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Husbandry of jellyfish, from the beginning until today

Überblick über die Quallenhaltung von den Anfängen bis heute

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Abstract

The popularity of jellyfish in Europe at the end of the 19th century influenced the European Art Nouveau period and jellyfish decoration elements can be found at several buildings. But at that time it was still impossible to keep jellyfish for a longer time alive in an aquarium.

Methods for the husbandry of jellyfish were developed only in the second half of the 20th century. During the last 20 years the exhibition of jellyfish became more and more popular and is today a standard for all larger aquariums. The development of husbandry is documented on the basis of the husbandry methods for jellyfish in the Berlin Aquarium, which has today one of the leading jellyfish exhibitions in the world.

Keywords: *Cotylorhiza tuberculata*; Moon jellyfish; *Phyllorhiza punctata*; Berlin kreisel; Planktonkreisel

Introduction

In Europe, it was the German zoologist Erich Haeckel, who initiated in the mid of the 19th century with his books and his artistic drawings his readers' interest in the wonderful forms

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Fig. 1. Jellyfish decoration on the entrance door of the Oceanographic Museum Monaco. Photo: Tai.

of marine plankton organisms and especially in jellyfish. He recognized and showed his readers the fragile and graceful beauty of these animals (Haeckel, 1879). With his zoological exact and aesthetic drawings he fascinated the public and made jellyfish and their graceful beauty so popular that quite often pictures of jellyfish can be found as decoration elements in the Art Nouveau period.

The Oceanographic Museum in Monaco used Haeckel's drawings as pattern for the entrance doors made of wrought-iron (Fig. 1), the chandeliers and other room decoration elements (Goy & Toulemont, 1997) (Figs. 2–4). Leopold and Rudolph Blaschka, who are very famous for their glass models of flowers and fruits in the Botanical Museum of the Harvard University, used Haeckel's drawings for their famous scientific glass models of jellyfish, which were ordered by different Natural History Museums and universities not only in Europe, but also in the US and Japan.

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