



CWAPC Fact Sheet

Problem:

The practice of keeping wild animals as pets is spiraling out of control. Experts estimate there are more tigers in the United States, many kept in substandard and inhumane conditions, than there are tigers living wild in Asia. Wild animals as pets injure and kill children and adults, are often kept in appalling conditions by unqualified owners, and can transmit potentially deadly diseases.

Facts:

Exotic and wild animals have become increasingly available and popular as pets. While it is impossible to precisely determine the number of wild animals in private hands in the United States, most accurate estimates include: 5,000 to 7,000 tigers, 10,000 to 20,000 large cats, 17.3 million birds, 8.8 million reptiles, and at least 3,000 nonhuman great apes.

Over the past 10 years, there have been thousands of incidents of injury and death documented involving many different wild animals. Since 1990, captive tigers alone have killed 2 children and 6 adults and nearly 60 others have been seriously injured.

Wild animals kept as pets often suffer from poor health either due to inadequate nutrition, poor husbandry, or due to various surgical procedures, such as declawing and defanging, performed for the sole purpose of turning a wild animal into a pet. It is estimated that 90% of wild animals kept as pets are dead within the first two years of captivity.

Keeping wild animals as pets is both dangerous to people and inhumane for animals.

Vision:

The Captive Wild Animal Protection Coalition (CWAPC), a new and innovative consortium of zoo professionals, sanctuary operators, and animal protection groups, believes the practice of keeping wild animals as pets is both dangerous for people and inhumane for animals. The Coalition is turning the spotlight on this alarming practice, as well as address the myriad of other welfare issues concerning captive wild animals.

Purpose:

The purpose of the Coalition is to research and analyze the issues of supply and demand for captive wild animals and to develop, implement and coordinate multiple strategies to significantly reduce the trade, use and possession of captive wild animals as pets.

Vision:

By the end of 2006, the Coalition will significantly reduce the availability, volume and presence of dangerous wild animals as pets. Our strategies to achieve this goal include maintaining a comprehensive database, executing a public outreach and advocacy campaign, and supporting appropriate legislation.

Many Organizations, One Voice

CWAPC, representing many animal protection organizations and more than 10 million supporters, all agree:

- **Wildlife should be protected in their natural habitat.**
- **Private ownership of wild animals as pets is dangerous to people and inhumane to animals.**
- **Wild animals as pets injure and kill children and adults, and can transmit potentially deadly diseases.**
- **Only professionally operated, regulated facilities can provide appropriate levels of care for wild animals.**
- **Wild animals are not suited to be kept as pets.**

To learn more about CWAPC
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