Roadside Zoos are not Zoos

Follow this and additional works at: https://www.wellbeingintlstudiesrepository.org/cu_reps

Part of the Animal Studies Commons, Nature and Society Relations Commons, and the Population Biology Commons

Recommended Citation

This material is brought to you for free and open access by WellBeing International. It has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of the WBI Studies Repository. For more information, please contact wbisr-info@wellbeingintl.org.
HSUS Launches Campaign Against More than 1,000 Menageries of Misery

Joe is an American Black Bear. No one is really certain just where Joe came from, but there are some facts about Joe's life that we do know.

For six years, Joe lived in a cage that was so small he could not stand up on his hind legs without hitting his head on the wire that enclosed the top.

The bottom of the cage was seldom cleaned thoroughly, so Joe spent much of his time standing in old straw, candy wrappers, and his own waste, causing ulcers to develop on his feet.

Instead of having a balanced diet, Joe lived mainly on doughnuts and sodas, resulting in medical problems that stunted his growth.

Fresh air, clean water, and room to exercise were strangers to Joe. His task in life was to sit in his cage and attract the attention of the people who patronized his owner's riding stable.

After months of pressure and insistence by HSUS staff members, the owner of the riding stable finally agreed to let us find Joe a new home. When the time came for him to leave, however, he had to be sawed out of his cage because the lock on the door had completely rusted over.

Today Joe is living in an animal orphanage in California, where he is well fed and cared for. Thousands of other animals like Joe are not so lucky. They remain imprisoned in so-called roadside zoos, under grossly inhumane conditions, where the best thing that could happen to many would be a painless death.

A Widespread Problem

No corner of the country is free from these menageries of misery. The Humane Society of the United States estimates there are more than 1,000 such establishments nationwide.

Unlike zoological gardens, these menageries are run by amateurs whose prime motives are economic. Roadside...
Menagerie operators lack the knowledge and expertise to care for their animals properly. Good zoological gardens employ highly qualified professionals who are eager to work in a reputable institution.

A good zoological garden, in addition to providing proper food, housing, and medical care for its animals, is an educational institution. The good zoo maintains an outreach program linking it with institutions of higher learning, providing an environment for breeding rare and endangered species.

CROWDING can be a major problem in cages and enclosures. Each wild animal requires space for rest, exercise, and privacy. A good zoological gardener understands the special needs of the animals. Crowding inevitably leads to poor mental and physical health and can result in unnatural conflicts between cage mates.

Housing is often built with no consideration for the special needs of individual species. Animals which are swimmers, such as polar bears, often have no pool. Climbing animals, such as monkeys, may have only trees or bars to climb and swing on. Some animals actually live in cages which do not allow them to stretch out or to turn completely around. Enclosures often provide no shelter from the elements.

FILTH is readily apparent. In many menageries, cages are seldom cleaned. They are littered with feces, rotting food, candy wrappers, and other garbage. Flies and other organisms which breed there spread disease. Such conditions reflect a lack of respect for animals on the part of the exhibit owners and can only inspire negative reactions in the public.

POOR DIETS are commonplace. Frequently fed on cheap carbohydrates, meats, or organ meats, the animals suffer from a variety of ailments and thins from malnutrition. It is not unusual to see primates drinking canned soda pop or eating gin-soaked dates. ThePresentation is an important one. The animals are not being fed properly.

MEDICAL CARE is almost non-existent at menageries. Because they don’t know about or understand the specific medical requirements of wild animals in captivity, those menagerie operators who run menageries usually fail to recognize symptoms of illness or disease at an early stage when conditions are easier to treat and cure. Thus, sick animals usually suffer for long periods before they either receive treatment or die.

You may find a menagerie where animals are provided with clean cages and adequate food. Good sanitation and a balanced diet, however, do not satisfy the complex requirements of wild animals in captivity. The animals without food, water, or heat in the menagerie, are malnourished, without the proper nutrition to support their needs. These animals may be deprived of food, water, or heat in the menagerie.

The bare patches on this Chimpanzee’s arm are the result of repeated attempts at pulling out its own ears. Wild animals in captivity, where they are deprived of opportunities for stretching, exercising, or communicating, often exhibit extreme reactions such as this.

The HSUS was one of the first national animal welfare organizations to take a long, hard look at zoos, including roadside menageries. During the last nine years, we have worked intensively, conducting zoo inspections, public education and awareness programs, and developing a working relationship with the professional zoological community as well as U.S. government agencies charged with the care of animals.

The HSUS is: 1. Inspecting zoos. To date, we have inspected a total of 395 major and minor zoos and menageries. Most have been inspected several times. 2. Reporting violations of the Animal Welfare Act to USDA officials and pressuring them to correct substandard conditions. 3. Teaching sections of the USDA training program for zoo inspectors. 4. Working for the passage of additional amendments to the Animal Welfare Act which would further protect zoo animals. 5. Stimulating public pressure to bring about change at zoos where laws are not specific enough to obtain convictions.

Taking legal steps to improve or close zoos where other action has not worked.

The HSUS is planning to continue its work with greatly increased staff and resources, stepped-up inspection schedules, and highly visible publicity campaigns. In addition we will:

Cruelty in North Carolina

Following up on a complaint by a concerned citizen, an HSUS investigator visited a North Carolina roadside menagerie. Upon inspection, we found that a variety of animals kept in small, filthy, ramshackle cages. Many animals were kept isolated and were denied water, food, or heat. The conditions were such that animals were suffering for long periods before they either received treatment or die.

Cruelty in New Jersey

Four years ago, The HSUS was called in to inspect the Trenton, New Jersey municipal zoo after some of the so-called ‘zoo’s’ animals had been killed by roadside menageries because of poor security and substandard fencing. During the inspection, The HSUS investigator found a lone bear lying in a small pit among beer cans, deer trying to graze in a grassless paddock, and monkeys sitting alone in dark, damp cage.

The HSUS investigator declared the zoo to be ‘the most inhumane for animals I have ever seen.’ The investigator urged the city to hire a professional zoo administrator, reduce the animal inventory, and start renovation programs immediately.

This ‘law’ has never been enforced since the HSUS conducted the inspections.

The HSUS is planning to continue its investigations and pressuring them to correct substandard conditions. We believe that with temporary measures a facility such as this one can become a functioning zoo. We believe that by licensing and inspecting zoos, we can ensure that the conditions at this and other zoos are improved.

Cruelty in Kansas

During the winter of 1979-1980, a USDA inspector found that a Kansas man had abandoned his animals because he could no longer afford to feed them. An HSUS investigator found that the dejected operator had allowed all his animals to die in the menagerie while he was canned up for the winter. The inspector found his menagerie a ‘cruel, inhumane, and filthy’ environment for his animals.

The menagerie operators lack the knowledge and expertise to care for their animals properly. Good zoological gardens employ highly qualified professionals who are eager to work in a reputable institution.

A good zoological garden, in addition to providing proper food, housing, and medical care for its animals, is an educational institution. The good zoo maintains an outreach program linking it with institutions of higher learning, providing an environment for breeding rare and endangered species.

CROWDING can be a major problem in cages and enclosures. Each wild animal requires space for rest, exercise, and privacy. A good zoological gardener understands the special needs of the animals. Crowding inevitably leads to poor mental and physical health and can result in unnatural conflicts between cage mates.

Housing is often built with no consideration for the special needs of individual species. Animals which are swimmers, such as polar bears, often have no pool. Climbing animals, such as monkeys, may have only trees or bars to climb and swing on. Some animals actually live in cages which do not allow them to stretch out or to turn completely around. Enclosures often provide no shelter from the elements.

FILTH is readily apparent. In many menageries, cages are seldom cleaned. They are littered with feces, rotting food, candy wrappers, and other garbage. Flies and other organisms which breed there spread disease. Such conditions reflect a lack of respect for animals on the part of the exhibit owners and can only inspire negative reactions in the public.

POOR DIETS are commonplace. Frequently fed on cheap carbohydrates, meats, or organ meats, the animals suffer from a variety of ailments and thins from malnutrition. It is not unusual to see primates drinking canned soda pop or eating gin-soaked dates. The Presentation is an important one. The animals are not being fed properly.

MEDICAL CARE is almost non-existent at menageries. Because they don’t know about or understand the specific medical requirements of wild animals in captivity, those menagerie operators who run menageries usually fail to recognize symptoms of illness or disease at an early stage when conditions are easier to treat and cure. Thus, sick animals usually suffer for long periods before they either receive treatment or die.

You may find a menagerie where animals are provided with clean cages and adequate food. Good sanitation and a balanced diet, however, do not satisfy the complex requirements of wild animals in captivity. The animals without food, water, or heat in the menagerie, are malnourished, without the proper nutrition to support their needs. These animals may be deprived of food, water, or heat in the menagerie.

The bare patches on this Chimpanzee’s arm are the result of repeated attempts at pulling out its own ears. Wild animals in captivity, where they are deprived of opportunities for stretching, exercising, or communicating, often exhibit extreme reactions such as this.

The HSUS was one of the first national animal welfare organizations to take a long, hard look at zoos, including roadside menageries. During the last nine years, we have worked intensively, conducting zoo inspections, public education and awareness programs, and developing a working relationship with the professional zoological community as well as U.S. government agencies charged with the care of animals.

The HSUS is: 1. Inspecting zoos. To date, we have inspected a total of 395 major and minor zoos and menageries. Most have been inspected several times. 2. Reporting violations of the Animal Welfare Act to USDA officials and pressuring them to correct substandard conditions. 3. Teaching sections of the USDA training program for zoo inspectors. 4. Working for the passage of additional amendments to the Animal Welfare Act which would further protect zoo animals. 5. Stimulating public pressure to bring about change at zoos where laws are not specific enough to obtain convictions.

Taking legal steps to improve or close zoos where other action has not worked.

The HSUS is planning to continue its work with greatly increased staff and resources, stepped-up inspection schedules, and highly visible publicity campaigns. In addition we will:

Cruelty in North Carolina

Following up on a complaint by a concerned citizen, an HSUS investigator visited a North Carolina roadside menagerie. Upon inspection, we found that a variety of animals kept in small, filthy, ramshackle cages. Many animals were kept isolated and were denied water, food, or heat. The conditions were such that animals were suffering for long periods before they either received treatment or died.

Cruelty in New Jersey

Four years ago, The HSUS was called in to inspect the Trenton, New Jersey municipal zoo after some of the so-called ‘zoo’s’ animals had been killed by roadside menageries because of poor security and substandard fencing. During the inspection, The HSUS investigator found a lone bear lying in a small pit among beer cans, deer trying to graze in a grassless paddock, and monkeys sitting alone in dark, damp cage.

The HSUS investigator declared the zoo to be ‘the most inhumane for animals I have ever seen.’ The investigator urged the city to hire a professional zoo administrator, reduce the animal inventory, and start renovation programs immediately.

This ‘law’ has never been enforced since the HSUS conducted the inspections.

The HSUS is planning to continue its investigations and pressuring them to correct substandard conditions. We believe that with temporary measures a facility such as this one can become a functioning zoo. We believe that by licensing and inspecting zoos, we can ensure that the conditions at this and other zoos are improved.

Cruelty in Kansas

During the winter of 1979-1980, a USDA inspector found that a Kansas man had abandoned his animals because he could no longer afford to feed them. An HSUS investigator found that the dejected operator had allowed all his animals to die in the menagerie while he was canned up for the winter. The inspector found his menagerie a ‘cruel, inhumane, and filthy’ environment for his animals.
Animal Welfare Act Not Working!

When captive wild animals were included under the Animal Welfare Act in 1970, it was our belief that menageries such as those already described would be found standard and closed permanently. Indeed, it was the intent of Congress to put an end to roadside menageries. The law was written to cover most warm-blooded zoo animals and set minimal standards for such things as transportation, food, water, sanitation, shelter, ventilation, and veterinary care of animals. Enforcement of the act was delegated to USDA veterinarians and inspectors who conduct routine inspections of all licensed animal facilities. Violators of the Act can receive letters of warning, cease and desist orders, fines, have their licenses revoked or suspended, or be imprisoned. While the intent of the law was good, there are several reasons why it is not working:

- It sets only minimal standards.
- It is vaguely worded and open to wide interpretation, which has resulted in uneven enforcement.
- USDA veterinarians who enforce the law are oriented toward domesticated animals and do not always appreciate the special needs of wild animals.
- The USDA has not been provided with sufficient funds to adequately enforce the law.
- The USDA has failed to act strongly against violators. Too often, inspectors get wrapped up in the problems of menagerie operators, and seem to forget that their job is to look out for the welfare of the animals.

As a result of the ineffectiveness of the Animal Welfare Act and a lack of enforcement as it applies to these roadside menageries, The HSUS has intensified its efforts to close these institutions.

Join Our Campaign To Close Roadside Menageries

Zoos have been an accepted part of the American culture for so long that they have taken on an aura of respectability. The amateurs who run menageries are taking advantage of this situation. They have created animal prisons and call them zoos! Sometimes dressed in their khaki safari outfits, they try to convey an image of jungle veterans who have personally tracked down, captured, and transported their captive beasts across the seas for us. They'd like us to believe that they understand the habits and habitats of their captives. Don't be fooled!

Join our campaign to get rid of these miserable menageries. Work with us. Use our three step program to end the misery.

What You Can Do

1. Go to the Menagerie
   If you find a roadside or municipal menagerie in your area, pay a visit. Look for signs of crowding, filth, poor housing, inadequate diets, and bad medical care. Take photos and notes.

2. Contact Authorities
   Take your evidence to local authorities such as fish and game commissioners, humane agents, and political leaders especially if it is a public facility.
   If local authorities fail to respond, contact the nearest USDA office. You can also contact state officials who administer laws pertaining to captive wild animals, or call the county attorney's office.
   Report your findings to The HSUS. If local authorities refuse to take action, we may be able to help. But you must help in the battle by keeping us informed.

3. Talk to Others
   Tell your friends and associates about menageries you have found. Ask them to join you in not patronizing or supporting such places. Give copies of this report to interested parties.

   Naturally, when inspecting or evaluating a menagerie, you should not represent yourself as an agent of The HSUS. Our investigators have had many years of training and experience to draw upon. Your views, as a resident of the area, will carry plenty of weight.

Help The HSUS End the Misery

You can do a lot to help The HSUS end the misery of animals imprisoned in menageries. Join our nationwide campaign to close the menageries! By becoming aware of the problem and educating yourself, you will become an extension of our educational efforts through conversations with people around you.

Your financial support will help enable The HSUS to continue zoo inspections. Our professional investigators are a necessary part of the process if we are to put an end to all menageries.

Our investigators serve two distinct purposes. First, they report violations and seek redress on behalf of the animals. Second, they serve as watchdogs for you, our members of Agriculture inspectors who are supposed to be enforcing the law and protecting animals from the kinds of things we've told you about within this brief report.

We firmly believe that without our presence, our programs, and our pressure, The USDA and state government agencies would take no action to stop the cruelties found behind the rusty bars of menageries. We know that fewer animals are suffering because of our zoo program. Your membership and support makes this continuing effort possible.

Please use the enclosed postage paid envelope to send your tax deductible contribution today.

Roadside "zoos" Waste Wildlife!

All contributors of $10 or more will receive this bumper sticker. By displaying the bumper sticker on your car you will be helping The HSUS publicize the roadside zoo problem. Who knows, perhaps your bumper sticker will make someone choose not to enter a menagerie of misery.

2100 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037
(202) 452-1100
Additional copies of this report available at 10¢ each.