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Russian Zoo Animals Headed to U.S., Ukraine and North Korea

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Meerkats from the Novosibirsk Zoo are on their way to Pyongyang

A zoo in Novosibirsk has handed out an array of its animals to fellow zoos in three foreign countries — the U.S., Ukraine and North Korea — and in several Russian cities as part of an animal transfer program.

The largest group of animals went to a zoo in North Korea's capital Pyongyang, which received a golden eagle; four bharals, also known as Himalayan blue sheep; 10 Mandarin ducks; two otters; and three meerkats this month, Novosibirsk Zoo said in an online statement Tuesday.

The choice of the destination was due to the fact that the Pyongyang zoo is "undergoing a major reconstruction," having added new spaces for the animals, "so our colleagues can afford to expand their collection," Novosibirsk Zoo director Olga Shilo said in the statement.

A zoo in Ukraine and another in Dallas, Texas, received wolverines that are capable of reproducing in captivity, Novosibirsk Zoo said, adding that it was the first zoo to have its wolverines produce offspring, in 1979.

Other animals went to five cities in Russia, in what Novosibirsk Zoo described as a "record number" of transfers for a month.

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