



A bored, solitary gibbon at Catoctin Zoo lacks companionship.

Primates are extremely intelligent and lead busy, active, stimulating lives. Most are highly social and naturally live in pairs or family groups with whom they travel, groom, play, build nests, sleep, and raise their offspring. Many primates spend up to 70 percent of their waking hours in foraging-related activities. Primates have excellent climbing abilities and many are arboreal. All too often, captive primates in roadside zoos are denied mental stimulation, sufficient exercise, proper diets, and interaction with others of their kind.

Abnormal behaviors for primates kept in poor conditions include repetitive movements, such as pacing, circling, rocking, spinning, clapping themselves, biting themselves, over-grooming, and plucking their hair, resulting in bald patches.⁴⁵

The following information details the many problems found at Maryland's roadside zoos.

Catoctin Zoo

Owner: Richard Hahn
Location: Thurmont, Maryland
USDA License #: 51-C-0034

Catoctin Zoo is accredited by the deceptively-named "Zoological Association of America," a fringe group with weak standards that endorses poorly run roadside zoos and promotes the private ownership of dangerous exotic pets and the commercialization of wildlife. Despite threats to public safety and negative animal welfare impacts, ZAA standards allow public contact with dangerous wild animals. ZAA has no affiliation with the highly respected AZA, which has a long history of setting industry standards for zoological institutions.



Inventory

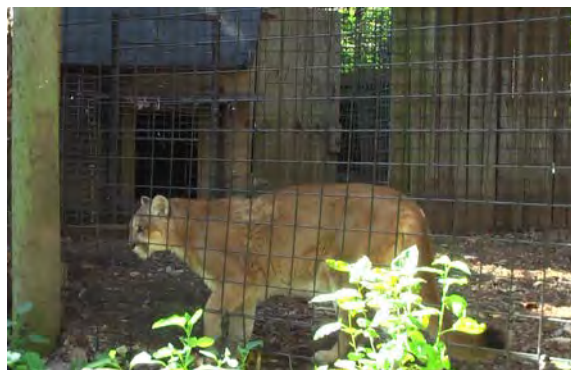
Three tigers, two lions, two leopards, one jaguar, five sun bears, two gibbons, one spider monkey, 12 capuchins, 11 lemurs, 8 vervets, 10 squirrel monkeys, 30 macaques, 11 patas monkeys, four tamarins, one marmoset, three addax, three porcupines, one hedgehog, six bison, four water buffalo, one wild ass,

43 sheep, three binturong, one wildebeest, seven blackbuck, two bobcats, five coatimundis, two capybaras, six chinchillas, four peccaries, two zebras, two dingoes, five camels, 42 bats, 13 fallow deer, two fossa, 24 goats, four wolves, one alpaca, one sloth, three llamas, one New Guinea singing dog, pigs, one raccoon, two wallabies, one oryx, 11 meerkats, one genet, three alpaca, two warthogs, two yaks, one armadillo (as of September 4, 2013 and September 30, 2013***)

USDA Inspection Summary

Since 2006, Catoctin Zoo has been cited by the USDA for 25 violations of the AWA. Violations include:⁴⁶

- Failure to have adequately trained and appropriately supervised employees after a keeper who had been on the job for only two months was mauled by two jaguars.
- Failure to provide veterinary care to underweight animals.
- Failure to provide minimum space to three sun bears kept in an 8.5' x 8.5' x 8' cage in the off-exhibit area.
- Repeated failure to maintain the structural strength of facilities and other maintenance issues, including for an 11-year-old cougar who was euthanized after being attacked by a wolf in an adjacent cage and for a camel who escaped.
- Failure to provide an adequate environmental enrichment plan to promote the psychological well-being of primates.
- Repeated failure to provide animals with adequate shelter or any shelter at all.
- Repeated failure to provide adequate ventilation and lighting in the off-exhibit housing area for primates.
- Failure to prevent animals from being fed possibly noxious or toxic plants by the public.
- Repeated failure to properly clean and sanitize enclosures.
- Filthy food storage areas.
- Inadequate pest control.



A cougar at Catoctin Zoo was euthanized after being attacked by a wolf in an adjacent cage.

The HSUS Inspection Summary

Catoctin Zoo had injured animals, inappropriate mixed-species exhibits, undersized and outdated cages, poorly designed, unhealthy, and potentially unsafe exhibits, filthy conditions, a lack of enrichment for many species, and enclosures in disrepair. Many cages lacked appropriate cage features, such as substrates that allowed digging and foraging, pools for certain species, adequate climbing structures, elevated platforms, shift cages for potentially dangerous species, and privacy areas or visual barriers to allow animals to remove themselves from public

viewing or cage mates, which are necessary to prevent excessive stress. Cages were too small and barren and many had concrete flooring, which tends to trap bacteria. In addition, the unforgiving nature of concrete is harmful, causing skin or coat problems, worn, cracked, or painful foot pads, pressure wounds, and premature arthritis and joint problems.



A bent, sagging fence next to a tiger cage at Catoctin Zoo could easily allow a child to penetrate the public safety barrier.



The shockingly inhumane and outdated sun bear cage at Catoctin Zoo pictured above is a far cry from the one-acre natural habitat enclosure that the AZA-accredited Oakland Zoo provides to its sun bears.

Bears

According to the experts, the sun bear enclosure at Catoctin Zoo was the worst exhibit among the three facilities visited and the conditions were clearly inhumane. The small, barren, concrete cage was completely devoid of enrichment items to encourage natural behaviors and alleviate boredom. There was no evidence that staff had taken any steps to address the extreme neurotic behavior exhibited by the bears, which included excessive pacing. Zoo professionals have long

recognized, and numerous studies confirm, that stereotypic behaviors are an indicator of poor welfare.⁴⁷

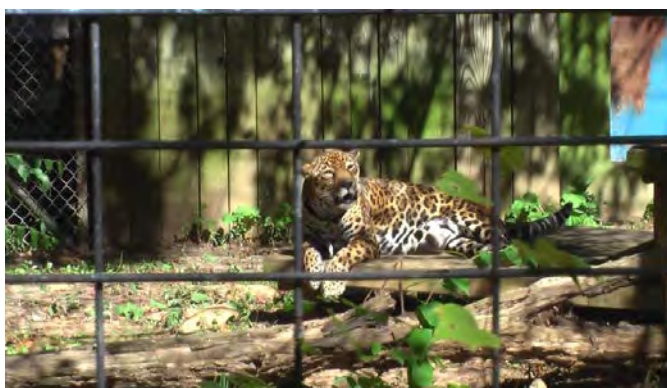
After reviewing photos of Catoctin's sun bear cage, Cathy Keyes, lead keeper at the AZA-accredited Oakland Zoo in California, stated, "The Catoctin Zoo sun bear exhibit appears to be outdated and not reflective of current best practices in regard to sun bear husbandry." In stark comparison, Keyes describes the enclosure for the three sun bears at Oakland Zoo as a large, natural one-acre enclosure that promotes a wide range of species-appropriate behaviors, such as climbing, digging, bathing, foraging, resting, sunning, exploring and manipulating objects, all of which are vitally important to the physical and psychological well-being of bears. The substrate is grass, dirt, low-lying vegetation, and bushes. Adding to the complexity of this natural space, the Oakland Zoo added two 20-foot high log structures, felled trees, fire hose hammocks, log piles, two 15-foot high concrete "trees" and a 30-foot long shallow pool with a waterfall. Food items are buried, requiring digging; placed up high, requiring climbing; and presented in various enrichment devices, requiring the manipulation of objects. The sun bears at Oakland Zoo prefer to be up high in their hammocks, resting on elevated log structures or the high branches of a 60-foot tall eucalyptus tree.

"The Catoctin Zoo sun bear exhibit appears to be outdated and not reflective of current best practices in regard to sun bear husbandry."

Cathy Keyes, lead keeper at
the AZA-accredited Oakland Zoo

Big Cats

In 2009, an animal care worker at Catoctin Zoo was critically injured by one, and possibly two, jaguars after she failed to secure the animals' inside area before working in it. Both jaguars entered the area and the woman was attacked by the nearly 200-pound male jaguar and possibly the female jaguar as well. Employees used a shovel, a 2-by-4 piece of lumber, and a fire extinguisher to fend off the jaguars. The keeper spent 10 days in the hospital for injuries to her face and upper body. The



The jaguar is likely able to reach his leg through the wide gaps in the fencing at Catoctin Zoo.

zookeeper had been an employee of the zoo for only two months and was not under the direct supervision of a more experienced and knowledgeable person during the time of the attack. In response to the incident, the USDA cited Catoctin for failure to have adequately trained and supervised employees

to maintain an acceptable level of husbandry practices.^{48,49,50} However, unsafe conditions persist at this facility.

It has been documented that tigers are able to jump at least 16-feet vertically, yet one of the white tigers at Catoctin Zoo was housed in an enclosure with an estimated 10-foot high fence with a two-foot kick-in (the top portion of the fence turned inward toward the exhibit at a roughly 45-degree angle) that may have been insufficient to safely contain the tiger.⁵¹

Additionally, the chain link fencing to the left of the public viewing area for the tiger cage was flimsy, bent, and sagging and there was a significant gap between this fence and the public safety barrier parallel to the tiger cage.



The fence for the tiger enclosure at Catoctin Zoo may not be high enough to safely contain a tiger.

Further observations by Farinato and Dr. Richardson include that the jaguar is likely able to reach a limb through the wide gaps in the cattle panel fencing, the ceiling in the jaguar cage was sagging, and there was no pool for the jaguar, even though jaguars are one of the large cat species that seeks out wet environments in the wild. The leopard was pacing in an undersized cage and a worn path indicated the pacing is chronic. There were inadequate elevated platforms to allow the leopard to recline or stretch and there was no pool. The shift area for the leopard was too small and had no roof to provide shelter from inclement weather. The chain link fencing in the African lion cage was sagging and bowed outwards and the netting used for the cage ceiling was constructed of flimsy plastic.

Primates

Catoctin houses more primates than all other zoos in Maryland combined, yet there was no evidence of a comprehensive enrichment strategy for any of the primates.***



This capuchin cage is not large enough for one capuchin, let alone the dozen capuchins listed in Catoctin Zoo's inventory.

Food for the crowded, undersized capuchin cage ended up on the ground beneath the wire flooring, raising concerns that some animals may not be receiving an adequate diet and that the food becomes contaminated with excrement. There were an insufficient number of perches and the cage space was inadequate for the number of animals.

The gibbon was singly-housed and the cage was not near any other primate species. Since all gibbon species naturally live as bonded pairs, isolation of a single animal can be stressful and depressing. No enrichment materials or activities were in evidence. There was no shift cage to allow keepers safe access to clean and maintain the enclosure.

The macaque cage was crowded and largely barren and there was evidence of rampant breeding. The concrete floor was in disrepair and the public safety barrier was constructed of cattle panels that were loose and not secured to upright posts.

There were several problems with the mixed lemur exhibit. A single brown lemur was observed in the cage that contained several ring-tailed and ruffed lemurs. Brown lemurs are a more timid and much



Without adequate enrichment, this young macaque at Catoctin Zoo tried to entertain himself by grabbing a handful of gravel.

smaller species. A brown lemur would not be able to compete with the larger lemurs and would not be

part of such social groups. The brown lemur was too thin, the tail had thinning fur, and he or she appeared depressed and inactive and segregated in a corner. Pigeons, doves, pheasants, and water fowl inside the exhibit could result in disease and parasite transmission and puts the birds at risk of attack by the lemurs. The lemur cage was filthy and had not been raked or spot cleaned and contained old dry browse and cobwebs. Bird feces and leaf litter can become a vehicle for disease transmission.

A cage housing tamarins, a sloth, and an armadillo had insufficient lighting, was poorly ventilated, and the windows were filthy. This was not an appropriate mixed species exhibit since the armadillo and sloth will be active at night and interfere with the tamarins' ability to get proper sleep.

Complaints from the Public

Today's sophisticated zoo visitors have higher expectations than the impoverished conditions found at Catoctin Zoo, as evidenced by a few of the comments posted on TripAdvisor.com by disappointed Catoctin Zoo visitors:^{52,53,54,55,56}

"Waste of \$30, left feeling depressed about how animals were treated.."

●●●●● Reviewed March 11, 2012

My boyfriend and I decided to go out and do something outdoorsy today since it was gorgeous..so we got our 5 month old daughter together and to say the least we were both pretty excited. We drove over 40 minutes to get to the zoo...the drive there was nicer than the zoo itself. Apparently we got a 2 dollar discount since right now it's not summer. Anyway we got there and it was horrible..weeds everywhere, leaves, rock paths which were NOT stroller friendly. The animals look extremely depressed you can tell that these people do NOT take care of their animals, they look tired, underfed, and worn out. Cages were WAY too small..animals seemed lethargic. The only neat part of the zoo in our opinion was the Meerkat babies, Koi pond, and the reptiles. Unfortunately most of the animals and exhibits were closed down. I was extremely disappointed. The entire park looked unkept and dirty. NO hand sanitizer in ANY of the dispensers through out the park which was so lovely after petting the goats..and there wasn't even in soap in the bathrooms. We wanted to ask for a refund but there was no point..in our eyes at least that 30 dollars we paid will hopefully go toward animal food. I have an extremely difficult time understanding why admission is so high for something so low class. When I was a child this was such an awesome trip to go with my family..what happened? Not giving this place another try.

Don't say you weren't warned. You're better off saving your money and spending it to get to a National Zoo.

"VERY DISAPPOINTED!"

●●●●● Reviewed August 31, 2013

This zoo is very unkept. Several of the water bowls were filthy and covered with rotting leaves. Most of the animals shown on their website were no where to be found. The zoo grounds shown on their website is definitely not the zoo we saw. The animals that are in their buildings are very hard to see due to dim lighting. None of the concession stands were open and their drink machine was broken so we couldn't even get a drink. Very disappointing and sad to see. We left feeling sorry for the animals that have to live there!

"Depressing zoo"

●●●●● Reviewed August 16, 2013

This zoo is way too small for the type of animals that they have residing there. They have exotic animals in there and they supply cups of food to purchase so that people can feed the animals. That is a recipe for disaster. You have hundreds of people going through this small, dirty, run-down zoo every day and maybe 70% of those people buying food to give to the animals. They are eating way too much food. Aside from that the animals appear distressed and depressed; most of them restlessly pacing their small living space. When I visited last year, there was a black bear who was just laying in his tiny cage on his back and side with a distressed look on his face. He cage was covered in feces and wet; it also smelled terrible (and it's in the open air). I really think they should rethink the animals they have there. It's a real shame to see some of these beautiful creature suffering like this.

“poor management”

●●○○○ Reviewed October 13, 2013

large animals in small cages with no companion, sad. most of the zoo was very stinky, not kept clean. large amount of cages were missing identification signs, layout bad, couldn't see some animals due to trees or buildings. took kids and grandkids hoping for a nice day. Grandkids(3&5) had pretty nice time, but for adults...couldn't take photos of animals due to cage wire, no good photo ops for the grandkids. couldn't take safari ride because they want a large amount of the bus filled. push button recordings at cages either didn't work or were not on. Overall a very disappointing experience and I think some animal protection/rights groups ought to look into this place.

“very sad place for animals”

●○○○○ Reviewed July 24, 2012

I had visited this dismal place a few years ago and I only went back to see if things had improved somewhat. Unfortunately I was very disappointed. This park is more like a prison for animals. Very small enclosures with nothing to provide stimulation for the animals. Overgrown shrubs and grasses around the cages. Animals look depressed and bored. This place should not even exist. If you care about animals-do not go and if you have been there and were disturbed by what you saw, make sure you complain to Animal Control or write a letter to your local paper.

Plumpton Park Zoo

Owners: Nick and Cheryl Lacovera
Location: Rising Sun, Maryland
USDA License #: 51-C-0021

Inventory

Two tigers, one cougar, four bears, two siamangs, one capuchin, one porcupine, 12 alpacas, two bison, three foxes, two jackals, one bobcat, three zebras, one cow, two camels, seven rabbits, 11 fallow deer, one giraffe, three goats, four wolves, five prairie dogs, 10 muntjac, three llamas, two Patagonian cavies, three pigs, one serval, two sheep, one white-tailed deer (as of October 23, 2013^{***})



USDA Inspection Summary

Since 2006, Plumpton Park Zoo has been cited by the USDA for 109 violations of the Animal Welfare Act, including 53 violations since September 2010 when the new owners took over.⁵⁷ Violations include:

- 27 citations that were categorized as repeat violations
- 25 violations that were categorized as directly impacting animal welfare
- 6 veterinary care violations, including:
 - a 2008 incident in which two black bears escaped from their enclosure when a zookeeper failed to secure their cage and one of the bears was killed because she became aggressive and the zoo did not have adequate safety equipment, trained personnel, and tranquilization equipment to safely recapture her
 - the death of an anemic, flea-infested juvenile tiger suffering from metabolic bone disease
 - a siamang who was being treated for a recurring gastro-intestinal infection and had not