




Voice For Animals E-Newsletter

November/December 2013

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v4a.org

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From the Editor's Desk

The V4A newsletter returns just in time for the Holidays! 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?

In this issue we are highlighting the plight of our poor Lucy, who we are still fighting to free from the Edmonton Valley Zoo. We also have a *Fifth Estate* review of a few elephants who did finally make it to a sanctuary, which gives us hope for the future. We also have an interesting article on the Species At Risk Act, part 2 of my research into palm oil, and an e-book review. Finally, I have included a poem, *The Starfish*, that I believe sums up why we do what we do to help animals.

This holiday season don't forget your animal friends: donate your time and/or money to our cause. Thank you for your generosity.

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.



A Voice for Lucy
by Chandra McQuarrie



On February 4th,
2013, three Voice for

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

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

Animals directors - Tove Reece, Stacie Shinewald and myself - visited the Edmonton Valley Zoo in order to observe Lucy's movement and behaviour. Although Stacie and I are unknown to the zoo, Tove, as our long time executive director and spokesperson, is recognizable. With that, it appeared that zoo officials were quick to have staff get Lucy on the move as soon as possible. It didn't take long for an educated eye to see that the zoo's poster girl is truly suffering.

For an elephant of 37, Lucy's movement is extremely laboured and slow. Most elephants twice her age that I have worked with or observed (barring injuries) walk with greater ease. This is largely owing to the surface she lives on, which is predominantly cement, and the pathways she walks on, which are asphalt. Elephants will walk over 20km a day in the wild. Lucy gets a fraction of this exercise, which contributes to her obesity. The lack of movement and added weight puts further stress on her already aching skeletal structure.

Our cold climate is one of the biggest factors that will exacerbate her arthritis. It also contributes to the lack of adequate exercise she receives.

When Lucy stands still she lifts her right hind leg and holds it up so as to take her weight off of it.

The only time I have seen this behaviour in an elephant is in the case of a few land mine victims I have worked with (usually they are working in illegal logging along a disputed border between Thailand and Cambodia when this happens). Those elephants have prominent deformities

Elephants on Board: A Journey to Remember

*Episode Review by
Natalie Forman*

On Friday October 25, 2013, the CBC aired an episode of *The Fifth Estate* that told the story of an unforgettable journey made by three unforgettable elephants.

After the Toronto Zoo board voted in 2011 to close their elephant enclosure, admitting that they would be unable to cover the millions of dollars in costs to maintain it for the long term, the zoo decided that it had to find a new home for their pachyderm family. After considering their options, the zoo board decided to send the three elephants to PAWS (Performing Animal Welfare Society), a sanctuary in San Andreas California. Even after the final decision was made, however, it took two full years and pressure from animal rights activists including Bob Barker (who generously footed the million dollar bill to move the Toronto elephants) before the zoo seemed prepared to let the elephants go. The final plan? On October 17, the elephants would be transported in specially designed crates on two 18wheeler trucks for a three day cross continent drive covering over 4000 miles. The *Fifth Estate* was allowed to tag along for the ride.

In this one hour episode, written and presented by *Fifth Estate* journalist Bob McKeown, we meet the elephants: Iringa (44) and Toka (43), the older elephants, who had

that often never completely heal. Other than severe arthritis in that particular appendage, I have no explanation as to why she would do this, hence the need for a true expert like Dr. Mel Richardson or another respected, credible vet to come in and examine Lucy.

Asian elephants usually have a pronounced curvature to their back. Lucy's hump comes to a fairly defined point. If you compare it not only to the silhouette of other Asian elephants but also to older photos of Lucy, you will see that the point has become more pronounced over time. Again, this can likely be attributed to arthritis but requires the attention of a professional in order to obtain a proper diagnosis.

Elephants have a very complex system of communication including squeaks, rumbles, trumpets, growls, touch, and taste.

In an effort to get to know other elephants, they will even taste each other's urine! They also practice what is known as "seismic communication" - the ability to send messages to other elephants through vibrations in the ground at a distance as far as 2km away. They are quite vocal animals, yet I have never once heard a noise out of Lucy. She exhibits signs of mental distress including head bobbing and rocking.

These movements are consistent with individuals in many species (including our own) who are under duress. Lucy has dead eyes. She knows she is alone, has no one to communicate with, and appears to have lost hope.

The zoo officials themselves have admitted that Lucy has a respiratory issue yet no one is able to specify what that issue is.

That alone should be just cause to invite an expert in

been at the zoo since 1974; and Thika (33), the baby, who was born in captivity and had known no other home. The African Elephant enclosure at the Toronto Zoo that had housed the three females for almost forty years encompassed less than one acre of land. Compare this to the vast expanses of land that wild elephants roam across, distances totalling between 10 and 20 km (one acre is equivalent to 0.0040469 km squared). PAWS was offering the Toronto elephants 80 acres of land to wander on, varied terrain to explore, and the company of other elephants. The only problem? Getting them there.

With the help of several pairs of hands, including those of Margaret Whittaker, an animal behaviour consultant who has moved 17 elephants over the years and knows just how difficult the task is, the elephants were loaded into their crates, along with 75 bales of hay, 50 bags of food, snacks, and 2000 L of water.

After more frustrating last minute delays, they were finally on the road.

Also along for the ride was Pat Lampi, executive director of the Alaska Zoo, who had once fought the move of his zoo's own elephant, Maggie, to a sanctuary before finally relenting and freeing her to PAWS to enjoy the rest of her life in a space as close to her species' natural habitat as possible.

The convoy made several stops along the way, mucking out over 120 kilograms of dung at a time, giving "the girls" (as they are affectionately known) fresh food, and ensuring

to examine her! The zoo refuses outside help except for that of Dr. James Oosterhuis of the San Diego Zoo - a vet who is on record condoning the vicious beating of an elephant under his care and recommending that Maggie from the Alaska Zoo not be moved. Fortunately, Maggie has since moved to PAWS in California and is doing very well! As activists, the thing we must remember is to present a unified front.

The primary issue we must stay focused on is that Lucy needs help and she needs it from the most qualified and respected veterinarians and behaviourists available. Ask those opposed to our campaigns who want to keep Lucy here, "If you love Lucy, stay or go, don't you want the best care possible for her?" If they really love her as they say they do, then they too should welcome the outside assistance!

When you think of Lucy, please do not forget about the other animals who are also enduring the inadequate and deplorable conditions of the zoo. We were greeted by an owl that lives in a far-too-small exposed cage that sits under a heat lamp for warmth. We came across wallabies huddled on a 5'x5' bed of straw with no real space except a small snow-covered yard that far from resembles their native Australia. We saw primates in enclosures that were almost completely void of natural light, dreadful murals of greenery painted on their cement walls, and nothing but a fake tree to live on. It is true, Lucy is alone - but she is not alone in her suffering.

Chandra is an Elephant Ambassador with Save Elephant Foundation/Elephant Nature

that their precious passengers were maintaining good levels of hydration. At one point, the zookeepers accompanying the elephants had to give Thika Gatorade as she was refusing to drink as much water as she needed to. The train of vehicles crossed the Canadian-US border to surprised waves and well wishes from the border patrol staff, and continued across a long series of US states, with the elephants kept under constant observation via cameras placed in each of their crates. It isn't until they reach Pine Grove, California that they encounter their one major hurdle. The truck carrying Thika, exhausted from climbing the hilly roads with such a weighty load, started failing and its tires started to smoke. In the end, they had to leave Thika and her handlers behind until a new truck arrived to finish the trip. It is a hard decision, but the clock is ticking and it is getting more important to reach the sanctuary and free the elephants from their crates. Ultimately, Thika arrives at PAWS only a couple of hours behind her friends. Watching her exit from her crate and seeing her take her first few cautious exploratory steps into the heated barn where the other two elephants are already comfortably sheltered is incredibly moving. Even more emotional are the sounds of welcome that come from PAWS' current residents, who are trumpeting and roaring their excitement at the arrival of their new friends.

The program ends with footage filmed during the

Park based in Chiang Mai, Thailand. She has been volunteering with rescued elephants and other inhabitants of the sanctuary since November 2009. Her yearly trips to Southeast Asia continually expand her knowledge of and love for these amazing animals. If you have any elephant-related questions you would like answered in the next newsletter, please forward them to canada_chandra@yahoo.ca.

first day that "the girls" start to fully investigate the outdoor enclosure that they will now call home.

Even climbing a low level incline works muscles in each elephant's body that have never been worked before. It is inspiring to see. For the first time, one of the elephants has a mud bath, a frequent event for wild elephants but one that is not available to elephants in captivity. This *Fifth Estate* episode ended on a joyful note, but was likely bittersweet for any animal loving Edmontonian.

It is difficult to fully revel in the victory for the Toronto elephants... not when Lucy, the sole elephant at the Edmonton Valley Zoo, is still being held in captivity. But, hopefully, with this major success for the animal rights movement in Canada, the momentum will carry forward to Lucy's benefit and she will one day soon be able to join Thika, Toka, and Iringa in California to enjoy the freedom and companionship she so desperately deserves.

What You Need To Know: the Species At Risk Act *by Marie Staines*

Are you aware that there is a federal law to protect endangered species in Canada? The Species At Risk Act (SARA) was passed in 2002 with the intention of preventing at-risk species from becoming further endangered, threatened, extinct or extirpated (locally extinct in a given region). The SARA is also intended to help recover at-risk species and to prevent species of particular concern from becoming at-risk.

"Wonderful," you think, "now I can settle back in my comfy chair with my hot chocolate and a good book watching the snowflakes fall through the window, in the sure and certain knowledge that my Government is looking out for my wild, furry and feathered friends, their fishy and reptilian chums and the plants that sustain us all." Unfortunately you'd be relaxing too soon.

As Suman Gupta reported, in *Alive* magazine of February, 2013 ("Canada's Endangered Species," pg 105), changes being made to the SARA instead of ensuring greater safety for endangered species could, in fact, put them at increased risk.

According to David Suzuki (www.davidsuzuki.org) in order for the SARA to be effective the government must use the powers of the Act which include: recognizing that a plant or animal needs protection (it cannot be protected unless it is on the list), identifying the habitat needed for survival and recovery; and use of federal government intervention if a province is failing to

protect a species and its habitat.

The federal government receives recommendations from an independent science advisory committee, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC), advising of the risk of extinction of a species. Unfortunately the government does not always follow their recommendations. If a listing is deemed to have social, political or economic impacts it can be denied that listing. This weakens the effectiveness of the Act. At its five year anniversary only 445 out of 551 species identified as at-risk by COSEWIC were actually listed. To find out more about just 8 of the many species that didn't make it to the 'list' go to www.davidsuzuki.org.

When a species IS listed the SARA requires that a Recovery Strategy be developed identifying crucial habitat for survival. The majority of strategies so far do not identify critical habitat.

The SARA only applies to federal lands which means that most public, Crown lands, are under provincial jurisdiction. This means that only a small portion of the country is under direct protection of the Act. The SARA does contain provision for the Federal Minister of the Environment to approve protection of areas normally under provincial jurisdiction but it has NEVER employed that provision despite dire circumstances (see www.davidsuzuki.org/publications/downloads/2006/Spotted_Owl.pdf). This is just one of the problems with this act; if there is a conflict of interest between an at-risk species and economic development of an area there is no contest; after all the animals and plants don't pay taxes.

Although perhaps made with the best intentions the SARA is a weak act with many loopholes and lack of funding providing poor habitat protection, political interference, poor implementation and little protection for Canada's wildlife, their habitat and our ecosystem.

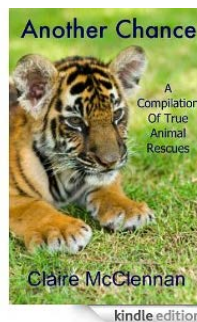
The Act, as initiated by Parliament, has had its mandatory five year review. A copy of the analysis of the five year report card can be seen at www.davidsuzuki.org. One species highlighted is the Peary Caribou which is found only in Canada's Arctic. This species has declined 80% in the last 33 years with climate change and potential industrial development sited as possible reasons for the past and estimated future declines. COSEWIC assessed the Caribou as endangered in May of 2004 but in July of 2005 the government decided not to list the species and instead put it on 'extended consultation.' The listing is still pending and, I assume, the Caribou numbers are still declining.

Is your hot chocolate cold yet? Is the comfy chair slightly less comfortable? Do you have a concern that maybe the SARA isn't quite the safety net for endangered species that you thought it was? Good, because the government, according to Environment Canada's website (www.ec.gc.ca), invites all Canadians to express an opinion of this Act and its implementation at the SARA Public Registry (www.registrelep-sararegistry.gc.ca). This includes those of us in comfy chairs with cold chocolate and mounting snow outside the window! If you would like to be involved in the decision making and recovery activities under SARA or would like more information about Canada's "at-risk" species please visit this site and make your Voice 4 Animals heard.

To find out more about this issue visit www.cosewic.gc.ca or take a look at the petition "Save Canada's Species Before It's Too Late" at www.ecojustice.ca.



3 Key Palm Oil Q & As
by Rebecca Staines



**Another Chance: a
compilation of true
animal rescues by
Claire McClennan**
Review by Rebecca



The Starfish

Q: Is there such a thing as "sustainable" palm oil?

A: Experts have recently determined that the answer to this question is no. Those companies that claim to source "sustainable" palm oil are engaging in 'green washing' and pulling the wool over customers' eyes.

Q: What companies use the most palm oil?

A: According to *Greenpeace*, *Unilever*, *Cadbury*, *Nestlé*, and *Tesco*, along with palm oil traders *Cargill* and *ADM* represent 40% of the world's palm oil trade.

Q: Are there companies that do not use palm oil in their products?

A: Yes. The following is a list of companies that are not only vegan, but also do not use any palm oil in their products: *Booja Booja*, *Divine Chocolate*, and *Funky Chocolat* (chocolate comestibles); *Dorset Cereals*, *Redwood Cheezly*, *Tofurkey*, and *Vegusto* (other food stuffs); *Aware* (laundry product); *Essential Care*, *Honesty Cosmetics*, *La Mari*, *Little Satsuma*, *LUSH*, *MoonCup*, *Natural Spa Supplies*, *Pure Nuff Stuff*, *RSPB*, *Woodworks*, and *Yaoh* (cosmetics and body care products). Visit the following website <http://www.onegreenplanet.org/lifestyle/guide-vegan-products-and-palm-oil/> for a list of companies that are still using palm oil in their products.

What you can do right now to help:

- * Write to those companies who are still using palm oil and demand that they change their ways - and if they don't, then boycott them
- * Purchase items from companies that do not use any palm oil in their products
- * Donate your time and/or money to organizations working hard to prevent rainforest destruction and save the orangutans

If you would like further information on this issue please visit the Rainforest Action Network's website at <http://ran.org/palm-oil> for comprehensive coverage of palm oil production, the destruction of the rainforest, and the continuing plight of orangutans.

If you have found the issue of orangutans interesting you may wish to read an article published in the August 2013 issue of *Elle Canada* entitled "Jungle Kinship" that profiles a dedicated Canadian (*Biruté Galdikas*) who has been working tirelessly for 40 years to preserve orangutan habitat and care for displaced orangutans. She is also the head of

Staines

In this delightful e-book (purchased through Kindle for a mere \$3.07!) I found plenty of heartwarming rescue tales to educate and inspire. Perfect for this holiday season, *Another Chance* offers readers a glimpse into the tough, yet rewarding, world of animal rescues. This book features over 20 rescue stories from a number of different animal rights organizations around the world including the National Animal Welfare Trust (NAWT), the National Anti-Vivisection Society (NAVS), the Elephant Sanctuary, the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA), and the Orangutan Foundation, just to name a few. The rescues contained within this book cover all species of animal from wombats to chickens to cheetahs and even butterflies!

I would recommend this book for children and adults who wish to know more about the role animal rights organizations play in society and who may

As the old man walked the beach at dawn, he noticed a young man ahead of him picking up starfish and flinging them into the sea. He asked why he was doing this and the youth replied that the strand and starfish would die if left on the beach until morning.

'But the beach goes on for miles and there are millions of starfish,' countered the old man. 'How can your efforts make any difference?' The young man looked at the starfish in his hand and threw it to safety in the waves. 'It makes a difference to this one,' he said.

Wildlife Aid

(sourced from: *Another Chance: A Compilation of True Animal Rescues* by Claire McClennan)

the charity Orangutan Foundation International that relies solely on donations so please check out their website at <http://orangutan.org>.

wish to learn more about the plight of certain animals. I found that this book offered a basic education on how specific groups of animals suffer whilst still offering hope that things can change and animals can be freed from their persecution and pain.

If you do read this book and enjoy it then you may wish to read its sequel: *Another Chance: Animal Rescues: Book 2*, also by Claire McClennan. It is also available in Amazon.ca's Kindle department.

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