

Unusual friendships

BABY hippo Owen isn't likely to outlive his 'mother'. He thinks this giant male Aldabran tortoise, named Mzee, gave birth to him - and after the trauma he's been through, who can blame him for being confused?



Kenya Wildlife Service rangers rescued the hippo in the sea off Malindi after the Asian tsunami killed his mum. And now the two friends sleep together, eat together and follow each other around their sanctuary house in Mombasa.

It took baby elephant Thembe a lot of persuasion to befriend sheep Albert.

Albert did not think Theme was very interesting in the beginning. He actually was afraid of him. But motherless Thembe, whose mother fell off a cliff, was in desperate need of a companion.

He kept reaching for Albert with his trunk and eventually Albert's fear made room for curiosity and then friendship. The pair is now inseparable and spend every hour together at their home in the Shamwari Wildlife Rehabilitation Centre, Eastern Cape, South Africa.



Muschi (German for cat) is a black homeless cat of three kilo, Mauschen (German for little mouse) a black collar bear of two hundred kilo. They already live together for four years, in the bear area of the Berlin zoo. Nobody knows where Muschi came from. She was just suddenly

there. Muschi liked it and decided to stay. The zookeepers didn't intervene. They thought that the company was good for the bear. That appeared to be correct. Muschi and Mauschen became close friends and are already inseparable for six years now. This friendship survived a house move. When Mauschen had to move to a new enclosure, the zookeepers made a special cat door for Mushi. She had been crying for days to be with her friend and the zoo finally gave in. When reunited with her friend, she immediately curled up in those big black claws and purred contently.



Ein unentrennliches Paar im Zoologischen Garten: die kleine Katze und die dicke Bärin Foto: 2008