

# **Ontario Zoo Review Report #3**

**Guha's Lions and Tigers**

**August 2006**



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# ZOOCHECK CANADA INC.

Zoocheck Canada Inc. is a national animal protection charity (#13150 2072 RR 0001) established in 1984 to promote and protect the interests and wellbeing of wild animals.

Zoocheck works to improve wildlife protection in Canada and to end the abuse, neglect and exploitation of individual wild animals through:

- investigation and research
- public education and awareness campaigns
- capacity building initiatives
- legal programs
- legislative actions.

## INVESTIGATOR PROFILE

### **Else M. B. Poulsen**

In 1978 Else Poulsen received her B.Sc. in Biology from Brock University and in 1995 her 4 year Diploma in Zookeeping from the City of Calgary Apprenticeship Programs.

Ms. Poulsen began her career in animal behavior in the early 1980s working as a field biologist in Alberta's energy industry. When the oil market took a downward spiral a few years later, she became a zookeeper at the Calgary Zoo.

As an entry level keeper Poulsen worked with a wide variety of animal species. She became particularly interested in large carnivore behavior and over time became a specialist in captive bear management and care.

Poulsen found it difficult to accept that the captive bears in her care displayed abnormal pacing behaviours, so she set out to better their lives. This led her to research captive bear problems, publish her findings and advocate for change.

After 18 years at the Calgary Zoo she left to work at a major US zoo and then at a specialist bear facility in Ontario. Over the years, she has provided expert assistance and advice about modernizing bear husbandry methods, environmental enrichment programming and enclosure design issues to zoos, sanctuaries and animal welfare groups around the world.

Poulsen has more than 40 papers and articles to her name in scientific research and technical journals, textbooks and other publications. She consults as an animal behavior and captive environment trouble-shooter. She has also lectured on modern bear care and animal welfare issues to audiences as diverse as university students studying population genetics to First Nations Band Council members in northern Canada.

# THE AUDIT PROCESS

The Zoo Exhibit Quick Audit Process (ZEQAP)<sup>1</sup> assessment tool that was used to grade the conditions in the zoo exhibits investigated in this report was developed for the World Society for the Protection of Animals and their member societies worldwide by Rob Laidlaw.

The ZEQAP provides a relatively simple approach to auditing terrestrial mammal exhibits, because it is based almost entirely on specific, critical housing and husbandry points.

## How the Audit Works

Each exhibit is assigned a starting score of 50 points based on a series of conditions that must be satisfied. An exhibit must retain 40 points to pass.

The ZEQAP presents the investigator with a series of factual statements. These statements are divided into 11 sections, each assigned a numerical score. For example, the section on Behaviour is allocated five points, while the section on Privacy is assigned two points.

Points are deducted from the starting score in each section if the statement is not true, as this represents an exhibit deficiency. For example, in the section on shelter, the investigator is presented with the statement, "Shelters are present in the exhibit." If no shelter is present, two points would be deducted from the five points assigned to this section.

The lowest possible score in each section is zero.

## Critical Deficiencies Mean Automatic Failure

The presence of any of the following critical deficiencies results in an exhibit automatically failing the audit and receiving a score of zero.

1. Severely cramped conditions (or restraints) that prevent normal postural adjustments and movement in any direction of less than three body lengths (including tail).
2. 100% hard or wire substrates.
3. Barren exhibits lacking any useable features or furnishings.

## Additional Observations

In addition to auditing specific exhibits, the investigator toured all accessible areas of each zoo. Conditions were documented through photographs, video and hand written notes, which were transcribed shortly after each zoo visit.

**Note:** A passing score does not mean an exhibit is optimal or needs no improvement. It simply means that at the time the audit was conducted, certain basic animal housing and care criteria were met. Captive environments, by their very nature, are deficient when compared to the environments that animals inhabit in the wild and can always be improved.

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<sup>1</sup> Copies of both ZEQAP documents are available from the Canadian office of the World Society for the Protection of Animals.

# GUHA'S LIONS AND TIGERS

August 23, 2006

This report is the third in a series of investigative reports about Ontario zoos in 2006. It provides a snapshot view of Guha's Lions and Tigers, located in Utterson, near Bracebridge, Ontario on August 23, 2006.

## General Commentary

Guha's Lions & Tigers is a private menagerie of native and exotic animal species owned by "animal trainer" Nanda Guha. The facility consists of a number of animal cages surrounding Mr. Guha's private residence. Some of the animals are living in grossly substandard environments and appear to be in poor condition.

When I entered the facility, I passed through an entrance gate across the driveway that was being opened and closed by a young girl. As I exited my car, I was greeted by a volunteer who took the designated admission fee.

## Welfare Conditions

A review of the facility revealed that some of the animals are in extremely poor condition, while others appear to be in better condition. In general the "show" animals (e.g., lions, tigers) looked to be in fair condition. However, they needed to develop greater muscle mass and lose body fat. Other animals, such as the lone wolf, two red foxes and a lynx appeared in poor condition and exhibited signs of stress, such as pacing, fur loss, minor skin lesions and fear of humans.

The condition of the cages ranged from old, rotting and deplorable to seemingly new and well-maintained. Some of the problems I observed were:

1. Poorly constructed cages and enclosures.
2. Undersized cages and enclosures.
3. Barren hardpan floor surfaces.
4. Lack of adequate shelter and privacy from public viewing.
5. Lack of structural enhancements, furnishings and/or enrichment programming to encourage species-typical movements and behaviours.
6. Lack of potable water.
7. Lack of standard safety features, such as double-door entry gates and shift areas.
8. Volunteers entering cages housing potentially dangerous animals.

I was escorted through the facility by two volunteer high school students, who were fulfilling a diploma requirement to do 40 hours of community work. They informed me that Mr. Guha brings his lions and tigers into his house to lay by the fireplace with him when the weather is bad, but I was not able to determine whether or not that was true. I observed that most of the lion and tiger cages had no indoor facilities.

The "tour guides" explained that "most of the animals pace" and that "they do this because there is nothing else to do." They also explained that all of the water buckets and bowls at the facility were green and dirty, because "the animals will not drink clean water, since they only get dirty water in the wild."

Most of the cages were poorly outfitted or barren and I saw no evidence of any kind of

meaningful, effective facility-wide enrichment program for the animals. In fact, I saw no recognition of the fact that these animals should be kept physically and mentally active in captivity.

## **Safety**

Some of the cages were well constructed and appeared relatively safe. Other cages were in poor repair and did not appear safe. The facility is not surrounded by a perimeter fence that would discourage escaped animals from leaving the premises.

The students also indicated that Mr. Guha entered the cages to train the big cats and that the cats were sometimes brought out into the central area for training. If true, there are a number of safety concerns for Mr. Guha, family members, volunteers, neighbours and visitors.

I observed the two volunteers, with no "official" supervision, enter a cage with two tiger cubs to "play with them." While small, the tigers are still wild animals and they bit and scratched the students. Eventually the students appeared to realize that this play session was getting out of hand, so they exited the cage. This episode needs to be put in context. Under no circumstances, should volunteer students be allowed entry into cages housing potentially dangerous animals.

There are signs posted warning the public to not stick their hands into dangerous animal cages.

A number of llamas and guanacos were roaming freely about the compound. I did not observe any hand-wash stations for use by visitors who have contacted animals.

## **Exhibit Evaluations**

Six exhibits were reviewed. Five received failing grades.

## **Images**

<http://www.zoocheck.com/programs/zoocheck/Report063/images.shtml>

## **Wolf & Red Fox**

The wolf and the red fox cages both received automatic failing grades. Both cages were small, barren, in deplorable repair and did not allow for species-specific movements or behaviours. The wolf cage received a fail because it was barren and the fox cage because it was barren and equipped with an inappropriate wire floor.

The wolf exhibit looked like an old, dilapidated dog kennel. It was barren with a hardpan substrate partially covered with wooden planks. There were no furnishings and no privacy areas. An oversized wooden shelter box with one side open was positioned at one end of the cage. No bedding was provided. The exhibit was situated next to the car park area and there was no stand-off barrier to keep visitors away from the cage FAIL.

The red fox exhibit was a metal cage placed on the ground. There was no public stand-off barrier. The metal grid floor of the cage was partially buried, although parts of it was exposed, presumably from digging by the animals. Other than a plywood shelter box, the cage was barren.

The water container was filthy and coated with algae growth. FAIL.

### **Canada Lynx**

The Canada lynx exhibit failed the evaluation. It is a small barren exhibit without furniture, meaningful enrichment programming and potable water. I observed one lynx pacing at the front of the cage, while a second lynx lay at the back, as far from the visitor viewing area as possible. Both animals had lackluster, patchy coats and appeared stressed. FAIL.

### **Cougar**

The cougar exhibit was substandard. A simple chain-link cage with hardpan substrate. There was no species-specific furniture or evidence of meaningful enrichment programming. The male and female are being bred and the female reportedly gave birth to three cubs in mid-August.. The student "tour guide" informed me that these cougars were donated to Mr. Guha by Disney. FAIL.

### **Tiger**

Two tiger cubs were housed in a barren, inappropriate exhibit. It was a simple rectangular chainlink cage with a hardpan floor. The cubs appeared to be approximately 3-4 months old. One of the student "tour guides" informed me that the cubs were donated by Disney.

Both students entered the cage to play with the cubs, but exited the cage a short while later because they were being bitten and scratched. Unfortunately, this contact may have been the only direct stimulation these cubs received that day. FAIL.

### **Lion**

The lion exhibit was reminiscent of others I have viewed in more professional zoos. It was larger than some of the other cages at Guha's and seemed to be well constructed with solid chain-link fencing and public stand-off barriers. The lions could remove themselves from the proximity of visitors, even though they were locked out of what was presumably a back area, because the exhibit is treed and is positioned on an incline that allows the cats to move up to the rear of the cage. The floor is predominantly earth with some vegetative cover. The cats appeared calm and were busy with a carcass during my visit. While the cage was not excessively large and could be substantially improved, it was superior to the accommodation provided to the other animals. Some aspects of the exhibit could not be assessed. Both animals would benefit from an enrichment program. PASS.

### **Conclusion**

In my opinion, most of the animals at Guha's Lions and Tigers are poorly housed and their biological and behavioural needs are not being satisfied. Many of the animal cages are small, makeshift and barren. In addition, many cages had inappropriate substrates, lacked proper shelters and privacy areas and there was little evidence of any kind of enrichment programming.

Some of the animals (e.g., wolf) appeared to be in poor physical condition. I also observed animals pacing or inactive (presumably because they had nothing to do). The fact that pacing is ubiquitous in the facility was corroborated by the statement of the volunteer tour guide who said all the animals paced.

While visiting the facility, I observed a moose carcass being eaten by one of the Guha lions. A volunteer explained that the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) brings the facility road-killed animals on a regular basis at no cost. They said this occurs with such frequency that the big cats know the MTO truck and react to it by jumping, running and pacing back and forth in excitement. The in-kind donation of animal carcasses could be viewed as a government subsidy to the Guha operation. I expect most Ontario residents would not agree with free delivery of carcasses to a private facility that keeps exotic carnivores in substandard conditions.

Some of the cages appeared unsafe and were in a state of disrepair. I observed patchwork repairs, gates that did not fit their frames properly, inappropriate locks, lack of stand-off barriers, volunteers entering cages and no perimeter fence around the facility to discourage escaped animals from leaving the premises.

Guha's Lions and Tigers has little, if any, educational value and makes no contribution to conservation. Whether or not it is viable as a private business enterprise is unknown. Ideally, this facility should be closed and the animals dispersed to more appropriate accommodation in other locations.



# GUHA'S LIONS AND TIGERS

## WOLF

CHARACTERISTIC	SCORE		COMMENTS
	POSSIBLE	ACTUAL	
<b>APPEARANCE</b>	5	0	
UNHEALTHY, INJURY	-2	-1	Wolf has an unhealthy appearance, is gaunt, too thin, not enough lean body mass. Frightened by approaching visitors and cars parked near cage. Animal appears stressed.
REQUIRE GROOMING	-2	-2	Wolf does not have ability to groom properly in cage.
FUR/FEATHER/SKIN CONDITION	-1	-1	Fur is patchy and skin has small lesions.
BODY WT. INAPPROPRIATE	-1	-1	Wolf does not have appropriate muscle tone and is not carrying enough body fat.
<b>BEHAVIOR</b>	5	0	
ABNORMAL BEHAVIOR	-2	-2	Wolf is constantly frightened by visitors, cage has no flight space, no place to hide.
PERFORMANCES	-2	-1	Wolf may be part of Guha's performing animals.
S.S. GROUPING	-1	-1	Being alone is unnatural and stressful for a wolf. Require extremely complex social hierarchy with other wolves.
WITHDRAWN	-1	-1	Tries to move away from visitors which frighten him/her, but cage is too small to get away.
PUBLIC FEEDING	-1		
<b>SPACE</b>	10	0	
ALLOWS NORMAL MOVEMENT	-4	-4	Normal walking gait and running gait not achievable; there is no place to go.
FIGHT OR FLIGHT RESPONSE	-4	-4	No place to get away from visitors. Wolf runs back and forth the small cage in stress response.
VERTICAL SPACE USE	-2	-2	No vertical space use. Very low ceiling on exhibit.
OVERCROWDED	-2	-2	Cage too small for one wolf.
<b>BARRIER</b>	3	0	
MAINTENANCE	-2	-2	Poorly maintained, wooden planks on ground of cage to prevent wolf digging his/her way out.
SAFE FOR ANIMALS	-1	-1	Wire bits from rusty mesh can cause harm to wolf.
HOT WIRES, PRIMARY BARRIER	-1		
<b>SUBSTRATE</b>	5	0	
< 25% SOFT SUBSTRATE	-2	-2	No soft substrate, 100% hard packed dirt (hardpan) with wooden planks in places.
ALLOWS FOR S.S. BEHAVIOR	-1	-1	Substrate does not allow for digging day beds, hiding in tall grasses, long distance gaits, or other activity to promote muscle development.
FLAT, NO VARIATION	-1	-1	Flat, no variation
SIGNIFICANT FLOODING	-1	-1	Wooden planks on cage bottom suggest flooding, erosion issue as well as wolf digging to escape.
<b>FEATURES &amp; FURNITURE</b>	5	0	
NO S.S. FURNITURE	-2	-2	NO furniture for wolf such as simple platform raising animal above ground. NO meaningful enrichment to promote activity. Just a shredded stuffed toy in centre of cage.

ENOUGH FOR GROUP	-2	-2	No furniture and no meaningful enrichment.
DESIGN	-1	-1	Cage appears to be a holding facility. Little thought has been given to any other aspects of the wolf's needs.
LOCATION	-1		
REPLACEMENT	-1		
EASE OF REPLACEMENT	-1		
<b>SHELTER</b>	5	0	
AVAILABLE	-2	-1	Old, rotting wooden nest box in cage.
EFFECTIVENESS	-1	-1	May give shade but not useful otherwise.
SHELTER ACCESS	-1	-1	Access too open and faces public, does not provide privacy or cover from weather. Completely inappropriate for winter use.
ENOUGH FOR ALL	-1	-1	Shelter not appropriate in such a small cage since shelter is half open and facing the northeast.
BEDDING/SOFT SUBSTRATE	-1	-1	No bedding (e.g., straw).
<b>PRIVACY</b>	2	0	
PUBLIC VIEW/CAGE MATES	-2	-2	There is no place for this wolf to get away from the public. He/she paces and runs back and forth trying to escape the public and their cars.
ENOUGH FOR ALL	-1		
360° VIEWING	-1		
<b>ENVIRONMENT: OUTDOOR</b>	5	1	
S.S. CLIMATE	-1	-1	Although a wolf can withstand Ontario's winter, they need appropriate shelter with bedding. This cage is inappropriate for summer or winter use.
VARIED TOPOGRAPHY	-1	-1	No varied topography.
NOISE	-1	-1	Cage is right next to visitor's parked cars. Cannot escape noise of humans and cars.
GARBAGE/FECES	-1		
POTABLE WATER	-1	-1	No potable water.
<b>ENVIRONMENT: INDOOR</b>	5		
S.S. ENVIRONMENT	-2		
VARIED TOPOGRAPHY	-1		
NOISE	-1		
GARBAGE/FECES	-1		
POTABLE WATER	-1		
<b>SAFETY</b>	3	0	
BARRIER CAN CONTAIN IND.(S)	-2	-2	Wolf may have escaped before since wooden planks cover digging areas in cage floor.
DEFECTS IN EXHIBIT	-1	-1	Exhibit is not an exhibit, it is a holding cage. No thought has gone into this cage to make it an exhibit.
PUBLIC BARRIER	-1	-1	No public barrier around cage.
GATES/DOORS LOCKED	-1		
DOUBLE DOOR ENTRY	-1	-1	No double door entry to protect staff and public from escape.

SHIFT AREAS	-1	-1	No shift areas, assume that staff go in with wolf to clean.
<b>SIGNAGE</b>	2	0	
1 OR > EXPLANATORY SIGN(S)	-2	-2	No signage.
PROMINENT LOCATION	-1		
ACCURATE INFO.	-1		
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	50	1	FAIL

**CRITICAL DEFICIENCIES**

NO.	DEFICIENCY	FAIL	DESCRIPTION
1.	SEVERELY CRAMPED CONDITIONS OR RESTRAINTS PREVENTING NORMAL POSTURES & MOVEMENT - LESS THAN 3 TIMES BODY + TAIL LENGTH		
2.	90-100% HARD WIRE SUBSTRATES		
3.	BARREN EXHIBITS LACKING ANY USABLE FEATURES OR FURNITURE	F	This wolf cage is given an automatic failure. It does not address the wolf's most basic needs, such as clean water and privacy. This animal appears under constant stress and cannot get away from the public.

## RED FOX

CHARACTERISTIC	SCORE		COMMENTS
	POSSIBLE	ACTUAL	
<b>APPEARANCE</b>	5	0	
UNHEALTHY, INJURY	-2	-1	Foxes appear lethargic, stressed and coat condition suggests diet and/or health issues
REQUIRE GROOMING	-2	-2	No place to groom properly. No logs, pools or grasses to rub in.
FUR/FEATHER/SKIN CONDITION	-1	-1	Fur is lackluster, patchy, skin lesions likely from insect bites.
BODY WT. INAPPROPRIATE	-1	-1	Foxes need to develop additional muscle mass.
<b>BEHAVIOR</b>	5	1	
ABNORMAL BEHAVIOR	-2	-2	One fox lying on top of nest box, hiding nose in tail watching visitors. Second fox would run to the farthest end of the cage to get away from visitors wherever cage was approached. The cage is grossly undersized and the foxes are under constant stress.
PERFORMANCES	-2	-1	
S.S. GROUPING	-1		
WITHDRAWN	-1	-1	Both foxes made attempts to flee from visitors when approached.
PUBLIC FEEDING	-1		
<b>SPACE</b>	10	0	
ALLOWS NORMAL MOVEMENT	-4	-4	Do not allow for normal long distance gait. Foxes do not have appropriate muscle mass indicating inactivity.
FIGHT OR FLIGHT RESPONSE	-4	-4	No flight space. These animals cannot get away from public.
VERTICAL SPACE USE	-2	-1	No meaningful vertical space use. One simple den box that animals can lie on.

OVERCROWDED	-2	-2	Too small for even one fox.
<b>BARRIER</b>	3	0	
MAINTENANCE	-2	-2	Cage made of rotting wood and rusty mesh wire. Very poorly maintained.
SAFE FOR ANIMALS	-1	-1	Rusty mesh pieces could potentially injure animals.
HOT WIRES, PRIMARY BARRIER	-1		
<b>SUBSTRATE</b>	5	0	
< 25% SOFT SUBSTRATE	-2	-2	Underlying ground mesh is exposed as soil on top had eroded in places.
ALLOWS FOR S.S. BEHAVIOR	-1	-1	Does not allow for digging dens, hiding in tall grasses, or other activity, there is no place to go, and nothing to do.
FLAT, NO VARIATION	-1	-1	Flat no variation
SIGNIFICANT FLOODING	-1	-1	The erosion of the soil exposing the buried wire floor of the cage suggests digging and/or flooding.
<b>FEATURES &amp; FURNITURE</b>	5	0	
NO S.S. FURNITURE	-2	-2	Completely barren. No furniture, such as logs, soil for digging dens, small pool, rocks. No enrichment programming.
ENOUGH FOR GROUP	-2	-2	No furniture and no enrichment.
DESIGN	-1	-1	Cage designed only to keep the foxes from escaping; no design features for comfortable living.
LOCATION	-1		
REPLACEMENT	-1		
EASE OF REPLACEMENT	-1		
<b>SHELTER</b>	5	0	
AVAILABLE	-2	-1	One nest box available. Constructed of old wood; not well maintained.
EFFECTIVENESS	-1	-1	Both foxes have to get along in order for both to use the box.
SHELTER ACCESS	-1	-1	Access facing northwest into the wind.
ENOUGH FOR ALL	-1	-1	Only one fox can utilize at a time if foxes not compatible or if dominance hierarchy between the two
BEDDING/SOFT SUBSTRATE	-1	-1	No bedding observed.
<b>PRIVACY</b>	2	0	
PUBLIC VIEW/CAGE MATES	-2	-2	Both foxes cannot escape public view or each other at the same time. There are no privacy areas.
ENOUGH FOR ALL	-1	-1	Two foxes require multiple privacy areas.
360° VIEWING	-1		
<b>ENVIRONMENT: OUTDOOR</b>	5	0	
S.S. CLIMATE	-1	-1	Foxes can over winter but they require appropriate nesting materials, privacy, and choice in nesting locations.
VARIED TOPOGRAPHY	-1	-1	Steel cage. No variation.
NOISE	-1	-1	Foxes cannot get away from noise of visitors and their cars. Cars parked beside fox cage.
GARBAGE/FECES	-1	-1	Feces which has fallen through exposed mesh on cage floor cannot be accessed to clean, so it has built up.

POTABLE WATER	-1	-1	Green, dirty water. No potable water.
<b>ENVIRONMENT: INDOOR</b>	5		
S.S. ENVIRONMENT	-2		
VARIED TOPOGRAPHY	-1		
NOISE	-1		
GARBAGE/FECES	-1		
POTABLE WATER	-1		
<b>SAFETY</b>	3	0	
BARRIER CAN CONTAIN IND.(S)	-2	-2	Fencing is rusty and wood is rotting. Foxes can potentially escape if sufficiently motivated.
DEFECTS IN EXHIBIT	-1	-1	Nothing address the behavioral needs, well being or comfort of the animals.
PUBLIC BARRIER	-1	-1	No public stand-off barrier. Visitors can walk right up to cage and stick their fingers through the barrier.
GATES/DOORS LOCKED	-1		
DOUBLE DOOR ENTRY	-1	-1	No double door entry to protect staff or public from escape.
SHIFT AREAS	-1	-1	No shift area suggests that staff go in with foxes to clean.
<b>SIGNAGE</b>	2	0	
1 OR > EXPLANATORY SIGN(S)	-2	-2	No signage.
PROMINENT LOCATION	-1		
ACCURATE INFO.	-1		
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	50	1	FAIL

#### CRITICAL DEFICIENCIES

NO.	DEFICIENCY	FAIL	DESCRIPTION
1.	SEVERELY CRAMPED CONDITIONS OR RESTRAINTS PREVENTING NORMAL POSTURES & MOVEMENT - LESS THAN 3 TIMES BODY + TAIL LENGTH		
2.	90-100% HARD WIRE SUBSTRATES		Floor of exhibit is wire mesh.
3.	BARREN EXHIBITS LACKING ANY USABLE FEATURES OR FURNITURE	F	This cage is grossly substandard in all respects and receives an automatic failure.

## COUGAR

CHARACTERISTIC	SCORE		COMMENTS
	POSSIBLE	ACTUAL	
APPEARANCE	5	1	
UNHEALTHY, INJURY	-2	-1	The male appeared lethargic and overweight.
REQUIRE GROOMING	-2	-1	Both cats require grooming but there are no logs, trees or other objects for rubbing.
FUR/FEATHER/SKIN CONDITION	-1	-1	Fur is lackluster and patchy.

BODY WT. INAPPROPRIATE	-1	-1	Male is overweight and needs to develop muscle. Unable to fully assess female.
<b>BEHAVIOR</b>	5	5	
ABNORMAL BEHAVIOR	-2		Female gave birth one to two weeks prior to Aug 23, 2006; was observed lying under platform nursing three young cubs.
PERFORMANCES	-2		
S.S. GROUPING	-1		
WITHDRAWN	-1		
PUBLIC FEEDING	-1		
<b>SPACE</b>	10	3	
ALLOWS NORMAL MOVEMENT	-4	-2	The exhibit is made up of two adjoining cages. The male lives in one and the female and her young are in the other.
FIGHT OR FLIGHT RESPONSE	-4	-2	The exhibit is too small to allow for proper flight response. The female has to retreat to lying under the platform to get any sense of privacy while feeding her young.
VERTICAL SPACE USE	-2	-1	There are platforms in both cages.
OVERCROWDED	-2	-2	These facilities too small and barren for five cougars.
<b>BARRIER</b>	3	3	
MAINTENANCE	-2		
SAFE FOR ANIMALS	-1		
HOT WIRES, PRIMARY BARRIER	-1		
<b>SUBSTRATE</b>	5	1	
< 25% SOFT SUBSTRATE	-2	-2	The substrate is bare, packed dirt (hardpan). No vegetation.
ALLOWS FOR S.S. BEHAVIOR	-1	-1	There is no vegetation, such as tall grass to hide behind, trees, logs, pool or other features to encourage normal behaviours
FLAT, NO VARIATION	-1	-1	Flat and barren.
SIGNIFICANT FLOODING	-1		
<b>FEATURES &amp; FURNITURE</b>	5	0	
NO S.S. FURNITURE	-2	-2	No furniture other than wooden platform. No meaningful enrichment programming.
ENOUGH FOR GROUP	-2	-2	No furniture. No enrichment programming.
DESIGN	-1	-1	Very poorly designed. No thought has gone into behavioural needs and physical comforts.
LOCATION	-1		
REPLACEMENT	-1		
EASE OF REPLACEMENT	-1		
<b>SHELTER</b>	5	0	
AVAILABLE	-2	-2	No shelter for either the male or the nursing female and young.
EFFECTIVENESS	-1	-1	
SHELTER ACCESS	-1	-1	
ENOUGH FOR ALL	-1	-1	

BEDDING/SOFT SUBSTRATE	-1		
<b>PRIVACY</b>	2	0	
PUBLIC VIEW/CAGE MATES	-2	-2	No place to retreat from public eye for either the male or the female.
ENOUGH FOR ALL	-1		
360° VIEWING	-1		
<b>ENVIRONMENT: OUTDOOR</b>	5	1	
S.S. CLIMATE	-1	-1	Although cougars can withstand Ontario winters, they still require appropriate bedding materials and housing. These cats have neither.
VARIED TOPOGRAPHY	-1	-1	No.
NOISE	-1	-1	Cougars cannot get away from noise of public. This is a very important issue for a nursing female.
GARBAGE/FECES	-1		
POTABLE WATER	-1	-1	No potable water.
<b>ENVIRONMENT: INDOOR</b>	5		
S.S. ENVIRONMENT	-2		
VARIED TOPOGRAPHY	-1		
NOISE	-1		
GARBAGE/FECES	-1		
POTABLE WATER	-1		
<b>SAFETY</b>	3	1	
BARRIER CAN CONTAIN IND.(S)	-2		
DEFECTS IN EXHIBIT	-1		
PUBLIC BARRIER	-1		
GATES/DOORS LOCKED	-1		
DOUBLE DOOR ENTRY	-1	-1	No double door entry for keeper safety.
SHIFT AREAS	-1	-1	No shift areas for cats. Unsure how daily cleaning is accomplished, unless staff enter cage with cougars
<b>SIGNAGE</b>	2	0	
1 OR > EXPLANATORY SIGN(S)	-2		
PROMINENT LOCATION	-1		
ACCURATE INFO.	-1		
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	50	15	FAIL

## TIGER

CHARACTERISTIC	SCORE		COMMENTS
	POSSIBLE	ACTUAL	
<b>APPEARANCE</b>	5	2	
UNHEALTHY, INJURY	-2	-1	The cubs appeared scruffy and bored. There was little for them to do.

REQUIRE GROOMING	-2	-1	They require a female to groom them. Student tour guide said cubs were a gift from Disney.
FUR/FEATHER/SKIN CONDITION	-1	-1	Fur is lackluster and patchy. Cubs scratching may indicate insect bites, mites or other problems.
BODY WT. INAPPROPRIATE	-1		
<b>BEHAVIOR</b>	5	2	
ABNORMAL BEHAVIOR	-2	-2	Cubs attempted to climb on the two students who entered to play with them. Cubs appeared eager for attention and activity.
PERFORMANCES	-2		
S.S. GROUPING	-1	-1	Cubs estimated to be three months old. Should still be with their mother.
WITHDRAWN	-1		
PUBLIC FEEDING	-1		
<b>SPACE</b>	10	2	
ALLOWS NORMAL MOVEMENT	-4	-4	Cubs were alone in a large barren exhibit. There was little to do. Their neighbour is a female cougar. They are in a critical phase of their social/behavioural development and should be with their mother.
FIGHT OR FLIGHT RESPONSE	-4	-2	The cubs can move to the back of the exhibit, but they could not hide or find privacy.
VERTICAL SPACE USE	-2	-2	No vertical space use.
OVERCROWDED	-2		
<b>BARRIER</b>	3	3	
MAINTENANCE	-2		
SAFE FOR ANIMALS	-1		
HOT WIRES, PRIMARY BARRIER	-1		
<b>SUBSTRATE</b>	5	1	
< 25% SOFT SUBSTRATE	-2	-2	Substrate hardpan - packed earth.
ALLOWS FOR S.S. BEHAVIOR	-1	-1	Cubs need to interact with their mother. Could not do this. Nothing to play with or manipulate. There is nothing for them to do.
FLAT, NO VARIATION	-1	-1	No variation.
SIGNIFICANT FLOODING	-1		
<b>FEATURES &amp; FURNITURE</b>	5	0	
NO S.S. FURNITURE	-2	-2	No appropriate furnishings and no meaningful enrichment.
ENOUGH FOR GROUP	-2	-2	Completely barren exhibit.
DESIGN	-1	-1	Poorly designed. No thought has gone into the cubs special needs.
LOCATION	-1		
REPLACEMENT	-1		
EASE OF REPLACEMENT	-1		
<b>SHELTER</b>	5	1	
AVAILABLE	-2	-2	Old dilapidated wooden crate for nest box.
EFFECTIVENESS	-1	-1	Cubs need to den with their mother in suitable nesting material. None of this is available to the



			cubs.
SHELTER ACCESS	-1		
ENOUGH FOR ALL	-1		
BEDDING/SOFT SUBSTRATE	-1	-1	No bedding provided. Potential problem for cubs who need protection from the elements.
<b>PRIVACY</b>	2	0	
PUBLIC VIEW/CAGE MATES	-2	-2	The cubs cannot remove themselves from public view unless they enter nest box.
ENOUGH FOR ALL	-1		
360° VIEWING	-1		
<b>ENVIRONMENT: OUTDOOR</b>	5	1	
S.S. CLIMATE	-1	-1	Adult tigers can withstand Ontario's winter but cubs cannot and require better housing for the fall and winter.
VARIED TOPOGRAPHY	-1	-1	Barren flat exhibit with no redeeming qualities.
NOISE	-1	-1	Cubs cannot get away from noise of public.
GARBAGE/FECES	-1		
POTABLE WATER	-1	-1	Water green in colour. No potable water.
<b>ENVIRONMENT: INDOOR</b>	5		
S.S. ENVIRONMENT	-2		
VARIED TOPOGRAPHY	-1		
NOISE	-1		
GARBAGE/FECES	-1		
POTABLE WATER	-1		
<b>SAFETY</b>	3	0	
BARRIER CAN CONTAIN IND.(S)	-2		
DEFECTS IN EXHIBIT	-1		
PUBLIC BARRIER	-1		
GATES/DOORS LOCKED	-1	-1	The two student "tour guides" entered the cage with the cubs to play with them. Soon the cubs began to bite and scratch. These animals are old enough to be a significant danger to the children. The students left when the tigers became hyperactive.
DOUBLE DOOR ENTRY	-1	-1	No double door entry.
SHIFT AREAS	-1	-1	There are no shift areas.
<b>SIGNAGE</b>	2	0	
1 OR > EXPLANATORY SIGN(S)	-2		
PROMINENT LOCATION	-1		
ACCURATE INFO.	-1		
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	50	12	FAIL

# LION

CHARACTERISTIC	SCORE		COMMENTS
	POSSIBLE	ACTUAL	
<b>APPEARANCE</b>	5	4	
UNHEALTHY, INJURY	-2		
REQUIRE GROOMING	-2		
FUR/FEATHER/SKIN CONDITION	-1		
BODY WT. INAPPROPRIATE	-1	-1	Both cats appeared overweight and need additional muscle mass.
<b>BEHAVIOR</b>	5	5	Male was busy eating on moose carcass. Female was lying in the vicinity.
ABNORMAL BEHAVIOR	-2		
PERFORMANCES	-2		
S.S. GROUPING	-1		
WITHDRAWN	-1		
PUBLIC FEEDING	-1		
<b>SPACE</b>	10	8	
ALLOWS NORMAL MOVEMENT	-4		
FIGHT OR FLIGHT RESPONSE	-4		
VERTICAL SPACE USE	-2	-2	No vertical space use.
OVERCROWDED	-2		
<b>BARRIER</b>	3	3	
MAINTENANCE	-2		
SAFE FOR ANIMALS	-1		
HOT WIRES, PRIMARY BARRIER	-1		
<b>SUBSTRATE</b>	5	5	
< 25% SOFT SUBSTRATE	-2		
ALLOWS FOR S.S. BEHAVIOR	-1		
FLAT, NO VARIATION	-1		
SIGNIFICANT FLOODING	-1		
<b>FEATURES &amp; FURNITURE</b>	5	3	
NO S.S. FURNITURE	-2	-1	Cats need some fallen logs, boulders and other features in exhibit. No evidence of enrichment programming.
ENOUGH FOR GROUP	-2	-1	No evidence of enrichment programming.
DESIGN	-1		
LOCATION	-1		
REPLACEMENT	-1		
EASE OF REPLACEMENT	-1		
<b>SHELTER</b>	5	5	Enclosure appears newer than some other exhibits and there is a building attached to yard. It is unclear

			and there is a building attached to yard. It is unclear if there is an appropriate back area for the cats.
AVAILABLE	-2		
EFFECTIVENESS	-1		
SHELTER ACCESS	-1		
ENOUGH FOR ALL	-1		
BEDDING/SOFT SUBSTRATE	-1		
<b>PRIVACY</b>	2	2	
PUBLIC VIEW/CAGE MATES	-2		
ENOUGH FOR ALL	-1		
360° VIEWING	-1		
<b>ENVIRONMENT: OUTDOOR</b>	5	5	
S.S. CLIMATE	-1		
VARIED TOPOGRAPHY	-1		
NOISE	-1		
GARBAGE/FECES	-1		
POTABLE WATER	-1		Unable to assess water.
<b>ENVIRONMENT: INDOOR</b>	5		
S.S. ENVIRONMENT	-2		
VARIED TOPOGRAPHY	-1		
NOISE	-1		
GARBAGE/FECES	-1		
POTABLE WATER	-1		
<b>SAFETY</b>	3	2	
BARRIER CAN CONTAIN IND.(S)	-2		
DEFECTS IN EXHIBIT	-1		
PUBLIC BARRIER	-1		
GATES/DOORS LOCKED	-1		
DOUBLE DOOR ENTRY	-1	-1	No double door entry.
SHIFT AREAS	-1		There is a shift area attached to main yard.
<b>SIGNAGE</b>	2	0	
1 OR > EXPLANATORY SIGN(S)	-2		
PROMINENT LOCATION	-1		
ACCURATE INFO.	-1		
<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	50	47	PASS

# CONCLUSIONS

This investigation concluded that Guha's Lions and Tigers is problematic in many respects. The cages and enclosures tend to be simplistic, poorly designed and barren. Six exhibits at the facility were reviewed using a modified version of the Zoo Exhibit Quick Audit Process (ZEQAP) described earlier in this report. Five of those exhibits received failing grades.

Some of the key problems identified during this investigation include:

1. Poorly constructed cages and enclosures.
2. Undersized cages and enclosures.
3. Barren hardpan floor surfaces.
4. Lack of adequate shelter and privacy from public viewing.
5. Lack of structural enhancements, furnishings and/or enrichment programming to encourage species-typical movements and behaviours.
6. Lack of potable water.
7. Lack of standard safety features, such as double-door entry gates and shift areas.
8. Volunteers entering cages housing potentially dangerous animals.

Some of these problems were identified in an earlier report prepared for the Ruby Edwardh law firm by Rob Laidlaw in May 2003.

While a few of the more substantive problems (e.g., undersized cages) at Guha's might require a significant amount of time, effort and resources to address, other problems (e.g., potable water, furnishings) could be resolved with rather minimal effort and funds. However, given that obvious, easily rectified problems remain unaddressed, there is little reason to believe that the more substantive problems will be resolved at any point in the near future.

## Native Wildlife

Zoos and other public display facilities in Ontario that display native wildlife (meaning those species listed as "specially protected and game wildlife" in the *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act*) must obtain a license from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR). There are several conditions attached to the license, including three general welfare conditions, that presumably must be satisfied before a license is issued. The welfare conditions are:

1. Animal enclosures in which animals are on public display should be of a size which enables the animals to:
  - a) exercise natural behaviours to facilitate public education and interpretation;
  - b) achieve a distance from the public and other specimens at which the animals are not psychologically or physically stressed;
  - c) achieve a full range of body movements and physical movements normally performed.

Clearly, these conditions are not being satisfied for the wolf, fox and lynx at this facility. The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources should conduct an immediate review of conditions at Guha's and take steps to ensure compliance with license conditions. If compliance is not achieved, the license should be revoked and those animals relocated to more appropriate accommodation elsewhere.

In addition, the delivery of road-killed wildlife to the Guha facility by the Ontario Ministry of Transportation is unacceptable. It is a form of subsidy that should be discontinued.

### **General Recommendation**

In Ontario, there are few rules governing the operation of zoos and other kinds of captive wildlife displays. This lack of regulation has resulted in facilities operating at a standard of their choosing. Guha's Lions and Tigers is one of those facilities.

The Province of Ontario must develop and deliver a comprehensive zoo regulatory program that requires anyone holding native and/or exotic wild animals in captivity to obtain a license and to satisfy a series of conditions as to their knowledge, experience, financial abilities, wild animal housing and management practices, safety procedures and other relevant issues. Licenses should be issued annually and only after an inspection of the premises to be licensed is conducted. The regulatory program should include the ability to conduct special inspections, penalties for non-compliance and provisions for license revocation.

A draft document entitled *Minimum Standards for Zoos in Ontario* was completed by the Ministry of Natural Resources in July 2001. If implemented and enforced, they would rectify many of Ontario's substantive wildlife in captivity problems, including some that have been described in this report. To date, the Ontario government has not acted.