

Marine Mammals in Captivity

Position:

The Edmonton Humane Society does not support the capture or captivity of marine mammals for the purpose of public entertainment.

Rationale

- The capture and transport of wild and non-domesticated animals has been known to cause stress, injury and in some cases, even death, to the animal. Capture may also disrupt the balance of family units formed in the wild.
- Traditional marine mammal exhibits focus on animals such as sea lions, dolphins, or whales who perform exaggerated tricks that are variations of natural behaviours; purely natural behaviours are compromised in captivity.
- Unlike that of some terrestrial mammals, the habitat of marine mammals is difficult to recreate or simulate.
- Captive facilities, with their logistical constraints, commercial considerations, and space limitations, cannot provide conditions that allow natural social structures to form; social groups are artificial in captivity.

References

1. American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. "Marine Mammal Shows." ASPCA policy statement, New York, n.d.
2. Canadian Federation of Humane Societies. "Animals Used in Entertainment or Displays." CFHS position statement, Ottawa, 1995.
3. Canadian Federation of Humane Societies. "Marine Mammal Protection." CFHS position statement, Ottawa, 1990.
4. Canadian Veterinary Medical Association. "Use of Animals in Entertainment and Recreation." CVMA position statement, Ottawa, 2010.
5. Humane Society of the United States. "Marine Mammals." HSUS policy statement, Washington, 2005.