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ABOUT THE COVER

The US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) estimated in 2004 that there were 700,000 to 1.5 million adult bobcats living in the United States. Considering that only four states have even attempted to estimate the size of their bobcat populations, there is no evidence to validate this ballpark figure or to justify the agency's belief that the population is even larger today. With significantly more bobcats being killed now than even five years ago, claims by most states and the FWS that these bobcat populations are stable or increasing are not credible. By contrast, the International Union for the Conservation of Nature's 2006 Red List of Threatened Species indicates that bobcat populations are in decline. The bobcat is one of many species whose future may rest on the outcome of this summer's Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora meeting, since its Appendix II protections are now at stake (see story, pages 8-9).

Photo by Susan C. Morse

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Mutilated for a Meal

Shark fin soup has been popular in Asia for many years, with one bowl carrying a 3-digit price tag. While many countries have laws to protect vulnerable sharks from the brutal industry that robs them of their fins to produce this expensive "delicacy," the species is still at risk. An estimated 73 million sharks are "finned" yearly, many while still alive. Their helpless bodies are typically thrown back into the water, where they endure long, painful deaths from suffocation, blood loss or predation.

Most people do not realize that their local Chinese restaurant may be supporting this cruelty by selling shark fin soup. With that in mind, the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) has launched a national campaign to stop restaurants from selling shark fin products. AWI began its campaign in the Washington Metro Area, collaborating with 10 animal welfare and conservation organizations to target restaurants in the vicinity that currently serve shark fin soup. We encourage readers to check with their local restaurants and to notify us of those carrying shark fin products.

Meanwhile, the issue continues to gain media attention. In March, National People's Congress Deputy and Peking University President Xu Hongzhi said China should remove shark fin dishes from banquet menus before the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing. Chinese officials traditionally honor important guests with meals that feature rare or exotic dishes, including items such as monkey brains and the infamous shark fin soup. "Serving shark fin to foreign guests during the Olympic Games could greatly hurt China's national image, and officials should start to remove the dish from the dining table right now," he told the Xinhua news agency.

As one of the ocean's top predators, sharks have been cursed with the reputation of being ruthless killers. In reality, these majestic prehistoric animals are the ultimate ocean caretakers. Their decline can devastate ecosystems, as revealed in a recent *Science* article on how the phenomenon of the species' dropping population numbers has wreaked havoc on scallop beds. There is a strong risk of similar effects to trophic structures if shark populations continue to decrease.

Please visit www.awionline.org/oceans/news/shark-finsoup.htm or contact us for the list of Washington, D.C. restaurants selling shark fin soup. 🐾



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Captive tigers in China await cruel deaths to support the black market for their skins, meat, bones and other body parts.

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J. Mills/Save the Tiger Fund



Two roosters fight until their deaths in the brutal practice of cockfighting, which was recently outlawed in New Mexico.

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Jennifer Pires



Actor Matt Parkman holds up Heroes castmate Hayden Panettiere's cast t-shirt, modified to read, "Save the Whales... Save the World!"

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www.savethewhalesagain.com

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It was hardly a hunt as six or more people, including two wealthy Americans, crashed through the dry brush somewhere in South Africa. The first victim, a female African lion, looked curiously at her followers as she was hit broadside by a bullet. The second, a large male lion, was shot at close range.

CONSUMPTION FIRST?

Wildlife Trade Policy in the United States

As the life drained from his body, he fell off a 25-foot cliff. In South Africa, where wild lions are illegal to hunt, these victims of the lucrative trophy hunting industry were born and raised in captivity, where they became accustomed to and reliant on humans—only to become targets for wealthy hunters. At the end of this safari, four animals had died to become trophies in someone's house.

It remains to be determined whether the American hunters secured the required Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) documents to import their trophies into the United States. If they did, they would not be alone, since the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)—the federal agency that administers both CITES and the Endangered Species Act (ESA)—issues such permits routinely to allow the import of a virtual ark of trophy-hunted species.

In 2005, the FWS allowed the import of over 17,000 sport-hunted trophies of CITES-listed species. The agency's policies and practices have consistently placed the interests of hunters over wildlife. The Safari Club International—the world's largest organization of trophy hunters—has influence and connections throughout the FWS that few other groups enjoy. And according to information recently obtained by the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI), these connections are now under investigation.

As America's wealthiest hunters travel the world shooting wildlife, the FWS continues to churn out the necessary permits, if permits are even required. For species listed on CITES Appendix II, there is often no permit required, since the trophy needs only to be cleared through a port of entry. The number of species that can be imported into the United States as trophies reads like a list of the world's most charismatic species. In 2005, it included 856 baboons, 237 wolves, over 9,100 black bears, 60 polar bears, 318 lynx, 384 African lions, 508 leopards, 44 African elephants, 485 zebras, 318 hippos, more than 800 pintail ducks, and 1,544 Sandhill cranes.

US wildlife trade involves far more than dead animals. The United States allows the import and export of CITES-listed live animals and plants, animal pelts, timber and a bevy

of products such as carvings, shoes, handbags and jewelry made from wildlife parts. While the exact total of live and dead animals, plants and wildlife products imported and exported into the United States is unknown, there is no question that the country is the world's leading consumer of wildlife and wildlife products. In 2002, for example, legally declared shipments of live, wild-caught animals into the United States included more than 38,000 mammals, 365,000 birds, 2 million reptiles and 49 million amphibians. The demand for live wildlife and wildlife products in the United States is driving both the legal and illicit trade that is contributing to the imperilment of many species around the globe.

The US government is known worldwide as a leader in conservation, but its wildlife trade policies and practices are weak and implemented inadequately. Considering its enormous wealth and significant worldwide influence, the United States should be a leader in tackling the ongoing wildlife trade crisis by establishing far more restrictive wildlife trade laws to unilaterally address many of the deficiencies in CITES.

For example, non-detriment findings (NDFs) made by exporting countries for Appendix II species should be submitted to the FWS for review before the export is allowed. NDFs are supposed to verify that the trade in those species will not harm their survival in the wild. While the requirement looks good on paper, in reality, it is not implemented consistently by any country. The FWS rarely, if ever, sees such findings, making it impossible for the agency to know that they exist, whether they are in writing, or whether they are based on credible scientific evidence. While such faith-based trade policies may have been the common practice for decades, wildlife trade in the 21st century must be based on science and accountability—not speculation, convenience and deception.



lion (page 4): Graeme Purdy/www.istockphoto.com; zebras: Gary Wales/www.istockphoto.com

Listed on Appendix II, zebras are just one of many captivating species that can be legally imported into the United States as wildlife trophies under current CITES regulations; almost 500 were imported in 2005.

Understanding CITES

Though it likely did not make the newspaper headlines, March 3, 1973 was a noteworthy day in the history of wildlife conservation: 21 countries signed the Washington Treaty in an effort to control the burgeoning international trade in wildlife and wildlife products. Better known as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), this treaty created a legal framework for promoting wildlife conservation through the regulation of wildlife trade. One hundred and sixty-nine countries are now signatories to CITES, and despite the imperfections in its scope, breadth and implementation, they are ostensibly complying with its provisions.

Because CITES only serves as a regulatory body, the legal wildlife trade is a booming business. Approximately 5,000 species of animals and 28,000 species of plants are "protected" under CITES through a permitting system that largely prohibits trade in many of the world's most imperiled species, while regulating trade in other species as a "sustainable" use. However, CITES has not tempered the illegal trade in plants and wildlife, which remains a significant threat to global biodiversity. With financial profits only behind illegal arms and drugs sales, the trafficking in illicit wildlife has become a multi-billion dollar business.

Even for legal trade, a variety of loopholes have been established over the years through resolutions and decisions made by CITES member countries. These loopholes depend on the species' origin and use. Though they are often used to facilitate legal trade, they have also been abused by unscrupulous wildlife dealers

The agency also must make its wildlife trade decisions completely transparent, both by informing the public about all applications submitted for all CITES and ESA-listed species, and by soliciting public comment on all applications. At present, with few exceptions, the American public is only provided a chance to comment on applications involving species listed as endangered under the ESA. The FWS operates without any public oversight in regards to CITES Appendix II and even Appendix I species, if they are not also listed as endangered under the ESA.

While stronger regulations, increased accountability and more transparency are needed to improve the program, effective enforcement of wildlife trade laws is also essential. With the significant profit margins to be made, the illegal trade in wildlife is flourishing, and even the so-called legal wildlife trade is rife with corruption, fraud and blatant disregard for both international and national laws. For years, the budget for the FWS law enforcement operation has been repeatedly cut thereby significantly compromising the ability of federal wildlife cops to identify, investigate, capture and prosecute wildlife criminals. Shockingly, according to a recent report by the US Department of the Interior Inspector General, there are only 208 FWS special agents and 111 wildlife inspectors for the entire United States.



Mary Rice/Environmental Investigation Agency

Despite measures to stop the practice, the trade in ivory continues to thrive around the world.

and businesses to trade illegally in a wide variety of species. Such loopholes complicate law enforcement efforts and ensure that a large percentage of illicit trade is never detected. Sadly, in addition to the remote potential of poachers even being caught, penalties are lenient for those who are discovered breaking the law.

Though CITES was originally intended to regulate wildlife trade, today both legal and illegal trading are at all-time highs. Improved transportation systems, booming economies in many parts of the world, increasing personal wealth, and an ever-expanding number of businesses selling or relying on wildlife or wildlife products are driving this trade to the detriment of wild species and their habitats around the world. In concert with a worldwide apathy regarding the destruction of our environment, as well as substantial profits to be made by governments and businesses engaged in wildlife trade, these are significant contributing factors to our worldwide biodiversity crisis. ■

These agents are committed to enforcing the country's wildlife laws, but the sheer lack of agents may, in part, explain the serious problem with the illicit trade in wildlife and wildlife products. Indeed, according to a 1994 report from the US General Accounting Office, the FWS estimates that it is detecting "less than 10 percent of violations associated with declared shipments of wildlife, and a much lower percentage of undeclared shipments." To make matters worse, it has been reported that the FWS has decided to cut costs by dismantling its Special Operations law enforcement division, which conducts undercover wildlife investigations.

AWI has provided the FWS with a litany of ideas of how to strengthen its wildlife trade regulations, and we have called on Congress to provide an increased allocation of federal funds to bolster the agency's enforcement capabilities. But there is also a need for a fundamental reform within the FWS to embrace conservation over consumption, to promote leadership over apathy, and to take a stand for the world's wildlife. Only by enacting far more restrictive wildlife trade laws can it force other countries to improve their wildlife management, law enforcement and scientific research programs if they want to continue to engage in wildlife trade with the United States. 🐾

ELEPHANTS IN PERIL, AGAIN

Customs officials in Singapore were prepared when a freighter arrived at port in June 2002. In a container from the African country of Malawi, they found what they were looking for: 532 elephant tusks and 42,120 carved ivory seals. The haul represented an estimated 3,000 to 6,000 dead elephants, valued at approximately \$8.4 million. It was the largest seizure of elephant ivory recorded since the late 1980s, as well as a tragic bellwether of days to come as poachers resumed their rampage against Africa's elephants to satiate the increasing demand for ivory.

In 1989, the member countries of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) saved Africa's elephants virtually overnight with a historic vote to ban the trade in ivory. Prior to this decision, Africa's elephants had been relentlessly pursued during the previous two decades by poachers, whose bloody rampage across the continent reduced Africa's elephant population from an estimated 1.3 million to approximately 500,000.

The ivory trade ban reduced incidents of elephant poaching to a trickle until 1997, when CITES downlisted elephant populations in Zimbabwe, Namibia, Botswana and South Africa from Appendix I to II, while also allowing a one-time sale of ivory to Japan. According to many experts, this single decision contributed to today's resurgence in elephant poaching—which is now considered equal in scope to that which was documented in the 1970s and 1980s. Based on Species Survival Network statistics, over 210,000 pounds of ivory from more than 15,000 dead elephants were seized between 1999 and 2004.

The trend in elephant poaching has only worsened since 2004, with nearly 80,000 pounds of ivory seized. Considering that only 10 percent of all illicit ivory shipments are discovered, the annual elephant death toll has been estimated to be more than 23,000 elephants. Feeding this slaughter is the profit to be made from the sale of ivory, which has increased in value from \$100 per kilogram in the late 1990s to \$850 per kilogram today.

The majority of illicit ivory is destined for the Far East, where booming economies have created new markets for ivory products. Despite laws intended to prohibit its international

trade, China's increasing appetite for ivory is especially feeding that demand. But China is not alone in its contribution, as demand for ivory in Japan is also high. Indeed, even the United States remains a destination for the illegal product.

In Africa, though elephant populations continue to be persecuted by poachers, the animals' numbers in some countries may be on the rise, according to the 2007 African Elephant Status Report produced by the African Elephant Specialist Group of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature. In some cases, the alleged increases may be a product of different sampling techniques. Elephants, despite their size, are difficult to count accurately because of the vast habitats they occupy, their daily and seasonal movements, as well as agency personnel and funding limitations. Consequently, though they are improving, the accuracy of the African population estimates is up for debate.

The same problem is encountered with Asian elephants. Their population estimates range from less than 100 in Vietnam to upward of nearly 33,000 in India, yet the total count of wild Asian elephants is said to be somewhere between 38,500 and 52,500 animals, down from an estimated 200,000 in 1900. These numbers are based on 15-year-old data and are merely guesses according to a 2004 study published in *Conservation Biology*. In addition to discrediting the Asian elephant population estimates, this study calls into question many of the African elephant estimates, claiming they are based on data that is inaccurate and of poor quality.

Whether in Africa or Asia, nearly all elephant populations are threatened by poaching for ivory and meat, habitat loss, land clearing, ivory trade, and increasing incidents of human/elephant conflicts. The status of elephants in both countries will be a matter of intense debate at the upcoming CITES Conference of the Parties meeting in June. The member countries will have to choose between reestablishing a complete ban on ivory trade and allowing the resumption of the international trade in ivory. While a moratorium on the trade cannot bring back the thousands of elephants brutally killed by poachers, it will reduce at least one of the threats jeopardizing the survival of these remarkable animals. 🐾



elephant: James Dorsey

CITES 2007: What's at Stake

The Hague, Netherlands is the site of the June 2007 meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES. During the two-week event, dozens of resolutions and proposals will be debated and voted on, with the fate of many species hanging in the balance. Here is a snapshot of some of the species proposals to be discussed.



Kristian Sekulic/www.istock.com

Leopard: To permit trophy hunting, Uganda proposes to downlist the species from Appendix I to II. The most recent population estimate is nearly two decades old and is considered an overestimate. The population is likely declining, and credible population size or trend data are absent. Recommended Vote: Oppose.



Ulrike Streicher

Slow Loris: Cambodia proposes to upgrade the species from Appendix II to Appendix I. Native to south and southeastern Asian rainforests, the species is in decline as a result of its exploitation for international and regional trade. Some localized populations have been exterminated, and their habitats have been destroyed. Recommended Vote: Support.



www.wikipedia.org

Cedar: Germany proposes to list this valuable timber species (second only to mahogany) on Appendix II. Though it was once common, cedar is now threatened by legal and illegal logging and land clearing. Recommended Vote: Support.



Tessa Dowell

Caribbean Spiny Lobster: Brazil proposes to list its population of this species on Appendix II to protect it from unregulated trade. There has been a 90 percent drop in the number of lobsters caught for export, reflecting an overall decline in population numbers. Recommended Vote: Support.



Christian Riedel/www.dreamstime.com

Vicuña: Bolivia proposes to expand trade in vicuña wool products and raw wool to an additional six populations, up from only three. In addition to indications of illegal poaching and trade in vicuña wool, some of the six populations have less than 800 animals and could be adversely affected. Recommended Vote: Oppose.

Losing Nemo

In the 2003 animated film *Finding Nemo*, a clownfish named Nemo escapes from a fish tank to be reunited with his forlorn father, who had crossed the ocean looking for his son. Though the movie ends with a happy reunion, in reality, the fish trade for home aquariums represents a significant threat to a large number of the world's most popular tropical fish.

At the upcoming meeting of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the United States will seek protection for the Banggai cardinalfish, one of countless species exploited for the aquaria trade. Found only in isolated pockets around the 27 islands of Indonesia's Banggai Archipelago, as many as 900,000 cardinalfish are collected annually to be sold in international trade—mainly to the United States, Asia and Europe.

The cardinalfish has no international or national protection, a low reproductive potential, a high natural mortality rate, and is easy to catch in its shallow water habitats. With a population estimated at only 2.4 million, many experts believe the species will be extinct within a decade if conservation measures are not implemented immediately. Some isolated populations have already gone extinct, and according to new survey data collected in March 2007, others are declining precipitously. Sadly, an estimated 65 percent of all collected cardinalfish die before being exported for sale at pet stores around the world.

To make matters worse, cardinalfish habitat is disappearing at an alarming rate. According to recent survey data, extensive areas



Dr. Alejandro Vagelli/New Jersey Academy of Aquatic Sciences

A school of Banggai cardinalfish swim in their natural habitat. Will this species receive the protection it needs to survive in the wild?

of coral reef have been lost to disease that is likely attributable to ocean warming, and from polluted runoff caused by poor land-use practices. Additionally, the use of dynamite to kill and collect fish for food causes massive damage to the reef habitat of the cardinalfish.

A CITES Appendix II listing would, if approved, regulate future trade in this species and provide incentive for the Indonesian government to establish stronger regulations to protect the cardinalfish and its habitat. ■

BOBCATS: PROTECTED YET PERSECUTED

If you spend time in the outdoors, more than likely they've seen you, even if you haven't seen them. Ranging from Canada to Mexico, the bobcat is an elusive and secretive predator who relies on intelligence and stealth to survive in the wild. Though rarely seen by people, this species is trapped and hunted in large numbers throughout the United States and Canada. Among the wild cats of the world, no species is as persecuted or as heavily traded as the bobcat. Tens of thousands are killed each year in North America, with the majority being skinned of their pelts to be manufactured into fur coats and other products.

The bobcat was listed in Appendix II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) in 1977, as were other cat species, including the Canada lynx, the Eurasian lynx and the Iberian lynx, due to their similarity of appearance. This look-a-like provision is intended to provide protection from unsustainable international trade for species whose similarities make it difficult to distinguish between the species, their pelts or other parts. Though the bobcat is more numerous than any of its related lynx species, its listing was intended to afford protection from

“unsustainable” trade for all lynx species, particularly the Iberian lynx, of which less than 600 are estimated to exist in the wild.

While they are listed on Appendix II, nearly 725,000 bobcats (mainly pelts) were exported from the United States between 1980 and 2004. Remarkably, few states have any valid bobcat population estimates, yet they claim that their populations are stable or increasing—despite evidence of a recent significant upswing in the number of bobcats being hunted and trapped as pelt prices have skyrocketed. The US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) continues to allow the annual export of nearly 38,000 bobcat pelts without any credible evidence that such exports do not harm the species. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature reports, however, that the population trend for bobcats and related lynx



James Dorsey

species is in decline due to habitat degradation, a reduction in prey species, and/or persecution by humans.

The United States first attempted to remove the bobcat from Appendix II in 1983. Another attempt was made at the 2004 Conference of the Parties, but it was withdrawn after it was agreed that the CITES Animals Committee would undertake a review of all cats within the family *Felidae*. The specific directive for this review, which the United States agreed to coordinate, included an assessment of whether the look-a-like concern between the fur of bobcats and other lynx species is real or merely hypothetical.

The FWS contracted with TRAFFIC North America, a division of the World Wildlife Fund, to assess the legal and illegal trade in bobcats and evaluate the look-a-like issue. The resulting report, released in February 2007, is largely worthless, due to its flawed methodologies and unsubstantiated conclusions. Remarkably, in compiling the report, TRAFFIC consulted only with the fur industry, despite its obvious conflict of interest. Most glaringly, TRAFFIC failed to examine the ability to distinguish between the pelts of bobcats and the Eurasian and Iberian lynx, even though these species are most at risk if the bobcat is removed from Appendix II.

Despite the deficiencies in the TRAFFIC report, the United States has again proposed to remove the bobcat from Appendix II. Hopefully, countries that objected to similar proposals in the past will reject this latest effort as unnecessary, premature and counterproductive to meeting the conservation needs of the bobcat and related cat species. At this summer's CITES meeting, the Animal Welfare Institute will advocate strongly for retaining the bobcat's Appendix II designation to potentially stem the tide of its escalating persecution, while ensuring continued protection for the critically imperiled Iberian lynx and other lynx species. 🐾

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Please contact the FWS and ask that it continue to protect the bobcat on CITES Appendix II. Send letters to Roddy Gabel, Acting Chief, Office of Management Authority, US Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203. He can be reached by email at roddy_gabel@fws.gov.

To read extended versions of these articles, please visit www.awionline.org or contact us and we will send you printed copies.



Beijing Olympics 2008

The Great Gall of China Part Two: The Trade in Tiger Parts



For \$235, the cow was dumped from a truck to meet her fate. The tigers attacked within seconds, ineptly tearing her flesh as she struggled to survive. While a wild tiger would have dispatched the cow quickly, these captive tigers had become accustomed to being fed by humans and had lost their predatory skills. Beyond the din of shutterbugs snapping pictures of the bloodbath, reactions to this spectacle of cruelty ranged from clapping by those thrilled by the gore to shock from those sickened by the torture inflicted on the defenseless cow. Eventually, the cow was relieved of her suffering. For the next group of tourists, the carnage would begin anew, perhaps with a less expensive chicken, duck or sheep.

Such scenes of suffering may have been common in the days of the Roman Empire, but this particular David vs. Goliath battle was set in modern-day China. In fact, it was just one of many alarming episodes described in recently published newspaper articles about China's tiger farms. Some 5,000 tigers now live on these farms, and business is booming. While a few tigers entertain farm visitors by attacking helpless animals, their fate is ultimately the same as their brethren, who are crammed three or more to a cage with nothing to do but eat, drink, sleep and pace endlessly. These tigers eventually die or are killed to satisfy China's black market for tiger skins, meat, bones and other body parts, many of which are used in traditional medicines. Portions of some carcasses are placed in large vats of rice wine for up to nine years, producing a "tiger wine" that is believed to cure arthritis, strengthen bones and have other medicinal values. Other parts are stored by farm owners who hope for a resumption of the lucrative legal trade in tiger parts.

While tiger populations on these farms are increasing, the number of tigers in the wild continues to decline. Today, there are likely fewer than 3,500 wild tigers left, including only 20 estimated to remain in China and 450 in Russia's Far East. The remainder is scattered sparsely across India, Nepal and Southeast Asia. As burgeoning human populations continue to encroach upon tiger habitats, the animals are being driven out of their homes and increasingly coming into conflict with humans—with fatal consequences for both. When combined with illegal hunting and trade to satisfy the demand for tiger parts, it is no wonder that all of the remaining tiger species sit on the precipice of extinction.

The tiger's future may be under even more threat if China's tiger farmers succeed in their efforts to convince the Chinese government to allow the legal trade in tiger parts to resume. The farmers claim that supplying the demand for tiger parts from farmed tigers will reduce the pressure on wild tigers. While simple in its logic, this concept is grossly flawed. If implemented, it will lead to unspeakable cruelty against captive tigers and the extinction of those remaining in the wild. Legalizing the trade will escalate the demand as the market expands and will significantly complicate law enforcement efforts by allowing wild tiger parts to be laundered as coming from farmed animals.

To its credit, China did ban the domestic trade in tiger parts in 1993. This decision, when paired with the species' Appendix I listing under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), shut down the legal trade in tiger parts and reduced the market for traditional medicines containing tiger parts. The illegal trade in tiger

tiger: Ashleigh Ravenall/www.dreamstime.com



A farmed tiger was cut in half by smugglers in Thailand.

Wild Aid Thailand



These illegal tiger bones were confiscated in Sumatra.

Fauna & Flora International

parts, however, has continued to impact wild tigers and is a product of the apathy of range states to the plight of the tiger, their failure to protect tiger habitat, and underfunded and lackluster law enforcement efforts to stop illegal poaching and trade. The smuggling of tiger parts into China is ongoing; boxes of parts are mislabeled as legal products such as toilets to avoid detection at the border.

Captive tigers are not the panacea to this predicament, since their questionable genetic lineage and lack of survival skills make them unacceptable for release. A commitment from the countries of the world to fund and support expanded law enforcement efforts and educational campaigns throughout Asia is needed to stop the demand for tiger products and to capture and imprison tiger poachers. At this summer's CITES Conference of the Parties, the international community will debate the issue. If wild tigers are to persist, member countries must forcefully oppose any resumption in the trade of the animals' parts. 🐾

Turtle Farming's Dangerous US Impact

Turtles are a popular ingredient in many Chinese meals and Traditional Chinese Medicine products. Though a number of scientific studies document that it is impossible to kill a turtle humanely, over 20 million turtles are consumed in China each year. To meet this demand, the country is home to more than 1,000 turtle farms.

While farmed turtles suffer just as much as wild turtles when killed, turtle farming is believed to be a means of saving Asia's wild turtle populations. In the February 2007 issue of *Conservation Biology*, however, scientists report that turtle farmers are purchasing wild-caught turtles to improve their breeding stock, placing a new significant pressure on China's turtle species, almost all of which are threatened. To make matters worse, some farmers are operating illegal turtle laundering operations, selling wild-caught turtles marked as being farm-raised.

Unfortunately, China's appetite for the animals is now threatening turtles in the United States. According to the World Chelonian Trust, more than 700,000 wild-caught US turtles were exported from 2003 to 2005, with most going to Asian turtle farms and markets. In Maryland, the diamondback terrapin population is declining—reportedly to satisfy China's taste for turtle. This sad reality has forced the state to ban the capture of wild terrapins.

In Texas, hundreds of thousands of turtles are being trapped each year to be exported to Asia. According to US Fish and Wildlife Service data, 256,638 turtles were exported from the Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport alone between 2002 and 2005. This relentless collection recently prompted Texas A&M University professor Dr. Larry Fitzgerald to tell the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission that, "the worldwide crisis in turtles is creating a large sucking sound from those areas that still have animals." In response to this threat, the Commission has approved a proposed ban on the commercial collection of all turtles. 🐾



Diamondback terrapin populations are declining in Maryland to satisfy demand in China.

NOAA



Behind the Wall: Smithfield and the Victory of Illusion

by TOM GARRETT

Farmer John's is a huge, odiferous slaughterhouse in Vernon, Calif. that is owned by Hormel Foods and supplies much of the pork consumed in the Los Angeles basin. Incongruously, however, the brick wall surrounding the plant is caparisoned with one of the world's largest murals depicting idyllic farms and pigs roaming happily in green pastures. The murals, painted over the course of 11 years by Hollywood set designer Les Grimes, are locally famous and inspire feature articles contrasting the surroundings from which the pigs have presumably been dragooned with the grim fate that awaits them.

When Grimes was creating this curious legacy between 1957 and 1968, most pigs were indeed raised on family farms; some, at least, on pasture. But times have changed; America's family farmers are in extremis; of over 2 million hog farmers in the 1950s, only about 80,000 remain. Today, the only real contrast between the industrial hell from which the pigs have been taken and the hell awaiting them as they are driven off the trucks or deposited dead and dying into rows of overflowing dumpsters (death loss on trucks is enormous in the summer) is the latter's brevity. Farmer John's largest source of pigs is a place as far from the bucolic as one can imagine, a phalanx of gigantic steel sheds rising eerily in the almost lunar landscape of southwestern Utah's high desert called Circle Four.

Circle Four was initially a partnership set up with grandiose expectations by four North Carolina hog barons

as the western terminus of their continental conquest. The partnership ended in 1998 with the cannibalization of two partners by the biggest one. Circle Four is now owned by Smithfield Foods. Smithfield's rise and pastoral America's fall, the eclipse of the wall's bright images on real farms, are very much parts of the same phenomenon.

Two decades ago, there were still 670,000 family hog farms, and Smithfield was a small Virginia company—notorious for polluting the Pagan River, but barely noticed amid the jostling of agribusiness behemoths. In 20 years, however, it has metamorphosed from regional piranha to international shark, operating in seven countries and utterly dominating the American hog industry. At least one of three pigs butchered in America is killed in Smithfield slaughterhouses; with its latest acquisitions it will own a fifth of those raised. Smithfield owns 95 percent of the pigs



Murals outside of the Farmer John slaughterhouse in Vernon, Calif. portray a farm setting that contrasts with the plant's harsh reality.

three large slaughterhouses, ostensibly for repairs. The processing bottleneck that resulted was so severe that live hog prices crashed to a quarter of the cost of production, plunging hog raisers, large and small, into acute crisis. Within months, tens of thousands of small farmers had been forced from business, and Smithfield had absorbed its erstwhile partners, Murphy Farms and Carroll's Foods, the world's largest and second largest hog production companies, to own 13 million hogs. At that point, Smithfield became 60 percent vertically integrated and insulated from the perturbations of the market.

Since 1999, Smithfield has invaded central Europe, first Poland, then Romania, flouting laws and regulations, stimulating political corruption, polluting, bringing mass abuse of animals, oppressing citizens, disrupting the agricultural economy, and again, as in America, leaving illness and ruin in its train.¹

On Jan. 25, 2007, winning in the hard world of death, stench and political control that fills its coffers, but losing in the world of public perceptions, Smithfield made a move that rivals some of its earlier gambits. The company announced, with much fanfare, that it intends to phase out gestation crates in its own installations—such as Circle Four—in 10 years, and to oblige its contractors (who raise most Smithfield pigs) to do the same in 20 years. The gambit worked. The move was widely praised; some opponents not only trumpeted “victory,” but also claimed it for themselves, arguing that they had forced the company's hand with anti-gestation crate referendums in Florida and Arizona.

Word that Maple Leaf, Canada's largest hog butcher, was following Smithfield's lead brought further triumph.

A victory, but whose? Has Smithfield, long the industry leader in rapacity, now become its leader in animal welfare? Is Maple Leaf, having followed Smithfield's lead before by crushing trade unions, chopping wages, speeding the killing line and adopting vertical integration, similarly “changing its spots?” The Smithfield announcement was a public relations coup that served an economic purpose, to placate its largest purchasers, such as McDonald's, which has become restive over the cruelty issue. It was a mission accomplished at little “upfront” cost. Most retrofitting will—inevitably—be deferred as long as possible, up to two decades in the case of contractors and often past the functioning life of the installations themselves. Few (if any) pigs now living will benefit. Generations of Smithfield sows

in Virginia. In North Carolina, where there were 27,000 independent hog farmers in the mid-1980s, only a few hundred remain. In Missouri, where there were 22,000, fewer than 2,000 remain.

Smithfield's first quantum leap to dominance came in 1992, when it completed the world's largest slaughterhouse in Bladen County, N.C., bringing on a porcine explosion in that state—from 2.4 million to 10 million animals—and the ecological devastation of its coastal plain. This was followed, as North Carolina became saturated, by a surge of hog factories across the Midwest and by Smithfield's own implacable expansion, crushing labor unions, taking over scores of competing companies. An even more profound transformation occurred in 1998, when Smithfield and another industry giant, Iowa Beef Processors (IBP), took advantage of a meat workers' strike in Canada to shut down

hexodus/www.flickr.com



Diane Halverson

hexodus/www.flickr.com

Happy pigs on pasture appear on the infamous Farmer John's mural, but the average productive life of a sow imprisoned in a gestation crate rarely exceeds two years. Many still-young sows chosen for culling are too crippled to even walk out of confinement to their deaths.

will live their short lives in the same wretched cages in which they are imprisoned today.

Eliminating gestation crates relieves the worst single aspect of industrial hog raising, but it does not change its overall cruelty and ugliness: crowding, filth, darkness, noise, noxious gasses, bare concrete floors. It is still a hell; every installation is still surrounded by a loathsome garland of dumpsters full of dead pigs. Animals live and die without smelling the earth or seeing the sky or carrying out motor patterns nature has intended for them.

It does nothing to protect the environment. All the disastrous effects of the liquefied manure system—its assault of pig respiratory systems, surface water pollution, air pollution, contamination of aquifers and the spread of resistant pathogens—remain in effect.

It does not relieve the impacts on humans, both those who live near liquefied manure operations and those who work there. Impacts range beyond stench and clouds of flies to eye and skin infections, respiratory infections and dysentery to irreversible pulmonary and brain damage. Lagoons and sprayfields are major emitters of hydrogen sulfide. There is

mounting evidence of widespread, often severe or lethal neurological damage from this gas. Recent out-of-court settlements by industry are tacit admissions of what may be the tip of a medical iceberg.²

It does nothing to relieve the corrupt marriage between industrial agribusiness and American officials and politicians. By lessening the opprobrium attached to industrial operations, it may have worsened it.

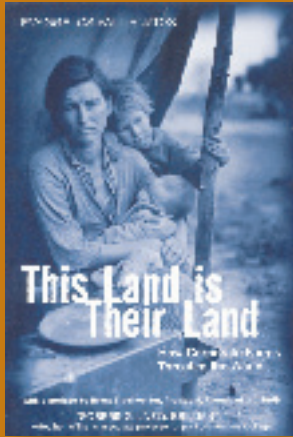
Finally, foreclosing the use of gestation crates does not inhibit the continuing remorseless expansion of industrial animal raising. Nothing illustrates this fact better than the recent situation in Arizona, where Proposition 204 to ban gestation crates passed by a substantial margin. Nonetheless, beleaguered citizens are struggling against a major hog factory expansion in the state's southwest corner, involving at least 50,000 feeder pigs. The purported owner, Jerry Cullison, is widely regarded as a front for Hormel, the company that owns Farmer John's. In fact, the investor of record calls itself PFFJ, "Pigs for Farmer John's." And we are, thus, where we began: sinister sheds in the desert, a vast and multivorous city, bright images of a bygone America girdling its house of death. 🐾

¹Smithfield's inglorious tradition of buying politicians and officials has convulsed Polish and Romanian politics, leading to the distortion and non-enforcement of health and environmental laws. In Poland, towns near Smithfield-owned hog factories (usually sited in former state farms) are full of sick children and people with respiratory, skin and eye infections. Dysentery is at third world levels. Citizens have to endure stench, clouds of flies, bullying by company guards. In Romania, which had rigorously enforced health and sanitation regulations, veterinarians are under pressure to let Smithfield do anything it pleases. There has even been an attempt to dismantle regulations altogether. In both countries, and earlier in the United States, small farmers are confronted by crashing hog prices caused by corporate overproduction and manipulation of the market.

²University of Southern California professor Dr. Kaye Kilburn, one of the world's leading experts on chemical poisoning, has examined 60 persons (mostly citizens living "downwind") with neurological damage from hydrogen sulfide. This chemical is produced by liquefied manure. He believes anyone—especially children—subjected to chronic exposure will suffer brain damage eventually.

This Land is Their Land: How Corporate Farms Threaten the World

by Evaggelos Vallianatos
Common Courage, 2006
ISBN: 9781567513585
315 pages; \$19.95



Drawing from a variety of recent books and studies on corporate agribusiness, *This Land Is Their Land* shows that in such areas as agricultural policy, land ownership, agriculture financing and lending, seeds, chemicals, energy, farm machinery, crop milling and processing, food

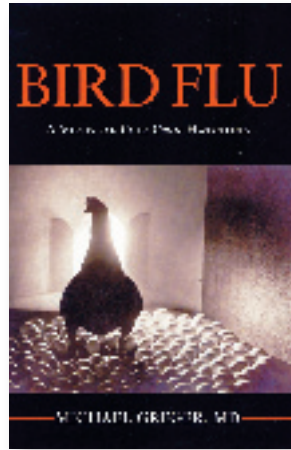
production, advertising and the wholesaling and retailing of food, corporate agribusiness has become the dominant force both in the US and throughout the world.

Author Evaggelos Vallianatos carefully examines the effect of industrialized farming in such countries and areas of the world as Brazil and Africa, and explores how it has become the Western culture's most aggressive and colonizing impulse. He also warns that "there's going to be hell to pay" over the disregard of the environment, ranging from changing weather conditions to such occurrences as the dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico.

By painstakingly laying out both the evolving crisis that corporate agribusiness is generating while at the same time showing the reader how knowledge may well save family farming as well as the integrity and wholesomeness of the food we eat, Vallianatos has contributed immeasurably to our understanding of not only the history of agriculture and food, but the path we must take to save ourselves from ourselves.

"A well-informed citizenry," he concludes, "is our best defense against the terrors of factory culture. An informed and caring citizenry is likely to put his money where his health is..." I would simply add: "Do you know where your food comes from?" ■

—By Al Krebs, editor of *The Corporate Agribusiness Research Project* (Review excerpted from the April 1, 2006 issue of *The Progressive Populist*)



Bird Flu: A Virus of Our Own Hatching

by Michael Greger, M.D.
Lantern Books, 2006
ISBN-10: 1590560981
Hardcover; 465 pages; \$30

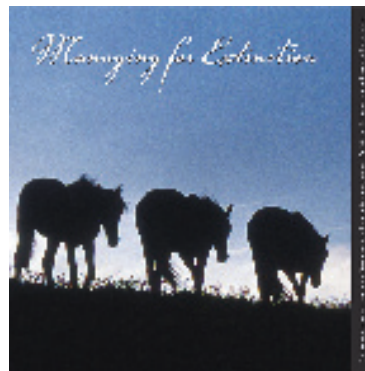
In this thoroughly referenced work, Dr. Michael Greger counters common misconceptions about what many believe will be an H5N1 avian influenza pandemic on a scale greater than the 1918 flu pandemic that sickened half the world

and killed between 50 and 100 million people. For example, although many believe migrating wild fowl will spread the virus, Greger notes that H5N1 has existed in a "benign" form in these birds for millennia without becoming lethal. Medical literature contains only two reports of human infection from wild bird viruses.

And while many believe that the breeding ground for avian flu will be backyard poultry flocks and commercial outdoor operations, Greger explains that self-preservation dictates a virus should not kill its host unless there is another potential host close by for it to infect. The low population density in outdoor poultry production and backyard flocks makes it difficult for viruses to spread from bird to bird. Under such conditions, it behooves the virus to remain mild enough to preserve the host. The low-stress outdoor environments help birds maintain a healthy immune response, keeping the virus in check.

In contrast, the crowded conditions of modern, industrial poultry production (where tens and even hundreds of thousands of immune-compromised birds may live in a single shed) are a perfect breeding ground for more virulent flu strains. Here, viruses can easily mutate to become deadly—and subsequently be spread widely by transport vehicles.

Greger does not dismiss the potential for a worldwide flu pandemic. Rather, he makes the case that its source will not be what so many people fear, but something closer to home and potentially preventable, if we have the will to change how food animals are raised. 🐾



Managing for Extinction

By the Animal Welfare Institute
(AWI), 2007
One copy free to AWI members
\$3.00 for non-members
(cost-price, includes S&H)

We have released a newly revised edition of *Managing for Extinction*, a 30-page report detailing the failures

of the National Wild Horse and Burro Program. Agencies in charge have lost sight of the legal mandate of the 1971 Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act, and this publication provides insights on ways in which the program and our wild horses might be saved. 🐾

Short Docking of Sheep: A Cruel Fad in the Show Ring

The sheep industry is locked in a serious debate over the extreme docking of sheep tails for shows and livestock exhibitions. In the United States, shepherds typically cut lamb tails to a length of 1 or 2 inches to prevent wool maggots later in life. The practice of short docking for the “show circuit” is different—the entire tail is cut off right at the body wall, along with one or two vertebrae of the spine. It is well known within the sheep industry that short docking is an unnecessary practice that can cause serious health problems, pain and suffering. Seven national veterinary, scientific and animal science organizations recommend the practice of short docking be stopped.

In 2003, faculty from five state universities studied the effect of short docking on the health of sheep.¹ The “Thomas

Study” found an increase in rectal prolapses in sheep who were short docked (a picture comparing short, medium and long docking can be found in the Thomas article on page 2728). The researchers concluded, “Ultra short docking is a cosmetic fad promoted in the show ring that compromises the health and well-being of sheep. The practice should be abandoned.” There are several causes of rectal prolapses. Short docking is particularly a problem because the caudal vertebrae of the spine and the cords that stabilize the rectum and anal sphincter are removed. Destroying this support system increases the chance that any straining (such as coughing) can push the rectum out of the body. Fixing a rectal prolapse is painful. With valuable show lambs, a prolapse may be amputated or sutured. In some cases, a torturous series of iodine injections is given to try to build up enough scar tissue to re-stabilize the rectum.



This type of short dock, whereby the animal's tail is cut off entirely at the body wall, is typical in the show ring.



This ewe's tail has been docked to the typical length of 1 or 2 inches. Her lamb's tail has not yet been docked.

Robyn Mackenzie/www.istock.com

Short docking policies and practices at universities participating in the Thomas study.¹

	University Sheep Flock	Cooperative Extension (4-H)
Iowa State University	No written policy, lambs short docked (2007).	No policy. ISU sheep program selling short docked “club” lambs (2007).
Ohio State University	Written policy banning short docking (2000). Photo of short docked sheep on university sponsored website (2006).	No policy. Short docked sheep at 2006 fairs.
Oregon State University	Policy banning short docking (2000). Included in Standard Operating Procedures (2006).	Written policy (2001) made optional (2004). No policy at State Fair (2005).
Texas A & M University	No response to our request. Short docked sheep on university website (2007).	No response to our request. Short docked sheep at 2006 livestock shows.
University of Wisconsin at Madison	No written policy, practices medium docking. Photo of short docked sheep on university sponsored website (2007).	No policy. Short docked sheep at 2006 fairs.

The Show Circuit's Role

Short docking only exists in the show circuit. At fairs, sheep are judged on how much meat they could produce at market. Like a body builder flexing to display muscle angles, sheep exhibitors use techniques in the show ring to highlight muscle definition. By removing the animal's entire tail, competitors want to create the illusion of the level back and full leg of a better meat lamb. Why? A winning sheep can sell for as much as \$14,000, and winning builds up the breeder's reputation. 4-H and Future Farmers of America (FFA) offer youth hands-on experience through club projects that end with demonstrations at fairs and expositions. 4-H is a US Department of Agriculture (USDA) program administered by Cooperative Extension at each land grant university. County Extension Agents staff local 4-H programs and are employees of the university. FFA, in the US Department of Education (USDOE), is authorized by the National Vocational Education Acts. Leaders are agriculture teachers in local school districts and universities. Surprisingly, there is no national 4-H or FFA policy on tail docking, and Cooperative Extension Services in only 10 states ban the practice in sheep projects.

AWI Gets Involved

In June of 2006, the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) wrote to the president and Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) chair at each campus that sponsored the Thomas Study. Our goal was to see how these institutions carried out the recommendations published by their faculty. We asked about policies for university sheep flocks and Cooperative Extension 4-H Sheep Projects.

We found that only two campuses ban short docking, and all five states still allow short docking in 4-H sheep projects. AWI also contacted the national 4-H and FFA headquarters, calling for leadership to stop the practice. Universities, the National 4-H Headquarters and the National FFA Organization all deny authority over what happens in the show ring.

Who Can Change this Policy?

The show ring today is more than a place for kids to display their skills—it has become a business. Some universities breed club lambs for sale; some private breeders educate youth on the care of sheep. Responsibility for change rests with administrators who design protocols and educational tools for sheep programs, including IACUC and

Cooperative Extension faculty at universities. Ultimately, “[Cooperative] Extension will have to decide if it will promote and educate based on what the research base tells us, or whether it will promote and educate based on what some club lamb producers tell us. These are often two divergent trains of thought.”²

We commend the US Animal Health Association, the American Association of Small Ruminant Practitioners, the American Veterinary Medical Association, the American Sheep Industry Association, the American Farm Bureau Federation, the National Institute for Animal Agriculture, and the National Lamb Feeders Association for taking a stand against short docking. We also thank Cooperative Extension departments within universities, agriculture educators and industry leaders for their efforts to ban short docking in California, Idaho, Maryland, Nevada, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oregon, Utah, Washington, West Virginia and Wyoming.

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

- *On Campus:* Take pictures of show lambs at fairs and university agriculture schools. Send them to the campus IACUC and ask for written policies that ban short docking in all university programs. (Send us a copy too so we can help!)
- *At the Fair:* Encourage the Cooperative Extension Service to ban short docking in 4-H sheep projects. Ask the USDA and the USDOE to establish a national standard for 4-H and FFA projects.
- *Public Policy:* Add short docking to animal welfare laws. Work with fair boards to strengthen animal cruelty policies at the fairgrounds.
- *Ally Building:* Support commercial sheep producers calling for responsible improvements in docking practices in the show ring.

AWI is interested in working with activists organizing to stop short docking in their states; if you need help, please let us know. If you would like to join our work in Iowa, Ohio, Oregon, Texas or Wisconsin, please contact the AWI office.

¹Thomas, et al. (2003) Length of docked tail and the incidence of rectal prolapse in lambs. J. Anim. Sci. 81: 2725-2732. http://ag.arizona.edu/pima/4-h/projects/sheep/tail_docking_rectal_prolapses.pdf

²Goodwin, J., et al. (2003) Development of objective lamb tail-dock measurement device. <http://www.animalagriculture.org/proceedings/2003%20Proc/Goodwin.htm>

Cockfighting Bill Approved

New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson signed a measure in March that will outlaw cockfighting in the state. The law takes effect on June 15, leaving Louisiana as the only state that continues to permit the cruel bloodsport. Animal protection advocates applauded Richardson's decision as a major step in completely outlawing the barbaric practice. However, those who support cockfighting—in which two roosters fitted with sharp blades or gaffs on their legs are placed into a pit to fight until their deaths—say they plan on a legal challenge. 🐾

Integrity-Free Monsanto

In a not-so-surprising development, biotech multinational giant Monsanto is moving aggressively against a group of dairies labeling their products “hormone free.” The agribusiness behemoth that manufactures the cow growth hormone rBGH claims that this type of labeling is damaging its business and has lodged a complaint with the US Food and Drug Administration and the Federal Trade Commission. Its objection flies in the face of what is known about bovine growth hormone—even Monsanto lists 16 possible health effects for cows on its packaging. Use of rBGH to increase milk production in cows is associated with an increase in painful conditions such as severe mastitis, digestive disorders and chronic lameness. 🐾

Celebrity Chef Speaks Out

Famed Chef Wolfgang Puck has announced that he is changing suppliers of the egg and meat products served in his fine-dining restaurants, fast-casual eateries and catering venues, avoiding those that use some of the most egregious industry methods. Further, he has stated that he will no longer serve foie gras, a product produced by force-feeding ducks and geese. We applaud Puck's decision and hope he will insist on a high welfare requirement for all species of animals raised for food that are supplied to his establishments. 🐾

Shark Species Discovered; Others in Decline

A 5-year study that was the first analysis of Indonesia's shark and ray populations since 1860 was recently published by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research. “Economically Important Sharks and Rays of Indonesia,” a bilingual field guide by researchers from the Australian Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, discusses the discovery of 20 new species of sharks and rays, including the Bali catshark, the Jimbaran shovelnose ray and the Hortles' whipray.

Study co-author Dr. William White says the information is especially critical in Indonesia, since it is home to the largest shark and ray fishery in the world, with reported landings of over 100,000 tons a year. The country is also a major player in shark finning operations and the trade in shark parts, so it is crucial that these newly discovered species are protected from exploitation. Accurate species data is the best tool for preserving species diversity, because it allows researchers to gauge the effects of the fishing industry and develop successful fisheries management plans.

Unfortunately, North American researchers write in *Science* that the overfishing of large shark species has upset the balance of marine life off the eastern seaboard of the United States by “chopping off the top of the food chain.” A report by US and Canadian scientists outlines the decline in big sharks over 35 years, as well as the corresponding explosion of the number of cownose rays in Chesapeake Bay. Reaching up to 40 million animals, the ray population has multiplied by 20 times over three decades and simultaneously decimated populations of bay scallops, oysters and clams.

The population of scalloped hammerhead and tiger sharks has fallen at least 97 percent since 1970, and bull, dusky and smooth hammerhead shark populations have fallen by at least 99 percent. The species have been deemed “functionally extinct” because they cannot control middle predators in their ecosystems. These findings updated the results of a 2003 study, concluding that original estimates of declines in big shark populations were too conservative. 🐾



Chris Fallows/www.apexpredators.com

A sharp decline in smooth hammerheads and other shark species off the US eastern seaboard is causing larger problems for the marine ecosystem.

Pet Safety and Protection Act Reintroduced

The Pet Safety and Protection Act has been reintroduced in the 110th Congress as H.R. 1280 by Representatives Mike Doyle (D-PA) and Phillip English (R-PA) and as S. 714 by Senator Daniel Akaka (D-HI). This legislation would prohibit the sale of random source dogs and cats to laboratories by Class B dealers, thereby protecting companion animals and stray animals (who may be lost or stolen family pets) from being sold for research purposes.

The Society for Animal Protective Legislation received a letter in support of these companion bills from Dr. Robert R. Whitney, who worked at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) for more than 20 years, serving as Director of the National Center for Research Resources and later as Deputy Surgeon General. He confirmed that random source dogs from Class B dealers are not used for NIH intramural research, stating that "[t]he continued existence of these virtually unregulatable Class B dealers erodes the public confidence in our commitment to appropriate procurement, care and use of animals in the important research to better the health of both humans and animals." 🐾

SAPL Congressional Directory Now Available

The Society for Animal Protective Legislation asks that its constituents contact Members of Congress on various animal welfare bills and issues. Now it is easier to locate your elected officials, as we have just released a portable directory of the 110th Congress. The handy full-color booklet includes contact information for all federal legislators and House and Senate committees. If you are interested in purchasing a copy for the cost price of \$12 (includes S&H), please contact our office by phone or send a check or money order to:



Society for Animal Protective Legislation
 Attn: Congressional Directory Order
 P.O. Box 3719
 Washington, DC 20027 🐾



Kimberlee Curyl

American horses, whether they are wild or former racehorses and pets, are closer than ever to receiving permanent protection from slaughter for human consumption.

Legislators Support American Horses

In late April, the US House of Representatives voted 277 to 137 in support of H.R. 249, reaffirming what it originally declared in 1971—that America's wild, free-roaming horses and burros must be saved from commercial exploitation and the cruel slaughter industry. The bill restores decades-old protections that were stripped away in 2004 with the passage of a rider slipped in to an appropriations bill without public awareness or Congressional oversight. It must now go before the US Senate before becoming law.

Just one day before this important victory, the Senate Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee held a mark-up for S. 311, the American Horse Slaughter Prevention Act, voting 15 to 7 in favor of sending the bill to be considered before the full Senate. While the three remaining foreign-owned slaughter plants in the United States were shut down this year following court decisions, passage of the bill is critical to ensure that horses are protected from slaughter forever, and that they are not exported elsewhere to be killed for the same purpose.

The Illinois House of Representatives also took a step to stop the slaughter this April. Legislators voted 74 to 41 in favor of H.B. 1711, a bill to ban horse slaughter for human consumption in the state, which is home to the Cavel International plant. Representative Bob Molaro reintroduced the bill this year and spoke on the floor of the House before the landslide victory. Compassionate actress Bo Derek also aided the campaign as a spokesperson for the Society for Animal Protective Legislation. H.B. 1711 will now move on to the Illinois Senate. 🐾

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Please urge your Members of Congress to co-sponsor the AHSPA. Write to:

The Honorable (name)
 US House of Representatives
 Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable (name)
 US Senate
 Washington, DC 20510

The relationships between captive non-human primates and their caregivers are critical to animal welfare. Research shows friendly relationships can improve quality of life; adversely, agonistic relationships can decrease quality of life. Meanwhile, there is evidence of the negative effects of the presence of caregivers and their activities. While caregivers in and of themselves should not be stressful to their charges, their behaviors and the nature of their interactions are likely the basis for stress. One method to mitigate the potential negative effects and to promote positive relationships is for caregivers to employ species-specific behaviors in their interactions with their charges.

With funding from an Animal Welfare Institute Refinement Award, I tested the effect of the use of these behaviors with chimpanzees at The ZOO Northwest Florida in Gulf Breeze. The facility houses three chimpanzees: Zachary, Mr. Zoo Good and Patrick. Prior to collecting data, I trained



Dr. Jensvold makes observations about one of her chimpanzees from afar.



Mary Lee Jensvold

Species-Specific Behaviors

Central Washington University researcher Mary Lee Jensvold, Ph.D. studies methods of promoting positive relationships between captive chimpanzees and their caregivers.

their caregivers on the meaning of chimpanzee behaviors and how to understand them.

During Chimpanzee Behavior Condition (CBC) data collection, a caregiver used chimpanzee behaviors and vocalizations while interacting with the animals. In Human Behavior Condition (HBC) data collection sessions, a caregiver presented human behaviors and used speech instead.

These interactions were natural and usual; caregivers followed the lead of the chimpanzee or the normal routine. This included grooming, playing, serving meals, presenting enrichment or simply observing the chimpanzees as part of the daily check. The chimpanzees were never forced to participate. The caregiver could end the session at any time, but was encouraged to stay for at least 10 minutes.

From videotapes of data collection interactions, data coders recorded the behavioral contexts for each chimpanzee

as they occurred. Since the HBC had 78 minutes more data than the CBC, I created a sample of only the first 5 minutes of each data collection interaction, for an equal comparison. The sample showed significant differences in the chimpanzees' response to the conditions. The chimpanzees engaged in more play and grooming in CBC than in HBC, in which they were less interactive.

In human interactions, partners often mirror each other's behaviors. If one partner crosses his legs or scratches his head, the other may do so as well. Studies

show that when the partners match each other's behavior, the interaction is perceived by outside observers as more positive. Individuals report that when a partner matches his or her behavior, he or she likes that person more. Use of mirroring behaviors can have tremendous impact in client-therapist and student-teacher relationships. Likewise, the results of the current study can have a tremendous impact on the relationships between caregivers and chimpanzees.

The chimpanzee behavioral training included many play behaviors, including play faces and chimpanzee laughter, as well as grooming and submissive behaviors. These are all used by caregivers at my home institution, the Chimpanzee & Human Communication Institute. We have found that the submissive behaviors reduce inter-group aggression. Thus, the use of species-specific behaviors can also improve relationships within the captive group. These findings strongly suggest that caregivers should change their style of interaction to enable appropriate, friendly responses and positive relationships. 🐼

Artificial marking and tagging for identification purposes is integral to animal research, including the utilization of animals as models for biomedical, agricultural and wildlife experimentation. A variety of identification systems is available, and researchers often choose a method based on experimental design or convenience. Examples include tags containing data about the individual or marks that can be seen from a distance, with little known of their effects on the animals or experimental results.

Our research group investigated the potential side effects of four popular identification systems used in poultry research. The birds' behavioral and physiological changes associated with leg bands, wing bands, neck tags and livestock marker tags applied to tail feathers were examined in comparison with birds bearing no identification. The study was supported by funding from an Animal Welfare Institute Refinement Award.

Laying hens were marked with one of the four identification systems, and each bird was housed with an unmarked cage-mate. Unmarked birds were paired for one hour a day with birds of each marking or tagging treatment, to create every possible pairing. During one-hour tests, the birds' behaviors were recorded and analyzed for aggression and feather pecking. None of these markings had any effect on aggressive behaviors given or received by the bearers. Interestingly, the frequency of feather pecking increased in wing-banded birds, which may suggest that wing banding birds raises social stress levels.

Two days after the completion of behavior testing, physiological measures were taken. One measurement

was for fluctuating asymmetry, which is the degree of asymmetry of an ideally symmetric trait. Birds (and other animals) can become more asymmetric because of multiple factors, including social or environmental stress. By examining the fluctuating asymmetry of the birds' shank lengths and widths, we found leg- and wing-banded birds were more asymmetric than unmarked birds, which could be due to increased



Rachel Dennis and Alan Fahey

Marked for Success?

The US Department of Agriculture Livestock Behavior Research Unit's Dr. Heng-Wei Cheng and graduate researchers Rachel L. Dennis and Alan G. Fahey study the impact of identification on poultry welfare.

social stress. Leg-banded birds also had a reduced growth rate over the testing period compared with birds bearing all other identification marks. A slower growth rate may be a result of monopolization of resources by more dominant birds, an increased metabolism, or decreased appetite due to elevated stress.

The "stress hormone" corticosterone is released from the adrenal gland in response to various stimuli. One of its main functions is to maintain

physiological homeostasis, or stability in response to stress. Results showed that corticosterone levels were similar in all birds, except for wing-banded birds, who had a much lower level. This could be related to chronic social stress, resulting in the reduced reactivity of their adrenal glands. On the other hand, compared to other birds, immune function was suppressed in leg-banded birds, as demonstrated by a reduced concentration of heterophils—a type of white blood cell that provides protection against infection. Our findings show that wing and leg banding systems have a greater impact on certain stress parameters.

These results have important implications for poultry and other animal research. Wing and leg bands are identification systems used commonly in research and are often thought to be less visually conspicuous than tag or marking systems since they are difficult for a human observer to see from a distance. However, our findings suggest that these marking systems may be more conspicuous to birds and other animals. Wing and leg band systems may also have an effect on movement or comfort of the marked birds, as these systems utilize a heavier metal base that may irritate skin and hinder movement, since they are located near a commonly used limb joint.

Without consideration of how these systems alter birds' physiology and behavior, these identification systems could lead to misinterpretation of experimental results and have a negative impact on the integrity of animal research. Although the cellular mechanisms are not yet clear as far as which identification systems alter birds' physiological and behavioral parameters, our findings suggest a species-specific approach to marking is required. 🐾

BLINKERED BY BOWHEADS



As the host and chair of the May 2007 International Whaling Commission (IWC) meeting in Anchorage, Alaska, the United States has the task of accommodating thousands of delegates and support staff, non-governmental organizations, reporters, security personnel and curious onlookers. The meeting's venue is no coincidence. The United States has been preparing for this year's meeting since the 2002 IWC meeting in Shimonoseki, Japan, when its request for a 5-year quota of bowhead whales for Alaskan Natives was blocked. Only later did the quota achieve final approval through a specially convened meeting. That precious quota expires next summer, so a new one will be requested this May. Not wanting a repeat of Shimonoseki, the sole focus of the Anchorage meeting for the United States is obtaining the bowhead whale quota, to the exclusion of all the many other decisive IWC issues.

The United States has treaded water over the course of the last four IWC meetings. Meanwhile, the pro-whaling nations have continued to push for a resumption of commercial whaling through initiatives such as recruiting countries to join the IWC and providing fisheries aid to make them vote in favor of a pro-whaling agenda. The United States is so preoccupied by its own mission that it is ignoring the much bigger issues facing the IWC, such as the shifting balance of power due to Japan's accelerated IWC recruitment drive, the growing call of cultural imperialism by some of the recruited nations, the passage of a pro-whaling declaration for the first time in decades at last year's meeting, and the simple majority the pro-whalers attained—if only by a single vote.

Japan and other pro-whaling nations began a new initiative to undermine the IWC's moratorium by convening a so-called "normalization" meeting in February 2007, aiming to restore an emphasis on regulating whaling. The United States at one point actually planned to attend, but then correctly chose to not participate. While this decision was welcome, the United States is glossing over the biggest potential threats to the moratorium: the latest Japanese proposal

for a resumption of its small-type coastal whaling, coupled with its proposal for status reviews of the great whales listed on Appendix I of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

At the Anchorage meeting, Japan intends to propose that the IWC vote in favor of a resumption of its small-type coastal whaling, whereby small motorized fishing vessels hunt small cetaceans in nearshore waters. Japan has sought IWC permission for its coastal whaling for two decades, claiming that whalers in four towns have suffered economic hardship and a loss of culture because of the moratorium on commercial whaling. In fact, until Japan started its "research whaling" and flooded the market with whale meat, these coastal communities actually benefited from the moratorium as they continued to hunt small cetaceans, selling the fresh meat with little competition.

The practice of hunting small cetaceans is still conducted in Japanese towns such as Taiji, where the notorious dolphin drive hunts take place—primarily to sustain a growing demand for live dolphins for aquaria in recent years—as well as in other locations where the Institution for Cetacean Research also issues licenses for participation in Japan's North Pacific "research whaling" of great whale species. The fear of pollutant contamination in coastal species causes much of the meat to be unsafe, with large quantities being processed into pet food or fertilizer. At the special 2002 IWC meeting at which the bowhead quota was passed, the United States voted in favor of a Japanese small-type coastal whaling proposal for the first time, presumably in a deal with

Japan to secure the bowhead quota. This year, Japan will massage its request to be more palatable by removing any hint of commerciality and by tweaking the cultural necessity angle.

The small-type coastal whaling proposal will, if approved, necessitate a partial lifting of the commercial whaling moratorium, unless Japan is able to convince the IWC that its whalers' needs are subsistence, similar to those of Alaskan whalers. AWI Quarterly readers may recall that the United States was in 1997 successful in convincing the IWC that the

“Contrary to the wishes of the American people, the United States has lost its will to fight whaling and has concentrated only on the bowhead battle.”

Bowhead whales will be a popular topic at the May 2007 IWC meeting in Anchorage, Alaska. The United States will seek a new 5-year quota for killing this species, and to further its objective, it may avoid critical attempts to rescind the ban on commercial whaling.

(Paul Nicklen/National Geographic Image Collection)

Makah Tribe of Washington State—which has no subsistence need and had not whaled in over 70 years—deserved a gray whale quota. Domestic litigation has prevented the Makah from whaling, except for the 1999 killing of a single whale who was essentially left to rot on the shore. The United States again plans to submit a joint proposal with Russia for a quota of gray whales at the Anchorage meeting, which

will of course play directly into the hands of the Japanese, who may use this request to justify their own proposal.

If Japan prevails at the IWC meeting, then not only will the moratorium be compromised, but pro-whaling countries will have succeeded in paving the way toward a resumption of international trade in whale meat. All of the great whales are currently listed in CITES Appendix I, which bans international trade in their parts and products. The Appendix I listing is largely due to the IWC moratorium, and CITES member countries have also adopted a resolution that gives deference to the IWC over the management of whales. The next CITES meeting takes place in Holland shortly after the IWC meeting, and Japan intends to introduce a proposal for the status review of all whales to determine whether their Appendix I designation is warranted. Though resource intensive and unnecessary, with even a partial lifting of the moratorium, Japan's CITES proposal will be difficult to oppose.

The pro-whaling bloc will assuredly attempt to thwart the bowhead quota request again in Anchorage, and the United States, hobbled by its angst over this single issue, has not expended the effort or resources to prepare its opposition to this careful assault. Contrary to the wishes of the American people, the United States has lost its will to fight the whaling war and has concentrated only on the bowhead battle. It is clearly disengaged from this high-stakes game, in which Alaskan Natives have become unwitting pawns. The United States has the tools to outmaneuver the whalers, namely through domestic trade sanctions and strong political and diplomatic pressure, yet it chooses not to take action. The United States must acknowledge that being blinkered by this single issue while ignoring the bigger picture is equal to watching on as the death-knell for the whales—bowheads included—is being sounded. 🐾

Inherently Inhumane

Pro-whalers purport that whales can sustain commercial hunting, but many populations have not recovered to sustain hunting. All whales still face overwhelming odds for survival because of other threats from by-catch, toxic pollutants, climate change, anthropogenic noise, habitat destruction, over-fishing of prey species and ship strikes. Even if whale populations were sufficiently robust such that a resumption of commercial whaling could occur, the practice of whaling is inherently cruel. The most advanced methods can neither kill the animals instantaneously nor render them irreversibly insensitive to pain prior to death. The current criteria used to measure time to death is questionable, since the same weaponry is used on both small and large whales, and the whalers themselves are charged with collecting welfare data.

TV's *Heroes* Save the Whales

The 1970s "Save the Whales" movement spearheaded by the Animal Welfare Institute (AWI) was hailed as a pivotal moment in the history of environmentalism and succeeded in instituting a moratorium on commercial whaling. However, despite the ban, whale populations have still not recovered, and many species face an uncertain future because of other human threats, including entanglement in fishing gear, ship strikes, ocean noise, toxic pollution and climate change.

With these threats in mind, AWI has collaborated with our long-time colleague Jeff Pantukhoff, president of the Whaleman Foundation, to launch the "Save the Whales Again!" campaign. Our efforts kicked off this February in Hollywood, Calif. with a media event hosted by Hayden Panettiere, star of NBC's *Heroes*. She was joined by her fellow cast members and AWI's Susan Millward, who introduced the event.

The launch coincided with the conclusion of the Conference for the Normalization of the International Whaling Commission (IWC), held by Japan. Its topic was the declaration passed by a single vote at last year's meeting, stating that the moratorium is "no longer necessary," that the IWC should "allow controlled and sustainable whaling," and that its functions require "normalizing." Japan extended invitations to member nations that "share the concern for the current inability of the IWC to manage whale resources."

The United States announced early on that it would not attend. However, in late December 2006, National Marine Fisheries Service Director William Hogarth—the newly appointed 3-year chairman of the IWC—decided that the United



Kurt E. Soderling

AWI's Susan Millward and the Whaleman Foundation's Jeff Pantukhoff (fourth and fifth from left) joined members of the cast of NBC's *Heroes* to launch the "Save the Whales Again!" campaign at a press conference in Los Angeles.

States would send a contingent to participate in the meeting. This confused other conservation-minded countries and served to legitimize the nonsensical event, while undermining the international whale management responsibilities of the IWC.

After making our views known to Dr. Hogarth, we were elated when the United States again proclaimed that it would not attend the meeting, turning the conference into nothing more than a gaggle of whalers. Now, the US IWC delegation must become real-life "heroes" for the whales at this summer's Alaska meeting. To learn more about this issue and view Public Service Announcements by compassionate celebrities, please visit www.savethewhalesagain.org. ■

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