



Voice For Animals E-Newsletter

January/February 2013

 Facebook link
currently unavailable

 Twitter link currently
unavailable

 [Forward to a Friend](#)



Your donations are important because they enable us to keep on top of the crucial animal rights issues in your community, so please [DONATE TODAY!](#)

Your donations are very much appreciated by V4A and the animals we help so thank-you for your support!

If you have any questions regarding donations please email inquiries to info@v4a.org, phone (780) 490-0905, or mail to P.O. Box 68119, 162 Bonnie Doon Mall, Edmonton, AB, T6C 4N6, Canada

From the Editor's Desk

Happy New Year everyone! While you're huddled inside out of the way of the blowing snow and the plummeting temperatures why don't you take the time to read our latest issue?

We have a jam packed one for you this month featuring articles on the plight of Indonesian orangutans, why we don't like zoos, and why elephants belong in sanctuaries instead of behind bars. We also have a review of CBC News' *Fifth Estate* broadcast, *The Elephant in the Room*, as well as our monthly charity profile. Finally, *The Clever Rabbit* restaurant is a popular place with our members, so be sure to check out our second review detailing even more about the luscious food they serve there including a stunning photograph of one of their dishes!

Until the next time, have a fabulous winter, wrap up warm, and give your animal companion a big hug to let them know you love them!

Keep the letters and article ideas coming folks - we always love to hear from you! Remember, my email address is: newsletter@v4a.org.

Rebecca Staines

Our website is currently undergoing a facelift so I ask that you please bear with us. Thank-you.



Palm Oil: The Evil Behind the Label
By Rebecca Staines

What Products Contain Palm Oil?

1 in 10 household products including food stuffs, cosmetics, and household cleaners contain palm oil. In fact it has



Profile of a Charity: PAWS for Life Foundation
by Marie Staines

The non-profit registered charity,

What you can do to Help

- * Visit the [V4A website](#) to find featured campaigns and action alerts that you can aid by writing letters, signing petitions, attending rallies, etc.
- * [Volunteer](#) your time to the organization
- * [Donate](#) money to V4A
- * Always spay and neuter your animal companion
- * Choose to adopt your animal companion from a shelter rather than through a breeder



Upcoming Events

by Tove Reece

- * 24th National Anti-Fur Day
Friday, Feb. 8th, 2013 from 3:30-5:30
Entrance to The Bay, downtown.
Email info@v4a.org for more info.

Click on the above picture to go to our updated events calendar. Check back often for newly added events/protests!

been calculated that 50% of all baked goods, candy, food spreads, cosmetics, air fresheners, cleaning agents, paints and printer inks in Europe, North America, Australia, and New Zealand contain palm oil.

Therefore, the average person consumes approximately 10kg of palm oil a year. Biofuels also use palm oil. It is extremely difficult to determine which products on the store shelves have palm oil in however, as companies are not required to include this information on their products' labels. Instead, they use the umbrella term "vegetable oil" or they choose from over 170 other terms. As I cannot possibly list all the terms here please check out the following [link](#). We need to make these companies accountable, therefore, I ask that you sign the Care2 Petition demanding that Canada make it mandatory for palm oil to be listed on labels on products sold here. I have provided a link to the petition at the end of this article. Thank-you.

There are alternatives to palm oil which include canola oil, peanut oil, sunflower oil, and coconut oil. Companies are hesitant to switch though due to the fact that palm oil is the cheapest option. It's all about the bottom line for them. It is interesting to note that 30 years ago palm oil was virtually non-existent in our products, but with recent increases in demand for fatty, saturated fast food its use has become much more prevalent.

Why is the Harvesting of Palm Oil so Bad?

In order to make the land ready for palm oil plantations vast areas of rainforest are clear cut and

Providing Animals with Safety for Life Foundation (PAWS), is based out of Edmonton, run solely by volunteers and is completely funded by donations. The Foundation rescues dogs and cats, ensures they are healthy by having a vet check the animal for health issues and makes sure that they are vaccinated and tattooed or micro-chipped. If there are any health or temperament issues the pet will not be available for adoption until those issues have been dealt with. The pet has to be spayed or neutered before going to its new home. Work with the animal begins immediately to enable volunteers to get to know their personalities.

Foster homes are an integral part of the PAWS organization. Some people foster only once or twice whilst others foster for years. Some fostered pets end up becoming a new member of their foster family. All necessary items for the care of the fostered pet, such as food, crate, collar and leash, etc., are given to the foster family so that they do not have to incur expenses; although some foster families do decide to donate these items.

PAWS adoption process can take from one to two weeks depending on how many applicants there are. Pets and applicants are matched for suitability and a meeting with the members of the family as well as other pets is arranged before the application process is finalized. With this kind of attention to detail it is clear that these rescued animals have every chance

burned. This is obviously devastating to the orangutans' natural habitat by itself, however, it is not the only threat that this decimation of trees causes. It also allows for easier access to hunters and traders, leaving the orangutans vulnerable from all sides. Furthermore, the setting of forest fires as a land clearing method has been believed to have killed a number of orangutans as they are slow moving and cannot escape the flames in time. To make matters even worse, these gentle giants are shot by farmers when they accidentally stray on to these plantations.

The reason why orangutan habitat is so widely used for palm oil cultivation is because it is located in areas with fertile lowland soil that are near to rivers which make it ideal for palm oil plantations and, with growing international demand for palm oil, there is a heightened frenzy to expedite the growth and harvesting of the product which has allowed for a large number of unethical plantations to spring up all over Indonesia, slashing and burning their way to profits.

Chilling Statistics

* It has been estimated that a mere 60,000 wild orangutans are left on Indonesia's islands, Borneo and Sumatra, making them an endangered species. It has been further estimated that they could be extinct by as early as 2015 and their habitat completely erased by 2033

* The equivalent of 300 football fields are cleared every hour throughout Indonesia and Malaysia to make way for palm oil plantations

* Anywhere from 6 to 12 orangutans are killed each day due to habitat

of finding their 'forever' homes.

Although PAWS is a non-profit organization they do require an adoption donation to fund medical bills, food, and other necessary expenses. The minimum donation for dogs and puppies is \$300, \$200 for cats and \$250 for kittens. This is not too large a fee when you consider that you are receiving a pet who has been vet checked, vaccinated, spayed/neutered, and who has been matched to your family's needs and temperaments. That's not counting the knowledge that you are giving a rescued pet a loving home and helping other rescues at the same time. At the time of writing this article they have six awesome cute dogs in need of adoption featured on their [website](#). Check them out, you'll fall in love!

If you would like to help this worthy charity there are several ways. PAWS is always looking for volunteers in all areas: dog walking, grooming, fundraising, marketing, adoption events. Donations of either cash or pet items, such as those listed below, are always welcome and needed. Fostering or adopting one of the rescued animals would benefit the charity, the animal and your family.

PAWS is always in need of the following items: adult and puppy dry dog food; cat and kitten food; kitty litter; flat collars; leashes; blankets and towels; plastic shopping bags; dog and cat toys; cleaning supplies such as paper towels, dish soap, laundry detergent, disinfecting wipes.

destruction, poaching, illegal animal trading, etc. all caused by the palm oil industry

* 90% of the orangutans' habitat has been destroyed over the last 20 years thanks to palm oil harvesting

Why Love Orangutans?

Besides being absolutely adorable with their bright orange hair and huge eyes, they share 97% of their DNA with us humans, so they are family. They are one of the smartest creatures alive and they are a keystone species meaning that without them other species of plants and trees won't grow resulting in missing habitat for other insect and mammal species and the knock on effect continues...

What You Can Do Now

* Sign the [Care2 petition](#) demanding full labeling disclosure on Canadian food products

* Educate yourself: there are a multitude of resources available detailing the true costs of palm oil, who you need to hold accountable for these atrocities (governments, businesses, etc.), as well as who is trying to help, so check them out on the Web

Stay tuned for part 2 of my article detailing organizations that are trying to protect both the orangutans and their habitat as well as which companies are using ethical palm oil or have banished it completely from their products. Plus, I'll include links to interesting resources!

The Foundation's 'PAWS for Love' second annual Silent Auction at the Canadian Brewhouse North on February 9th is still in need of donations. Items are still being gratefully accepted and tickets are for sale. For more information on any of the items mentioned in this article email pawsrescue@hotmail.com or phone (780) 471 BARK (2275).

Elephants - Northern Zoos vs. Southern Sanctuaries

by Louise Schutte

Elephants have been kept in zoos in the North for several decades. These magnificent creatures were

never meant to live in a cold winter climate, yet Canada continues to house pachyderms.

This archaic practice is starting to turn around. Five years ago, the forward-thinking officials of Alaska Zoo made the decision to move their lone African elephant, Maggie, to the Performing Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) Sanctuary in San Andreas, California. This decision didn't happen overnight. Zoo officials contacted 10 elephant experts; nine of them recommended moving Maggie out of her current home.

After Maggie fell twice, officials decided the time to move Maggie was imminent. Animal Activist, Bob Barker, became involved, and Maggie has spent the past five years roaming 80 acres set aside for female African elephants at PAWS.

During the past few years the fate of the three aging female African elephants at the Toronto Zoo had become a heated controversy after the zoo decided to terminate its elephant program and send its elephants to another zoo. Months after the decision the Toronto Zoo had still failed to identify any potential recipient facilities for the elephants, so on October 25, 2011, Toronto City Council stepped in and voted to send the elephants to the PAWS Sanctuary instead. After a year of debate on November 28, 2012, Toronto City Council reconfirmed their previous decision to move them to a sanctuary in a landslide vote of (32-8 in favour of PAWS).

Elephants are highly intelligent, extremely social animals that require a diverse landscape to roam. Properly run sanctuaries provide the essentials for elephants. PAWS provides space that is 167 times larger than the minimum requirement for elephants set out by the Association of Zoos & Aquariums (AZA). AZA standards require 400 square feet for indoor enclosures per adult female elephant and 5400 square feet for outdoor spaces. Not surprisingly, in zoos these sentient beings develop a psychological behaviour of swaying or rocking back and forth; some exhibit aggression.

"They [PAWS] have acres and acres of land," says Bob Barker. "They have a mud hole; elephants love to play in mud. They have a pool; some of them stay underwater practically the whole summer. And there are elephants for them to socialize with. Elephants come in that have been mistreated and been lonely and depressed, and they just blossom. It's wonderful to behold."

Nature did not create these large mammals to live a solitary existence, nor were they designed to walk or stand on concrete surfaces for long periods of time. With upwards of 20 hours per day chained to a cold, hard concrete floor in zoos, elephants develop foot problems. "It was never intended for elephants to be in such cold weather," Barker continues. "And in captivity, the biggest cause of death for elephants is foot problems. They develop foot problems, and they become infected; that infection spreads all over their body, and they die, die much earlier than they would in the wild."

This year, Calgary Zoo announced its intentions to relocate its three female Asian elephants - Kamala, Swarna, and Maharani - along with the calf Maharani is expecting - to another animal facility within four or five years. Bull elephant, Spike, is still owned by Miami Zoo and is to be relocated to a facility in co-operation with the latter zoo. "We believe the Calgary Zoo will transfer their elephants elsewhere," says Rob Laidlaw, Executive Director, Zoocheck Canada Inc.

"The debate over elephants in North America really has nothing to do with elephant health and welfare," states Laidlaw. "If you look at elephant biology, behaviour and lifestyle, it's very clear they need better housing and care than they now receive. The battle over the elephants is a political fight - a line in the sand - between the status quo and a different, new future for elephants in captivity and for zoos generally."

Barker concludes, "There will be a time that people are going to say, 'Do you know that back there for years and in 2012 even, they had zoos they called them, and they took these beautiful animals and they stuffed them in cages. Can you picture that? In cages. Can you imagine that? It was the dark ages. Dark ages.' That's what I predict."



What are zoos for?

by Anna Chilewska

Whenever the question of the necessity of zoos comes up, I hear the



The Elephant in the Room

Review by Tove Reece

Programme: CBC's *The Fifth Estate* with Bob



Brunch at The Clever Rabbit

Review by Natalie Forman

My friends know me as

following answers: "amusement, education, rehabilitation, help in preserving certain species, and opportunities for research." I know that there are many arguments for zoos, but in my mind there is none that makes sense. I don't go to zoos. If I did, I would consider myself a voyeur. Looking at an animal that has been taken out of its natural environment, that has had its liberty severely restricted, and that must do its business in front of "zoo visitors" is not my idea of time well-spent. If anything, I have trouble classifying visitations to zoos as anything other than a peeping-Tomism. After all, what could I possibly learn from a bored tiger or a lonely polar bear? And don't get me started on my personal heartbreak that is the Valley Zoo's Lucy.

I am aware of the fact that humans have always kept animals by their side. In the antiquity, individuals had private collections of domestic and exotic animals. The Romans kept animals to have a so-called 'living fodder' for their gladiatorial games. Kings had gardens filled with birds, and nobility had their own personal menageries. But zoos, as we know them, are a fairly modern human invention. The first modern zoos were founded in Vienna, Madrid, and Paris in the 18th century, and in London and Berlin in the 19th century. Their primary purpose was - and still is - entertainment. Today, even zoos that consider themselves the most humane and the most advanced have various displays of animal trickery

Mckeown

Original Air Date:

Thursday, November 9,
2012

This great episode of *The Fifth Estate* takes a clear-eyed and in-depth look at captive zoo elephants and, in addition, questions the future of zoos. The host, Bob Mckeown looks at the politics behind and the reasons why zoos are so desperate to hang on to their elephants and why moving them to a sanctuary is so controversial.

The fight to move Lucy, the Valley Zoo elephant and Thika, Toka and Iringa, the Toronto Zoo elephants, are the main focus of this show. Also featured is Maggie, the former Alaska Zoo elephant who went to PAWS (Performing Animal Welfare Society) in 2007. It's a story, so similar to Lucy's, of the struggle to have Maggie moved and the eventual magical outcome for her.

To set the stage, *The Fifth Estate* shows some wonderful footage of elephants in the wild. In their close matriarchal groups they are seen wandering through wide open expanses of savanna dotted with shrubbery and woodlands. This contrasts starkly with the loneliness of Lucy and Maggie and the

a creature of habit. I tend to walk the same routes, listen to the same music, watch the same shows, and eat the same food. But, awhile back I heard of a new vegan/vegetarian eatery that had been opened by a set of animal-loving sisters, called *The Clever Rabbit*. Ever since then I'd been curious to see what they had to offer. I convinced two close friends of mine to accompany me for brunch, both for the companionship and also so that I could get a larger sampling of opinions!

Beforehand, I made sure to check out thecleverrabbit.ca in the hopes of inspecting the menu (I like to be prepared) and was in luck.

On a crisp Sunday morning our trio made its way to *The Clever Rabbit's* accessible location on 124 street and 107th avenue, where our eagle-eyed driver spotted a place to park just a block away. After a brisk walk, we entered the welcoming restaurant, picking ourselves a cozy window seat in the just-the-right-size café. Just as we were getting comfy our charming server, whose smile literally chased away the winter cold, delivered us menus and took our drink orders. As I already knew what I wanted to eat I sipped my

such as bird of prey demonstration, camel rides, elephant painting, etc. These are often labelled as educational presentations. But seriously, how many elephants painting a picture would I expect to find in the wild? That brings me to the second purpose of zoos: education. Many zoo experts and zoo curators claim that people must be educated about animals so that they could better understand the need for animal and habitat protection. But is there strong evidence that speaks to the connection between visiting a zoo and caring for animals? Not according to such experts as Stephen Kellert, Edward Ludwig, and my personal hero, Peter Singer. I would also argue that most people who are actively involved in nature conservation and animal rights are those who do not visit zoos and who are largely opposed to keeping any animal in captivity.

Occasionally there is the issue of scientific research that zoos provide. This has long been a point of debate, and according to Dale Jamieson (among others), very few zoos in the world support any significant scientific research or employ scientists with full-time research appointments. The main area of study that zoos engage in is animal behaviour. However, behavioural research has always been controversial because many animal experts claim that what can be learned from captive animals is not the same that can be learned from animals living in a natural habitat. Therefore this type of research does not lead to anything that could

small, concrete and steel enclosures that these captives call home. Lucy is seen walking through piles of snow, emphasizing the absurdity of keeping elephants in a Canadian climate.

A wide variety of people provide insights into the nature of elephants and the industry's adamant refusal to let them go. Weighing in on this bitter controversy are veterinarians, zoo and ex-zoo directors, city councilors and Hollywood celebrities such as the incomparable Bob Barker.

The show is filled with noteworthy quotes, some of which are:

Bob Barker: "Canada is a wonderful place and I love Canadians. I loved them on *Price is Right* and I love the country. But it ain't no place for elephants."

David Hancocks - Former director of the Seattle Zoo:

"...when people working with elephants say 'she's a people elephant,' they know nothing about elephants. It's more than just a zoo-centric view, it's a completely blinkered view."

Bob Barker: "You looked into her (Maggie's) eyes and they were just hopeless, there was no hope in her eyes at all."

Patrick Lamphi - Director, Alaska Zoo. Commenting on

earl grey tea in peace while the other two perused the menu's offerings. Eventually, we decided to start off with homemade tortilla chips and salsa. The chips were perfect and flaky, with just the right amount of salt, and the salsa was fresh and chunky - just the way I like it. It was difficult to share!

For the main course, my one friend chose the vegan version of a traditional breakfast, and ordered the tofu scramble with a side of vegan sausage. The dish came out looking amazing - brightly colored tomatoes and broccoli, heavenly looking "eggs," with two sausages and two crisp pieces of toast. I couldn't help but second guess my own choice. My other friend, who has some strict dietary concerns, chose the granola and yogurt, opting for the non-dairy coconut version. Another lovely dish, mixed with fresh berries and kiwi and so pretty it was a shame to watch him take the first spoonful. And not only was it judged delicious, it also sat well with my friend's stomach. And my own midday meal? For that I decided to go with the lentil loaf with almond gravy, which was raved about in a review posted on *The Clever Rabbit's* website. It did not

be useful to the species in the wild or to their conservation.

I think that over the years I have heard every possible reason for why a zoo should exist. I admit, I am biased because whatever those reasons might be, I will always be of the opinion that zoos should not exist - at least not anymore. A cage is a cage - the shape might differ, the size might differ, the degree of visibility might differ, but it is still a cage and to me that is the core of the discussion.

For further reading consider the following books:

- * *Zoos and Animals Rights* by Stephen Bostock (1993)
- * *Beyond Bars* by McKenna, Travers and Wray (1988)

his visit to PAWS:

"It was just such a peaceful setting, as close as you could get to their native habitat maybe on this continent. Yeah! It felt right."

As for Edmonton Valley Zoo veterinarian Dr. Milton Ness - he sounds uninformed and out of touch.

So why are zoos so desperate to hang on to their elephants? Undoubtedly, Bob Mckeown's statement that charismatic mega fauna (elephants) in zoos generates more money than all professional sports leagues in North America combined, is the answer. And in Bob Barker's words "Animal exploitation begins with greed."

If you missed the show here is a [permlink](#)

disappoint. The loaf was delicious, moist and filling, and the gravy was, well, gravy (as in, an extra bonus). I savored every bite, as well as every slurp of the accompanying soup du jour, a peanut-y squash creation that was rich and creamy and tasted like autumn.

With whimsical rabbit figurines decorating the tables, a couch for the leisurely visitor, bright and open front windows and attentive but not oppressive staff, *The Clever Rabbit* has what they call "great atmosphere." And it also has great food, which means I'll be going back as soon as I can to start working my way through everything else on the menu. AND, to indulge in one of the incredible looking vegan donuts displayed in a baker's case right next to the register. Next time, I'll be sure to leave some room for dessert!

[follow on Twitter](#) | [friend on Facebook](#) | [forward to a friend](#)

Copyright © 2012 Voice For Animals All rights reserved.

Our mailing address is:

P.O. Box 68119, 162 Bonnie Doon Mall, Edmonton, AB, T6C 4N6, Canada

[unsubscribe from this list](#) | [update subscription preferences](#)