Beat: Entertainment

World`s oldest known crocodile turns 114 in South Africa

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USPA News - A Nile crocodile which was captured in the early 20th century and condemned to a life of captivity for eating several children has turned 114 at a conservation center in South Africa, making him the world`s oldest known crocodile. Henry`s 114th birthday was celebrated on Tuesday morning at the Crocworld Conservation Center (CCC) in Scottburgh, a coastal town south of Durban.

"We have invited all of Henry`s 6 wives to his 114th birthday party," said the center. It also prepared a cake in the shape of a crocodile and decorated Henry`s enclosure with balloons. Measuring the age of crocodiles is difficult and Henry is one of only a few `centenarians` whose age is undisputed because he has lived in captivity since 1903, when he was estimated to be about three years old. A common method used to determine a crocodile`s age is by measuring its lamellar growth rings in bones and teeth - but the method is not precise. Henry was just a few years old when he terrorized a tribe in the Okavango Delta of Botswana in 1903, killing several children before he was captured by an elephant hunter known as Sir Henry. The tribe initially demanded that Sir Henry killed the crocodile, but after consultation the tribe elders decided to condemn the reptile to a lifetime of captivity. The Botswana tribe probably did not expect that Henry would live on for so many years when it sentenced him to a lifetime of captivity, considering that larger species of crocodile have an average lifespan of up to 70 years. "These days, Henry has a pretty wonderful life at the Center with his six wives," Crocworld said. An Australian freshwater crocodile known as Mr. Freshie was estimated to be about 120 to 140 years old when he died at the Australia Zoo in 2010, but his old age could not be fully confirmed as he had only been captured in 1970. Another crocodile lived at a zoo in Russia for more than 80 years until his death in 1995, when he was estimated to be between 110 and 115 years old.

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