Orcas die at alarming rates when confined; the majority do not live beyond their teens. More than 50 percent of all orcas ever held in captivity are already dead.

**MARINE MAMMALS**

**Should Orcas Be Kept Captive?**

Recent deaths raise questions

Wild killer whales, or orcas, roam the cooler waters of the world in close-knit pods of a few to dozens of individuals. In the wild, orcas, and indeed all cetaceans, exhibit rich behavioral repertoires, sophisticated communication systems, and complex social structures. Orcas are playful and active, sometimes swimming as many as one hundred miles in a day. Fortunate whale-watchers can delight in typical orca behavior—spy-hopping, lob-tailing, and breaching. Orcas emit intricate calls, clicks, and whistles, which allow individual identification and, presumably, the sharing of critical information. Orcas also use sound for echo-location; listening for the returning echo of emitted sounds, orcas create an intricate three-dimensional map of the sea around them, “visualizing” the sea bottom and tracking neighbors and potential prey. These animals have strong family bonds: offspring of both sexes remain with their mothers for life and parents share responsibilities. Because of large and very developed brains, orcas are considered highly intelligent. It is estimated that they live thirty-five to eighty years.

Because of orcas’ unique qualities, The HSUS has always been concerned about the impact of wild captures on both individual animals and their pods. Since orcas taken from wild populations (mostly near Iceland) account for 90 percent of all orcas ever held in captivity, serious scientific questions exist as to the impact of their capture, transport, and confinement.

- In August 1989 Kandu, an orca at Sea World in San Diego, died in a freak accident. She and a larger female, Corky, collided in a peculiar display of aggressive behavior. Kandu bled to death from a broken jaw, orphaning her calf, Baby Shamu.
- In early February 1991, Hyak, a male orca at the Vancouver Aquarium in Canada, died, probably from a perforated lung, the result of an incident with a younger whale. A week later, orca trainer and competitive swimmer Keltie Lee Byrne died tragically at SeaWorld of the Pacific, in British Columbia, Canada. After being pulled into the exhibition pool, she was battered about and dragged underwater by three whales. It was impossible to rescue her and she drowned.
- Over the past four years, seven orcas have died under peculiar circumstances at Sea World parks in San Diego, California, San Antonio, Texas, and Orlando, Florida. In one case, the necropsy report implicated ingestion of a plastic buoy; in another, the whale collided with the pool wall and fatally fractured its skull. In the latest of these tragedies, a near-term pregnant female died of acute pneumonia.

These are only some of the incidents of animal suffering—and threats to public health and safety—posed by the maintenance of orcas in captivity.

Orcas die at alarming rates when confined; the majority do not live beyond their teens. More than 50 percent of all orcas ever held are already dead. At Sea World, the largest consumer of orcas, more than 63 percent have died. This is especially distressing in that Sea World is widely considered the best marine park in the industry. Apparently because these animals are unable to express fully their normal range of behavior in captivity, they often suffer frequent or prolonged physical illness or other symptoms of stress. Orcas are medicated with antibiotics so frequently that it is considered nearly routine veterinary practice. While in confinement, they may exhibit atypical—or stereotypical (repetitive neurotic)—sexual or social behaviors such as bobbing or patterned swimming. These aberrant behaviors are apparently related to extreme, prolonged stress, anxiety, and/or frustration.

The HSUS and many other organizations wrote to the U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) urging several immediate changes. We requested that it prohibit further captures and imports of orcas; conduct a complete evaluation of care of currently held orcas; analyze the
availability of orcas for captivity; evaluate educational and research programs utilizing already-captive orcas; and develop alternatives to such programs.

Finally, along with the public-display industry and the humane community, we have requested NMFS to explore the option of rehabilitation and release of captive orcas. As a result of these requests, NMFS has scheduled an unprecedented public meeting on the capture, care, and maintenance of orcas.

We remain committed to working with NMFS to implement immediate, far-reaching changes in policies on captive orcas and other marine mammals.

COMPANION ANIMALS

HSUS Urges: “Adopt One”
Shelters should be the source of pet animals

Adding a companion animal to your family is a serious, wonderful, traumatic, and exhilarating experience. Such a decision should never be made lightly. The well-being of both your family and the companion animal rests on a well-informed and well-thought-out adoption.

The source of your new pet is also very important. If you and your family feel that you have the time, money, commitment, and knowledge it takes to be a responsible steward of a dog or cat, The HSUS encourages you to visit only your local animal shelter.

Millions of homeless animals are turned over to shelters every year. Although some of the animals received and cared for by shelters are reunited with their original families, most are put up for adoption. Shelters will keep animals for adoption for as long as they have room. However, the number of homeless animals received by shelters is staggering. There will not be room for long in any facility. The tragic result is that millions of companion animals must be humanely destroyed every year in the United States.

If you are already thinking of adding a dog or cat to your family, then your local shelter is the only appropriate source for companion animals. In introducing the “Until There Are None, Adopt One” campaign, HSUS President John A. Hoyt said, “I can think of no better way to begin to turn destruction into reduction, defeat into victory, and death into life. Until there are none, adopt one!”

Shelters provide a large and varied selection of dogs and cats. Available animals typically range from puppies and kittens to “experienced” animals in their quiet, later years. Potential adopters can, and should, take advantage of this large selection when adopting. Remember that the commitment to this new addition is a serious one, lasting as long as fifteen years or so. This makes selecting the right companion all the more important.

The HSUS does not govern or regulate shelters. Each humane society or municipal animal-control facility is independently responsible for ensuring high standards of animal care. The HSUS does, however, provide training, guidelines, and reference materials to any such agency requesting our help.

When you visit your local shelter, you should expect to see animals in clean, comfortable kennel runs or cages. If this is not the case, ask to speak to the manager or director. He/she is responsible for providing humane living quarters for all animals served. Most shelters do an excellent job of caring for companion animals. However, although you may expect the animal quarters to be clean, the buildings may not be modern or appealing. Most shelters run on a shoestring budget; money goes first to the care of animals and last to cosmetic improvements. Some shelters are quite large, with capacity for hundreds of animals; other shelters, usually in smaller
communities, house only a few animals at a time. In either case, the mission of care and compassion to all animals should be the same.

A good shelter will provide a thorough screening for both the adopter and the adoptee. Before a dog or cat is put up for adoption, the shelter will typically check its health, temperament, and behavior to help ensure that the animal will make an appropriate family member.

You will be screened to make sure that you have the time, money, commitment, and knowledge required for responsible animal stewardship. "Are you able to spend adequate time with the animal?" "Will you provide training, veterinary care, and a fenced yard?" "Do you understand and are you willing to make a commitment to the animal's health needs?" Don't be offended by the probing questions shelter staff members may ask. It is their responsibility to confirm that the future homes of the animals in their care are good ones.

You may also be asked to wait for a period of twenty-four hours before taking the animal home. Many shelters feel that this policy is a good safeguard against potential adopters who make snap judgements or decisions based more on impulse than on forethought. Shelters with waiting periods report that a significant number of potential adopters never return for the animal. You, on the other hand, can use this time to make sure that you have provided safe surroundings for the animal before bringing it home. The shelter should be able to help you with food, bowls, leashes, and literature that can make the animal's transition to the family a smooth one.

Since many of the animals turned over to humane shelters are "pre-owned," it is sometimes possible to get an idea of the dog's or cat's characteristics prior to the adoption. Dogs that are excitable will not be placed with a person who is looking for a sedate animal; conversely, an inactive animal will not make a good candidate for someone who wants a companion to run with. The HSUS News Winter 1992 issue discusses the quality of shelter animals, the availability of purebreds in shelters, and what applicants can expect when they visit the shelter to adopt.

The special "Adopt One" issue of Shelter Sense is designed for shelters to use in their adoption programs. It includes articles discussing ways to attract more people to the shelter to adopt pets, ideas for presenting the shelter and the animals to the public, and the most effective way to conduct the adoption process. Shelters will find useful the bound-in copy of the campaign poster plus handy tear sheets on different aspects of the adoption process.
Animfyll shelters can provide potential adopters with a varied selection of dogs, cats, puppies, and kittens.

for a quiet, retiring animal, for example.
As part of their health check, most shelters will include an inoculation that safeguards the animal against the most common feline or canine diseases. Most shelters will also start animals on heartworm-preventative medication and administer a broad-spectrum deworming medication. It is up to you to follow up on these health safeguards and to have the animal licensed and seen regularly by a veterinarian.

Perhaps most importantly, by selecting your companion animal from a local shelter, you will help reduce the tragic and unacceptable number of homeless animals in our country. The HSUS reminds everyone to cast his/her vote in favor of dogs and cats by not buying, breeding, selling, or accepting for free any companion animal until not even one homeless dog or cat languishes, unwanted, in animal shelters.

Consider the source! Until there are none, adopt one!—Nicholas P. Gilman, field coordinator, animal sheltering and control

CAMPAIGNS

Club U.N.I.T.E. Benefits HSUS
A corporate leader launches a new program

The HSUS is pleased to have been chosen one of the participants in Sebastian International’s new Club U.N.I.T.E. program. On August 25, 1991, Sebastian International, a leader in the personal-care-products industry, launched an innovative membership program designed to meet the challenges of the nineties by joining its efforts with those of its customers and worthy nonprofit organizations.

Sebastian International believes that it is possible to mix good business with a sense of corporate responsibility. It has been extremely successful in producing effective programs to encourage adults and children alike to become more conscious of their environment and to take active roles in promoting better living for all.

Sebastian’s latest brainchild is Club U.N.I.T.E. The acronym stands for Unity Now Is a Tomorrow for Everyone, a paraphrasing of the club motto, “Club U.N.I.T.E. was formed today for a brighter world tomorrow.”

Beauty salons across the country that choose to participate in the Club U.N.I.T.E. program will offer their customers the opportunity to make a $10 donation to one of seven nonprofit organizations. They are The HSUS, The Alliance for Children’s Trust, American Indian Children’s Education Fund, The Design Industry’s Foundation for AIDS, The National Hispanic Scholarship Fund, Operation Home Shield, and The Rainforest Foundation.

A person joins Club U.N.I.T.E. by making a donation check out directly to the chosen organization. Each person receives a “We Care Passport” good for more than

At the press conference announcing the new Club U.N.I.T.E. program were (left to right) actress Ana-Alicia, John Sebastian, president of Sebastian International, The HSUS’s Patricia Forkan, actor Jon Voight, and The Rainforest Foundation’s Trudie Styler.
COME IN MAY TO THE DELAWARE BAY

The HSUS invites you to join us in May for a six-day outing to the Delaware Bay to witness the spring migration of shorebirds. You'll see firsthand the synchronized flight of a flock of plovers as thousands of birds turn and wheel in unison. You'll take the vacation photos you've always dreamed about as sandpipers march past your camera, probing a mud flat for crab eggs. Our schedule will include field tours to birdwatching hot spots, a bird-identification workshop, bird-banding demonstrations, and boat cruises.

Transportation will be provided from both Philadelphia and Washington, D.C., to Dover, Delaware. Bird-watching activities will begin with a workshop focusing on identifying shorebirds of the Delaware Bay. The class will be taught by trip leader Claudia Wilds, editor of Birding magazine and a leading authority on the identification of North American shorebirds. Ornithologists and naturalists from the HSUS staff will act as guides. Their knowledge and enthusiasm will assure that your vacation is exciting and educational.

We'll take excursions to popular shorebird haunts at Port Mahon and Little Creek Wildlife Management Area. The highlight of the visit to the bay's western shore will be a day-long outing to Bombay Hook National Wildlife Refuge, one of the nation's premier birding locations.

Later we'll journey by ferry across the Delaware Bay to Cape May, New Jersey, the nation's oldest seashore resort. The Washington Post has called Cape May "an open-air museum of Victorian architecture." The group's three-day stay will include evenings set aside for exploring the town's 600 Victorian homes and historic buildings, ocean-front promenade, and four miles of beach.

We'll visit southern New Jersey birding hot spots, including Reeds Beach, Moore Beach, and South Cape May Meadows. You'll have a rare opportunity to watch ornithologists banding shorebirds as they migrate through Cape May. We'll take a morning boat trip on the intercoastal waterway to search the marshes for migrants and take a breakfast cruise into the Atlantic Ocean to look for marine mammals and seabirds.

While shorebirds will be the focus of this ecotour, we also expect to see many of the Delaware Bay's other resident bird species and spring migrants, such as the glossy ibis, blue grosbeak, Caspian tern, American oystercatcher, clapper rail, and bald eagle. More than 400 species of birds have been observed in Cape May County and the waters of Delaware Bay; the list of bird sightings at Bombay Hook Refuge contains 261 species.

Whether you are a novice or an avid birder, you will not want to miss this trip.

The Delaware Bay trip is planned as the initial venture in a series of ecotours especially designed to provide HSUS members with unique opportunities to learn about our threatened ecosystems. You'll have the opportunity to study nature in the company of some of the nation's foremost biologists and naturalists. HSUS tours will take you behind the scenes to places and events usually not accessible to tourists. Look for information on tours to Yellowstone National Park, Puget Sound, and other destinations in future issues of the HSUS News.

For more information on dates, cost, and itinerary write: Delaware Bay Tour, The Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L St., N.W., Washington, DC 20037.