



CWAPC CALLS FOR USDA TO INVESTIGATE OHIO BREEDER WHO SOLD 8-DAY OLD LION CUB TO UNQUALIFIED OWNER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(SAN FRANCISCO, Calif.) October 13, 2003—this weekend, a New York Post Reporter purchased a lion cub from Backyard Safari in Wapakoneta, Ohio. His intent: to expose how easy it is to buy a dangerous wild animal in this country. Mission accomplished.

A sickly, 3-pound, 8-day old lion cub was purchased from the USDA licensed Ohio breeder for \$1,000.

“This is a perfect example of what happens on a daily basis with wild animals for sale in this country. Anyone can buy anything, and in all cases, the results are disastrous,” says Richard Farinato, Director of Captive Wildlife Protection for The Humane Society of the US.

The Animal Welfare Act prohibits transporting unweaned dogs and cats without their mother until 8 weeks of age, but there is no such protection for wild animals.

“Lion cubs in the wild typically nurse for at least 4 to 6 months,” says Kim Haddad, who practices veterinary medicine part-time at the San Francisco Zoo, and manages the Captive Wild Animal Protection Coalition. “Taking a cub away from his mother at just 8 days of age is inhumane and put this cub’s life in serious jeopardy. This should not be allowed to happen,” added Haddad.

Purchasing the cub highlights some very frightening facts:

- 1- Buying wild animals is extremely easy in this country.
- 2- Breeders will sell to just about anyone—qualified or not. It is about turning a profit, not conserving endangered tigers.
- 3- When private owners realize they can't take care of the animal, they dump them at any sanctuary willing to take them, usually with no financial support.

Lack of regulation and poor enforcement has resulted in a situation that is out of control. The Captive Wild Animal Protection Coalition is asking for the public to help end the private ownership of wild animals as pets.

“We can reduce the supply of wild animals for the pet trade by stopping the thousands of breeders, like Backyard Safari, who continually pump out lion and tiger cubs for sale,” states Haddad.

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