



Offering shelter to animals

General

Stichting AAP, founded in 1972 and located in Almere, is a European sanctuary for exotic animals. The animals which AAP takes care of come from seizures of illegal trade and are often severely abused or neglected. Also animals that were owned by private individuals, shady animal parks and circuses, and laboratory animals end up with us. AAP strives for teaching the social animals to live in a group again with their congeners (i.e. rehabilitate) and prepare all the animals for replacement to quality centres in The Netherlands or abroad, in a more natural environment.

Waiting list

Our quarantine facilities aren't always immediately available. That's why we keep a waiting list for some animal species. In very urgent cases (for example in the case of euthanasia threat) we will appeal to our partner organizations. In such a case, the animal will be placed there, until there is a place available at AAP.

Expenses

AAP always puts the animal's interest first. In principle, we don't charge expenses for caretaking. However, voluntary contributions are always very welcome, as we don't receive any financial grants and are totally dependent on our beneficiaries.

Renounce certificate

On arrival of the animal at AAP, the owner must sign a renounce certificate. With this, the owner declares to renounce his or her rights on the animal. This statement is unconditional and irrevocable.

Quarantine

After arrival, all animals are placed in quarantine from six to twelve weeks. This period enables us to thoroughly observe the animal's general mental and physical condition. Its health is checked by carrying out blood tests and muck tests. Should, in the unlikely event, the tests and observations show that it is a matter of a life-threatening disease for humans or animals, or a severe behavioural problem, AAP can decide to have the animal put to sleep without consulting the ex-owner. (see also the chapter about Euthanasia).

Birth control

Stichting AAP does everything to avoid that young animals will be born. We almost never go into sterilization and castration, because of a possible negative influence on behaviour. We prefer to use birth control methods like contraceptive injections or implants with cycle inhibiting hormones. Of course, this is not applicable for animals that aren't accommodated with the opposite sex.

Euthanasia

It rarely happens that we carry out euthanasia on the animals of AAP, nor when we deal with mentally or physically handicapped animals. A dignified existence is the condition. The minimum requirement for a dignified existence is to be able to be self-supporting in basic needs, such as eating and drinking. If the animal cannot manage to do so anymore and if this is a permanent situation, we may go into euthanasia. Of course, the animal keepers and the veterinarian will do their utmost to cure the animal or to let it deal with any handicap.

Visiting the animal

In principle, it is not possible to visit the animal, once it is handed over. Often, the animal has to learn to live (again) with its congeners, and a visit from an ex-owner may cause stress. This generally means a regression in the rehabilitation process and will cause unrest in the group.

Replacement

During their stay at AAP, we try to prepare the animals as much as possible for a life in a more natural environment. For example, we teach the animals to assert for their own food, and to deal with their congeners. As soon as the animal is capable of doing so, and mentally and physically declared healthy, we will actively look for a new destination. This destination is preferably in the area of the animal's origin, or comes close to its everyday environment. This may be a renowned zoo, animal park or reserve.

The animals are replaced in a group as much as possible. Practically always, the animals are accompanied by a companion of AAP to the replacement address, to make sure that during the trip and directly after arrival proper care is given.

Media attention

With prevention-oriented information, AAP tries to prevent that more animals become victims of their owners' ignorance. Media play an important role in that. We sometimes ask the owner/bringer to let the media be present when the animal is handed over. Of course, we cannot and don't want to oblige anybody to cooperate. When, however, cooperation is decided, this will indirectly help other exotic animals in trouble.

Besides, media attention is an effective way to try to get AAP known.