

Wild and Exotic Animals as Pets

Position:

The Edmonton Humane Society does not support the keeping of wild and/or exotic animals as pets.

Definition:

A wild or exotic animal is any animal that has not been subjected to domestication through many generations of selective and controlled breeding and is therefore not adapted to living in close association with humans.

Rationale

- Wild and exotic animals are often exposed to suffering and/or death in capture and transportation.
- Nutritional requirements for such pets are often not well understood, leaving the animals at risk for illness and death.
- Wild and exotic animals may become unwanted pets in a short period of time due to lack of owner knowledge about care requirements and animal behaviour.
- Wild and exotic animals still retain their natural hunting and territorial defense mechanisms, which can result in injury to the owner.
- Wild and exotic animals can carry a number of diseases that are transmittable to humans and native animals.
- Wild and exotic animals may escape or be abandoned by owners. This results in the displacement of native animals.
- Wild and exotic animals may be endangered in their natural environment. The extensive trapping or capture of such animals may lead to species extinction.

References

1. American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. "Exotic Animals as Pets." ASPCA position statement, New York, n.d.
2. Canadian Federation of Humane Societies. "Wild or Exotic Animals as Pets." CFHS position statement, Ottawa, 1998.
3. Humane Society of the United States. "Wild Animals as Pets." HSUS policy statement, Washington, 2005.