
THE BEAR ESSENTIALS:

A Survey of Captive American Black Bears In Ontario

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Prepared by

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FOREWORD

The American black bear (*Ursus americanus*) is the most abundant bear species in North America. Inhabiting a variety of forest environments, American black bears are familiar to rural residents and outdoor enthusiasts alike. They are also well-known to zoo visitors.

In Ontario, a little more than twenty years ago, black bears, and other animals, were regular attractions at numerous gift stores and gas stations throughout the province. Housed in tiny, concrete-based cages, usually in clear view of highway traffic, they were used to lure curious drivers off the road in the hope that they would purchase gasoline, gifts or grocery items. Most of those bears lived miserable lives of neglect and deprivation. Their custodians had neither the expertise, financial wherewithal, or motivation to house and care for them properly. Thankfully, most of those situations are now gone.

Today, the majority of Ontario's captive American black bears are found in zoos, wildlife displays and roadside menageries. Some were born in captivity, a few have been imported, and others were donated by government agencies looking for facilities willing to accept cubs orphaned by the spring or fall bear hunt. Unfortunately for many of these bears, conditions are almost as bleak as they were many years ago.

During the last several decades, there has been a substantial increase in our knowledge of bears. In fact, the biological/behavioral requirements of American black bears are better understood than many other animal species. These peaceful forest dwellers are now known to be highly intelligent and behaviorally sophisticated.

Despite this, American black bears can still be found in physically inappropriate, behaviorally impoverished cages and enclosures in zoos, wildlife displays and roadside menageries throughout the province. Many of Ontario's captive American black bears are currently housed in conditions that fail completely to satisfy their needs.

Until very recently, Ontario had no legislation governing the keeping of most permanent American black bear captives. But in early 1999, the province of Ontario passed the new *Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act* (FWCA), replacing the old *Game and Fish Act* in the process. The FWCA allows for the creation of regulations, which will be developed over the next two years, governing the care and housing of American black bears and other native wildlife species in captivity.

Zoocheck Canada initiated this review of the conditions experienced by captive American black bears in Ontario to clearly demonstrate the need for a substantial shift in current housing arrangements and husbandry protocols. The new FWCA standards must address both the biological and behavioral needs of American black bears in captivity.

This study reflects conditions during the 1998 time period. Since this study was initiated, Lazy Acre Farm has closed and the Earlton Zoo has constructed a new bear exhibit. Other changes may have

occurred in some cases. Each facility was given the opportunity to comment on and correct any factual inaccuracies in the section of the report dealing with their bear exhibit. Only four facilities responded. All measurements are estimates only.

Public attitudes regarding the way wild animals are kept in captivity are rapidly evolving. Most members of the public no longer find it acceptable to confine bears and other animals in substandard conditions that fail to satisfy their needs. This must be reflected in the new FWCA regulations. Only then will we see the end of decades of exploitation and suffering of American black bears in Ontario.

Rob Laidlaw
Director
Zoocheck Canada Inc.



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INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes the results of my investigation of various facilities throughout Ontario which house the American black bear (*Ursus americanus*) in a captive situation. The purpose was to evaluate these facilities, in terms of their suitability for keeping American black bears, and to determine which, in my opinion, were acceptable, and which were not. The criteria used were derived from a combination of my own personal knowledge attained through twenty-two years' experience as a zoo keeper, as well as information obtained from the literature and from bear rehabilitators, as referenced in the attached bibliography.

METHODOLOGY

A survey of facilities in Ontario which house the American black bear (*Ursus americanus*) in captivity was carried out over a period of approximately two months (June and July, 1998) during which time I travelled throughout the province of Ontario. Some additional follow-up was done in the month of October. With the exception of the Chippewa Wildlife Exhibit in Thunder Bay, I was able to inspect all facilities housing black bears in Ontario during the available time period. In some, but not all, instances, I identified myself as a consultant for Zoocheck Canada conducting an evaluation of captive bear exhibits.

I visited each of the seventeen facilities listed in Chapter Two at least once, for a period of two to four hours. It is not really possible to obtain a complete idea of the individual bear's behavioural repertoire in this short a period of time. In any event, in most instances the environment in which these bears were kept did not allow for an extensive repertoire. Most were existing in impoverished conditions. I attempted to obtain as complete a picture as possible of the conditions in which the black bears were being maintained, as well as get an overview of the general facility. Some of these were not open to the public, although I was able to gain access by way of either the owner or an employee. In general, I found most of the owners or representatives to be quite helpful and open, and in most cases I was able to obtain the data requested.

In Chapter 2, I describe the general facility and then more specifically each bear's environmental conditions followed by comments and recommendations. All measurements in this report are estimates. Note that some facilities are described as being *members* of the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums (CAZA). This does not mean they have been *accredited* by the CAZA as having met its minimum standards for accreditation, a separate designation.

The facilities discussed have been arranged in this report in alphabetic order, for ease of reference. Wherever possible I have listed the owner/operator, as well as the full address of the facility and other pertinent details.

I videotaped each bear enclosure, as well as other exhibits, in order to document the overall conditions of the facilities, with two exceptions. Due to technical difficulties I was unable to videotape the facilities of Greenview Aviaries, Park and Zoo. Since the Canadian Wildlife Experience make their living by charging visitors to photograph their animals, I was not given permission to tape them. In some instances, I also used a “point and shoot” still camera.

I utilized a prepared checklist in an effort to standardize the information, rating each facility in eleven categories, with each segment rated from “Excellent” (5) to “Unacceptable” (0). The total score was then used as a basis to classify each facility, with a perfect score totalling 55 points. These results are shown in Table 1 entitled “General Rating of Facilities” (p. 61).

It should also be noted that there seems to be a trend to move young bears from place to place. My report deals with the animals, and their enclosures, at each facility at the time of writing; however, their location may now have changed, or be different in the future.

NATURAL HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN BLACK BEAR

Law et al (1992) mention that there is still a misconception about how bears live in the wild, and this attitude is reflected in the barren enclosures often seen in captive wildlife facilities. Often conditions such as lack of stimulation, inadequate space, inappropriate social groupings, etc. result in stereotypical behaviour (Wechsler, 1991)—repeated movements that have no discernible purpose—such as pacing, head twisting and bobbing. All too often I have witnessed this behaviour in captive animals, and in my opinion these activities reflect an animal being driven insane.

Information derived from a general knowledge of the natural history of American black bears should be a prerequisite in planning an exhibit and keeping bears in captivity.

American black bears are selective omnivores (Fair, 1994; Kitchener, 1995) opportunistically feeding on plant food, tender grasses, nuts, berries, carrion, snails, insects, centipedes, crayfish, bees, larvae, frogs, mice, small rabbits and birds’ eggs. They are referred to as “fulltime professional food consumers,” spending most of their waking hours searching for food. This is an important consideration in their husbandry and housing. Once a day feedings do not satisfy a bear’s need to forage.

The American black bear is found throughout North America wherever there is tree cover. They can survive in forests, swamps and mountains, and prefer areas that have thick vegetation (Fair, 1994). Females live in designated territories that they often share with their cubs and previous female sub-adult offspring. A female black bear marks her territory by urinating as she forages and will defend her area.

Male offspring voluntarily leave their mother’s territory to disperse, and thus avoid incestuous activity. Little is known about this dispersal, other than that males generally avoid one another rather than provoke conflict (Fair, 1994). Thus, it would seem that captive female bears could be kept in a smaller area than males, but should generally not be kept in the same enclosure. This is in no way an endorsement of small pens; size is relative and dependent upon many factors. A large, barren two-acre pen, for example, may not be as desirable as a smaller one-acre pen replete with bushes, shelter,

trees, play objects, pool, etc.

American black bears also possess a keen sense of smell (Lompart, 1996), with prominent ears, and eyesight almost as good as humans (McIntosh, pers. com.). Their powerful legs and feet are an adaptation for digging and ripping apart logs (Lompart). These attributes should also be taken into consideration when planning an enrichment program.

Bears are highly susceptible to parasites such as roundworm and giardia (McIntosh) and therefore a proper worming program should be instituted when they are kept in captivity.

Although not a true hibernation, the American black bear does enter a deep sleep which lowers the animal's body temperature just a few degrees; however, the bear is capable of remaining in the same position and not having the need to defecate, urinate, eat or drink (Fair, 1994). An appropriate denning area should be a factor in planning an exhibit.

Law et al (1992) offer some excellent suggestions to address some of the needs of the Asiatic Black Bear (*Selenarctos thibetanus*) and these can also be applied in general to the American black bear (*Ursus americanus*), particularly with reference to the enrichment suggestions.

STANDARDS FOR KEEPING BEARS IN CAPTIVITY

Standards for keeping bears in captivity have been detailed by the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA), excerpts of which are set out below. While including them in this report in no way constitutes an endorsement by the author or publisher, the AZA standards provide a useful guideline for the reader as to what are considered minimum requirements *within* the zoo community for keeping bears in captivity. (In my view, they do not represent optimum standards.)

- ◆ *Enclosures should possess a dry resting and social area, pool and den. Bears may be maintained in outdoor enclosures employing moats, thick laminated safety glass or bars.*
- ◆ *A dry resting and social area for one or two adult bears should measure at least 300 sq. ft. and should be increased by 50% for each additional animal.*
- ◆ *Enclosures should incorporate:*
 - *Sufficient shade for all animals*
 - *Pool*
 - *Den*
 - *Visual barriers such as logs or boulders*
 - *Fresh clean water for drinking should be available at all times*
 - *Hard-surface enclosures & food containers should be cleaned and disinfected daily. Dirt substrates should be raked and spot-cleaned daily.*
 - *Fresh food fed daily*
 - *Enrichment*

BEHAVIOURAL ENRICHMENT FOR CAPTIVE BEARS

A great deal of emphasis has recently been given to enriching the lives of captive animals. For example, Shepherdson (1995) emphasizes that bears are “inquisitive, intelligent and highly manipulative” and devote a large part of their day foraging for food. Consequently their environment should be made as complex as possible. “Three-dimensional space that is varied in terms of texture, limb diameter, angles, flexibility and height” are recommended (Shepherdson). Organizations such as the American Zoo and Aquarium Association, as well as the American Association of Zoo Keepers, have researched this subject extensively and many articles are now available. Information is even available on the internet at (www.enrich.org/aazk).

The North Carolina Zoo has developed an “Enrichment Master List” which provides details of enrichment for many different wild/exotic animals. Their list for bears (polar, grizzly and black) is detailed below (Tozier et al).

Consummatory Items

alfalfa sprouts	apple juice	apples
baby food	bananas	blackberries
blueberries	bread	broccoli
canine meat (Nebraska brand)	cantaloupe	capelin
carrots	cauliflower	celery
cereal	cheese	cherries
chestnuts	chicken (ground)	coconuts
corn	cottage cheese (lowfat)	cow legs
crackers	crab	crab legs
cranberries	crickets	cucumbers
dog biscuits	dog chow	eggplant
eggs (hard boiled)	feline meat (Nebraska brand)	fish – live
fishsuckles (frozen in jello)	fruitsuckles (frozen in jello)	gatorade
grape juice	grapes	grapefruit
greenbeans	greens (lettuce, kale, etc.)	herbs (fresh, crushed or in vinegar)
herring	honey	jello (sugar free)
jerky treats	karo syrup	kiwi
Kool-aid (sugar free)	knuckle bones	krill
leaf eater biscuits (for monkeys)	lemon	lime
lure spray	mangos	marigolds
mealworms	mice	mixed fruit (frozen)
mixed vegetables (frozen) oats	molasses	monkey biscuits
nectarines	nuts – shelled	oats
oatmeal	omnivore biscuits	onions
oranges	orange juice	oxtails
pasta (cooked)	peaches	peanut butter
peas	pears	plums
polar bear biscuits	popcorn	pomegranate
pudding (fat free)	pumpkin (whole or canned)	prickly pears
quail chicks	raisins	raspberries
rabbits (whole)	rats (whole)	rice cakes (plain)
squash	sherbet	squid

squidsickles
strawberries
watermelon (whole)
yoghurt

spices – ground
sunflower seeds
whole grains
zucchini

sprays
tomatoes
yams

Browse, including alfalfa and timothy hay; clover; dandelions and other edible greens

Non-Consummatory Items

aerobic stepper
black ribbed tubing
boat bumpers
Boomer spool
bucket – 5 gallon
plastic
cardboard boxes
cow hide (frozen)
feed bags (burlap)
flower pots (plastic)
hard hats
ice frozen in “mobes”
keg barrels
manure (hoof stock
only, parasite-free)
rawhides
tires – non steel belt
trash cans (plastic)
turtle shells

arctic fox fur
bleach bottles
Boomer balls
boots–rubber (steel toe/insoles
removed)
cardboard rope reels (empty)
drain cover (plastic)
feed tubs (rubber)
fogger system
gas tanks (plastic & new)
hose – pool vacuum
ice pile – crushed
laundry baskets
phone books
plastic pallet (whole or pieces)
sleds (plastic)
traffic barrels
trash can lids
watertank (plastic bottom
section

black ABS pipes
bison fur
Boomer ice (whole, pieces or frame)
bowling pins
bucket lids
carpet tubes
feathers
fire hoses
frisbees
gas cans (plastic/new)
ice (plain or frozen, food inside)
keg lids
milk crates (plastic)
pine cones
PVC pipe fittings
synthetic urine & musk oils)
traffic cones (whole or half)
trash can liners

Other: Hang objects in holding areas; Rubbermaid tough tubs; mirror in area not accessible to bears; music

Types of Deadfall

dead spruce trees
log anchored on bottom of pool
pine tree
tree branches

hollow logs
log climbing frame
rotting logs (preferably
with grubs)

large deadfall
logs chained around area
small logs
tree stump with roots

Types of Substrate

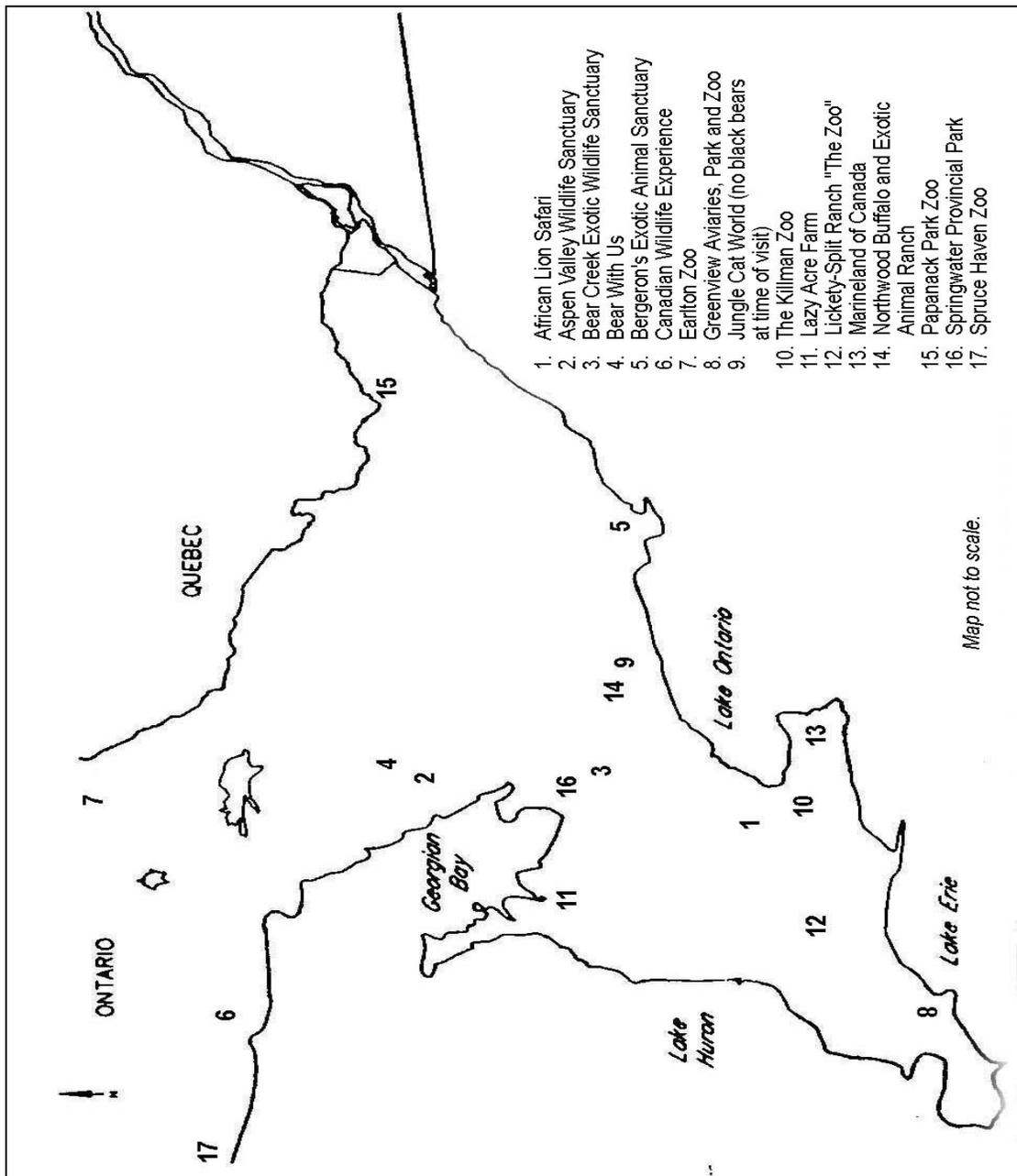
alfalfa	grass clippings pile	leaves
mulch	pine straw	sand
shredded paper	sod pieces, grass flats	straw
timothy hay	trash can lids	wood shavings

A thorough search of the enrichment literature should be conducted by anyone keeping bears in captivity, and enrichment measures incorporated accordingly. Enrichment does not have to be expensive. A great deal can be done with little or no outlay of cash. Varying feedings to more than once per day; varying the type of food; hiding food in logs or burying it are all simple yet effective suggestions. For those strategies that do require greater funding, this must be seen as a necessary cost of operating a captive wildlife facility. Enrichment should not be considered a luxury. It must be incorporated into the daily routine of the caregiver and the infrastructure of the facility.

2

SURVEY OF FACILITIES

Illustration 1 - MAP OF ONTARIO FACILITIES WITH AMERICAN BLACK BEARS



AFRICAN LION SAFARI

R.R.#1, Cambridge, Ontario N1R 5S2

Head Game Warden Steve Ashbee

Open April 25 to October 25

African Lion Safari (ALS) opened in 1969 as a drive-through safari park, owned and operated by Col. G.D. Dailley. The intent is for visitors to drive their vehicles through separate fenced areas that contain various wild animals, to create the impression that the animals are roaming freely. The park is a member of the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums. Wire mesh fences, some with electric wire, and staff members parked in vehicles at the entrance to each compound, prevent the animals from leaving. There is an extensive system of perimeter fencing as well.

There are many restaurants and souvenir shops dotting the facility. In addition ALS features Birds of Prey shows, elephant bath times, and a boat ride around various small islands that house lemurs, other primates and an assortment of birds. The boat driver informed me that they were awaiting a shipment of colobus monkeys for one of the islands. These animals are extremely delicate in nature and generally die in captivity because of their complicated dietary needs.

In general the grounds were clean and attractive, and there appeared to be adequate staff to handle the large crowds that arrive daily. Safety of visitors is definitely a prime consideration at the park, but I'm concerned that accidents could still occur. It has been my experience that many visitors think of captive wild animals as not being dangerous; they have a compulsion to touch and feed animals and think they won't hurt them. Zoo visitors have been known to feed animals and, in drive-through parks, to open their car windows. Other than monitoring visitors (which is done by the African Lion Safari staff parked in their vehicles in each area), there is little that can be done about this problem. The staff do carry radios and in the event of an emergency can get assistance in a hurry.

I visited African Lion Safari on two separate occasions; the first in my own vehicle and the second as an occupant of the bus provided by ALS at an additional charge. The buses are equipped with a sound system over which one can listen to the bus driver making comments about the animals. However, due to the many noisy children on the bus I chose, I was not able to hear a great deal of the commentary. On both occasions I was only able to spend a relatively short time in the enclosure containing the black bears, because they share the 30-acre enclosure with a large troop of baboons who seem intent on destroying parts of vehicles, while begging for food. In order to obtain additional information I interviewed the bus driver (although some of her information was not accurate), as well as the Head Game Warden Steve Ashbee.

Although feeding the animals is not encouraged, it does occur and consequently the bears also engage in begging behaviour. At one point I had a bear standing upright by my driver's window seeking a hand-out while baboons were busily ripping out my windshield wipers. There doesn't seem to be any aggression between the two species. According to Mr. Ashbee, the adult baboons will sometimes tease the bears, but generally they ignore one another.

Since baboons are found in Africa and American black bears are indigenous to North America, the housing of the two in one area would tend to reinforce a false assumption that they are found in the same region of the world.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS OF AMERICAN BLACK BEARS

African Lion Safari currently has six American black bears in their enclosure, as follows:

Theodore, neutered male, cinnamon, born in Alberta in 1989 and “orphaned” there; acquired from Storybook Gardens, Owen Sound, Ontario at age two.

Brewster, neutered large black male, wild-born in British Columbia in 1989.

Jane, female, born in Alberta in 1987 and “orphaned” there; according to Ashbee, she hates cubs and stays away from everyone.

Three adolescents born in 1996; origin of two unknown; third was an “orphan” from Nova Scotia. All three arrived at ALS as cubs. Adequate records on the bears were kept.

From casual observation, all of the bears appeared in good physical condition, although some had not completed their molt. The three adolescents were engaged in play behaviour, chasing and wrestling one another. Theodore was situated toward the outer road side of the enclosure amongst the taller trees; Brewster was standing in a muddy pool; and the female was begging among the vehicles. Mr. Ashbee said that both Theodore and the adolescents enjoy climbing the trees. He also said Theodore enjoys the cubs and spends time wrestling with them. Theodore and Brewster also play together frequently; however, I was told, when food is involved, arguments do erupt, but no actual fighting occurs. Play behaviour generally occurs when there is little or no stress in a group of animals, so I would conclude that the black bears, for the most part, are comfortable in their environment.

The enclosure is the third one entered in the drive-through area; there is a “warden” at the entrance to ensure that no animals cross the open gateway between areas. The enclosure is thirty acres surrounded by an 8' wire mesh fence, topped with electric wire. The boundary of the property is augmented with a 20' wire mesh perimeter fence, with an extension angled inwards at the top. There are several tall trees near the boundary fencing, as well as many areas of small trees, shrubs and bushes. The vehicle pathway meanders through this area, and the bus takes several minutes to stop along the way, in order to provide photographic opportunities for visitors. There are also several old dens that are no longer accessible to the bears at one end of the paddock. The terrain is slightly hilly in nature. A structure containing a hanging tire has been erected .

Drinking water is provided by the muddy pond; I was told that the bears frequently use the pond and spend a lot of time playing in it, even in cold weather. Most likely the bears drink from and play in the same water source. At night the bears are brought into a large barn complex (along with hoofstock from the neighbouring paddock) where they are provided with water dishes and their main meal of the day. I did not view these night quarters, which also serve as winter quarters for many animals. They were described as being comprised of three cages, each 15' x 15' x 15' in size. The three adults share two of these cages, while the three adolescents share the remaining cage.

If the information I received is accurate, the winter quarters are not large enough to contain six animals for an extended period. I was told the bears are allowed outside but generally go no further than the chute that leads to their large paddock. Mr. Ashbee commented that the bears are grumpy by the end of winter. As adult bears would generally not den together, I suggest that this "grumpiness" may be in part due to the fact that they are required to share their dens. The three adolescents are approaching the age where they would normally be going out on their own, and one cage will certainly not be sufficient for them in the future. The effect of neutering the two adult males is not

something that can be readily measured in terms of change in normal behavioural patterns; perhaps they do get along well enough to den together, but it would be best if they could *choose* rather than be *forced* to co-exist with the female.

The bear diet consists of dog chow and produce (apples are a favourite), and sometimes fish and chicken pieces, fed on the floor, after they enter their night quarters. During winter, food is cut back and the bears become lethargic.

The management of the facility does not consider enrichment to be necessary because they feel there is enough to keep the bears occupied the way things are. No enrichment is provided while the bears occupy their winter cages.

GENERAL COMMENTS

African Lion Safari's outdoor enclosure has several positive features—apparent space, shade, privacy, naturalistic environment, enrichment in the form of natural objects to manipulate, as well as social interaction. Despite this, I don't believe casual visitors will learn a great deal about natural black bear behaviour. In fact, their begging behaviours may cause visitors to view them as “clowns” who like to beg and stand upright like circus bears.

At first glance the thirty-acre compound appears to be a very adequate size for the bears. However, my brief observations made me wonder just how much of this compound the bears actually use. During both visits they remained at one end of the compound (near the tall trees) and did not venture out into the more open areas which were occupied by the majority of the baboons. Whether this was because they wanted to avoid the annoying baboons or wanted to stay closer to the larger trees, or if it happened to be a coincidence, would require further study.

From the description provided to me of the winter quarters, I am concerned about their small size, lack of behavioural enrichment, possible overcrowding and the mixing of males and females in close proximity, particularly as the adolescents mature.

An ALS publication that can be purchased at an additional charge provides a one-page discussion about black bears. It claims that “females can be very dangerous especially when they feel their young are in danger”. Many scientists, including Dr. Lynn Rogers, a renowned American black bear biologist, believe this view is inaccurate and perpetuates a false stereotype of the black bear (Fair and Rogers, 1994).

According to Mr. Ashbee, there are no off-site outreach programs provided by ALS to schools and similar institutions due to the expense.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Remove the baboons to a separate area. This action may allow the bears to utilize the entire compound and will ensure that visitors are not left with the idea that baboons and black bears occupy the same geographic region.
2. Begin planting large, fast-growing species of trees (e.g., poplar) protected by mesh fencing in

other areas of the compound, to create additional privacy areas for the bears.

3. Provide fresh drinking water during the day.
4. Visitors should be strictly discouraged from feeding the bears.
5. Vary the diet of the bears by offering different produce on different days, and experiment with alfalfa hay and other grasses, plants and berries of different types.
6. Instead of feeding only one large meal at night, offer small feedings during the day. This may cause other problems for the keepers because the bears may not come into their night quarters as readily. By saving the most desirable food until the evening meal, the problem should be overcome, after a period of trial and error.
7. Provide larger facilities for the winter denning time, so that each bear can choose whether to share a den or not.
8. Provide enrichment measures, such as logs, branches, etc. in the night facilities. A search of the enrichment literature will outline options for bears in captivity. One example of available information is the North Carolina Master Enrichment List contained in Chapter 1 (pp. 4-5) of this report.

ASPEN VALLEY WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

Rosseau, Ontario P0G 1J0

Owner Audrey Tournay, Manager Tony Grant

Open Wednesday & Sunday afternoons

The following information about the Aspen Valley Wildlife Sanctuary was obtained through interviews with the two principles, Audrey Tournay and Tony Grant. The sanctuary was established in 1972 by Ms. Tournay to care for orphaned and injured wildlife and also to return to the wild any animals that were deemed able. Since that time the Sanctuary has rehabilitated hundreds of native creatures including chipmunks, squirrels, raccoons, skunks, beaver, foxes, deer, moose, wolves and bears.

The facility is located on 300 acres of northern Ontario habitat, on a little-used sideroad, making it an ideal location for such an endeavour. A considerable amount of additional acreage in the region has recently been donated to the Sanctuary, and in time this will be protected by a perimeter fence and used to rehabilitate additional animals.

The Sanctuary has been established as a Canadian charity, making it possible to issue tax receipts for donations. Tony Grant, the manager, and other interested supporters have been able to arrange donations of a great deal of construction material, a sawmill, vehicles and general supplies necessary for successfully operating such a facility. The charitable structure also helps ensure ongoing support upon the demise of the principles.

The Sanctuary enjoys strong local support and many merchants donate produce and supplies. There is also a strong volunteer support base to do the physical work. Tony Grant, for example, began helping out fifteen years ago. When he retired and sold his businesses three years ago, he moved to the area and now volunteers full-time at Aspen Valley.

The strong volunteer network affords Ms. Tournay an opportunity to pursue writing booklets for children on various animals (including two moving accounts of American black bears), as well as articles for various newspapers. The Sanctuary also produces a newsletter.

The Sanctuary has good working relationships with other organizations including the local humane society and Bear With Us.

Veterinary care is provided pro bono by the Parry Sound Veterinary Clinic, as well as a specialist clinic in Mississauga, Ontario. Some animals are vaccinated before release, whereas others are not, depending upon the species. Permanent residents receive routine deworming. There is controversy about whether or not to deworm animals destined for release because all wild animals have natural parasite loads when brought in for rehabilitation with which they are able to cope under normal circumstances. If an animal becomes debilitated, then the parasite load becomes too much and should be treated.

Aided by Ms. Tournay's accumulated knowledge and skill, many animals deemed to have been beyond hope have actually recovered; some are not able to be released and the Sanctuary utilizes them as ambassadors for their species in its education programs. Ms. Tournay is a former schoolteacher who continues to educate local children by taking animals such as Amanda the

porcupine and Penelope the skunk into the classroom. She believes this gives young children the opportunity to get to know and appreciate the wildlife around them.

I made the following observations on the date of inspection of the Aspen Valley Wildlife Sanctuary. The top floor of the barn is currently being renovated to construct a small educational theatre adjacent to the gift shop, which sells souvenirs, many made by local artisans.

The barn where more delicate animals spend the winter has been thoroughly insulated; the cages inside and adjacent to the barn are all well-built with thought and consideration given to the needs of the animals contained therein.

Each animal is given a hide, ranging from a hollow log to a small kennel. Bedding is thick and clean in each pen; fresh water and food is provided daily. Ms. Tournay seems to have a clear understanding of both the psychological and physical needs of the animals. The permanent Sanctuary residents, for the most part, had large, private enclosures complete with lots of trees for privacy and shade. Where possible social animals are kept together; a wolf/dog cross substituted as a companion for a lone arctic wolf. A young moose calf destined to be released was kept in a quiet enclosure off-limits to most visitors. I was told he will shortly be moved to a much larger enclosure at the back of the property to spend the winter, enabling the moose to forage for food and learn the skills necessary for survival upon release in the spring.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS OF AMERICAN BLACK BEARS

At the time of my visit in October, 1998 there were thirteen American black bears at the sanctuary. Three are permanent residents; the rest will be released.

Group 1

Nungoon , male, approximately eight years old.

Giisus, female, approximately eight years old.

I was informed that these two animals had suffered terrible abuse while residents of Oswalds Little Bear Acres near Newberry, Michigan. Their teeth had been broken off, leaving painful roots in their gums, and their claws had been removed. They had been chained in a barn and used to train dogs to attack bears. They arrived at the Sanctuary in an emaciated condition. They were initially kept in a 200' x 300' enclosure with two wooden dens side by side. Nungoon was given a vasectomy, but not before he fathered a cub named Oops.

These three bears share a 4.5 acre enclosure containing trees, boulders and a pond, affording privacy and enrichment. The enclosure is constructed of 8' high wire mesh fence, the bottom portion of which has been dug into the ground on the interior side to prevent escape. Steel panels have been attached to the upper portion of the wire mesh. Mr. Grant mentioned that any bear attempting to climb the fence is frightened by the noise made by the steel panels and quickly retreats.

The bears are fed a daily diet of fresh produce and dog chow, as well as being able to forage for food items throughout their enclosure. Undoubtedly they also consume insects, birds and small mammals that enter their enclosure as well.

Group 2

Sailor, male, approximately two, orphan, from St. Josephs Island.

Titanic, male, approximately two, from Spruce Haven Zoo, Sault Ste. Marie.

SOS, female, approximately two, from Spruce Haven Zoo, Sault Ste. Marie.

At the time of my visit to Spruce Haven Zoo in August, 1998, these latter two animals were still resident there and I have described their conditions elsewhere in this report.

These three animals are housed in a 1,000 square foot enclosure in a private area at the back of the property prior to their release in the spring of 1999. The enclosure has a pool, trees and a wooden shelter and is built on a hill which provides different elevations for the bears. The enclosure is the same construction as most of the large compounds — 8' wire mesh with metal panels on top.

Beyond this enclosure, another similarly-constructed enclosure was being erected at the time of my visit in October, 1998, to house the other orphaned bear cubs currently held in the vicinity of the barn. This enclosure contains trees, rocks and a waterfall and is completely private — a necessary ingredient in preparing for the release of bears back to the wild. They generally see only Tony Grant once daily when he feeds them.

Mr. Grant explained that when this enclosure is completed, he has plans to build another one, containing a large pond. He is currently negotiating for the donation of materials to commence this project in the spring of 1999.

Group 3

El Nino, male, two years old, from Huntsville, Ontario.

I was told this animal weighed only 9 1/2 lbs. when he arrived. He had been found at a bird feeder trying to eat birdseed and was near starvation. He is being kept temporarily in a wire mesh cage attached to the side of the barn until it is known if he will regain the use of one paw which was badly damaged.

The enclosure is approximately 12' x 150' and contains several “toys” which El Nino enjoys manipulating. He is provided with fresh branches as well as a wooden privacy den.

Group 4

Roger, male, two years old, blind in one eye, from Wisconsin; occupies one pen.

Female, possibly two years old; orphan from Kapuskasing, Ontario; possibly orphaned during the spring bear hunt; occupies another pen.

Female, approximately one year old, orphan from Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Female, approximately one year old, orphan from Kapuskasing, Ontario, with a bite on her back end.

Male, approximately one year old, mother killed by car, from Kapuskasing, Ontario.

Female, approximately one year old, mother killed by car, from Kapuskasing, Ontario.

(The latter two male and female bears share a pen.)

The remaining six bears are grouped in the same area because they are temporarily in similar-sized

pens which have been constructed off the side of the entrance to the barn. Each is constructed of wire mesh fencing approximately 6' x 8' with a dirt substrate. Shade is provided by a clear fibreglass roof and tarpaulins on one end. Each pen contains fresh fir branches, hollow logs and other privacy containers. Clean straw bedding covered the floor and fresh water in clean metal containers was provided in each pen. All these bears were still receiving milk in the form of lamb milk replacer, offered in a metal bowl. Solid food (dog chow and produce) is also being provided.

The Sanctuary plans to move the bears to the new pen behind Group 2 once it is completed and the bears are eating well.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The people associated with Aspen Valley Wildlife Sanctuary are to be congratulated for their efforts on behalf of native wildlife, particularly for those animals in need of immediate assistance as a result of human interference. Audrey Tournay and Tony Grant operate their facility in a professional manner that places animal well-being as the highest priority.

RECOMMENDATION

It is important to maintain records on the care and feeding of animals raised at Aspen Valley. Efforts should be made as soon as possible to start a database which would include a description of husbandry methods that were successful in the past, as well as other pertinent data.

BEAR CREEK EXOTIC WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

R.R. #2, Barrie, Ontario L4M 4S4

Concession 10, near Ivy, Ontario, south of Highway 90

Owner Werner Ebner

Open weekends

Bear Creek Exotic Wildlife Sanctuary is a privately-owned and funded facility operated by Werner Ebner and his daughter Michelle. Mr. Ebner is a sub-contractor of windows and cares for the animals in his spare time. He is only open to visitors by prior arrangement on weekends, and does not charge admission. At the time of my visit a volunteer named Sylvia guided me through the facility.

The Sanctuary is situated in Mr. Ebner's back yard, in a country setting. The property is well shaded by a number of mature trees. No public feeding of the animals is allowed. Mr. Ebner has acquired various animals from people who no longer want to take care of them in their homes; from a zoo that closed down in Gananoque; from the local humane society; and from the Ministry of Natural Resources. The Sanctuary does not take in birds of prey (which is just as well, given the close proximity of so many exotic cats who would certainly stress the birds by their presence). I did observe a single pheasant in a low, narrow wire cage directly opposite the tigers and lions. It sat huddled at the back of the cage in dirty bedding.

A perimeter fence surrounds the entire facility however, it was not adequate to contain the animals in the event of an escape. The fencing around the entrance leading to the back yard consisted of a 5' wooden fence with four strands of electric wire above. The boundary fencing separating the Ebner property from his neighbour's on either side consisted of wire mesh and electric wire. I learned that two of the tigers had escaped last year and had prowled around for three days before being caught and returned to their cage. Sylvia claimed that the neighbours support Mr. Ebner's work and are not overly concerned about escaped animals.

In most cases there is no secondary barrier to prevent visitors from putting their fingers into cages, but as they are never allowed in without an escort and are warned not to do so at the start of the tour, this is probably not a significant danger.

The cages were reasonably clean, with a few exceptions. For example, there were several days' worth of feces in the Leopard Cat cage, possibly because he is considered "nasty" (as stated by Sylvia) and entering the cage for cleaning would be problematic. There was also old, dirty bedding in some cages. In general Mr. Ebner enters the cages for maintenance without shifting the animals (indeed, many cages are not equipped with a shift cage at all).

Overall the facility appears to be neat and tidy, but the majority of the cages were much too small for the animals they contained. This is one of many Ontario facilities that have a large number of wild cats (e.g., Leopard Cat, Siberian tigers, lions, cougar, jaguars), as well as other mammals. Only two of the Siberian tigers appeared to be in cages that could be considered suitable in size, although the barrier fence is too low for safety. Most pens contained no enrichment materials, privacy areas or proper shelters.

In several cages Mr. Ebner has recycled some of his old windows to make weather barriers. In my opinion, this is extremely dangerous. If the glass were to shatter, there would be shards scattered

throughout the cage.

Educational signs are minimal and appear on only a few cages (e.g., Leopard Cat, Arctic wolf); there is nothing for the Black Bear. Sylvia did provide a good deal of verbal information for each animal and has obviously done her research. Printed material consisted of a promotional flyer.

Veterinary care is available from a veterinarian-neighbour next door, in an emergency, or from Dr. Glen McLean, an experienced exotics veterinarian who lives in the region. Annual vaccinations are administered. Sylvia did not know whether parasite control was done on a regular basis or not.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS OF AMERICAN BLACK BEAR

There is a single American black bear housed at this facility:

BooBoo, male, two years old

BooBoo appeared to be in good physical condition. His coat was shiny and his molt complete. He paid little attention to us. Because I was being escorted, I was not able to spend as much time as I would have liked by the bear cage, but did get the general impression that the bear was bored. He did not exhibit overt stereotypical behaviour, but he did appear disinterested in his surroundings.

The main cage measured approximately 20' x 28' x 10' consisting of wire mesh with two strands of electric wire along the top. The locking mechanism on the steel mesh gate leading to this cage consisted of one latch and padlock. There is a concrete rim around the bottom, with wooden posts holding up the wire mesh. The mesh separating this main cage from a smaller one had broken wires and no proper doorway; it looked as though the bear himself had made the opening and then expanded it. The substrate was earth with many holes excavated by BooBoo, especially around the edge of the fence where the wire had been laid to fold it into the pen. There were a few large trees in the centre with evidence of bear use (scratches in the trunk at the base), but they were probably not strong enough to support BooBoo's weight, if he attempted to climb. There was one cross-pole braced against one of the trees, but other than that, no climbing structure of any sort. No pool was provided for bathing and no other enrichment was observed.

This main cage abutted another cage measuring 14' x 8' x 10', with a garden shed attached. Part of this shed was made accessible to the bear as a den area approximately 2' x 3', with the remainder sealed with plywood. The bear had dug a hole in this region and had expanded the area downwards. The remainder of the shed appeared to be used to store tools, etc., and contained a large opening. If the bear managed to knock out the plywood sheet, there would be nothing to prevent him from escaping. The only shelter from the weather was inside the "den", and there was no privacy area. This may not be as serious a concern at this facility as it may be at others, since there is not a constant stream of visitors.

The smaller cage was also barren of any kind of furniture and contained an empty plastic bucket for drinking water. The surrounding area was wet and I assume the bear had knocked the pail over. This is the area where the bear has chosen to defecate; the small amount of feces observed would indicate that the cage had been cleaned recently.

I was told the diet of the bear consists of whole chicken, fruit, vegetables and sometimes fish. As

well, members of the public donate spoiled food from freezers. Boo Boo is said to be especially fond of fruit-bottom yoghurt, which Mr. Ebner offers daily. Food is fed directly on the substrate, once daily in the morning. The bear is offered food daily throughout the winter and is allowed to hibernate if he wishes.

Mr. Ebner enters the cage for maintenance purposes. Sylvia claimed he has a “wonderful rapport” with his animals; nevertheless, it is always a dangerous practice to enter an animal’s territory and this should be avoided by providing a shifting mechanism.

The bear cage abuts another cage containing two young female lions; they could actually touch each other through the mesh, and indeed Sylvia stated that they often lick each other. It could be argued that this contact is a form of enrichment, but hardly normal behaviour for a bear (or lion, for that matter). Sylvia also mentioned the animals sometimes get bowling balls to play with, although none were in evidence in any cage during my visit. The lions’ cage was just as barren as the bear’s. Across the aisle from the bear were two “rescued” Siberian tigers. Behind the bear’s cage was the perimeter fence separating the property from Mr. Ebner’s neighbours. There were plenty of trees in the area to provide shade.

There was a secondary barrier fence in front of these three cages, but the gate was open. Even though visitors are escorted, I can envisage an enthusiastic child running ahead of the adults and directly through this gate. Most cages had no visitor barrier whatsoever and there would be nothing to prevent a child from putting a hand through the mesh.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Mr. Ebner seems to be an example of a well-meaning person, who started out with two deer, who now finds himself in the position of having too many animals to cope with, either financially or physically (e.g., workload). Mr. Ebner undoubtedly had the best of intentions in “rescuing” these animals, but does not appear to have the resources to keep them properly. With specific reference to the American black bear, the cage is too small, poorly designed and does not serve the needs of the animal. Instead, the bear is condemned to a boring, static life. A small saving grace is the fact that he is not subjected to a stream of visitors or indiscriminate feeding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Place the American black bear in another more appropriate facility (as well as other animals such as the Leopard Cat and other cats).

In the interim:

2. Build a suitable cage for the bear consisting of sufficient space and furniture for him to behave in a more normal fashion. There appeared to be a large area at the back of the property nestled in trees that could be developed into a bear enclosure. A privacy area, shelter from weather, climbing structures and enrichment items should be added. A bathing pool of adequate size should also be provided.
3. Incorporate into the design of this new cage a shift area so that Mr. Ebner does not have to enter

the cage directly with the bear, for his own safety. Presumably he works most of the time on his own; if an accident should occur for any reason whatsoever, either in the cage or out of it, Mr. Ebner probably would not receive assistance for some time.

4. Offer several small feedings; bury and hide food, and install feeder “logs” in order to occupy the bear with the job of searching for his diet.
5. Provide enrichment measures, such as logs, branches, etc. A search of the enrichment literature will outline options for bears in captivity. One example of available information is the North Carolina Master Enrichment List contained in Chapter 1 (pp. 4-5) of this report.
6. Provide a proper, clean, non-tippable water container immediately.
7. If food is offered directly on the ground, then care should be taken that the ground surface is disinfected regularly, to avoid ingestion of parasites, etc.

BEAR WITH US

R.R. #1, Sprucedale, Ontario P0A 1Y0

Owner Mike McIntosh

Not open to the public

Bear With Us is a privately-owned sanctuary and rehabilitation centre for American black bears. Its mission is: "To promote understanding and respect for the bear family, a species near the top of the evolutionary scale, a species in direct niche competition with the human race." The main goal of the sanctuary is to take in orphaned cubs and maintain them in a manner that their eventual return to the wild is ensured. Bear With Us has also given permanent homes to 5 animals: 3 former circus bears — one Grizzly and two American black bears — and 2 other black bears. For various reasons these animals are not releasable and will spend their retirement at Bear With Us.

On the day that I arrived, the sanctuary owner, Mr. McIntosh, was preparing to leave for a three-week trip to Russia to study Grizzly bears. He was busily moving the bears into a temporary arrangement to enable his house-sitters to care for them more easily in his absence. Nevertheless, he took the time and effort to show me around his facility (which is not open to the public) and to discuss bears in general. Mr. McIntosh seemed very well informed and generously shared his knowledge with me. In particular we discussed the controversial opinion about how orphan bear cubs come to be; he does not accept the proposition that male bears are responsible for the killing or driving off of cubs, and feels that most are orphaned as a direct result of the spring bear hunt, which has now been discontinued (as of 1999) by the Ontario government. Mr. McIntosh contends that it is very difficult to identify a lactating female and that many are shot by hunters.

Despite a full-time profession in another field, Mr. McIntosh devotes a great deal of time to the plight of bears, either in caring for them, rescuing orphans, educating the public or intervening on their behalf in conflict situations.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS OF AMERICAN BLACK BEARS

On the day of my visit Mr. McIntosh had two orphaned cubs remaining in his care. He explained that he had previously released back to the wild another eleven in various "quiet" parts of the region. He has had as many as thirty-two cubs in one year at his facility, all of which were returned to the wild. He looks for natural bear habitat and/or areas that have recently been logged because such areas encourage the growth of berries and there are generally not many people inhabiting these regions. The two remaining cubs (who were still too young to release) are allowed, at times, access to the property under Mr. McIntosh's supervision. While I was there, Mr. McIntosh made them tree, just as a mother would, and was generally teaching them how to live as bears in the wild. He does not encourage touching. His property is set back in the woods and also contains a large pond, as well as bush and grass areas — natural bear habitat.

Dairy goats are kept on the property to provide milk for the orphaned bear cubs. All goats appeared to be healthy and in good condition, and their hooves trimmed appropriately.

I was informed that much of the health care maintenance is done by Mr. McIntosh himself, as he feels it is less stressful for the bears, but he regularly calls on the assistance and knowledge of two local

veterinarians who provide their services free of charge. He carries out routine de-worming and vaccination of his animals. To reduce stress, he uses a blowgun on the adult bears, when needed. I did not determine whether this regimen included animals destined for release, but I assume it does. There is some controversy regarding this point, as to whether or not a natural “balance” should be maintained in parasite loads in free-living animals and whether or not wild animals should be vaccinated at all.

Mr. McIntosh works closely with the Aspen Valley Wildlife Sanctuary at Rosseau, Ontario in the rehabilitation of bears.

The bears permanently housed at Bear With Us are:

Grizzly Bear:

Oso, male, twelve years old; ex-circus bear with a reportedly terrible history of abuse; his incisors and canines have been removed, leaving his mouth horribly misshapen. I was told Oso was a walking skeleton upon arrival at Bear With Us, but he now looks in excellent condition. (A photograph I was shown verifies his condition upon arrival.)

Oso is currently housed in a small pen, approximately 20' x 10' made of wire mesh. There is a tree inside the cage to provide shade, as well as a wooden box for shelter. Privacy is not really an issue, as Oso would only see Mr. McIntosh in a typical day. There were sticks in the exhibit for Oso to manipulate and fresh water was provided. Sunflowers were growing at one end. A new enclosure for Oso, described at the end of this section, is planned.

Oso, who has gained considerable weight, has more or less recovered from his bout with starvation and enjoys wrestling with Mr. McIntosh. He is very gentle and is careful not to put his entire weight on Mr. McIntosh. This activity appeared to provide a bonding experience between them.

American black bears:

Molly, female, born in 1985; brought from a circus in Ireland in 1994; reportedly her feet had been burned in order to train her to “dance”.

Yogi, vasectomized male, born in 1991; brought from a circus in England in 1995.

These two bears appeared to be in excellent condition. Most of their molt had been completed. They are housed together in an enclosure approximately one-quarter acre in size and constructed of upright metal posts (10' in height) welded together — an unusual design and not particularly attractive, but one that looks quite sturdy. Within the circular enclosure grow alder trees, bushes and grass and there is a pond at one end large enough for both bears to swim (unfortunately due to a sustained drought the pond was quite low at the time of my visit). This is fed from the larger pool on the property. There is a separate smaller area (approximately 10' x 10') that can be used to shift the animals for cleaning or veterinary work. The gate to the enclosure is wire mesh and has a locking mechanism on it.

The area also contains two 4' x 4' wooden dens erected side by side. The bears choose not to sleep together. Straw is provided for bedding during the winter. Food is withheld, and as winter approaches they sleep for longer and longer periods of time, but do come out on sunny days. By the end of

winter, they have demolished these dens, so there are plans to build more durable dens in the future.

Mr. McIntosh explained an interesting behaviour he's observed. Yogi has a favourite stick that he pushes along the ground like a broom while standing on his hind feet; Molly has copied this activity, thus providing an insight into the cognition of bears. Most likely this activity was developed from some earlier "trick" learned when Yogi was a circus bear.

Nanibush, male, born in 1996, declawed and therefore unreleasable. Used as a babysitter for orphaned cubs.

Freddy, male, kept as a pet for five months; fed candy as main diet. Originally Freddy was scheduled to be released and was put with other cubs; unfortunately he has proven to be too human-oriented to survive in the wild.

At the time of my visit Mr. McIntosh had put these two into a small cage alongside the two cubs destined for release, as an expediency for his house sitters (as stated earlier, Mr. McIntosh was leaving imminently for a three-week trip to Russia to study Grizzly bears.) As it is a temporary situation, I will not comment on the enclosure here. Shelter from the elements, toys and fresh water were available.

The diet of all of the bears is varied daily — the only facility I visited which incorporated this as part of their routine. At the time of my visit they received shelled sunflower seeds. They had earlier received fresh salmon. Other days, I was told, food would be chosen from a list that includes different species of fish, fox pellets, raw chicken, grapes, apples, oranges, and other produce, clover, raw eggs, yoghurt, chokecherries and other berries, and honeycomb (including larvae) smeared on a log. Mr. McIntosh has found that his bears refuse red meat (with the exception of Oso) but will eat chicken.

Enrichment consists primarily of natural objects. Mr. McIntosh commented that the bears really enjoyed manipulating sticks. He also provides feeder logs (logs with holes drilled in them and filled with raisins) for Nanibush, Freddy and the two cubs, as well as rubber hosing, picked grass and branches with berries on them. Grapes are offered as treats. Social interaction, as well as visits from wild bears, also provide enrichment.

During my visit, Mr. McIntosh described plans to construct a new pen in the fall of 1998 for Oso, Nanibush and Freddy, the perimeter of which will be 850', enclosing many alder and fir trees as well as bushes and grasses. The enclosure will be adjacent to that of Molly and Yogi's and a large pond is being excavated at one end. The construction material is heavy wire mesh panels (as used in reinforced concrete) 10' long. Mr. McIntosh feels confident that there will be no problem in housing a Grizzly bear with two American black bears. In October, 1998, construction of this new enclosure was completed. Mr. McIntosh plans to move the bears after winter hibernation.

GENERAL COMMENTS

This facility stood out from the majority that I visited. The goals are admirable. Mr. McIntosh is not trying to create a menagerie type of zoo or public display facility. Rather, he is providing a sanctuary for some badly abused bears as well as managing a release program for bears that have the potential to “make it” in the wild. He also devotes time to educating the public about bears and to translocating problem animals.

There is a brochure available to describe the mission of Bear With Us, as well as material about the plight of Oso and favourite myths dispelled, sponsored by Cantel and AT&T. Mr. McIntosh has also cooperated in developing a brochure for the World Society for the Protection of Animals about living with bears for people travelling in bear habitat. It’s unfortunate that other zoos that I visited did not appear to have this brochure for distribution to the public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The watering of the bears in winter must be difficult. The ponds within the pens freeze over during Ontario’s cold winters, so drinking water would need to be truded from the barn in pails. An underground pipe leading to the pens, with an electrically heated tap, would alleviate this problem.
2. The development of a Bear With Us long-term Master Plan would assist in dealing with the pressures typically placed on facilities that provide sanctuary for abused animals. It would also address the concern about who would manage the Sanctuary in the event that Mr. McIntosh is unavailable.
3. Install a gate across the roadway entrance to deny easy access when no one is on the property.

BERGERON'S EXOTIC ANIMAL SANCTUARY

R.R. #2, Picton, Ontario K0K 2T0
Owners Mr. & Mrs. Joe Bergeron
Director of Outreach Programs Rob Kellough
Open April to October

This is a privately-owned and operated facility initiated by Mr. Bergeron while he was a member of the regional humane society. He came across unwanted exotic pets, starting with a cougar. Out of compassion, he took them to his residence and constructed cages for them. Dr. Samantha Lindley, a British veterinarian who conducted an assessment of nine Ontario zoos in 1997, includes this facility in her report. I will not repeat her findings here, except to say that I concur with them. My greatest concern overall would be the lack of shade provided for the animals.

There are four staff members (including Joe and Pat Bergeron) plus Rob Kellough who is an employee of the newly-formed Prince Edward Exotic Animal Society. He attended the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust training school in 1981. The school teaches students animal care/conservation skills and imbues a sense of responsibility toward animal welfare. Mr. Kellough previously worked at the now closed Reptile Breeding Foundation in Picton, Ontario. He mentioned that he had tried working at various zoos in Canada but didn't agree with their philosophies; however, he believes in what the Bergerons are doing and wants to help.

To their credit, the Bergerons recognize many of the shortcomings of their cages, such as small size, lack of shade, privacy, enrichment, etc. and insist that the animals come first before the visitors. However, as it stands now, they have little cash to work with and a big job ahead of them to attain their goals. Mr. Kellough mentioned that the Prince Edward Exotic Animal Society is currently awaiting approval of charitable status with Revenue Canada. Once this is achieved, they believe fundraising for the facility will become easier.

The sanctuary is situated on 14 acres of rural property surrounding the residence of the Bergerons. There is no external perimeter fence to contain an escaped animal or to protect the animals from intruders. Some cages are actually attached to the side of the residence. As in other facilities, there is a preponderance of exotic cats. Their general physical condition was good, as were the other animals. I was told that routine fecal examinations and vaccinations are carried out by two on-call veterinarians. There are a great assortment of species including domesticated and farm animals.

At the admissions booth, soda pop is sold, as well as paper bags of food (\$1.00 per bag) for feeding to the animals. A sign invites visitors to feed all of the animals, except the cats. A very obese pot-bellied pig waited by the booth for a hand-out. The area surrounding the admissions booth is unattractive and not well maintained, giving the facility an unprofessional appearance. Additional plantings (flowers, bushes, trees) and benches on which to sit would make it more attractive to visitors.

Mr. Bergeron is an individual member of the CAZA and supports enacting legislation in Ontario restricting the private ownership of exotic animals. Rob Kellough has initiated a newsletter to explain their mission and to raise awareness.

Mr. Kellough has also developed some good educational materials for school children of different age levels in order to make them aware of such topics as endangered species, care of animals, biology,

etc. He is currently working with local Boards of Education to integrate their programs into Board curriculum. At the sanctuary itself, he conducts tours and speaks knowledgeably about each animal. Some of the cages had good explanatory signs while others did not. Rob Kellough makes a major contribution to the educational aspects of this facility.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS OF AMERICAN BLACK BEAR

A single American black bear is housed at this facility.

Edna, female, about one year of age. Arrived a few months previously from Jungle Cat World, Orono, Ontario. I was told she was originally confiscated from a private home near Orillia and was probably an orphan resulting from the 1997 spring bear hunt.

The bear appeared to be in good physical condition; she was still molting and had a reasonable degree of body fat. She did pace, returning continuously to where I was standing and seemed to be looking for food, although no obvious begging behaviours were observed. The worn pathway in the grass provided evidence that pacing had become stereotypic in nature. Begging also might develop over time if reinforced through public feeding.

The cage measured approximately 12' x 40' x 6' made out of coated wire mesh fencing secured by wire ties onto a metal frame. While it does have a wire mesh roof, it appears as though it would probably not safely contain an adult bear. There is one padlock on the gate and no separate shift area. Rob Kellough commented that he would no longer go into the cage with Edna, now that she is growing. This is the Bergerons' first experience with keeping bears.

The cage itself is in good repair, and there is shade cloth over the top, which provided some relief from the unremitting sun and heat during my visit. Tree trunks had been placed horizontally, with another one standing vertically. The substrate was comprised of soil and grass, but the grass had been worn around the edges where the bear was pacing. No bedding was provided and there was no privacy area or den. No other shelter from the weather was provided. There was a rubberized 3' x 3' tub intended for bathing which appeared to be at least half empty.

Enrichment is carried out when time allows and is mostly food oriented. Logs drilled with holes and filled with honey, maple syrup or vegetables are used. Sometimes live catfish are placed in the water tub.

There was no educational signage at the black bear exhibit.

The bear enclosure was a distance of approximately 20' from an adjacent exhibit of two wild boars, and was at the end of a line of cages housing primarily domesticated animals. On the other side was a vacant hay field. There are plans to build a new enclosure for this bear, approximately twice as large, behind its present cage. I mentioned to Mr. Kellough that this is still too small an area, but I was led to believe that construction is constrained by budget considerations. This new enclosure is to be constructed in the very near future and will contain a separate shift area for keeper safety. Visitors were kept back from the bear cage by an exterior fence rail along the viewing area. The sides and back of the cage were closed by barriers so the front of the cage was the only area available for viewing. Due to the small size of the enclosure, however, it really was not possible for the bear to retreat from visitor view.

The bathtub appeared to be the only source of drinking water. Subsequent to my visit, Mr. Bergeron stated that a water bowl was present but could not be seen. I was told the bear's diet consists of fruits, vegetables, monkey chow, meat and fish which are presented on the ground in the morning. There were leftover greens in evidence at 1:00 p.m.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The current caging for the American black bear is undersized. According to the plans described to me, the new cage to be constructed, in which the bear may well spend the rest of her life, will be too small as well. According to Mr. Bergeron, "*Her new enclosure will approximately be 65' x 50 x 12' high.*" Mr. Kellough and the Bergerons are trying to provide good quality care and are certainly open to suggestions and comments, but seem to be restricted by financial considerations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Either find a more suitable home for the single bear at this facility, or ensure that funding is available to construct a new more suitably sized cage.
2. Research the available literature to learn more about the natural history of American black bears and their care in captivity . Use this information in management decisions to provide a more satisfying lifestyle for the bear.
3. Expand enrichment measures and ensure that they are incorporated into the daily routine, not just when time allows. A search of the enrichment literature will outline options for bears in captivity. One example of available information is the North Carolina Master Enrichment List contained in Chapter 1 (pp. 4-5) of this report.
4. Immediately provide a separate clean water bowl for drinking.
5. While awaiting the construction of the new enclosure, improve the cage furniture, privacy, shelter, etc. of the current one.
6. Where missing, erect proper educational signage such as is demonstrated in other parts of the sanctuary (common name, scientific name, geographic region, behavioural information and status).
7. Prohibit public feeding.
8. Install a perimeter fence around the entire facility to contain animals in case of escape and to protect the animals from intruders.

CANADIAN WILDLIFE EXPERIENCE

R.R. #1, Massey, Ontario P0P 1P0

River Road West, Spanish, Ontario

Owners Wilson and Doug Nuttall

Open by appointment for photographic purposes.

The Nuttalls are a father and son team who own and operate a facility that is open to photographers by appointment. The facility and surrounding countryside is extremely beautiful, and I have no doubt that it appeals greatly to naturalists and outdoor people. The facility started out as a drive-through safari park, but the Nuttalls have since decided to specialize in offering photo opportunities to amateur and professional photographers for a fee. Indigenous wildlife is featured in naturalistic settings incorporating invisible barriers such as moats, so that photographers can obtain photos that make the animals appear as though they were roaming free. However, because there is a demand that the animals be in view most of the time, some of the areas are smaller in size than they first appear.

Wilson Nuttall, the father, described how he will take photographers into the bear compounds if they wish, but insists that they do not touch or feed the animals. They must also sign a waiver before entering. He takes an electric prod with him for protection, but says he has not used it in several years. Despite the precautions taken, it's possible some dangerous situations could occur.

Doug Nuttall, the son, escorted me around part of the park and was very helpful in providing details. However, I was not allowed to take photographs.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS OF AMERICAN BLACK BEARS

There are two separate containment areas for bears.

The first houses the following:

Dan, male, born in 1993; obtained from Belleview Park Zoo in Sault Ste. Marie when the zoo closed down.

Rick, male, born 1995; obtained from an unknown source.

The bears were out of sight when we first drove up but came down to the fence, probably in anticipation of being fed. During the time that we observed them, they stood or sat watching us. Dan scratched himself slightly, but did not appear to be suffering from any skin problems. Both bears appeared to be in good physical condition. I didn't observe any stereotypic behaviours.

The enclosure is approximately one-quarter acre in size. Fencing is comprised of 6" gauge wire mesh, 8' in height, with the bottom extending beneath the ground into the paddock. Wooden posts keep the mesh upright and electric wire is strung across the top. The fence surrounds a natural forest area.

Within the compound the terrain is terraced granite rock with many trees, brush, ground cover and a small, muddy natural pool. The substrate is earth and rock. The only non-natural element within the compound is an old fuel tank that was provided as a den, with bedding, during the bears' first winter. Last winter they each dug their own dens and did not share, although they were close together.

There is no secondary barrier fence to keep visitors back. The owners may feel this is not desirable as all people are escorted to the site and the purpose is to get close to take photographs. There is no shift area to move the bears into while servicing the enclosure, and no regular cleaning is carried out — nature is allowed to take its own course in this regard. The paddock did not look unkempt.

No educational material on the bears or other animals is provided.

Doug commented that the two males sometimes wrestle each other, but there is generally little interaction between them. He thought they slept most of the day and were more active at night and early morning. He has never seen either up a tree.

Drinking water is provided in a bathtub that did not appear to be cleaned out regularly. All water has to be trucked to the site.

The bears' diet consists of fish, chicken and mink mix and is fed in the evening. Doug didn't feel that they needed produce. No doubt they find their own insects and berries within the enclosure.

No enrichment is offered. As the bears are living in an enclosed section of their natural habitat, they probably have sufficient things to occupy them such as marking, digging, manipulating logs, browse etc.

The second compound houses the following:

Danielle, female, born in 1994; obtained from Belleview Park Zoo in Sault Ste. Marie when the zoo closed down.

2 male cubs and 1 female cub, born January, 1998 (sire is Dan).

These had recently been moved out of the compound holding Dan and Rick, into this new area, which was not quite completed at the time of my visit.

This compound was constructed along the same lines as the previous one and was approximately the same size. This too had a natural promontory with trees, brush, etc. There was no pool. To prevent the cubs from escaping, a hot wire had been erected 2' above the ground, but at the time of our visit the cubs were not in the exhibit. Danielle was pacing the fence line, possibly looking for her cubs. She appeared to be in good physical condition overall. She made no vocalizations during the time that we were present.

I was informed that veterinary care is available locally, if needed.

GENERAL COMMENTS

There are no other species within sight of the two compounds but plenty of natural vegetation grows as the trail winds through the park, and on to other compounds containing wolves, lynx and other native animals.

If one is to keep bears in captivity, these compounds come close to the criteria that should be met.

There is space, shade and shelter, all provided by the natural environment. A larger, cleaner pool in the one area, and the addition of a pool in the other would improve conditions. The diet of the bears could be more varied, but the bears undoubtedly supplement it voluntarily during daily foraging activity within their exhibit.

Because photographers want to take photos of cubs, the Nuttalls said they plan to allow the bears to breed. They hope to sell the offspring as they get too old for photographic purposes and no doubt many of these will end up in unacceptable situations. Since black bears are already in a surplus situation in captivity, this will exacerbate the problem.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Cease any further breeding of American black bears.
2. Improve and expand the pool in the males' compound and develop a pool in the female/cubs compound.
3. Vary the diet by providing produce.

EARLTON ZOO

P.O. Box 430, Earlton, Ontario P0J 1E0
Owner Pierre Belanger (also owns trailer park next door)
Supervisor Daniel Heroux

Open May to September

Earlton Zoo is built on 34 acres of wooded land (opened in 1984) and boasts 200 animals representing 40 different species, ranging from Hamadryas baboons to moose, as well as a petting zoo. I observed one employee carrying an infant macaque wearing diapers, and attached to a leash, a practice I do not recommend.

There were aspects of this zoo I was impressed with: the huge treed paddocks for hoof stock, the moose-rearing program (it is extremely difficult to hand-raise young moose successfully); and the shady areas and benches made out of logs for visitors to rest. The grounds are clean and attractive and a 1.2 km trail meanders throughout, taking the visitor by exhibits of varying degrees of suitability for their animal inhabitants. At one end of the scale are the bear, primate and cat exhibits (too small and barren); one iguana at the front entrance had no heat lamp (it was a cool day) and a parrot in a small cage inside the gift shop. At the other end of the scale were the spacious, shady exhibits for zebra, white-tailed deer, caribou, etc. and a wolf enclosure complete with glass viewing area and detailed graphics.

An on-site restaurant features buffalo burgers provided by Mr. Belanger's nearby buffalo ranch. There are no seats inside, so this encourages people to wander around while eating. There are no signs to warn people not to feed the animals, and food dispensers are set up by some of the hoof stock cages. For 25 cents one is given a handful of grain to offer to the animals.

The zoo brochure mentions the availability of educational kits and tours, and boasts of conservation through reproduction of European bison (wisent), Siberian tigers and Trumpeter swans, in addition to their moose-rearing program and wolf reproduction study. Since the zoo makes a point of mentioning that they choose animals for their winter hardiness, I wonder how the Hamadryas baboons (a primate living in Africa) and an iguana (a lizard from Central and South America) were chosen. The lack, and shortness, of tails on the female baboons leads me to think that they may have been lost to frostbite.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS OF AMERICAN BLACK BEARS

Male, born in 1991, arrived at Earlton in 1992 from Amos, Quebec, orphan

Female, born in 1991, arrived at Earlton in 1992 from Amos, Quebec, orphan. These are siblings.

The bears appeared to be in reasonable physical condition. There were no visible signs of injuries or foot problems, despite living on a concrete substrate. I was informed that there are two local veterinarians who treat the animals, one of whom is experienced with wild animals. There is a regular vaccination and deworming program in place. Vet technicians from a nearby college do their internships at Earlton Zoo.

At the time of my visit, these two bears shared a woefully inadequate, octagonally-shaped wire mesh enclosure approximately 25' across at its widest point. Attached to the main enclosure is a shift cage

measuring approximately 10' x 8', in which an automatic drinking fountain was overflowing, causing a large wet patch. The roof was covered with wire mesh and the whole cage was in reasonably good repair. Metal posts support the mesh and the flooring is concrete. Shade is available from trees surrounding the pen and a piece of plywood placed on one side of the roof. A concrete den, approximately 6' x 5' x 6' in the larger cage, was filled with filthy packed-down bedding. The two bears share the den. A bathtub was embedded in the enclosure floor, and the bears used it after it was partially filled. The only furniture in the cage were two well-worn logs. No other enrichment was offered.

There is a heavy mesh barrier fence surrounding the cage, to protect visitors. I spoke with a temporary keeper who was taking care of the majority of the animals in the park that day (it was a weekend). He was hired for the summer and had been trained by supervisor Daniel Heroux. When asked about enrichment, he mentioned the logs and said that sometimes a log with ants is put in. There were hanging cables which apparently are used to suspend objects, but it was quite barren on my visit. Mr. Heroux has since indicated that several other enrichment strategies are utilized such as ice cubes with fruit frozen inside and live minnows in the water tub. Hamadryas baboons occupy a cage adjacent to the bears creating a modest degree of visual stimulation. On the other side of the bear pen is the paddock where moose-rearing takes place.

The bears are shifted from one cage to the other for cleaning, which has to be done with very basic, and possibly inadequate, tools. The keeper hosed down the cage (this is done on a daily basis) after scooping up the feces with a small shovel and old broom, but no scrubbing or disinfecting was done at the time. Water pressure was poor. One medium-sized lock secured the gate.

The diet consists of "seconds" produce from a local grocery store (on my visit there were strawberries, pineapple, oranges and peaches, all in good condition), dog chow and sometimes fish. One major problem is that the keeper had prepared diets for all the animal collection in his care in the morning, loaded each bucket onto a wagon attached to a small three-wheeled tractor, and made his way around the park, cleaning as he went. By the time he had reached the bear enclosure in early afternoon, the food had been contaminated by flies. The food was fed directly on the concrete substrate in the smaller enclosure after it had been hosed down. This was used as an incentive to get the bears to shift to that cage. Public feeding of the bears is not allowed.

There are no plans to prevent the bears from breeding and Mr. Heroux stated that any potential cubs could be sold to another zoo; however, given the inadequate facilities for bears at most Ontario zoos, and the surplus of bear cubs in captivity, this is not a responsible option.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The present enclosure for the bears is quite unacceptable and reminiscent of an earlier time in zoo history when animals were considered as objects to be stared at and ridiculed. The bears could not get away from the view of the public or each other, and had little to occupy themselves with. Fortunately, a larger, one-quarter acre compound was being constructed for them. The fence posts had already been dug at the time of my visit. It is located in a wooded area adjacent to wild boar and zebra and will be of wire mesh construction. Hopefully, consideration will be given to providing the bears with shelter, privacy, pool, behavioural enrichment, etc.

In an October 1998 telephone conversation, Mr. Heroux described the new enclosure as having a

shift section for keeper safety, dens for hibernation, climbing structures, toys and a pool. The bears were moved to this new facility in the spring of 1999.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Enrichment should be considered part of the daily routine. A search of the enrichment literature will outline options for bears in captivity. One example of available information is the North Carolina Master Enrichment List contained in Chapter 1 (pp. 4-5) of this report.
2. Feed the bears small amounts during the day, ensuring that the food is not infested with flies. Cover the food buckets until they are delivered to the appropriate area, to prevent contamination.
3. Vasectomize the male bear, as soon as possible, to prevent breeding.

GREENVIEW AVIARIES, PARK AND ZOO

Hwy. 3, Morpeth (R.R. #1, Ridgetown), Ontario N0P 2C0

Owners Allen and Mary Ellen Greenway

Open May - mid-October

In her 1997 report, Dr. Samantha Lindley goes into detail about the inadequate facilities and I will not repeat her comments, other than to state that I was appalled by the conditions in which the mammals in particular were forced to live.

This privately-owned zoo began as a dog kennel for American Eskimo dogs and grew, with animals being added in a seemingly haphazard manner. In addition to the animals, there is also something called "Shakespeareland" adjacent to the zoo.

A restaurant is located on site, and food, including sugar coated cereal, is sold for feeding to the animals.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS OF AMERICAN BLACK BEAR

Banjo, female, age not known, cinnamon phase; originally from Winnipeg.

This animal seemed obese and appeared to have some health problems. She urinated for a long period of time, licked the liquid, walked around while dripping urine, drank some water, then urinated and licked the liquid again. She waddled when she walked and appeared to be arthritic. During my visit, she slept a good portion of the time. When awake and walking around, she seemed quite oblivious to her surroundings. She did not look out past the confines of her cage, nor take any interest in anything except food thrown to her by visitors.

The cage is extremely small, an L-shape approximately 20' wide at the widest point, narrowing down to 15'. The length is approximately 32'. Wire mesh is affixed to steel pipe supports to a height of 7', with wire mesh also across the roof. The substrate is concrete. There are flower beds on two exterior sides of the cage, with a wire mesh visitor barrier and wood rail on top around the other sides. This barrier is too low; taller people can easily reach over and put their fingers into the cage. In the front portion of the "L" there is the base of a barren tree trunk.

At the back of the "L", a concrete den provides the only potential area of privacy for the bear. No bedding was visible. A pool measuring approximately 4' x 2' is too small and shallow to contain the bear. At the time of my visit the cage had recently been hosed down and there were bits of feces and other debris that had been deposited between the cage and the visitor barrier. Apart from being unsightly, it increases the chances zoonoses (the transmission of diseases between animals and humans).

Shade is provided by a piece of plywood on top of the cage at the front and back of the enclosure. There is a shift section near the den area, to segregate the bear during cleaning. The locking mechanism consisted of one lock on the steel mesh frame door, with a chain around it. The exhibit itself is in the centre of a pathway connecting to other parts of the zoo and visitors pass by on all sides of the cage. Sheep, goats, porcupines and llamas were in the adjacent exhibits. One plastic drum and a

piece of PVC pipe were the only furniture in the cage.

I was told the bear's diet consists of "some meat", vegetables, oranges and bread. A round metal container, with some rust on it, was the source for drinking water.

GENERAL COMMENTS

This facility appears to be a local tourist attraction. There is no attempt at conservation or education, other than a pamphlet handed out which gives a small amount of information about each exhibit animal. I spoke to Mrs. Greenway who was very cautious in answering questions when I spoke to her, and seemed reluctant to provide details. I counted four staff members caring for animals. There is little or no regard for the psychological or physical wellbeing of the bear and she seems destined to spend her life in a tiny prison-like environment, isolated from anything that might be considered natural.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The bear appears to have health problems. Conduct a full veterinary assessment and treat accordingly.
2. Relocate the bear to more suitable accommodation elsewhere as soon as possible.
3. Until the bear can be relocated, make enrichment part of the daily husbandry routine. For example, offer feeder and dangling logs; add unusual scents; provide a soft substrate area; re-assess diet and adjust; provide bedding in the den; and erect visual barriers for privacy (hard to do in such a confined area). A search of the enrichment literature will outline options for bears in captivity. One example of available information is the North Carolina Master Enrichment List contained in Chapter 1 (pp. 4-5) of this report.
4. Cease selling sugar coated cereal as animal feed.

JUNGLE CAT WORLD

**3667 Concession 6, R.R. #1, Orono, Ontario L0B 1M0
Owners Krista and Wolfram Klose**

At the time of my visit there were no American black bears on-site. The three American black bears previously housed at Jungle Cat World have been disposed of as follows:

One bear to Bergeron's Exotic Animal Sanctuary, Picton, Ontario.

Two siblings to Northwood Buffalo and Exotic Animal Ranch, Seagrave, Ontario (Note: I saw only one bear that might answer this description at Northwood, although a second young bear was in an off-exhibit cage).

Cougars now occupy the American black bear pen. Two grizzly bears are exhibited in the pen the cougars were moved from.

THE KILLMAN ZOO

**237 Unity Road E., Caledonia, Ontario N3W 2H7
Owners Stephen and Mark Killman**

I visited this facility, which houses one American black bear, twice, the second time returning in order to videotape the enclosure. It is yet another example of a zoo set up without regard to many of the needs of the animals. While the majority of animals were provided with shade from trees on the property, most were in cages that were much too small, with no privacy and little or nothing to do. The public pathway meanders around the rows of small cages lined up one after another. A gift shop, the sale of domesticated animals such as ferrets as pets, as well as buffalo meat, help to make ends meet, but the operation does not appear profitable.

The day of my second visit was extremely hot and Mr. Killman was busily carrying buckets of water around to replenish small water bowls in various cages, suggesting to me that there were no water pipes in the more outlying areas of the zoo. A perimeter fence separates the animal containment area from the road, but I was unable to determine if it went completely around the property.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS OF AMERICAN BLACK BEAR

Jeana , female, born 1995; former Alberta zoo owner declawed her in order to bottle-feed her. Arrived at Killman's August 10, 1997.

The decision to declaw an animal in order to bottle-feed her is unacceptable. Having personally hand-raised bear cubs, I can attest to the fact that it is possible to protect oneself from sharp claws by simply wearing appropriate clothing. Jeana apparently was also trained to respond to various commands. At the Killman Zoo, she appeared to be in good physical condition; her coat was shiny and her molt complete. During my visits she spent considerable time begging for food or pacing the fence line.

The bear cage is one of the better exhibits on the property, and looked relatively new. It is built of wire mesh fencing and wooden support posts, approximately 60' x 50' x 8' high with a wire overhang. One strand of electric wire is strung about 5' above the ground, and there is no roof on the cage. The substrate is natural soil and there is one large tree. Adjacent to this is a climbing structure made of wood, with a ramp leading down at either end. The only shelter provided is a wooden crate under the climbing structure. It wasn't possible to see if there was bedding in it. On my first visit, a large portion of the ground was muddy from recent rains. Only a small portion of the front section is accessible to visitors, with the rest cordoned off with mesh. The enclosure does not appear to have a shift cage to isolate the bear for cleaning and maintenance. The brochure shows a photo of Mark Killman standing next to a begging Jeana so it would appear as though he does enter the cage on occasion.

A small metal bowl in a wooden container was provided for drinking water, but it was empty.

A sign on the cage states that the bear has never eaten red meat. Her diet consists of fruit, vegetables and dog chow. There were bits of leftover food, oranges, what looked like bamboo and many peanut shells. Peanuts are sold as animal feed. Some relatively fresh feces were in evidence, but not an over-

abundance.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Compared to many of the cages at this facility, this one was superior. Some effort had been taken to provide privacy and room. The bushes and single tree contained in the exhibit, as well as the forest behind the fence, created the impression for visitors of being in the bear's natural environment, if not for the bear. She was exhibiting stereotypic behaviour, possibly due to boredom.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Provide some tree stumps and movable natural objects for the bear to manipulate, and incorporate enrichment as part of the daily routine. A search of the enrichment literature will outline options for bears in captivity. One example of available information is the North Carolina Master Enrichment List contained in Chapter 1 (pp. 4-5) of this report.
2. Stop the sale of animal feed.
3. Install a pool in the bear enclosure.
4. Vary the diet more, and offer several feedings throughout the day.
5. Construct a shift cage, to ensure keeper safety.
6. If not already the case, ensure that the perimeter fence surrounds the entire facility to contain animals in case of escape and to protect the animals from intruders.

LAZY ACRE FARM

**R.R.#3, Allenford, Ontario N0H 1A0
Owners Ann and Dieter Von Richter**

Lazy Acre Farm is a riding stable with a side menagerie of wild animals. The Von Richters, who operate the facility, own 45 horses and offer trail rides. Various pens of animals surround the farmhouse and stable yard and the animal collection appears to be unplanned. According to Mrs. Von Richter, some animals were purchased through an exotic animal auction held near Niagara Falls, while others were brought for “rehabilitation” from the Ministry of Natural Resources.

The pens were very tiny and unsuitable for most of the animals. Shade was available to most animals, but not all of them. Drinking water was lacking in many cages. There was no perimeter fence around the facility. Grain was sold at a dispenser. Ostensibly, only the goats were allowed to be fed by the public, but there was no method that I could see of ensuring this was the case. The only staff members I observed seemed to be connected with the riding stable aspect of the business and none were caring for the wild animals during my visit. The overall appearance was one of an afterthought (a whim) tacked on to the main business of a riding stable. In contrast, the horses were well cared for.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS OF AMERICAN BLACK BEAR

Jasper, male, born 1996; hand-raised in British Columbia.

During my visit, the bear paced ceaselessly along the front of the fence line looking only in the vicinity of the house, as though waiting for someone. He had a very poor molt and seemed oblivious to his surroundings.

The size of the enclosure is approximately one-quarter acre contained by 12' high wire mesh fencing with two strands of hot wire along the top and one where the upper and lower portions of the fencing join, about 5' above the ground. Cedar posts hold the wire secured with rusty fence staples. There was no roof over the pen. Some sections of the mesh were sagging at the top, especially the section between the main pen and the small side cage. This side cage apparently was meant to be used as a shift pen, but it looked as though it would be necessary to enter the main cage in order to close the gate on this side pen. I was told that only Mr. Von Richter went in with the bear. There was no double gate on the main cage to prevent an escape should the bear slip past Mr. Von Richter as he enters the pen. There were no locks on the main gate — only a simple bar which any passerby could lift.

Brush and trees surrounded the pen on three sides, but it would have been quite easy for anyone to walk around the small barrier placed in front of the main gate and go right up to the pen itself. On the pathway leading from the bear enclosure to the lynx and Rhesus macaque cages, only one piece of yellow rope was erected as a barrier for visitors. Anyone could easily walk under it and approach the bear or lynx cages.

Inside the pen were three tall, thin trees; it is unlikely that a bear could climb them. A pile of rocks near the middle of the pen appeared to have no purpose. They were too low to be able to provide an area to climb. Adjacent to the small shift pen was a den made out of a wooden crate, approximately 10' x 5', filled with what appeared to be dirty bedding. The overall substrate of the cage was earth and

weeds. A certain amount of privacy was afforded by the trees growing around the exhibit. The only evidence of enrichment was a blue plastic drum.

The diet appeared to be fresh produce, but was covered in flies at the time of visit. There were leftover tomatoes, squash and oranges.

No water could be seen, nor any container for it, other than possibly the blue drum. On the day of my visit it was extremely hot and the bear appeared uncomfortable. His pacing only ceased when he was offered grass, and only then very briefly.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Fresh drinking water should always be available for captive wild animals, especially during the hot summer days typically experienced in Ontario. As stated earlier in the Introduction, a bear can readily succumb to heatstroke, and should always be able to drink when desired.

The barrenness of the enclosure reflects a general lack of understanding of the psychological needs of wild animals. When asked why there were wild animals at a riding stable, the trail leader replied, “They give the riders something to do while they’re waiting to go out on the trail ride”. There is no attempt to educate visitors about wild animals, and conservation is not a factor.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Ensure that the bear has access to drinking water at all times.
2. Implement an intensive enrichment program including climbing structures, tree trunks, branches, privacy areas and other natural objects. A search of the enrichment literature will outline options for bears in captivity. One example of available information is the North Carolina Master Enrichment List contained in Chapter 1 (pp. 4-5) of this report. Stereotypic behaviour is almost impossible to stop once it has begun, but an effort should be given to distracting the bear so he engages in other activities. His regular pacing area could be broken up by adding logs, toys, etc., so that he must alter his route. Insects, berries, grasses should be offered at various times during the day.
3. Provide a pool for bathing.
4. Install a perimeter fence around the entire facility to contain animals in case of escape and to protect the animals from intruders.

NOTE: LAZY ACRE FARM IS NOW CLOSED.

LICKETY-SPLIT RANCH “THE ZOO”

**1292 Scotland Drive, London, Ontario N6N 1L
Owners Dean and Shirley McElroy
Open May 24 to Labour Day**

This family-owned and operated facility is situated on several acres of property adjacent to the McElroy residence. The owner was friendly and stated that he feels he's doing a good job with the zoo. He started out raising birds (as a member of a local bird club) and progressed to hand-raising lions, tigers and jaguars, gradually acquiring other animals from different sources.

Leftover old food and feces were evident throughout the zoo during my visit. Water bowls appeared dirty. Most of the cages were too small (an agouti in a tiny crate) or inappropriate (an iguana displayed in a wire cage). With the exception of the tiger and bear, the animals had no opportunity to withdraw from view or to get away from the proximity of visitors. No appreciation of social groupings was in evidence (there was a single macaque, a social primate species, housed alone). There were also a number of domesticated animals. My overall impression was that this was somebody's menagerie of pets and that the number of animals had outgrown the resources of the people involved.

Apart from attempting to care for the animals' basic survival needs (food, water, shelter), there did not appear to be any attempt to satisfy other aspects of wellbeing, such as psychological health.

The zoo was not surrounded by a perimeter fence to prevent animals from leaving the property in the event of an escape or to prevent injury by human vandals.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS OF AMERICAN BLACK BEAR

Male, born 1997; arrived from either Quebec or Ontario as an orphan in June 1998.

The cage is set back partly behind the jaguar cages and visitors are prevented from approaching by a stand-off barrier. The back of the pen abuts the property line and the remaining side is adjacent to the owners' lawn. Consequently it was impossible to approach the cage to determine the physical condition of the bear. The pen is constructed of wire mesh with wooden support posts on an earth substrate. It measures approximately 25' x 15' x 15'. The wire mesh roof contained bent and open areas. Interior furnishings consisted of a few wooden stumps on the ground, a bathtub (I couldn't see whether it contained water) and a wooden crate (6' x 5'). The bear paced continuously in and out of the crate during my visit, seemingly oblivious to his surroundings. No shade areas were available for the bear (except the interior of the crate).

There is no separate shift cage. Apparently, the owner's son goes in with the bear.

I was told the bear's diet consists of dog chow, peanuts, fruit and donuts. No food container was visible and food is presumably presented to the bear right on the ground. A water bowl was not evident; it appears the bathtub serves this function as well. Public feeding is not promoted.

I was not able to determine whether or not regular parasite control, vaccinations or other veterinary

care is provided.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Although the bear is just one year old and has only been at the facility for two months, the owner said he hibernated during the winter with food being withheld to induce hibernation.

This is yet another example of an individual who may have good intentions but who seems ignorant of basic husbandry and care of exotic animals. Cages do not appear to be cleaned regularly; water bowls are not scrubbed, wire mesh is not cleaned properly (particularly necessary in primate cages) and enrichment is not made available. In addition, many of the animals would have to be moved to a warmer environment during the cold winter months, and probably spend many months in even more cramped conditions than that which they find themselves in the summer. I observed only a small barn-like structure to one side.

This bear may yet be young enough to rehabilitate to the wild, but an expert assessment would have to be made in this regard. If the bear were removed from its present cage in the immediate future, and enrichment provided, it might be possible to cure the stereotypic pacing behaviour.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Make efforts as soon as possible to find a more appropriate home for this bear. Rehabilitation and release options should be evaluated by a professional.
2. In the interim, enrich the current enclosure through the addition of logs with intact bark, branches and other browse, a pool, olfactory stimulation, etc. A search of the enrichment literature will outline options for bears in captivity. One example of available information is the North Carolina Master Enrichment List contained in Chapter 1 (pp. 4-5) of this report.
3. Stop the feeding of donuts and peanuts. Replace with other foods as listed on the North Carolina Zoo Master Enrichment List.
4. Install a perimeter fence around the entire facility to contain animals in case of escape and to protect the animals from intruders.

MARINELAND OF CANADA

7657 Portage Road, Niagara Falls, Ontario
Owners John and Marie Holer (through a corporation)
Open May to mid-October

This facility is an amusement park featuring a number of animal exhibits, including several in which visitors can feed the animals and others in which animals perform. Other experts have written reports regarding the killer whale show, the over-crowded deer park and other aspects of this facility (see Distorted Nature: Exposing the Myth of Marineland, May, 1998), so I will not elaborate, other than to discuss the bear exhibit. There did not seem to be a perimeter fence around the facility to contain animals in case of escape and to protect the animals from intruders.

The bear exhibit is located across a pathway from two rides — one featuring rotating chairs that have artificial bears perched on top. Marineland seems to be primarily an entertainment facility, with little or no emphasis on education and conservation.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS OF THE AMERICAN BLACK BEARS

The bear exhibit is approximately three to five acres in size, if one includes the pool area. In itself this is a reasonable size to exhibit a few bears, but not as many as the twenty I counted, and there may have been more. The coat condition of all of the bears was very poor — dull, and the winter molt had not been completed, even though summer was well upon us during my visit.

As bears do not live in groups, the overcrowding would create considerable stress to these animals. Several of the bears had evidence of scars. I observed ripped ears on a few, a wound on the right shoulder of another, and another bear with a piece of hide ripped off his flank. In my professional opinion these wounds are evidence of fighting. Indeed, there have been reports that bears have killed one another in view of the general public (ibid). It appeared to me that certain bears had developed a tiny “territory” into which others ventured at their peril. One had staked out a shoreline area to one side. A few had spots in the pool. One other remained near the back area by a large boulder. Upon further exploration I found several bears which had retreated out of sight at the back of the enclosure, or to one side. Those around the pool spent their time begging for food.

The exhibit’s land area is a gravelly, earth substrate with a few large boulders and some grass. There is no shade, other than what can be found along the fence line — certainly not anywhere near acceptable for this number of bears. The natural habitat of bears includes woods where they can seek shade during the heat of the day. This is critical as bears do not sweat and must be able to stay cool. As a result of the lack of shade, the bears at Marineland are subjected to the full impact of the heat which could possibly contribute to health problems.

The visitor viewing area is a raised concrete platform with railings overlooking the pool area of the bear exhibit. Parts of the viewing area project further into the pool, to allow more visitors to stand up close to the railings, which do not seem adequate enough to prevent someone from toppling into the pool. The raised design of this viewing area automatically makes the visitor look down at the bears in the pool — a throwback to the old pit design that was so popular when bears were first exhibited and which is now considered an outdated mode of exhibition within the modern zoological field. The bears are at a psychological disadvantage in this type of environment where humans are hovering

above them. This situation does nothing to demonstrate the natural personality of these animals. Nor does it engender an attitude of respect.

The pool is made of concrete, with paint that seemed to increase the glare on the water. This glare must be extremely hard on the eyes of the bears. A concrete lip is found on the edge of the pool, and there are several rock outcroppings within the pool on which the bears can lie. I observed seagulls, blackbirds and starlings eating food thrown to the bears by visitors and defecating into the water. The water was dirty and appeared to be the only source of drinking water for the bears. I could not see any evidence of an exhibit filtration system for the pool, which appeared to be connected to other ponds nearby.

The sides and portions of the back wall of the exhibit are constructed of upright wooden posts, with electric fencing on top. At the very back of the enclosure there appear to be five den areas. The dens did not appear to be used, possibly because a bear would fear to be trapped inside if another bear entered. These dens are dug into the side of a hill and upon further examination, it became apparent that there was no barrier to prevent members of the public who walk behind the exhibit from climbing up to stand on top of the dens. To one side of the dens is a chain link entrance gate, with no secondary visitor barrier. Several bears were lying in the small amount of shade offered at this area, and it would have been quite easy to stick my hand in. There is no barrier to prevent people from walking down the service path to reach this area, and indeed I saw visitors doing that very thing.

Outside the exhibit, at the rear there is a platform which appears to be used by the keepers to throw the daily food supply in to the bears. I observed leftover cabbage, carrots and bananas on the other side of this platform. In literature supplied by Marineland's public relations department, it states that the bears are fed fish, meat, fruits and vegetables at night-time. I was unable to determine whether the food was scattered throughout the exhibit; however, the existence of the aforementioned platform seems to indicate that it isn't. Given the number of bears in the exhibit, the placing of food in one area only could lead to fights and uneven distribution of food items.

I saw no shift area where bears could be segregated so that keepers can safely service the exhibit, or respond to a problem or emergency without being in contact with the bears.

There is a kiosk in the visitor area of the bear exhibit where "bear food," an ice cream cone cup containing miniature marshmallows (\$1.35 each), is sold to members of the public. On the day of my visit many visitors were throwing this "food" to the bears reinforcing their begging behaviours. Upon enquiry I was informed by a Marineland employee that on a busy day as many as 400 cups of marshmallows are sold. I can't imagine how many marshmallows each bear must consume over the course of a year. Considering that marshmallows are primarily sugar, it is a wonder that the bears have any teeth left whatsoever; indeed, I saw a good deal of evidence of dental and gum disease.

Marineland may try to justify the practice by saying that bears like sweets, but it is doing untold harm to the bears who consume them.

GENERAL COMMENTS

I consider the environment in which these bears are forced to exist extremely stressful. The close quarters for so many animals and the lack of shade are factors that could readily be alleviated. The health and wellbeing of the bears is not being addressed; they appear to me to be treated merely as objects and might just as well be robotic instead of living, breathing creatures; however, a few changes could make the bears' lives far more acceptable. In an attempt to obtain more information, I contacted the marketing department, which sent me a two-page information sheet containing some basic information about the natural history of American black bears. This information should be available at the exhibit. I also made several attempts to speak to Animal Curator, Mr. Dave Perri, but he did not return my phone calls.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Immediately stop the sale of marshmallows as food for the bears. This could be an opportunity for Marineland to educate visitors as to the importance of a properly balanced diet for bears (as well as for the other animals), and could be used as a public relations vehicle. The bears may continue to beg, having been conditioned to do so; therefore, the public should be informed about the reasons for the change in public feeding policy.
2. Reduce the number of bears to ten or less. The size of the exhibit is reasonable for this number and could be made much more attractive, to both the public and the bears, by the addition of several climbing trees, stumps and logs, browse, bush and privacy areas. It could even be expanded in size without too much difficulty. In Europe, groups of unrelated bears have been successfully exhibited together in large enclosures (International Bear Foundation Workshop on Captive Bear Management, 1996), improving animal welfare and simultaneously, providing a very satisfying experience for the general public. Marineland's popularity could be enhanced by studying the experiences of facilities such as the Rhenen Bear Forest in the Netherlands.
3. Provide shade, either artificially through man-made structures or else by the planting of trees protected from the bears by barriers.
4. Do a full veterinary assessment on each bear and treat accordingly.
5. Develop a program for environmental enrichment of the bear exhibit. A search of the enrichment literature will outline options for bears in captivity. One example of available information is the North Carolina Master Enrichment List contained in Chapter 1 (pp. 4-5) of this report.
6. Provide a separate shifting area so that keepers can regularly service the area safely.
7. Provide better educational signage for the general public.
8. Spread food evenly throughout the exhibit to ensure that all bears get an even share.
9. Install a filtration system in the pool and provide additional sources of drinking water.
10. Install a perimeter fence around the entire facility to contain animals in case of escape and to

protect the animals from intruders.

NORTHWOOD BUFFALO AND EXOTIC ANIMAL RANCH

2192 Cookson Lane, R.R. #2, Seagrave, Ontario L0C 1G0

Owner Noman E. Phillips

Open May to Thanksgiving

This is a privately-owned facility situated on sixty scenic acres of land on a dead-end road near Port Perry, Ontario. Some of Mr. Phillips' animals have been used in movies and commercials, and his brochure mentions cougars, tigers and bears in this regard. Mr. Phillips is a non-accredited member of CAZA. At the time of my visit Mr. Phillips was caring for the entire collection with the assistance of only one other person; during the week he has other help as well.

Mr. Phillips obtains his animals from zoos that have closed down and from private owners who no longer wish to care for their animals. He encourages school groups to visit by offering a 10% discount on the admission fee.

The collection includes a wide variety of animal species from big cats (lions, tigers, jaguars) to primates (macaques, a single gibbon) to bears (two grizzlies, one polar bear and three American black bears). The conditions under which these animals were kept varied a great deal. Some were in cages that were too small (most of primates); others were in larger compounds (grizzlies and polar bear). Some had no shade (Siberian tigers, polar bear, grizzly bears) while others had treed shady areas (bigger black bear enclosure, cougars). None were provided with environmental enrichment. Some cages had no signs to say what was exhibited and at least two were incorrect (tiger was signed as a jaguar, jaguar was signed as tiger).

Some of the animals were obese, possibly due to lack of exercise. Public feeding is allowed and there are dispensers near the monkey cages (peanuts) and bear cage (grain).

There is no perimeter fence around the facility to contain animals in case of escape and to protect the animals from intruders.

I was alarmed to see the enclosure for the polar bear. It is very large (about three acres and contains a large pond), but the barrier is simple 8' wire mesh fencing with electric hot-wire. As mentioned above, there is no shade in this exhibit. There is also no visitor barrier fence. At the time of my visit the polar bear was sitting by one corner and anyone could easily have stuck his/her fingers in through the mesh. Polar bears are crafty animals. In the wild they will wait for long periods of time on ice floes for a seal to appear at a blowhole before striking. Indeed, of all the various species of animals that I have worked with as a zoo keeper, the polar bears are the animals I respected and feared the most. It should be a concern that this polar bear could escape and also that there is no secondary barrier to contain it should it escape. The grizzly bears are exhibited under similar circumstances.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS OF AMERICAN BLACK BEARS

Although I saw only two American black bears, Mr. Phillips stated that a third was in the barn. This female was apparently being kept there until she was older, as she would have climbed out if put into the exhibit area.

This information puzzled me as I had been previously informed that Northwood had acquired a brother and sister from Jungle Cat World. If this is indeed accurate, then the male bear I observed was

too large to climb over the top of his enclosure; similarly, his sister should not have been able to do so either.

Mr. Phillips told me he does much of his own routine veterinary work (vaccinations, etc.) but does call in an exotic animal veterinarian for more serious problems.

The bears' diet consists of whole chickens, dog food and fruit, and is dispersed once a day. Food is withheld in winter and the bears are encouraged to hibernate.

The two American black bears I observed are kept in radically different environments.

Ben, male, adult, origin unknown.

Ben is famous locally for appearances in movies and television programs. His enclosure is very small (24' x 30'), consisting of wire mesh fencing 6' high with electric hot-wire on the top. The substrate is earth and there is a small den that provides the only shade. There is no water for bathing and the plastic container for drinking water had only a small amount of dirty water in it during my visit. The pen contained no climbing structure or privacy area.

There is no shift area to move the bear into when servicing the pen.

No visitor barrier surrounds Ben's pen. In fact, people are encouraged to buy food to feed to him.

Male, about two years old, from Jungle Cat World.

In contrast to Ben's small pen, the other bear on exhibit has quite a large treed area approximately 60' x 60', with wire mesh and electric hotwire on the top. This enclosure is located down the hill in a wooded lot and is adjacent to cougar and Arctic wolf pens, all newly constructed.

At the time of my visit there was a single male bear in this pen, whom I believe had only recently been moved from the small pen next to Ben's. Presumably the young female will be moved to this new enclosure at a later date. The male was pacing up and down the fence line, and I assume this was a stereotypic pattern developed while the bear had been living in a smaller environment. His coat appeared in good condition and he looked physically healthy.

This enclosure was well treed with plenty of shade. I doubt if the bear could have climbed any of the trees because of their small size, and there were no other climbing structures visible. The substrate is soil and grass. At one end there is what appears to be a den facing away from the public viewing side. There is no pool in this enclosure and drinking water is provided in a heavy plastic container.

There is no apparent shift area in the new enclosure to move the bear to while cleaning.

A visitor barrier fence surrounds the bear and wolf pens.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The single most outstanding issue is the stark contrast in which the two male bears are kept. It seems a great pity that Ben (who is quite famous locally) remains in an area that is totally inadequate, while a relatively new arrival is favoured with a much larger and more bear-friendly environment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. If a new pen in the wooded area cannot be constructed for Ben in the near future, then I recommend that, as an interim measure, the two vacant pens adjacent to Ben's be opened up to allow him access to a much larger area than what he has been accustomed to.
2. Provide shaded areas, climbing structures and a pool for Ben, and install a pool in the larger enclosure.
3. Build a visitor barrier fence for Ben's enclosure. While it may be argued that Ben is accustomed to people and that there is no necessity to construct a visitor barrier fence, it is always better to be safe than sorry when it comes to the problems, including liability, associated with injuries to visitors in zoos.
4. Incorporate enrichment into the daily routine, particularly for Ben. Install a series of logs and boulders in the region where the young male bear in the large enclosure paces, in an attempt to alter his stereotypical pacing. A search of the enrichment literature will outline options for bears in captivity. One example of available information is the North Carolina Master Enrichment List contained in Chapter 1 (pp. 4-5) of this report.
5. Install a perimeter fence around the entire facility to contain animals in case of escape and to protect the animals from intruders.

PAPANACK PARK ZOO

150 Nine Mile Road, Wendover, Ontario K0A 3K0

Owners Keith & Diane Forgie

Open May through Thanksgiving, Christmas & March Break

This is a privately owned facility which opened to the public in 1994. The motto on their business card is "Preservation and Conservation through Education" and their brochure describes outreach programs, junior zoo keeper camp, school field trips and birthday parties, club zoo (a weekend workshop for adults), zoo membership and animal sponsorship. During July and August, Papanack Park Zoo also features a daily "Meet the Keeper" program, followed by a feeding of the felines, with various other animal feedings scheduled throughout the day.

With the stated emphasis on education, it's unfortunate that the signage on the cages leaves much to be desired. There is little or no information provided about any of the animals. I did ask questions of the staff, who were all courteous and friendly, but not all visitors will do so and signs would enhance the zoo's education mandate.

Papanack Park Zoo is a participant in the Species Survival Program for snow leopards, but currently has only one female, although a male obtained from Europe is expected soon. The female, Georgina, is currently in a small cage; according to the owner, she was uncomfortable in a larger cage but is "happy" in the smaller one.

This is yet another facility that does not seem to consider shade a vital factor for many wild animals, particularly mammals. On the day of my visit the temperature was in the 90s (Fahrenheit scale) and several animals appeared stressed as they lay in the baking sun. The timber wolves had dug out dens in which to retreat; the silver fox had nowhere to go in its small cage and scratched constantly; the hyena stayed inside its concrete bunker. It may be argued that they can survive these high temperatures, but surely the goal is to keep animals as comfortable as possible in captivity. Ironically, shade is provided in a picnic area for the human visitors, and ice cream and soda pop are available for sale.

The cages were generally quite clean. Water dishes were not visible but were said to be inside the shelters.

The trailer where admissions are taken sold popcorn and guinea pig chow as feed for the farm animals. There is a sign asking that food not be given to the cats. Unfortunately, many children and adults ignore signs.

Some of the cages were reasonably sized (timber wolves) while others were undersized (macaws in a wire mesh cage approximately 6' x 4' x 4'). Most had visitor stand-off barriers.

Apart from feeding tubes in the baboon and raccoon cages, there was little evidence of environmental enrichment. The lone baboon was trying very hard to play with what was left of a frisbee, but the best enrichment for him would have been a companion, as baboons live in troops.

Mr. Forgie spoke to me about his computer program that calculated properly balanced diets for infants, as they hand-raise a number of offspring each year.

There is no perimeter fence to contain animals in case of escape and to protect the animals from intruders.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS OF AMERICAN BLACK BEARS

Ben, male, transferred from the Belleview Park Zoo in Sault Ste. Marie

Midge, female, transferred from the Belleview Park Zoo in Sault Ste. Marie

Papanack Park Zoo has two adult American black bears, a male named Ben and a female named Midge (although the brochure refers to Bernice), both from the Belleview Park Zoo in Sault Ste. Marie which has closed down. During the time of my visit, the male, Ben, did not cease pacing the fence line, while the female slept for the most part in the only area of shade available. The male appeared to be overweight but otherwise, both were in good physical condition. As all the animals appeared to be physically healthy, I am assuming that they do receive veterinary attention.

The enclosure measures approximately 72' x 24' surrounded by wire mesh fencing angled inward at the top. The mesh is supported by wooden posts with the lower portion buried into the ground. At one end is a small wooden building that at first glance appeared to be the sleeping and shifting quarters for the bears. On closer inspection, I discovered that there was no connecting method to make it accessible to the bears. The substrate of the enclosure is natural soil with grass/weed cover. A dirt mound with the interior excavated serves as a den. It appeared to be too small for the male to fit into. On top of this den was a single log for climbing. At the far end is a glass viewing window which looks out over a dried-up waterhole. To its right is a small wooden shelter, approximately 3' x 3', which again appeared to be too small for the male to utilize.

There was a metal container for drinking water. According to staff, the diet of the bears consists of meat, fish and chicken obtained from a local abattoir. No vegetables were mentioned. No food was visible in the cage. There is a wooden climbing structure at one side that apparently is used to throw food to the bears.

The bear enclosure is off to one side of the zoo and a considerable distance away from the timber wolves and cougars, the two closest exhibits.

A 4½' high wire mesh and wood visitor barrier fence surrounds the cage, but there are obvious signs, where the mesh has been bent, that visitors have climbed over to get closer to the bears.

When I inquired about the bears reproducing, Mr. Forgie said that he would only do so if he had an order for a bear cub. Otherwise, he will separate them for one week during the female's oestrous cycle in June.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The size of the enclosure is small for two bears, but could be improved by properly designing and outfitting the interior, utilizing environmental enrichment strategies, and providing privacy areas. The male bear paced continuously in a stereotypical pattern.

Both bears were utilizing only a very small portion of the cage, possibly because of the lack of shade in the remaining area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Provide additional shade through the use of shade cloth on the external perimeter of the cage as a short-term solution. Over the long term, plant fast-growing species of trees (protected from the bears) within the cage as well as along the exterior perimeter of the cage.
2. Enlarge the den area to provide shade and shelter for both bears.
3. Incorporate enrichment as part of the daily husbandry routine. Develop a system of tree stumps and other obstacles in the corner where the male bear paces, in an effort to alter his pattern. It is almost impossible to stop stereotypic behaviours once they've developed, but modifications to exhibits have been known to help. A search of the enrichment literature will outline other options for bears in captivity. One example of available information is the North Carolina Master Enrichment List contained in Chapter 1 (pp. 4-5) of this report.
4. Build privacy areas and shelter with natural objects.
5. Feed the bears more than once per day, to provide stimulation, including scattering small food items throughout the enclosure.
6. Fill the waterhole, particularly on very hot days.
7. Abandon plans to breed the bears. Most bears are already in a surplus situation in captivity, with most being housed in inadequate conditions.
8. Install a perimeter fence around the entire facility to contain animals in case of escape and to protect the animals from intruders.

SPRINGWATER PROVINCIAL PARK

Midhurst, Ontario L0L 1X0
Owner Province of Ontario
Keeper Bill Kraft
Open Year-round

Springwater Provincial Park is one of many within the provincially-managed park system. It consists of 145 hectares of land where visitors can walk on nature trails, picnic and cross-country ski during the winter. The wildlife displays consist of native animals that were either orphaned or injured, and range from waterfowl to beaver to bears. The caging is spread out amongst a naturally wooded area (planted in the 1900s). Attractive plasticized signs provide information on the natural history of each animal, including large panels describing raptor/human interaction, as well as information on migratory birds.

Like many provincial institutions, the park suffers from lack of funding, and the enclosures reflect this. For example, the waterfowl areas have no filtration system and consequently are dirty; the raptor cages do not allow sufficient flight distance from visitors; and the fencing on the white-tailed deer enclosure is deteriorating.

The brochure states, "The animal pens are specially designed for the animals they house, keeping in mind their natural habits and need for privacy." Unfortunately for the animals, this is just not so in the majority of cases. They are forced to be "on exhibit" regardless of their own wishes, except for the raccoon(s) which has a tree hollow in which to curl up.

The gift shop sells ice cream and souvenirs and is adjacent to the picnic area. They do not sell feed for the animals. The area is attractively landscaped and kept clean, as are the animal enclosures.

There is no perimeter fence around the facility to contain animals in case of escape and to protect the animals from intruders.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS OF AMERICAN BLACK BEAR

There is a single female American black bear housed at Springwater. She is a three-year old orphan originally from Tweed, Ontario, where a family bottle-fed her. Since it was illegal for them to keep the bear, they brought her to the park. She appeared to be in good physical condition. Dr. Downey, a local exotic animal veterinarian, is available when required.

The enclosure is approximately 35' x 30', surrounded by heavy fencing comprised of wire mesh with a 2' concrete base and metal uprights. The fencing is angled inward at the top and is electrified in an effort to prevent the bear from escaping, which she has succeeded in doing from time to time. The substrate is earth, with some grass/weed cover in the main yard area. The cage is in good repair. The shift area is approximately 10' x 10' and has a concrete floor which is hosed down daily, but no disinfectant is used. The shift door is operated from the exterior of the pen and the gate dividing the two areas has sturdy brass locks, to ensure keeper safety. Within the enclosure are two trees approximately 40' high, protected by metal sheathing. The exhibit is surrounded by tall trees which provide plenty of shaded areas. There is a concrete pool (10' x 5'), but the drain does not work; consequently, it has to be scooped and swept out daily. Even so, there was algae on top of the water and no bleach was used to clean the pool.

The enclosure is surrounded by a wire mesh visitor barrier approximately 4' high, with a metal railing along the top. There are shrubs planted between the barrier and the cage.

There is a covered treated wood deck with a ladder leading up for the bear to climb on, which affords her a view over much of the surrounding area. A rubber tire was attached to the underside of this deck and a large boulder is adjacent to it. The entire enclosure extends out from a naturally-occurring hill, so that the back part of the pen is accessible to the visitors who can look down at the bear from that side. This is not a comfortable position for any bear, as it is threatening for them to have someone higher than themselves. The other three viewing sides are at ground level. Within this hill a den has been excavated and a large concrete sewer pipe inserted. There were clean shavings inside. She has 24-hour access to this private area. The bear is allowed to hibernate during the winter. She is offered food, but generally slows down during this period of time.

Besides the pool, there is an automatic watering trough providing fresh drinking water. Shortly after being released from the shift area, the bear headed for the pool and enjoyed splashing in it.

A sign provides educational information for the visitor.

I was told that the bear's diet consists only of dog chow which is spread on the freshly hosed floor of the shift area. Visitors do feed her carrots, lettuce and other produce and probably junk food as well, even though public feeding is not encouraged. Keeper Bill Kraft explained that he used peanuts as a treat food in order to move the bear into her shift quarters for cleaning. The dog chow is kept in a central storage area and brought in a bucket at feeding time.

GENERAL COMMENTS

The bear engaged in some slight pacing and foot biting prior to being fed, probably in anticipation of feeding. After she had finished her meal in the shift quarters and had been released back into the main area, she was attentive to her surroundings, watching visitors and she became more excited when visitors approached her cage, possibly in anticipation of receiving a treat. Since her diet consists only of dog chow, she would certainly welcome these treats. Not only is the present feeding regime boring, it only engages the bear for a very small portion of each day. Even spreading the chow into two or three meals would enhance the feeding experience somewhat, although a more varied diet is preferable.

The cage was built some time ago, is small and does not greatly resemble the natural habitat of a bear except for one tree growing within it. I was told there is no funding to expand or renovate, the desired solution; however, there are still certain things that could be done to present a more naturalistic environment, in order to provide a better educational experience for the visitor, while at the same time providing stimulation for the bear. I had a long discussion with the keeper Bill Kraft, who was quite amenable to new ideas and suggestions. I provided a few simple enrichment suggestions that Mr. Kraft said he would try.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Ideally the bear exhibit should be expanded and renovated.

In the interim:

2. Stop visitor viewing through the rear fence of the enclosure. Utilizing the hill that forms the back wall of the exhibit, face it with small trees split down the middle, to create a more naturalistic forested area. Similarly attach trees split in half to the metal upright supports, to conceal the metal.
3. This will assist in reducing the stress created by visitors looking down on the bear, as well as providing scratching posts. An added benefit will be the visual improvement for visitors by allowing the exhibit to blend in more with its surroundings. Paint the concrete portion a brown tone, to resemble dirt.
4. Incorporate enrichment as part of the daily routine. A search of the enrichment literature will outline options for bears in captivity. Refer to the suggestions especially for bears provided by the North Carolina Master Enrichment List contained in Chapter 1 (pp. 4-5) of this report.
5. Plant shrubs and bushes within the enclosure, particularly those with berries. The bear will destroy them but will spend some time engaged in this activity. Also add more logs and stumps with intact bark for her to manipulate.
6. Feed the bear a more varied diet and increase feedings to two or three times daily. Scatter and hide food around the exhibit area. See the food suggestions contained in the North Carolina Master Enrichment List contained in Chapter 1 (pp. 4-5) of this report.
7. Cover the top of the enclosure with wire mesh to prevent further escapes.
8. Install a perimeter fence around the area of the park that houses the animals to contain them in case of escape and to protect the animals from intruders.

SPRUCE HAVEN ZOO

2016 Third Line West, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario P6A 6K4
Owners Helen and Ken Marshall
Open May 1 to December 1

Spruce Haven Zoo began in 1988 with a small number of animals. With the closure of the Belleview Park Zoo, it is now Sault Ste. Marie's only zoo. The Marshalls, who own the facility, take in abandoned or injured animals and also operate a dog boarding kennel and grooming centre. Unfortunately, the kennel run is located adjacent to the zoo pens and the incessant barking is surely quite disturbing to the captive wildlife. A visitor pathway winds through a wooded area in which a number of small wire mesh cages containing a variety of animals are located. For the most part the cages are relatively clean but are not well maintained. The wood is old, holes have been excavated in many areas of the substrate, and the wire mesh is in disrepair. The cages continue on the opposite side of the kennels.

Overall, the animals are in reasonable physical condition, except the foxes who appeared thin.

Within the petting zoo area there are several cages in a row filled with a variety of animals, all of whom did not have enough room in which to display any type of natural behaviour, nor were they afforded any enrichment to encourage them to do so.

Public feeding is not encouraged and no food is sold.

Educational signs were not in evidence for most of the animal exhibits. There is no visitor barrier surrounding many of the cages and it is a simple matter for a visitor to put his/her fingers into the cages. I was unable to determine if a perimeter fence surrounds the entire facility to contain animals in case of escape and to protect the animals from intruders.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS OF AMERICAN BLACK BEARS

At the time of my visit Spruce Haven had three bears in three separate containment areas.

Ben, adult male; the sign states that he is seven years old and arrived here after being captured as a nuisance bear who had been raiding garbage cans in the city of Sault Ste. Marie.

Ben paced non-stop during my visit, walking from the shift area of his cage toward the public viewing area and back again. The wire mesh cage measured 30' x 30' x 10' with the upper portion of the fencing angled inward. Metal posts served as uprights, and the base backed on to a metal strip. A concrete lip extended inside the cage. The adjacent trees provide shade on two sides, but there were no trees in the interior of the cage. The substrate was predominantly earth, except for a concrete area with a bathtub sunken into the floor. Bedding was visible inside the wooden den which measured approximately 6' x 5'. The wood edges were damaged by chewing. There was no privacy area in the pen for the bear to retreat from view, nor any night quarters. The locking mechanism consisted of a brass lock in the centre of the large gate and large metal hasps at top and bottom. Visitors can view the bear from two sides only, whereas the other two sides have wire mesh fences and trees. There is a wire mesh shift area at one end of the pen, to move the bear for maintenance of his main cage. This cage is adjacent to the petting zoo on one side and a row of smaller cages containing raccoons, red foxes, arctic foxes and a young female bear on the opposite side.

The bathtub inside the pen served as the source of drinking water as well as for bathing. It contained some algae at the time of my visit, indicating that it had not been properly cleaned. I was told the bear's diet consists of dog chow, apples and slaughtered cattle from a deadstock dealer. Subsequent to my visit, owner Ken Marshall stated that Ben is provided with other foods such as berries and vegetation, and that he does not receive "slaughtered cattle."

There is one sign that gives a short description and history of Ben. The sign states that Ben is "happy" living at Spruce Haven. Because we cannot ask Ben whether or not he is happy, this is an anthropomorphic statement, and the fact that Ben exhibits stereotypic pacing would tend to indicate otherwise.

The cage contained no environmental enrichment other than the bathtub.

Female, two-year old cub; hand-raised after being orphaned in the spring bear hunt; consequently, she is very tame.

This bear cub was housed in the same cage as three arctic foxes, and none of the animals seemed comfortable with this arrangement. The cage was inadequate for the bear, not to mention the foxes, and consisted of two joined wire mesh cages approximately 10' x 10' each. There was a smaller-sized mesh at the bottom, gradually increasing in size near the top. The roof is enclosed with wire mesh to prevent escape. Shade was provided by adjacent trees, and the substrate was earth, with several holes dug in it. There was no bedding or den for the bear, but a wooden retreat area for the foxes, who spent the majority of their time in or under this structure, at the back of the second cage. The bear spent most of her time in the front cage, which was separated by an open door between the two. The locking mechanism consisted of a small lock and lightweight sliding hasps on the top and bottom. This cage is part of a row of similar small cages containing raccoons (one of whom was frantically pacing on top of his nest box), a skunk and red foxes.

A dented metal bowl was provided for drinking water; some of the bent edges contained sharp pieces. The bear was vainly attempting to snag pieces of grass and dandelions on the outside of her cage, and readily accepted offerings from visitors. There were no visitor barriers around this row of cages.

There was no environmental enrichment of any sort in this small pen.

Male, a young orphaned cub from the fall bear hunt. Mr. Marshall said he was to be released in the spring of 1999. He was not on exhibit and was being kept away from visitors, in order to keep him as wild as possible. Mr. Marshall described him as being "nasty". I was not able to observe his caging.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Here is yet another example of private individuals with good intentions operating with too little money to do a proper job of maintaining the animals in their care. The young female cub is forced to share the tiny cage with arctic foxes, presumably because there is nowhere else to put her. The male "Ben" has been confined to an area that is too small, and has developed the stereotypic pacing behaviour that is all too often seen in captive animals. Since my visit to Spruce Haven Zoo, the two young cubs have been moved to Aspen Valley Wildlife Sanctuary.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Construct a larger properly designed and outfitted pen for Ben, as well as better quarters for orphaned bears if they are to be held for rehabilitation and release in the future.
2. Incorporate enrichment as part of the daily routine for the bears, as well as for the other animals kept at Spruce Haven. A search of the enrichment literature will outline options for bears in captivity. One example of available information is the North Carolina Master Enrichment List contained in Chapter 1 (pp. 4-5) of this report.
3. Provide a more varied diet, to include various berries, nuts, grasses and other natural foods. As Sault Ste. Marie is the actual habitat of American black bears, it should not be difficult to obtain these foods. See diet suggestions contained in the North Carolina Master Enrichment List contained in Chapter 1 (pp. 4-5) of this report.
4. Remove the bathtub and provide a proper pool for Ben. Provide a separate source of drinking water.
5. If a perimeter fence surrounding the entire facility is not in place to contain animals in case of escape and to protect the animals from intruders, one should be installed.
6. Since the Spruce Haven Zoo is within the boundaries of the City of Sault Ste. Marie, municipal funding to upgrade animal care and housing should be sought. A process ensuring accountability of the zoo to the citizens of Sault Ste. Marie should be developed if funding is established.



3

RATING AND CLASSIFICATION

In an effort to standardize the information gathered, I utilized a prepared checklist divided into 11 categories, using ratings ranging from “Excellent” (5) to “Unacceptable” (0). I used this as a basis to classify each facility. In employing the classification system, I found that the areas could differ greatly within any one facility. Under some categories I might award a “5”, whereas others might generate a “0” at the same facility.

Table 1 entitled “General Rating of Facilities” (p. 61) summarizes my findings by the 11 individual categories as well as the overall rating of each facility, out of a possible 55. The list is ranked according to the overall rating. It should be noted that the 11 categories are not weighted according to importance. The same rating formula is used for a category such as “Education” as is for “Cage Size”. I consider cage size, and other animal welfare criteria, to be far more important to the wellbeing of the animal(s) than is education of the public. Hence, I have added a category entitled “Overall Impression” to attempt to balance the total figures.

Table 1
GENERAL RATING OF FACILITIES
Ranked from high to low scores, out of possible 55 perfect score.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Bear Behaviour</u>	<u>Cage Size</u>	<u>Shade</u>	<u>Enrich.</u>	<u>Drinking Water</u>	<u>Pool</u>	<u>Den</u>	<u>Privacy</u>	<u>Visitor Safety</u>	<u>Education</u>	<u>Overall Impression</u>	<u>Total</u>
Aspen Valley	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	5	54
Bear With Us	5	5	5	5	5	4	3	5	4	5	4	50
Can. Wild. Exp.	5	4	5	5	3	0	5	5	3	2	3	40
Northwood	Other	4	5	3	3	0	4	4	5	1	3	32
African Lion Safari		5	4	4	0	4	0	5	3	1	3	32
Springwater Prov. Pk.		2	2	4	1	5	2	3	2	5	2	30
Bear Creek		3	2	5	1	1	0	2	4	3	3	26
Bergeron's		2	1	1	2	1	3	0	3	5	4	24
Killman Zoo		2	3	5	3	1	0	3	4	0	2	23
Earlton Zoo		4	0	2	0	4	2	3	0	5	1	22
Papanack Zoo		0	3	0	3	2	1	2	2	4	0	18
Lazy Acres		0	3	3	0	0	0	3	5	2	0	17
Lickety-Split		0	2	1	0	3	0	2	2	5	0	15
Spruce Haven	Ben	0	1	3	0	0	2	1	0	4	1	12
Marineland of Canada		0	0	0	0	3	4	0	2	3	0	12
Northwood	Ben	2	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	6
Spruce Haven	Cub	1	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	5
Greenview Aviaries		0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	3	0	5

N.B. It should be noted that the rating for Earlton Zoo is based on its old enclosure.

4

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this review was to investigate captive wildlife facilities in Ontario which house American black bears (*Ursus americanus*). Surveys were carried out primarily over a period of two months (June and July, 1998) during which time I travelled throughout the province of Ontario. Some additional follow-up was done in the month of October 1998.

The facilities were evaluated in terms of their suitability for keeping American black bears and to determine which were acceptable and which were unacceptable. While Chapter 2 contains detailed information on each of the 17 facilities surveyed in text form, Table 1 (p. 61) summarizes the results of a rating system employed to standardize the information gathered. The ratings system reflects the conditions present in the time period outlined above.

Assessments were derived from a combination of my own personal knowledge attained through twenty-two years' experience as a zoo keeper, as well as information obtained from the literature and from bear rehabilitators, as referenced in the attached bibliography.

A solid understanding of the natural history of the American black bear should be a prerequisite to planning a captive exhibit and keeping bears in captivity. In Chapter 1, an overview of the natural history of the American black bear is provided; however, a more thorough literature search should be conducted by anyone keeping, or planning to keep, bears in captivity.

Relatively few of the American black bears I observed were bred in captivity, the majority having been taken in as cubs, many orphaned because of the spring or fall bear hunt. Until early 1999, it was legal in the province of Ontario for resident and non-resident hunters to acquire a licence and legally hunt bears in both the spring and the fall. In January 1999, the Government of Ontario announced its intention to end the spring bear hunt, effective this year. Unfortunately other provinces continue the practise.

The spring hunt was particularly popular with non-residents and indeed 71% of total hunters fell into this category. Of the 7,200 bears killed in 1994, 55% were killed in the spring. Because it is extremely difficult even for experienced hunters to discern a female from a male bear, lactating females have been shot. Cubs are born in February and are dependent upon their mothers for at least a year (Lompart, 1996). The shooting of the mothers consequently results in a high incidence of death (70%) in orphaned cubs (Kolenosky and Strathearn, 1987, in Lompart 1996). Many that are rescued end up in the facilities described herein. The fortunate ones have been rehabilitated and returned to the wild.

As I conducted this review, I discovered that many individuals who house wild animals have little or no true knowledge of the needs of the animals in their care. As this report deals only with the American black bear, I have restricted my comments generally to this species. Basic needs such as shade, shelter and clean water were neglected in some instances. It is little wonder, then, that the more

sophisticated psychological needs of bears were also ignored.

If I had to choose only one area of basic care that stood out as being the most seriously deficient, it would be the lack of shade provided for captive bears. It does not appear to have occurred to the owners/operators of many of these facilities that bears, as well as other mammals, suffer greatly in the intense heat we experience in Ontario during the summer. Lack of shade, coupled in some cases with lack of water, must surely make for a miserable existence for any animal, and in particular for a bear who has a relatively heavy fur coat. Fair (1994) specifically refers to the fact that “bears are susceptible to overheating during warm seasons”. Not providing the basic necessity of shade and/or water is tantamount to cruelty.

In the keeping of American black bears, Canadians would do well to model their exhibits after those large enclosures that can be found in Europe (e.g., Rhenen Bear Forest, Netherlands) as described in the International Workshop on Captive Bear Management document. These enclosures are based upon the premise that bears need space, variety in habitat, enrichment and activities in addition to simple basic necessities such as food and water. How much greater, then, is the educational value, as well as visitor enjoyment, in observing bears going about their natural activities in an enclosure resembling natural habitat, instead of watching a bear pace or stare vacantly into space in a small wire mesh cage that affords the animal no relief from boredom? Of the seventeen facilities that I visited, very few could meet the criteria described above.

In the case of facilities that cannot provide the ideal space and natural habitat owing to financial constraints, I have two comments to make. First, no one should keep wild animals in captivity unless they have the financial resources to ensure their animals' long term physical and psychological wellbeing. Second, there are many things that can be done at low cost to improve the quality of life experienced by American black bears in captivity, as outlined in the enrichment section of Chapter 1 (pp. 4-5). Particular mention is made of the North Carolina Zoo “Enrichment Master List”. Enrichment measures include the presentation of consummatory items (e.g., fruit, fishsticks, sugar-free Kool-aid); non-consummatory items (e.g., keg barrels, non-steel-belt tires, boomer balls); types of deadfall (e.g., dead spruce trees, hollow logs, tree stumps); and types of substrate (e.g., alfalfa, shredded paper, wood shavings). Most of these measures should be incorporated as a part of the daily husbandry routine for bears regardless of the size and design of the current enclosure.

In general I found that the owners/operators of many of these facilities believed they were doing the best for the animals in their care. But, as Dr. Lindley suggested in her 1997 report, While Rome Burns: A Report into Conditions in the Zoos of Ontario, many of them do not have the financial resources or background experience to appreciate what is really required to keep wild animals in captivity in a proper manner. They may have started with the best of intentions, “rescuing” and housing unwanted animals, but find themselves in a situation where the numbers of animals have outgrown their financial and physical resources to care for them. As well, many don't seem to have the heart to say “no” when additional needy animals are brought to their attention, so their collections grow and their ability to deal with them satisfactorily diminishes.

Some zoo owners, particularly those who keep and exhibit wild cats, try to justify themselves by citing the breeding of endangered species as their *raison d'être* and throw around that over-used word “conservation”. American black bears are still relatively common in the wild. Their keeping in captivity has nothing to do with conservation .

It's time that stricter guidelines and licensing of the keeping of wild animals is put into effect. The Province of Ontario enacted *Bill 139*, the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act, in January 1999. The Act requires a license for keeping native wild animals in captivity in certain circumstances. Over the next two years, the government will be establishing standards that must be met to obtain a license. These should be high standards that will ensure the wellbeing of wild animals currently in captivity. The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act should be extended to include non-native wildlife which are currently not protected under any licensing scheme.

Standards for keeping bears in captivity have been detailed by the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA), excerpts of which are included in Chapter 1 of this report. I would consider these to be the *minimum* standards to be met by facilities keeping bears. They certainly do not represent optimum standards. Many of the facilities listed in Chapter 2 of this report do not meet even these standards.

We are losing species in the wild every day for a variety of reasons—destruction of habitat, pollution, poaching. There may well come a time when the only place to see animals is in a zoo-like setting. There is no longer a justification in this world for the old-fashioned Victorian-style zoo, with row upon row of cages in which visitors walk down a path, gawking at animals. If animals are to be kept in captivity, their biological and behavioural needs must be satisfied. They deserve to be treated with respect and decency, as ambassadors of their species. American black bears deserve no less.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Marilyn Cole began her career as a zoo keeper at the Toronto Zoo in 1973, initially working at the old Riverdale Zoo during its transition to the new facility. She has done field work on primates in Gibraltar, Indonesia and Costa Rica, and has presented papers with regard to hand-rearing, conditioning and enrichment at various conferences. Because of the geographical nature of the Toronto Zoo, Ms. Cole has had an opportunity to work with a large variety of species, ranging from polar bears to cockroaches. Her last assignment before retiring in 1995 was as senior keeper in the Animal Health unit. She has a B.Sc. in Physical Anthropology and a Masters in Environmental Studies, and is currently executive director of the Canadian Organization for Tropical Education and Rainforest Conservation (COTERC).



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