

New Design, New Signs - Signage about Austrian reptiles, amphibians and mammals in the Blumengärten Hirschstetten.

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Zoos are not just sites of recreation and leisure activities. Conservation, research and education are main functions of a scientific managed zoo (van den Brink , 1981). Concerning education in zoos the classic signs are still the cheapest, low-maintenance and in the end the most weatherproof way to impart information. Still there are many disadvantages, which have to be eliminated to create the perfect signage.

The Blumengärten Hirschstetten (Vienna, Donaustadt) give an insight in the diverse world of plants and animals with their various themed gardens, the Zoo Hirschstetten, a historical farm and their palm house. New designed signs with the size of A0 will be established in the Blumengärten concerning Austrian reptiles, amphibians and mammals (European ground squirrel), with them placed at an relevant enclosure/area. The thematic fields on the signs include identification of the species, their habitats and way of living, the endangering of the species and their appearance in Vienna. Concerning the design of the signage, the focus will lie on humorous illustrations, suitable pictures and less words to minimize the disadvantages of classic signage.

Trough an Analysis of the knowledge of visitors, with a questionnaire about the upcoming signpost issues, will be decided which of the issues will be focused on the signage. Questions about all thematic fields for the three taxa and labeling in zoos in general are included.

J. van den Brink (1981): The role of labels in the zoo. *Int. Zoo Yb.* 21: 61-63