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## Ujan the whistling Orangutan

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Ujan, an orangutan that lives in Heidelberg Zoo in southern Germany, has a very special talent: he can whistle. At first, zookeepers couldn't believe their ears when they heard the 14-year old whistling.

'Our vegetable gardener was here to deliver vegetables we both thought that we were whistling at each other. Someone was whistling in the background. But it wasn't us and then we realised that it was Ujan,' zookeeper Bernd Kowalsky told Reuters TV on Saturday (April 11).

Kowalsky said that Ujan taught himself how to whistle but that it is a talent which he and his colleagues hope to encourage. Using treats like tomatoes and peppers, Kowalsky has been trying to get Ujan to practise his whistling.

'The only thing we taught him was how to do it on command, whenever we want him to do it,' Kowalsky said.

And visitors to the zoo are always impressed by the animal's whistling concerts. Born in Switzerland, Ujan moved to Heidelberg after spending time in both Stuttgart and Hamburg. He now lives in an enclosure together with two females, Gisella and Pujan, both of whom have already made a name for themselves as painters.

In order to keep the intelligent animals challenged, Kowalsky says they are often given finger paint -- and that the resulting works of art are often sold at charity auctions.

According to Kowalsky, there are only three orangutans worldwide who are able to whistle; but he hopes that this number could maybe increase.

It is possible that others would want to repeat what Ujan does because they see that he gets a lot of attention when he does it. Maybe they will at some point whistle a duet or all three of them. That would be sensational,' Kowalsky said.

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