

PROJECT SAVE

cupertino high school



Overview

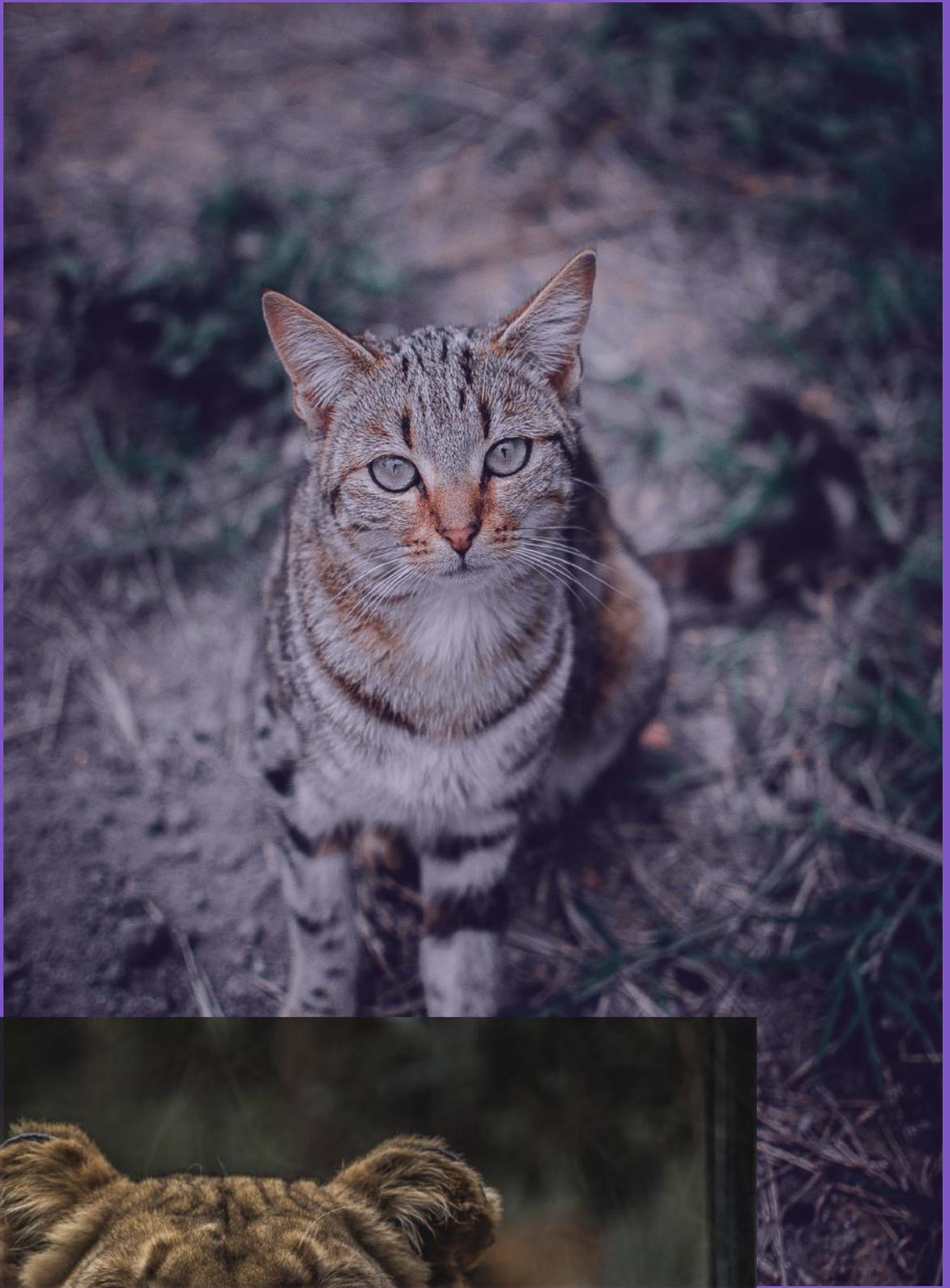
As part of this year's Cupertino High School Future Business Leaders of America's Community Service Project's goal of raising awareness of animal abuse and cruelty, our team, partnered with the Palo Alto Humane Society, has been working hard to create an informational pamphlet that covers topics such as the difference between wild and domestic animals, and the illegal animal trade and exotic animal trade.

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Wild vs. Domestic Animals

The term domestication refers to an animal whose genome has undergone changes in order to better suit the desires and interests of humans. For example, the domesticated dog's genomes have changed to produce more proteins involved in fat and starch metabolism through selective breeding for more favorable traits. Contrary to popular belief, domestication is not the same as taming. Animals who have been domesticated are genetically tolerant of humans through years of selective breeding. Wild animals or wild animals born in captivity can be tamed and conditioned to be tolerant of humans. Although these tamed animals grow accustomed to living alongside humans, they are not truly domesticated, remaining genetically wild.



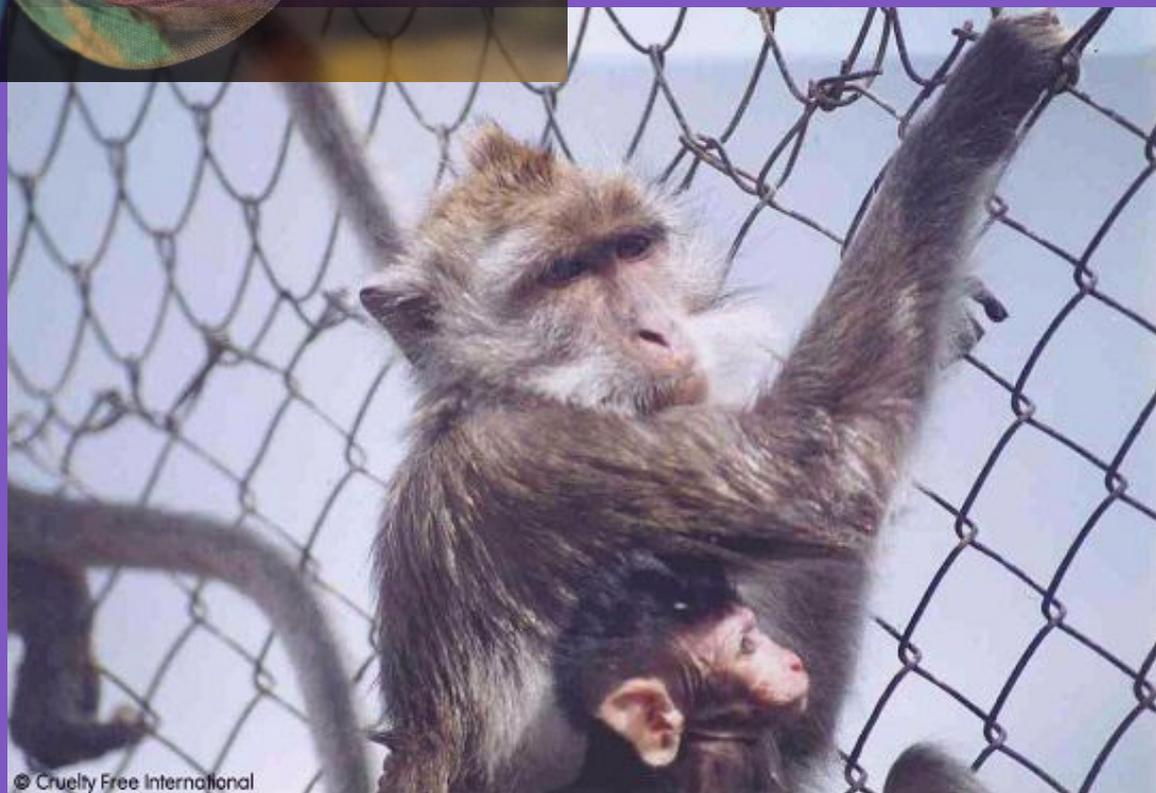
“New Research by AAP Shows Flourishing Trade in Exotic Pets in The Netherlands.” Stichting AAP, 12 Aug. 2019, www.aap.nl/en/news/new-research-aap-shows-flourishing-trade-exotic-pets-netherlands.



International, BirdLife. “A New Action Plan to Tackle Illegal Parrot Trading in Indonesia.” BirdLife, www.birdlife.org/worldwide/news/new-action-plan-tackle-illegal-parrot-trading-indonesia.



“Grand Cayman Blue Iguana.” Smithsonian's National Zoo, 5 July 2018, nationalzoo.si.edu/animals/grand-cayman-blue-iguana.

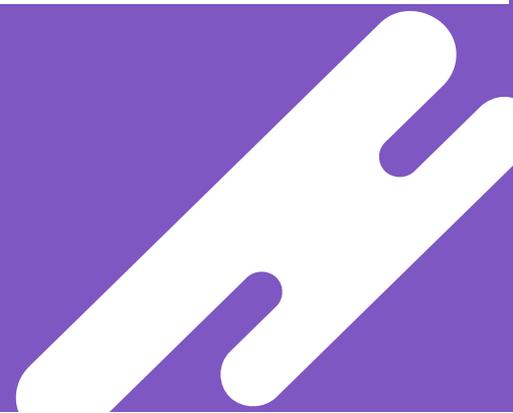


Posted By Sarah Kite on 2nd March 2016, et al. Cruelty Free International, www.crueltyfreeinternational.org/tags/monkey-trade.

Illegal Animal Trade

The illegal trade in animals is run by international networks. Both wildlife and animal parts are trafficked as a result of illegal logging of forests, illegal fishing of endangered marine life, illegal poaching of elephants, and more. The industry is worth billions of dollars and makes nearly 10 billion dollars a year, making it the third-largest illegal trade. Wildlife trade is threatening to nature, animals, the environment, and natural resources. The balance of nature is delicate, and illegal animal trade causes multiple ecosystems to be thrown out of balance.

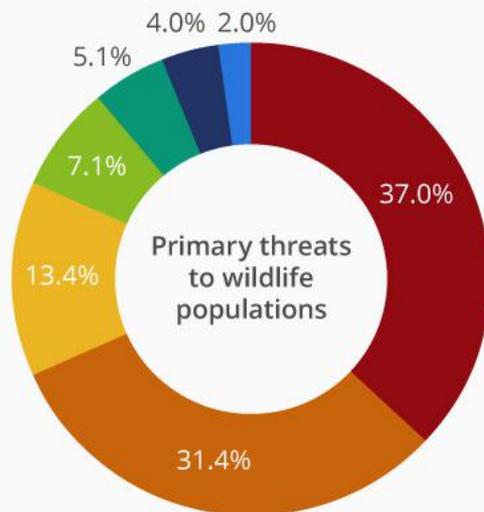
Illegal animal trade also pushes endangered species closer to extinction. Endangered animals are especially targeted because they are considered more valuable and rare. For example, the pangolin is the most illegally traded mammal in the world, and pangolins are on their way to going extinct. They are not alone. One million species face extinction as a result of the illegal animal trade. It is the second-largest threat to species on the planet, after habitat loss. Because of the illegal animal trade, wildlife populations have declined by 40 percent between 1970 and 2000.



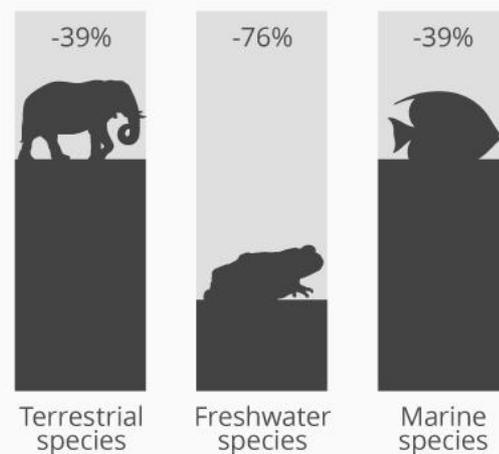
Illegal Animal Trade Continued

Wildlife Populations Worldwide Have Plummeted

Threats to wildlife and population decline from 1970-2010



Species population decline from 1970-2010



@StatistaCharts Source: World Wildlife Fund

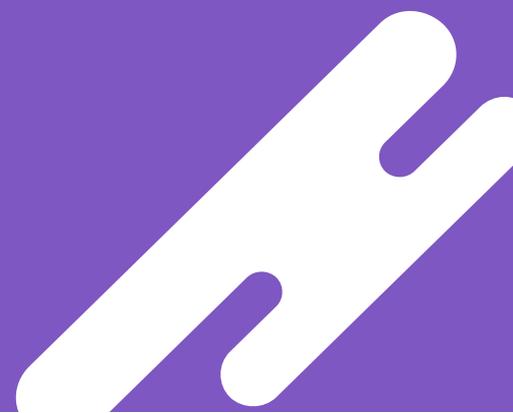
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McCarthy, Niall, and Felix Richter. "Infographic: Wildlife Populations Worldwide Have Plummeted." Statista Infographics, 2 Oct. 2014, www.statista.com/chart/2782/wildlife-populations-worldwide-have-plummeted/.

Illegal Animal Trade

Some of the most common examples of illegal animal trade include poaching elephants for ivory, tigers for skins and bones, and rhinos for their horns. In South Africa, rhino poaching has increased from 13 to 1,004 rhinos between 2007 and 2013, a massive increase of 7,000%. This action of harvesting animals in order to partake in the illegal animal trade business has become the second-biggest threat to the vital biodiversity of our planet, as it continuously targets animals that are meant to be protected because of the dwindling numbers of members of their species.

Though illegal animal trade is a complicated issue, it can be resolved. Technology has been developed to identify hot spots of illegal animal trade and stop them. In addition, concerned citizens can call on the government to enact policy changes and laws to protect animals in danger. There are also centers that hire volunteers to help care for and rehabilitate trafficked animals. Consider taking proactive steps to stop the illegal trade of animals. No matter what kind of action you take, you can make an impact to help stop the illegal animal trade





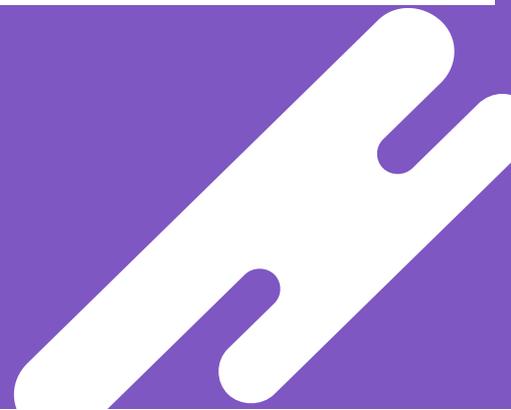
“5 Reasons Why We Need to Protect Reptiles from the Exotic Pet Trade.” World Animal Protection, 6 Nov. 2020, www.worldanimalprotection.org.nz/news/5-reasons-why-we-need-protect-reptiles-exotic-pet-trade.

Exotic Animal Trade

The exotic animal trade is a rapidly growing industry, with a total value of over 10 billion dollars, providing many homes in the United States with unique pets. However, its many adverse effects are ever more present as its popularity grows.

Many exotic animals require specialized care that often cannot be replicated in typical homes. With social media fueling the fire behind this industry, it has become a trend to have unique pets for which many owners cannot provide proper care.

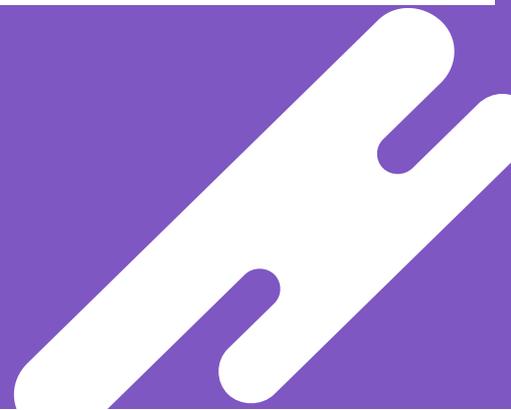
One example of an animal that many desire but few provide the necessary care for is the iguana. Iguanas are often sold at a young age to unknowing buyers who quickly realize they grow far larger than an indoor enclosure can account for. As a result, many iguanas are released and negatively affect the surrounding ecosystem. This lack of care, as well as consequences to the environment, is not exclusive to iguanas as many exotic animals share similar experiences. Another negative effect of the exotic pet trade is the transfer of diseases, such as monkeypox, a virus that originated from an Illinois breeder who owned Gambian rats.



Exotic Animal Trade

There are viable solutions to the consequences of the illegal animal trade that can be made to negate these effects. One such option is to substitute purchases of wild-caught animals to captive-bred animals. Captive-bred animals are raised independently of potentially diseased or endangered populations, resulting in no environmental or public health concerns. Additionally, funding government organizations such as the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service can help enforce laws that prevent the trade of exotic animals. While the exotic pet trade not only poses consequences to the environment, public health, and individual animals, there are a variety of potential solutions and ways of raising awareness to remedy this growing issue, such as tighter regulation and depleted consumer interest in exotic pets.

Many trafficked animals are injured or die while in transit because they are not provided the conditions they need to remain healthy and survive. In short, they are not properly cared for and have a higher risk of dying, increasing the danger that they will go extinct. It is very difficult to track the number of animals being traded because smugglers take them to areas yet to be discovered by researchers. The exotic animal trade also creates dangers for humans because smuggled animals can carry diseases that can lead to serious illness and or even death in humans. For these reasons, the trade shouldn't be practiced. Furthermore, it is illegal.





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