

Construction of aviary for raptors began in 1928. An Andean condor named Mendoza was among those living there for the longest time – this giant vulture occupied the aviary between 1996 and 2019, up until its death of old age.

Mendoza was taken away from its nest in the Andes as a still unhatched egg, which, alas, back then was a legal and acceptable procedure. After several vicissitudes, the bird was brought to the Warsaw Zoo. Here it was joined by a loyal companion and partner from Gdansk – Oliwia, half the age of Mendoza.

The Andean condor is the largest living land bird - Mendoza's wingspan was 3 m wide! In the wild it is a scavenger, feeding mainly on carrion, similarly to other vultures. Hence its bald head, which enables it to keep proper hygiene after a not-that-appetizing meal.