

# Wild attraction.

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THE opening of two new attractions at the Al Areen Wildlife Park and Reserve in Sakhir has been put back until National Day - December 16. They were originally due to open for Eid Al Fitr, but could not be finished in time.

But most of the construction work has now been completed, said Isa Faraj, birds section head at the park, which comes under the Public Commission for the Protection of Marine Resources, Environment and Wildlife.

The attractions include an Arabian wild animals complex, costing BD200,000, and a BD100,000 aviary.

"Our plans to open the new sections on Eid didn't work out, as the construction work was still incomplete and we were extremely busy with the Eid rush," said Mr Faraj.

"It was very busy here and many people, including families, bachelors and workers, visited the park.

"So we thought of postponing the opening and doing it in a right way at the right time."

The wild animals complex will house leopards, foxes, wolves and hyenas.

Mr Faraj said the animals were being brought in from Africa and Asia and would be here by early December.

The new developments are a joint venture between the government and the private sector.

Park officials thanked the sponsors, especially Batelco, which is meeting half the cost of the wild animals complex.

Work on the wildlife sanctuary began in 1976 and it officially opened in 1979.

Its aim is to protect rare Arabian species including the oryx, adax and reem gazelle, along with other wildlife, including ducks, camels, donkeys, pelicans, flamingoes, exotic birds, wild sheep, ostriches, springbok, impala, fallow deer, Chapman's zebra and porcupine.

Today, hundreds of animals and birds live in the 70,000sqm park, which features three waterfalls and two river channels.

It is home to 90 bird species and 50 animal species, said Mr Faraj.

The park is now open from 8am to 4pm from Saturday to Thursday and 2pm to 4pm on Friday.

Entrance is BD1 for adults, 500 fils for children and free for children aged under three.

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