“Zoos exist so people can learn about animals — otherwise, why have zoos?” claims Sue.

A Talk with Sue About the Zoo

Editor’s Note: Sue Pressman is The Humane Society’s special expert on zoos. Because of her crusade, zoos are providing better care for animals.

Q. Sue, what’s wrong with zoos?
A. Most just confine animals. Zoos started 200 years ago as a novelty. Kings imported unusual animals for their parks. They were freak shows.

Q. Isn’t a natural setting better than a cage?
A. Zoos are for people. By allowing an animal a little more room, he can do more things, and then he teaches you more about himself. He gets a tree, a swimming pool, and six or ten more yards of cell room, so, sure, he gets a kind of spin-off, too. He may even be allowed to socialize with animals of his own kind.

Q. Aren’t animals happier with more room?
A. I won’t say that. I’ve moved an animal from one tiled cage to another exactly like it, and he panicked. That really got me. But because his smell wasn’t there, it was a strange place.
The DEFENDERS newsletter is published monthly except during July and August by The Humane Society of the United States, The Woodrow Wilson Building, Washington, D.C. 20006. Permission to reprint art and text is hereby granted. Photos may not be reprinted without permission of the photographer. Notices of change of address should be sent to The DEFENDERS, The Humane Society of the United States, The Woodrow Wilson Building, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. The DEFENDERS is a publication of The Humane Society of the United States for educational purposes. The opinions voiced in the DEFENDERS are those of the writers only, not necessarily those of The Humane Society of the United States.

A. We still don’t know much about wild animals?
A. We’re actually learning faster about them in the wild than in zoos.

Q. How do young people find careers helping animals?
A. Volunteer to help at a shelter, zoo, or natural science museum. You may find you don’t like the dirty work, emergency hours, or drudgery.

Q. You’ve criticized many zoos. Has it helped?
A. Every one has changed. Some went away totally. But most have been getting better.

Q. What can DEFENDERS do to help their local zoo?
A. Find out what it’s like. If you don’t have a great time, there’s something wrong.

Q. Then what do we do about it?
A. Discuss it with others. Find out if the zoo society has a junior membership. Discuss it in class. Decide what kinds of teacher guides and learning materials would help, before and after a trip to the zoo. Discuss it with your parents. Write a letter to the editor of your local paper.

Q. Will zoo officials really listen to kids?
A. You bet they will. They realize better than ever before if they don’t educate they aren’t needed.

Q. How about reports to KIND?
A. Great. Maybe DEFENDERS can help zoos develop educational programs so every visitor can learn something about animals.

Back to the Land - Part 3

At last my cabin began to take shape. It even began to look like a proper house. It was just a skelton with no walls or roof yet.

When I had first made plans for building, I bought groceries for sandwiches and cold meals. I knew that it wouldn’t be healthy not to have at least one hot meal each day. So after a hard morning’s work, I drove to town for lunch.

Often I was too dirty to go into a restaurant, so I would buy a hamburger and milkshake and eat it in the car. Cindy, my poodle, always went with me. She begged for a bite of hamburger. When it was gone, she wanted some milkshake. I made her wait until it was almost gone. Then I tore the sides of the carton down so she could reach the bottom. She still got milkshake all over her face. What a goofy sight she was!

Of course, I couldn’t leave the milkshake on her face. When we got home, I took her down to the stream to wash off. While I was there I usually took a swim myself. The water was often cold, but it felt good. After a dip, I was usually ready to go back to work.

That entire summer was spent with hard work and fun times. While I worked Cindy was always nearby, digging for buried treasure, trackling mud across the new floor, or just resting in the shade under the house. When the walls went up, I built a special door so Cindy could come in or go out.

I didn’t know how Cindy would take to country life, but she loved it! She no longer wears those fancy little pom poms some poodles have. She is just a country dog, having the time of her life.

But I’m convinced that’s where people are happiest.

A Slick Career--Elephant Oiling

One of your duties would be to oil down the elephant’s skin every three months. This is extremely important because most zoos do not have the space or facilities to duplicate an elephant’s natural habitat. Elephants need the old swimming hole, where they can lounge in the mud and water. The mud helps keep their skins from drying out.

Elephants usually sleep standing, leaning against a termite mound or huge tree. They have many habit patterns in the wild that they can’t follow in captivity. One reason is that they are social animals and zoos usually don’t have more than one or two elephants at a time. That’s why an elephant caretaker must be a very special person. He must understand elephants and be kind to them.

This elephant caretaker is Bob Ramos, at the Beardsley Park Zoo in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Bob enjoys oiling elephants and being kind to them.

Short Stuff

Humane Society Asks Court to Stop Coyote Poisoning

Coyotes are being poisoned again. The Environmental Protection Agency allowed sheep ranchers in 44 Texas counties to “test” the effectiveness of the M-44. This is a mechanical “coyote getter” filled with cyanide poison.

The permit to “test” the M-44 was given after the President banned the use of poisons by Executive Order. The EPA, pressured by conservation agencies, had to stop issuing registrations for use of these poisons on public lands, which sheep ranchers lease from the government.

The M-44 has been around for a long time. The Humane Society felt that it has been used long enough for any “testing” it should have had. So the Humane Society went to court and asked for a temporary restraining order to stop the use of the M-44 until a regular court session could be set up.

Hearings before the court were scheduled as your newsletter went to press. Hopefully, the court will uphold the President’s executive order.

A Slick Career--Elephant Oiling

What kind of career do you want to follow? Have you ever thought of being an elephant caretaker? One of your duties would be to oil down the elephant’s skin every three months. This is extremely important because most zoos do not have the space or facilities to duplicate an elephant’s natural habitat. Elephants need the old swimming hole, where they can lounge in the mud and water. The mud helps keep their skins from drying out.

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This elephant caretaker is Bob Ramos, at the Beardsley Park Zoo in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Bob enjoys oiling elephants and being kind to them.
How would you like to be able to check on the big air polluters in your area? In order to do it right, you'll need to read their smoke. This project tells you how to read the smoke and gives you a tool to do it with.

Below is a Ringelmann smoke chart. Maximillian Ringelmann invented his chart more than 75 years ago. The chart tells you how dense the smoke is. The percent of density is really the amount of dust and fly ash in the smoke. The darker the smoke, the more polluted the air is. Of course, this chart doesn’t help you check on the invisible poisons that are in some polluted air.

Cut out the chart and paste it on some cardboard. Now cut out the center of the chart. Hold the chart at arm’s length and match the color of the smoke with a color on the chart. The number on the chart tells you what percent of the smoke is dust and fly ash. If you want to talk with the polluter, it'll be good to have all the facts.

You’ll have to take more than one reading to get good results. Be sure and stand less than 100 feet away from the smokestack and never look toward the sun. Tall buildings in the background can throw off your reading. It’s best to have open spaces in the background.

The ABC’s of Stamp Collecting

The U.S. Postal Service has published Stamp Collector Starter Kits. They have six kits right now. There's Space, Canada, United States, European Art, Sports, and Wildlife. Each kit costs $2.00.

You get a lot for your money. Every kit includes a twenty page album, stamps from different parts of the world, and a beginner’s booklet titled, The ABC’s of Stamp Collecting.

Collecting stamps by subject or topic is an interesting way to collect. Animals could be a great way to begin a new and exciting hobby. Just imagine, you have the whole world to choose from.

We’ve reviewed the Wildlife starter kit. It includes animals from Angola, Tanzania, South Africa, the United States, and many other countries. Most of the stamps show the animals in their natural habitat. And none of the stamps picture hunting or trapping.

The ABC’s book is loaded with helpful hints for the beginning collector. It includes the names of useful books and magazines, stamp collecting societies, a vocabulary of stamp talk, and a list of the basic tools you’ll need to start collecting. For more information, write Philatelic Sales Unit, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Elephants

Elephants, who are well known for their memories, are among the most intelligent animals. They can be trained in less than a year to obey 30 commands. In the ancient world, they were used as soldiers on two notable occasions. In Pakistan, they fought against Alexander the Great and in 218 B.C., Hannibal of Carthage used a force of elephants to surprise the Roman army.

Today, elephants are favorites in the circus ring. In Asia they are also used as laborers, especially in the logging camps of India and Southeast Asia. With their massive trunks and tusks, they can lift and stack a ton of timber at a time.
Threatened Wildlife

Many U.S. animals are threatened with extinction. Twelve of those animals can be found in this puzzle. See if you can answer the clues with the names of the threatened animals. Answers are below.

**Across**

1. Blue________
2. Bald________
3. Eastern________
4. _______ Trout
5. One of the falcons
6. _______ Curlew
7. Black-footed________
8. Northern________ Mt. Wolf
9. One of the wolves
10. Ozark Big-Eared____
11. A small deer

**Down**

1. Blue________
2. Bald________
3. Eastern________
4. _______ Trout
5. One of the falcons
6. _______ Curlew
7. San Joaquin Kit____
8. Northern________ Mt. Wolf
9. One of the wolves
10. Ozark Big-Eared____

**ANSWERS**

A P E N A D O I E N T E E R D" U M O N E C O U L F W

Branch Club News

The Charleston Raccoons from Illinois have helped make major changes at their local dog pound. First they visited the pound and learned what was wrong. Then they walked the dogs, groomed them and played with them. They found so many things wrong that the dog catcher has been transferred and now works as a sewage disposal maintenance helper.

The dog pound was nothing more than kennels of chain link fencing, with a roof, but no walls. Animals were exposed to the wind and rain in all types of weather. The new dog catcher is building windbreaks with the approval of the county officials.

Because of what the Raccoons Club has done, adults have now become interested in organizing a humane society. Public support for humane treatment of animals is growing in the community. Discussions are now going on with county officials for cooperation between the county and the new humane society.

Because KIND members were concerned enough, there may be a new humane society in Illinois.

Letters and Pen Pals

Dear KIND,

What’s happening with the Eastern Cougar? Where can I get a copy of the endangered species list? Why do you only take members under 18?

Lee Ann Laraia, West Hartford, CT.

In recent years, two or three people have seen an Eastern Cougar. The sightings were in the Appalachian Mountains in West Virginia. I guess these people were known well enough for officials to believe them. That part of West Virginia is such a remote area that the cougars can probably survive on their own. Perhaps it’s better people leave them alone, since the growth in population is probably what reduced their numbers to begin with.

Your local library probably has a copy of the endangered species list. It’s called the Red Data Book.

We only take people under 18 because KIND is the youth membership division of The Humane Society. When KIND members turn 19, they are invited to transfer their membership to membership in The Humane Society and continue to work to help animals. — Ed.

Dear Sirs,

This year my sister and my friend and I are going to make Easter baskets for the little animals that live in the field behind our house. We hope they will appreciate their Easter baskets of food.

Judy Junker, Florence, KY, age 14

Dear Sirs,

Can you send me information on starting a humane club? I am 12 and I live in the Big Thicket.

Tim Swearingen, Votaw, TX

What a great place to live! The Big Thicket is where the endangered Ivory Billed Woodpecker has managed to survive. We hope they’re still doing well. Write again if you see one.

- Ed.

A Dog Pound Being Improved Because DEFENDERS Cared

KIND Branch News: The sun was shining and we were in the corner, out of the building — Wink, Wink, sister, what’s up? — KEND.
Our Government usually acts when the public becomes upset. When a lot of people wrote to the President asking him to ban the use of poisons to kill predators, the President gave an order. He stopped the poisoning. At first, the Environmental Protection Agency didn’t enforce the President’s order. But when the Humane Society and six other organizations filed a petition, the EPA finally stopped the registration of these poisons.

The EPA has been under a lot of pressure from people who don’t want environmental controls. The EPA has been asked to set aside its regulations on pollution controls because of the energy crisis. The EPA has been ignored by Congress in new bills that should have been checked by our official environmental watchdog agency.

Then along came the sheep ranchers, crying coyote. There was no way, they said, that they could produce all the meat and wool this country needs, now that the President wouldn’t let them poison coyotes. They claimed coyotes were eating sheep so fast that some of the ranchers were losing money. But, they couldn’t prove it. The official records of sheep loss claims in Wyoming, where there are coyotes, were only slightly higher than in Ohio, where coyotes are rare.

Many sheep ranchers don’t own the land that they graze their sheep on. It’s ours. It’s public land that they rent from the Government. The sheepmen have asked government agents to come poison coyotes so they won’t be a threat to the sheep.

At any rate, we think it’s too bad that people have to give money to the Humane Society to be used to go to court to make a government watchdog agency do its job. It seems like the only way to save the coyote and many other animals that might be poisoned accidentally. It is, after all, another way the people have a voice in government.

Of course, the coyote isn’t an endangered species. With the lowering of wolf populations, the coyote is enlarging its range. It is a valuable predator for the large numbers of insects and rodents it consumes. The Indians used to say that, “Next to God, Brother Coyote was the smartest man on earth.” Perhaps they were right.