

# Wildlife Conservation & Animal Welfare need one another ....

## “Conservation Welfare”

Sally Walker\*

Conservation biology & animal welfare were once considered two separate disciplines, but in the last few years several symposia and publications have suggested more integration of these two topics. Some examples are:

### Symposia / Publications

Organisation	Event	Publication(s)
Peter Wall Institute & Universities Federation for Animal Welfare	Interdisciplinary Workshop; Vancouver, 16-18, Nov. 07 <a href="http://www.interaction.pwias.ubc.ca/">http://www.interaction.pwias.ubc.ca/</a>	Sp. Issue Animal Welfare Journal, May 2010, UFAW, UK,
Chicago Zoological Society, Institute of Animal Welfare	2008, International Workshop zoo and animal welfare scientists	Sp. Issue Zoo Biology Journal, 28:501-506
WildCru, Oxford / Born Free Foundation, UK	Animal Welfare in Conservation Practice , 1-3 Sept 2010 Oxford, UK	“e-proceedings” on website all PPTs in PDF, <a href="http://compassionateconservation.org">http://compassionateconservation.org</a>
AZA Welfare Committee	White paper approved	AZA, 2010
Zoo Outreach Organisation	Multiple education workshops over two decades in thousands of schools, zoos, ngo’s, etc.	Educational packets, posters, booklets, Power-point presentations on the topic since about 1989. <a href="http://www.zooreach.org">www.zooreach.org</a>

Several papers delivered at the workshop held in Vancouver, Canada in 2007 were published by UFAW in the Animal Welfare Journal, May 2008. It was a special issue entitled “Conservation and Welfare” comparing and synthesizing the two fields. Fraser, in an overview article, commented that the output of the UFAW workshop “...showed that many research problems and practical interventions (of wildlife conservation) would benefit from involving animal welfare and recognizing animal welfare concerns.” He also said “... for animal welfare scientists and advocates, the papers call for an expansion of concern to include the vast number of free-living animals whose welfare is adversely affected by human action. He stated that until relatively recently, animal welfare scientists had paid little attention to the welfare of free living wildlife”... yet routine forestry, agricultural, pest control measures gravely impact the welfare of wild animals.<sup>1</sup>

Also in 2008, the Chicago Zoological Society Center for the Science of Animal Welfare conducted an international workshop intended to bring zoo and animal welfare scientists together and to promote investigation and assessment of current zoo welfare research. The focus was how the understanding of wild animals could improve zoo animal welfare.<sup>2</sup> The papers from the workshop were published in Zoo Biology.

From 1-3 Sept 2010 WildCru, University of Oxford and Born Free Foundation organized a 2-day International Symposium entitled “Animal Welfare in Conservation Practice” to debate

animal welfare issues in conservation, examine potential synergies, look for practical outcomes and promote dialogue in Oxford, UK. <http://www.compassionateconservation.org>

More recently, July 2011, the American Zoo Association’s Welfare Committee brought out an excellent White Paper entitled “White tigers, lions, and king cheetahs: welfare and conservation implications of intentional breeding for the expression of rare recessive alleles.”<sup>4</sup> The paper is striking because it unapologetically combines welfare and conservation in its title and throughout the document. This paper makes such a good case against intentional breeding for rare recessive alleles that it has been possible to use it to break through the mind-set of some Asian zoo personnel where the white tiger has been deified both for its godlike whiteness, its uniqueness and (perhaps more than anything) the “heavenly” price it brings on the market.

So there have been enough gatherings and publications about animal welfare and conservation to create a dialogue and extension of the utility of this concept. In October 2010 the Conservation Breeding Specialist Group entertained two sessions of a working group on the need for the welfare group in CBSG, and this will be followed by the creation of a Task Force on animal welfare under its auspices.

### Education & training material

There is plenty of education and training material on conservation for youngsters as well as adults but much less welfare literature and precious little on this relatively new concept of “conservation welfare”. Youngsters need to learn to be kind to animals from toddler to teen and beyond. They need to learn from actual reasons and facts and not just because “it’s a nice thing to do.” If they learn when they are young and if the reasons for protecting and not persecuting free ranging animals, as well as pets, it has a good chance of sticking to them as they grow into adulthood. One often hears that serial killers tortured animals when they were kids. That alone should justify a mighty effort to instill adequate respect for Life of any and all creatures.

At present the writer could turn up NO educational literature at all on conservation welfare except what has been brought out by Zoo Outreach Organization (Z.O.O). Z.O.O has been bringing out educational literature using the synthesis of conservation and animal welfare as a teaching and training tool to stimulates new thinking about both animal welfare and conservation, as well having the capacity to bring about changes human attitudes and behaviour.

Zoo Outreach Organization (ZOO) based in India was founded to help Indian and later South Asian zoos improve, including zoo staff and visitor attitudes and behaviour towards the captive wild animals. ZOO grew out of Friends of Mysore Zoo (FOZ) founded 1981. Some of the first teacher training, educational literature and educational signage the FOZ developed carried the seeds of conservation welfare. ZOO was the first to use the terms

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"wildlife welfare" and "conservation welfare" and to use them in a series of educational booklets, toys, packets and handouts. These have been supplied to hundreds of zoos and NGO's who wanted to educate their visitors and improve animals' conditions. Similar educational materials continue to be evolved, produced and distributed widely in South Asia. Some examples will be discussed further on in this paper.

### **Intersection of conservation and (animal) welfare**

What are the ways that conservation and animal welfare intersect? Some quotes from the symposia, publications and education/training materials are helpful in establishing this.

#### **From the UFAW Symposium published in *Animal Welfare 2010, 19, ISSN 0962-7286*.**

*In preparing captive living animals for life in the wild, concerns for welfare and conservation may collide. (B.Beck, 1995).*

*Since reintroduction programs involve moving animals from captive or wild environments and releasing them into novel environments, there are sure to be challenges to the welfare of the individuals involved.*

*RR Swaisgood, The Conservation-welfare nexus in reintroduction programs, 2010*

*Conservation biology and animal welfare science ... many areas of existing or potential overlap. Policies and practices targeting either conservation or animal welfare may not work unless they take account of both areas of concern. D. Fraser, Toward a synthesis of conservation and animal welfare science, 2010*

#### **From the symposium of WildCru and Born Free, Compassionate Conservation Symposium 1-3 September 2010, Oxford**

#### **Animal welfare in conservation: working towards a common goal**

*Macdonald, et. al. makes a case for animal welfare in conservation in discussing ethics in conservation and describing "the great divide" as Welfare including the welfare of the individual and its right to live and Conservation as conservation of the population (many individuals) and their right to be left alone. Finding common ground will lead to a common goal. David Macdonald, Sandra Baker, Merryl Gelling & Lauren Harrington, September 2010.*

#### **Do the means justify the end? Welfare and the kangaroo harvest**

*The mission is to foster understanding amongst Australians about kangaroos in a sustainable landscape, through critically reviewing current kangaroo management practices and exploring non-lethal management methods that are consistent with ecology, animal welfare, human health and ethics. Dror Ben-Ami, 2010.*

*Dealing with interspecies conflicts in wildlife conservation, "What measures can be taken to minimize risks to welfare (in conservation)? The author refers the "Three Rs" or principles of humane use of animals in scientific procedures and suggests two of them for conservation interventions,*

*e.g., Refinement – of protocols and methods in order to minimize adverse welfare consequences and Reduction – involving no more (nor fewer) animals than required in order to achieve the conservation objective James Kirkwood, 2010.*

### **Animal Welfare in Zoo Education**

Zoo education seems to have steered clear of animal welfare except in very uncreative, repetitious, brief and subtle ways. This is hard to understand because there are so many opportunities at the zoo for a child or adult to have fun messing with the animals and harming them, intentionally and/or unintentionally. Teasing animals, feeding, pretending to attack, shouting, throwing harmful items inside the enclosure or cage is rampant in many zoos. Signage alone is not sufficient to insure these practices stop; youngsters need to be guided before they will willingly give up such a treat as tormenting animals. Combining welfare and conservation can often create a rationale that reaches older youngsters. Even human-animal conflict can be very effectively addressed with conservation and welfare for both human and animal. Some examples follow. The Appendices contain the text of three documents and one document containing a list of topics covered.

"Daily Life Wildlife" is a concept meant to inspire kids to adopt kindness to the animals which hang around their home, school, roadside, ponds, etc., instead of tormenting them for entertainment. We don't think of what killing flies, torturing frogs, and lighting fires on cat's tails might be doing to kids in the long term. In some countries, even adults don't take it seriously, and the result is kids who grow up thinking that is "right behaviour". "Daily Life Wildlife" addresses all minor and some major cruelties perpetrated by so called innocent youngsters on animals we encounter on a daily basis. "Daily Life Wildlife" has been the most popular packet for the longest duration of any ZOO has developed in the last two decades. See Appendix I.

"Monkey Manners" confronts the issue of invasion of monkeys from destroyed forests and barren lands into villages, towns and cities, schools, hospitals, etc. ... where human beings eat and or throw leftovers away. Monkeys quickly become accustomed to this life and morph into very bold and pugnacious creatures that cause enormous angst, as well as a range of injuries, etc. Human beings cause this monkey mischief ... in countries where locking up garbage and trash is not practiced and rotting food and leftovers are left outside houses for dogs or flies to eat, and they attract monkeys. The Monkey Manners literature explains the mistakes made by human beings and also warns children not to fight the monkeys if they snatch food, or to run from the animals as that will incite the monkeys, and to take responsibility for the problem since the monkeys cannot be expected to do so. Learning how NOT to be attacked by a monkey, how NOT to attract them with food, etc. creates a vacuum in which monkeys hopefully find other forests where they may feed on wild fruits, bark, etc. Consult Appendix II in this paper.

"Human Elephant Conflict HEC → Human Elephant Coexistence HECx". Much like the Monkey Menace, human beings cause much of the injury and death from elephants themselves. The elephants have been squeezed out of their large range and also done out of their watering and grazing areas. People become enraged at the behaviour of the

elephant and forget the strength and fury of the elephant. Ultimately human beings, aided by forestry officials, prevail with the elephants getting the worst of it. Many elephants are maimed or killed! Many are killed trying to find water or food. Over all, it is both a conservation and animal welfare issue, despite the fact that human beings are also harmed. Elephant Etiquette explains what human beings should do and not do in cases of marauding elephants. See Appendix III.

**Conservation Conscious v.s. Conservation Careless** – This packet is a complicated one about zoos, differentiating between “conservation conscious” and “conservation careless” zoos. The packet is designed with the idea of teaching people in a wide range of ages to appreciate a zoo, what to do if the zoo is not good. A collection of a dozen large “cards” explains almost everything one should know about a zoo, in order to behave well in it, or to help it as a volunteer, to respect a good zoo, etc. Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about different aspects of zoos are frank and to the point and a card on how to really help a zoo that wants to improve. Only the FAQs are included in the Appendix due to the size of the packet. See Appendix IV.

ZOO also has brought out a wide range educational material on sloth bears who are used as entertainers by their owners and live horrible lives tramping the hot roads and streets of city and country in India including a teaching manual.

**Welfare** is no less than the “well-being” of wild animals. The welfare/well-being of wild animals either captive or wild is essential to conservation of wildlife. This is so simple and obvious that it literally goes without saying. Wildlife conservation, however, requires a different kind of welfare than domestic animals – it requires “conservation welfare” which involves a heavy measure of “leave them alone”, as well as certain necessary welfare actions. Good zoos and conservation biologists or field practitioners routinely use welfare practices in their keeping, breeding (or not breeding), catching, handling, etc. Ironically “welfare” is still not wholly welcome by all people in the context of conservation, and “conservation” is not welcome to all in the context of animal welfare. This anomaly can be mitigated if a clear distinction between Conservation Welfare and Animal Welfare is established.

#### **Good practice**

- Good practice of welfare both in the field and captivity is desirable for ethical and humane reasons.
- Good practice is necessary for wildlife conservation which requires physically and psychologically fit animals.
- In the final analysis, what’s good for the health and well-being of either captive or wild animals seems good also for their conservation.

**Conservation ... saving species, populations, and individuals ... is welfare plus benefits!**

## **Appendix I Wildlife Welfare in Daily Life (illustrations removed)**

Produced and published by Zoo Outreach Organization (ZOO) Sponsored by Chester Zoo and UFAW, Text by Sally Walker, Education booklet No#14/2006

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### **What is “Wildlife” ?**

Definition : “Wildlife” refers to (wild) animals which are not domesticated (in case of plants, not cultivated)

- When we think of “wildlife”, we think of animals that live in the wild or away from human habitation.
- But any free-ranging non-domesticated animal is wildlife (except feral formerly domestic animals).
- Examples are tigers, lions, eagles, butterflies, fish, rodents, bats, lizards, snakes, etc., that one sees in the forest.

### **What is Captive Wildlife ?**

- Animals kept in zoos are wildlife, even though they live in captivity.
- Temple animals, although domesticated perhaps, are still wildlife -- elephants, monkeys, bats!
- What about frogs, insects, house geckos, lizards, spiders, snakes, crows, etc. that we see around our house and compound. There are also wildlife. We call it “**daily life wildlife**”.

### **What is “Daily life wildlife”?**

- “Daily life wildlife” is a term created by Zoo Outreach Organisation to draw attention to the animals that live close to us that we all take for granted.
- We consider these animals so common that we treat them like objects, as if they didn’t have feelings.
- Youngsters may get a habit of mistreating animals by being careless with the feelings and lives of these animals they encounter on a daily basis.

### **What is “animal welfare”? .... Welfare means “well-being”.**

Wildlife welfare therefore means the well-being of wild animals *both* in wild and in zoo.

### **Well-being means**

- to be free from neglect, abuse, stress, distress and deprivation.
- to have basic needs satisfied, & even to have comfort, happiness, contentment, and general good . . .

### **Human Welfare**

- Humans give a lot of importance to their own welfare.
- For our own welfare, we often harm other life forms unknowingly and unnecessarily.
- Captive wild animals i.e., animals in the laboratory, zoos, pets often have a hard time when human beings are insensitive.
- Free-living animals also deserve kind treatment to the extent possible.

### **Why learn about wildlife welfare?**

- Wildlife is important to our survival, even daily life wildlife.
- You kids are tomorrow’s adults.
- Good values will not let you down. Practicing good values makes us feel good.
- Learning to be kind to all animals builds good values and prevents other bad habits.

### **Human activities affect welfare of wild animals in forests:**

- Destruction of habitat

- Introduction of diseases through domestic animals
- Hunting / trapping / poisoning
- Disturbance caused by tourism (firing crackers in forest)
- Introduction of inappropriate animals
- Release of chemical pollutants

#### **Cruelty in Daily life**

- Killing household insects that could be scooped up and set free.
- Killing or injuring animals that come in or near the house but are harmless (such as frogs, garden lizards, insects, birds, bats, shrews, etc.).
- Torturing animals just for entertainment
- Such animals are not just harmless ... most of them are helpful to us !
- Some animals like mosquitos are pests due to their impact on human health, but they are few compared to the number of useful animals.

#### **Daily life mistakes!**

- Many of the animals people kill or shoo away play a beneficial role in our lives ...
- Frogs, snakes, bats control insect and rodent populations.
- Many insects and some bats are pollinators. They are responsible for one-third of the food we eat and also for flowers and some trees.
- Shrews and other small rodents spread seeds and also eat up grasses that clog waterways.
- Worms break down living material for enriching the soil.

#### **Check your Habits!**

- These are bad habits. We just don't think !
- Common sense applies. No need to be fanatical ! (You can swat mosquitos).
- Sometimes we just don't know what animals are harmless.
- Cultivate investigation, rather than careless habits.

#### **Daily life wildlife as pets?**

- Wild animals — even daily life wildlife should not be kept as pets.
- Not every animal can adapt itself to humans' conditions.
- All animals have some basic requirement that a captive situation can't provide.
- Many wildlife pets become upset and even die of stress and trauma.
- Keeping wild animals can sometimes be dangerous to humans because of their unpredictable nature or disease.

#### **Watching daily life wildlife**

- Daily-life wildlife doesn't have to be kept. You can watch them from a distance like a naturalist studying wildlife in the wild.
- Keep a record of the behaviour of a familiar gecko. Does it come in the same room daily ? Does it like the wall or ceiling better ?
- See how many frogs come into your bathroom in a month.
- Watch ants troop up the wall to get a dab of jelly or other sweet stuff.
- Count the kinds of birds in your compound.

#### **Since we are talking about wildlife...when you go to the zoo**

- Don't tease animals in the zoo; they also have feelings.
- Don't throw stones, or paper, or sticks or stones.
- Don't feed zoo animals your food. It is not good for them and could make them sick.
- Watch wild animals at the zoo like you watch daily life wildlife

## **Appendix II**

### **MONKEY MANNERS !**

#### **Misplaced Monkey Mischief - How to Handle**

Concept and text by S. Walker with help from J. Lenin, S. Paul, S. Molur

Sponsored by Awley Wildlife and People ([www.awley.com](http://www.awley.com)) and Apenheul Primate Park ([www.apenheul.nl](http://www.apenheul.nl))

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Hello ! Will you answer some questions? just answer "yes" or "no"

- Do you have wild monkeys roving your neighborhood doing bad things?
- Have you ever had wild monkeys come home, steal food & make a big mess?
- Have you ever been bitten by a wild monkey in a public locality?
- Have you ever met a wild monkey in a park and felt scared?

If you have replied YES to even one question, you need to learn some "Monkey Manners!"

#### **But what ARE Monkey Manners?**

Monkey Manners are NOT the bad manners of monkeys, described before.

Monkey Manners are a set of behaviors or actions to be learned by YOU and your friends and family, so that you will be safe from these mischievous relatives of mankind. That's what this booklet, and this whole packet is about.

"Mind your monkey manners" means you will NOT act in ways that make monkeys mean.

The monkey problem is NOT because monkeys are mean. It is because human beings are short-sighted. Human beings have not managed other humans, forests and wildlife in such a way that there is enough space for all.

It is now high time we human beings learned *our* "Monkey Manners!"

#### **What are Monkey Problems and their cause?**

1. Today - modern times - there is less space between wild animals like monkeys and where people live. Monkeys find it easier to raid crops and eat garbage around homes and other human habitations, in villages, towns and cities, than to forage in a shrinking or crowded forest. Therefore there are a growing number of monkeys coming into human localities.
2. Some places like temples and tourism sites encourage the feeding of monkeys for sake of pilgrims obtaining blessing and for entertaining tourists. Today there are just too many monkeys, and they have learned bad habits.
3. These monkey groups thrive on the easily accessible, rich food and their numbers increase, thus increasing the problem. So Monkey Manners Rule # 1 is Don't feed monkeys or leave food where monkeys can get it easily.
4. Mischievous monkeys are not popular. Sometimes people try and solve the problem themselves by killing them regardless of their unique type. It is not good for the maintenance of biodiversity as some of the rare unique ones are being killed and shifted in addition to the numerous common ones.
5. Mischievous monkeys destroy crops, creating hardships for farmers and their families. Government panics and uses

wrong method to control them, which makes the problem worse.

6. The longer the problem persists, the bolder the animals become through familiarity.
7. Disease can be passed from people to monkeys to people. Such diseases are called "zoonoses". This is very bad for both people and monkeys.

Things to do as a student, as a family member, & as a concerned citizen

At home, offer to be "garbage monitor", insuring that garbage cannot be accessed by monkeys or other animals. At school make signboards telling how destructive it is to feed monkeys and places around areas where this happens. Encourage your parents, teachers, & their clubs to support the city government purchasing incinerators so that they get rid of garbage entirely instead of simply moving it from one area to another. Also good for controlling rats and other pests.

Things that your government authorities should be doing:

Legislators should pass a legal ban on public feeding of monkeys.  
 Municipal authorities should create an action plan for combating monkey menace without harming the animals.  
 Forest authorities should provide training to wildlife staff to handle monkey menace.  
 Sanitation authorities should check that the garbage is being removed every day.  
 Temple authorities should find other ways for devotees to satisfy the need to feed monkeys without creating problem monkeys.

**Monkey Drama**

You can get your neighborhood together on what to do about the monkey problem by conducting a drama or a series of dramas with other kids. Get together as many of the kids in the neighborhood as you can. Divide them into two groups: householders and monkeys. Conduct a drama a day for several days. Use this method to teach the adults what they can do about the monkey problem. Here are some samples...make your own dramas from what you learn in this book.

Day 1: Demonstrate what happens when house-holders are careless with garbage or put out food for stray animals to eat. Show the monkeys demanding more and more food and becoming more and more aggressive. Show them entering houses where the shutters have been carelessly left open.

Day 2: Demonstrate how to wean the monkeys away from living off human houses. You can show monkeys hanging around the trash bins piteously begging and householders acting strong and refusing to give food.

Day 3: Demonstrate how kids should behave around monkeys. Show what happens when you ignore them and what happens when you tease them and give them treats.

Day 4: Conduct a debate between householders and monkeys. Let each give their point of view and figure out what to do.

Day 5: Bring government officials, animals welfare enthusiasts and forester and wildlife officers into the debate.

Monkey see ... monkey do...monkey do's ... monkey don'ts

**MONKEY-DO's**

1. Make a system for holding garbage away from home, so it doesn't attract monkeys.
2. Report destructive monkey individuals and troops to your wildlife department and animal welfare society.

3. If a wild monkey troop habitually visits your neighborhood, make your house secure.
4. Avoid being close to any wild monkey or monkey troop.
5. Avoid confrontation for both your safety and that of the monkey.

**MONKEY- DONT's**

1. Don't feed wild monkeys or eat in front of them ... in parks, road, at home...anywhere.
2. Don't smile or show your teeth to monkeys – it means "danger" to them.
3. Don't taunt or tease wild monkeys anywhere (ex. Offering food then pulling it away).
4. Don't run from wild monkeys ... if it threatens, stand your ground with a threat pose.
5. Don't ever try and fight if a monkey grabs something out of your hand.
6. Don't look monkeys directly in the eyes; that can be interpreted as a threat by them.
7. Don't snarl or even smile at monkeys - showing teeth means "hostile" to monkeys.
8. Don't act afraid... that is interpreted as weakness, meaning you are safe to attack.
9. Don't go close to them; don't run up to them or run from them.
10. Don't tease them ...for any reason anywhere.

**Appendix III**

**Elephant Etiquette**

Compiled and designed by Sally Walker  
 Sponsored by US Fish and Wildlife Service, Elephant Family, Twycross Zoo, Columbus Zoo, and Schonbrunn Zoo.  
 Typesetting, proofreading and other assistance -- ZOO staff  
 Produced and published by ZOO March 2010 -- Education Booklet Number 43

**Lets Look at our Elephant Etiquette for the well- being of elephant and man**

Who has not heard of "man-animal conflict" these days? The newspapers are full of reports of domestic cattle lifting by big cats, depredation of crops by wildpig, monkeys invading orchards, etc. The conflict between human beings and elephants has become so pervasive that it has its own acronym, HEC - Human Elephant Conflict.

More attention is given to HEC in rural areas because elephants having been deprived of habitat and food by developmental works, are entering villages and agricultural fields to find eatables in kitchen gardens and fields.

In some countries, however, captive elephants even in cities and towns have their own problems with human beings -- in zoos, temples, public roads, etc. Some people don't know how to behave around them, sometimes resulting in injuries or fatalities though no fault of the elephant. The elephant may be punished however.

So, in this booklet, when we talk about Elephant Etiquette, we include all instances of human elephant contact: rural, city, captive and wild. Elephants are big and powerful. Don't risk either injury to yourself or putting the elephant into trouble.

Learn some rules and principles of Elephant Etiquette. Elephant etiquette means appropriate behaviour with elephants ... avoiding confrontations, refraining from annoying them, from exciting them, from goading or tempting them ... to put you and others in danger.

Elephants, as such, once lived in completely different parts of the world and in a very different form. They were from *Primelephas* that will include *Loxodonta*, mammoth and *Elephas*. Instead of warm tropical forests their habitat was cold tundra such as in northern North America and northern Eurasia. These elephants have been extinct since 2000 BC and are called Woolly Mammoths. They existed as long as 20,000 years ago.

Elephants today are the subject of much scientific research. Like monkeys, our closest relatives, elephants have very interesting and intelligent minds, with thought and behavior processes which defy explanation.

Today's elephants have many problems.

### **Human Elephant Coexistence HECx**

Many rural people that we met while assembling this booklet seemed to be more "successful" in dealing with HEC. These were people who had adjusted to the elephant presence, who willingly coexisted with the animals and accepted them as part of life. These people seemed to have no more and possibly many less irrevocable tragedies, such as loss of life or limb, than people whose way of behavior was fighting the elephants.

We sympathise with both people and animals in nature, so we adopted human elephant coexistence as our direction in education and philosophy. We have titled our programme "Getting Along with Elephants" meaning Human Elephant Coexistence, HECx.

This booklet is about HECx and the well-being of both human beings and elephants. We do not mean to belittle or dismiss the suffering or seriousness associated with crop and home loss or of the inconvenience and aggravation that adjustment often carries. We simply want to focus on minimising the loss of life and limb. That is why we include people living in cities where they come across captive elephants at zoos, temples, circuses, etc. Injury and loss of life happens to them also when they behave foolishly around elephants.

Etiquette means manners or people's customs of being polite, or what we call civilised. We don't break the queue; we don't push and shove; we try to be on time for engagements; we don't break our word; we try to speak nicely, etc.

When we speak of elephant etiquette, we don't mean good manners for elephants!. We mean good manners, eg. correct behaviour of humans toward elephants. And we define "correct" here as whatever will help you stay alive and in one piece and also keep elephants out of trouble.

Elephant etiquette helps both man and animal to survive. Elephant etiquette is when you agree NOT to act in ways that frightens or angers elephants, tempting them to misbehave.

This is for your well-being **and** for the well-being of elephants.

### **Etiquette for Elephants?**

Elephants, as are all wild animals, are very unpredictable. Wild animals believed to be tame sometimes injure or even kill their trainers or owners, who trusted them. This is always because, although we know we mean the animal no harm, and the animal may return our love and trust, we can never know what in the immediate environment frightens or threatens the animal. As wild animals, they have a

strong survival instinct which kicks in quickly, as if the animal were living in the wild.

Reports of elephants killing people for seemingly small offences don't give the whole picture ... the whole picture includes what the elephant sees and does... For example, the elephant may be warning his wayward mahout with a 'slap on the wrist' but - because they don't realise their strength, a slap could hurt or maim.

Fast movements are believed to frighten elephants ... it may be the reason behind the belief that elephants are afraid of mice. Rats and mice move extraordinarily quickly and this is probably the reason for the stories of elephants seeing a mouse and running amok.

This information should be useful to us ... we should be careful not to make fast or suspicious movements, or sharp loud noises when around elephants, even when they are securely tethered.

### **Elephant Quiz for people living in elephant areas. Just answer "yes" or "no"**

1. Do you like elephants? Can you imagine what it would be like to be an elephant?
2. Do you ever get hungry?
3. Can you imagine what it would be like NOT to have anything to eat in your area?
4. Would you go to nearby areas and try to find food?
5. If people tried to keep you away from food when you were very hungry, would you be angry? Would you fight with them?

Thanks for taking this quiz. Now, if you replied "yes" to any questions 2-5, how do you think an elephant feels?

### **Elephant Quiz for people living in cities. Just answer "yes" or "no"**

1. Would you like to be an exhibit in a zoo, or circus, or temple, to be restrained by a chain or cage and dependent on others for food?
2. Would you like to have people throwing peanuts at you? or to have people pointing and laughing at you? or offering food to you then pulling it back when your reach for it?
3. Do you like it when people deliberately try and upset you to see your reaction?
4. When your schoolmates tease you, or throw things at you, do you simply stand down?

Thanks for taking this quiz. If you replied "no" to these questions, how do you think an elephant feels?

Well, we don't know but it is likely that an elephant may not be able to empathize with a human being or to follow the Golden Rule of "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." You, as a human being, have an advantage ... you can empathize with humans or animals ... if you want to.

Even the most uneducated villagers in some villages we surveyed, empathized with elephants. Several villagers said: "the elephant has a very big stomach but we people with our small stomach get so hungry ... they (the elephants) need more food than us. They have to eat." The villagers thus "forgive" the elephants for trying to raid their crops. This is how they adjust.

### **What causes elephant problems anyway ?**

1. In contemporary South Asia, there is less space for animals, particularly in rural areas near to forests, where people live. Elephants have been displaced by development ... clearing forests by humans. There is less forage and fruit for elephants because human beings are

gathering for themselves and their livestock. Elephants maintain their family ties, living in large herds. It takes a big area of forest to provide them with sufficient food and "breathing room" to survive.

2. People have infiltrated forests and collect forest delicacies for sale, reducing the variety and nutritional content of available foods for elephants.

3. The lure of "easy food" from crops, domestic stores, rural markets, etc. is overpowering to the hungry and frustrated elephants.

4. Elephants sheer size and the complexity of their social behaviour cause tremendous difficulties in finding a place to settle. In any case elephants move around a lot but now there is scant space to do so. In zoos and other captive situations, elephants really suffer.

5. Elephants are much more sensitive than people think, in captivity as well as in the wild. Many a visitor to a zoo or other captive elephant site has unwittingly provoked an elephant with some silly behaviour resulting in injury, death or a very bad scare. In the process sometimes the elephant, who just behaved like an elephant, is punished.

### **Who causes elephant problems ?**

Some of you might be thinking: "it's not fair ! its not fair for us to have to adjust to elephants. They should adjust to us. They come in our living and work areas and take what they want. It is their fault ..." Well let's look at that.

The problem of HEC is not because elephants are greedy, or stupid or mean. It is because human beings have been shortsighted. We have developed most of the world with houses, industry, public services, etc. so that it is not habitable by large animals. Forests have shrunk because of human beings, not because of tigers or monkeys or elephants. Their number is growing smaller while our numbers are increasing.

We, who as a species had the intelligence to take over the Earth, do not have the intelligence or farsightedness to see that it was wrong. We went on breeding and building. Now we are in trouble. So how is it "not fair" really? If elephants could talk they would say we were at fault ... aren't they right, in a way? If elephants could read history and talk, they could say a lot about that.

### **Elephant gods and work horses -- Temple, camp and farm elephants**

Throughout Asia elephants are utilised for temple duty and also heavy duty forest and farm work. Temple elephants are often taken to beg for alms by temple mahouts. Often they are out in hot part of the day without access to sufficient water. As one can imagine, elephants need a lot of water!

Elephants in forest department-owned elephant camps seem to get a better deal than privately owned work elephants. For one thing they live in camps or near the forest and are generally better treated than privately owned elephants. Privately owned work elephants may be used like a tractor without much concern for their welfare. Some of these may be owned by large farms, timber companies, and other commercial entities.

You may come into contact with temple or forest camp elephants. Although chained, they are still big and powerful. Be careful around any elephant.

### **Entertainment elephants -- Zoos and circuses**

There are thousands of elephants owned by zoos and circuses. Many of these elephants have very hard lives. Elephants are social, smart and energetic. In nature, they move with a herd and interact with other elephants. They

also have challenges such as finding food, dealing with carnivores and man. They spend a lot of time moving around, gathering a variety of foods, bathing, taking care of young, etc.

In a zoo or circus they are normally chained, and in many cases, they are all alone. So from a very rich life of interpersonal relationships and activity, they are lonely, bored and lethargic. Sometimes their mahouts mistreat them, as if standing chained in one place was not enough punishment. Elephants normally live a very long time and it is not unusual to hear of an elephant having spent half a century chained in a small stall or behind a building. Some zoos have seen the light about elephants and as a policy will not even keep them. Other have improved their standards of care quite a lot. Still, elephants on display for our pleasure have had to give up a lot. We owe it to them to behave in their presence and avoid irritating them.

### **Some Elephant Etiquette (rules) for being "near captive" elephants**

#### **Visiting a zoo or circus**

- don't go close to the elephant.
- don't try to give food to moving elephants .
- don't give them food directly; give to their mahout.
- don't touch elephants unless their mahout or keeper is there.
- don't make threatening gestures near elephants.
- don't ridicule or laugh at elephants in their presence.
- don't make loud noises or fast movements in presence of elephants.
- don't run in front of elephants.

#### **Visiting a temple**

- don't harass chained elephants; it is a cruel.
- don't try to feed the elephant by offerings. Let the keeper do it.
- don't go too close or stay too long.
- don't do any of the "visiting a zoo" "don'ts".
- don't burst crackers at a temple or anywhere near elephants.

**Encountering elephants in city traffic** (Sometimes we see elephants on city roads. Their Mahout or "driver" has to obey traffic rules. If you are also in traffic, think!)

- don't put your hand outside car/bus window to wave to the elephant.
- don't try to attract the attention of the elephant from a two-wheeler.
- don't offer the elephant food in traffic even if the Mahout say you can.
- don't do anything that might frighten or anger the elephant.
- don't rev up your engine loud close to the elephant.
- don't blow your horn loudly around the elephant.
- don't cut in front of the elephant.
- don't go close, either back or sides.

#### **Suggestions for people in elephant areas from people living in elephant areas**

If you are habituated to doing some activity, and elephants start coming there at the same time, stand down! Do it some other time.

- Don't keep water, smelly food or garbage or fermenting liquours out in the open.
- Villagers of Anaikati village in India say "Don't talk ill of elephants, at least within their hearing. They can *feel* your bad words."
- Don't leave high smelling garbage around your home.

- Some villagers in Nepal, India and Banglaesh recommended fire to discourage elephants, particularly fire that produces much smoke.
- Other villagers at West Bengal (India), Nepal, Bangladesh said they had various ways of making noise at elephants, such as shouting, whistling, clapping, etc.
- Some Nepalese sing hymns, conduct worship, etc which makes them calm in their mind which also affects the sensitive elephant.
- Villagers in West Bengal, India changed all their habits ... they planted paddy during the night, harvested paddy very quickly, and stopped planting corn.
- If you find elephants trashing your house or garden, think before you act. They are bigger and stronger. You can't win a fight. Stand down.
- If elephants are taking something from you, think of its value!. Is it worthwhile to risk your life or your well-being for a basket of coconuts?
- There are many, many suggestions and rules for avoiding or minimising conflict with elephants in villages. The main one is to try and stay out of the way, no matter what.

### Give up your rights!

All human beings are very attached to what they perceive as their "rights". Sometimes if we are very stubborn about our "rights". It leads us to do foolish things.

Demanding our rights when dealing with elephants is like shaking our fist at a *tsunami* or tornado, or terrorist attack. In some situations you have to do what is wise and what will help you survive, not what you think you are entitled to!

Imagine a man holding a coconut nearby an elephant. The elephant reaches for the coconut and the man hits out at the elephant, and the elephant hits back. Now, see the man in hospital, bandaged from head to toe still holding his coconut saying "I won!".

Giving an elephant the right of way is usually wise. Demanding your rights in some situations may cost you your life, or your backbone, or your leg.

### What good are your rights then ?

## Appendix 4

### Conservation Conscious / Conservation Careless Zoos – Contents only

- I. Why We have Zoos?
- II. Conservation-Conscious Zoos v.s. Conservation-Careless Zoos.
- III. Zoo Inspection: Improve Your observational Skills.
- IV. Improvement, not Closure of Zoos.
- V. Reasons NOT to close a Zoo.
- VI. How to Help? What YOU can do.
- VII. Pro's and Con's of Zoo Volunteers.
- VIII. Principles for Positive Action – How to be a GOOD Zoo Volunteer.
- IX. Drama at the Zoo including Sample dramas.
- X. Frequently Asked Questions and Honest Answers!

### References

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- <sup>4</sup> (2010) AZA White Paper – Welfare Implications of intentional Inbreeding. [http://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=aza%20white%20paper%20animal%20welfare%20committee&source=web&cd=2&ved=0CEgQFjAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.aza.org%2FuploadedFiles%2FAbout\\_Us%2FWhitePaperInbreeding\\_BoardApproved\\_%252028July11.pdf&ei=dzXLTqrhOY6urAetzaXgDA&usg=AFQjCNG7navbnfcwH93nfwZMVpAeSW-lwQ](http://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=aza%20white%20paper%20animal%20welfare%20committee&source=web&cd=2&ved=0CEgQFjAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.aza.org%2FuploadedFiles%2FAbout_Us%2FWhitePaperInbreeding_BoardApproved_%252028July11.pdf&ei=dzXLTqrhOY6urAetzaXgDA&usg=AFQjCNG7navbnfcwH93nfwZMVpAeSW-lwQ)  
CBSG, News

## Announcement

### New IUCN vacancy:

#### Programme Officer, Aichi Biodiversity Targets and Key Biodiversity Areas, Biodiversity Conservation Group

The Programme Officer will report to and work closely with the Global Director, Biodiversity Conservation Group, given that this work spans the work of all constituent Programmes of the Group, and indeed will involve working with IUCN globally. The incumbent will also work extremely closely with the Programme Officer, Conservation Planning, based in the Global Species Programme, Cambridge, UK and also with the joint IUCN SSC (Species Survival Commission) - WCPA (World Commission on Protected Areas) Protected Areas and Biodiversity task force to support the technical deliverables of the position on sites of global biodiversity conservation significance.

To see the vacancy announcement, please use this link:  
<https://hrms.iucn.org/iresy/index.cfm?event=vac.show&vacId=325>