Abstract
Every year, the number of species considered as endangered increases, especially due to human activities. Nowadays, captive breeding in zoological gardens becomes an option for their survival in refugees. Zoological gardens function as so-called „Noah’s Ark“, which has the potential to shelter a large amount of individuals from many species. In the future, this opportunity may give us a chance to reintroduce a species that disappeared in the nature. There are many factors influencing which species will be selected to be kept in zoos, e.g., the IUCN status, taxonomical uniqueness, availability, etc., but it was found that especially the size of the animal and the human aesthetic preferences affect the selection. However, every group of animals is evaluated independently in the terms of beauty, and thus, it is necessary to detect these rules and then to apply them to conservation projects. This thesis examines the factors that influence human aesthetic preferences to mammals, both in terms of the characteristics of animals (their colour and morphology), and in terms of human factors (gender, age, education, residence). It was found that especially the pattern, saturation and overall lightness of the animal affect the evaluation of beauty in mammals. On the other hand, dark colours are evaluated negatively. Gender and age of the respondents have the greatest impact on the evaluation of mammalian beauty. The time spent watching real animals in Prague Zoo was also analysed. It was found that the watching time correlates with the evaluation of beauty of the majority of species.

Keywords: mammals, beauty, aesthetic preferences, attractiveness, Prague Zoo.