

# Think Twice Before You Buy

## Keep Wild Animals Wild

**Meet a Sniffer Dog**



**Why Wild Animals Don't  
Make Good Pets**



**Remember the  
Sea Turtles**







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answer to puzzle on page 9: starfish on green hat; coral on shelf; rhino horn on shelf; feather on purple hat; sunglasses with tortoise shell frames; snakeskin briefcase; chess pieces made of ivory; fur coat; tiger rug.



## From the Editor...

For millions of years, planet Earth has been home to thriving populations of wild animals. Sharks, crocodiles and coral reefs have been around for hundreds of millions of years. Rhinos and elephants have existed for about 50 million years and tigers have roamed the land for at least two million.

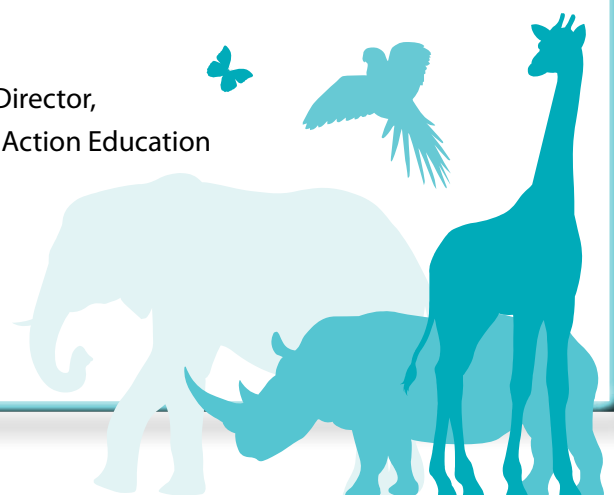
Then, about 200,000 years ago, humans came along. Humans have changed life on Earth more than all the other millions of animal species combined. Since 1970, wildlife populations – including mammals, birds, fish, amphibians and reptiles – have been reduced by as much as 50 percent because of human activity.

Two of the biggest threats to wildlife include the destruction of habitats, caused by pollution and human development, and the effects of human-related climate change. A third and quickly growing threat to wild animals is commercial wildlife trade – the buying and selling of live wild animals or products that use their parts. Trade in wildlife is not only cruel – but the illegal trade is driving many species to extinction. It also endangers the ecosystems we all depend upon to survive.

I hope this magazine helps you better understand the challenges of and solutions to one of the greatest threats faced by wildlife in our world. If we can put an end to illegal wildlife trade, we will protect the health and safety of both individual animals and entire species – including our own.

## Nancy Barr

Programme Director,  
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# What Is Wildlife Trade?

**It's** a beautiful day, and the market is busy. You pass crates filled with bright tropical fruit. Colourful baskets and rugs hang from the stalls. Something catches your eye. It is a tiny white statue of an elephant.

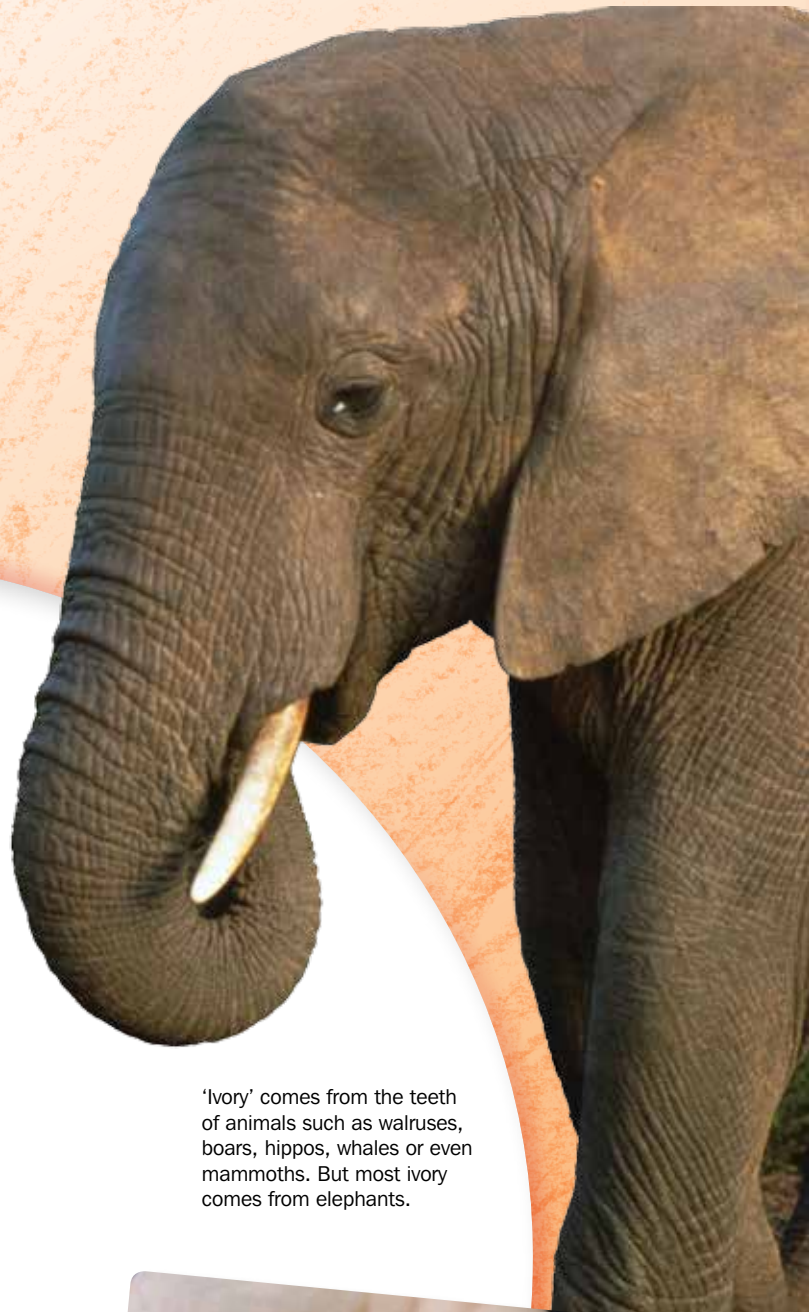
"It is made of bone," says the storekeeper. The statue is carved with many details. You would love to have it.

But this statue does not just *look* like an elephant. It is made of ivory, or elephant tusk. An elephant had to die to make it.

## Buying and Selling Wildlife

Wildlife trade is when people buy and sell wild animals. Wildlife trade also includes buying and selling parts of wild animals' bodies to make **products**, such as jewellery, clothes, decorations or medicine. People sell wild animals or their parts to make money.

Wild animals suffer because of wildlife trade. For example, elephants are killed and their tusks are taken to make ivory jewellery and sculptures. Rhinos are killed and their horns are taken to make medicine. Yet no-one needs these or other wildlife products. People can use products that are not made from animals.



'Ivory' comes from the teeth of animals such as walrus, boars, hippos, whales or even mammoths. But most ivory comes from elephants.





People also sell wild animals for use as pets or working animals. Parrots, monkeys, pythons and many other wild animals are sold as pets. Some people even keep tigers as pets. But these animals belong in the wild, not in people's homes.

Some wildlife trade is against the law. Some wildlife trade is not. But no matter how it happens, wildlife trade hurts wild animals.

Sometimes people hunt wild animals for food or for other things their families need. This is different from **commercial** wildlife trade. Commercial wildlife trade is killing or capturing wild animals to sell to other people to make money. It involves millions and millions of people, animals and pounds around the world. Commercial wildlife trade harms wild animals whether it is against the law or not.





## Harming Wildlife, People and the Environment

Wildlife trade hurts wild animals in many different ways. Wild animals are hunted and either captured alive or killed for their body parts. Sometimes this hunting is against the law. Illegal hunting is called **poaching**.

Animals caught alive are hurt by wildlife trade. They are removed from their families and their natural **habitat**. They often get stuffed into tiny cages or containers. They are shipped long distances – even across oceans – with little or no food or water. Many of them die along the way.

Wildlife trade even hurts many animals that are not captured or killed. Some wild animals live in close **social** groups. Elephants live in large, caring families. Many parrots mate for life. Killing or catching these animals leaves broken families behind.

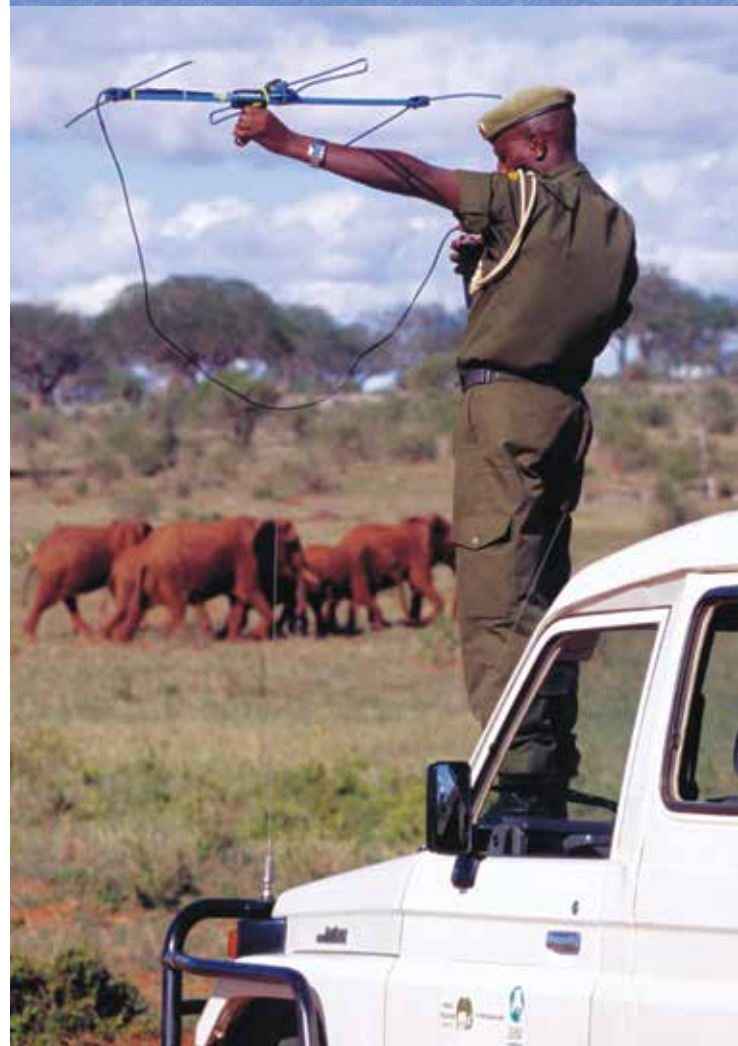
The people involved in wildlife trade often kill or capture as many animals as they can – even endangered ones. Thousands of species, such as African elephants and black rhinos, are in danger of becoming **extinct** because of wildlife trade.

Wildlife trade hurts people, too. Travellers can be arrested for carrying wildlife products – even if they didn't know they were buying illegal items. Keeping a wild animal as a pet can be dangerous, too. Just like people, wild animals have germs. They can spread disease among themselves and sometimes to people. And wild animals are not used to living with humans. They might lash out at people or their pets.



Shipping animals is often illegal, so people hide them in places with no light, water, food or space when transporting them.

This Kenya Wildlife Service ranger tracks radio-collared elephants in Tsavo East National Park, Kenya, from a vehicle donated by IFAW. Rangers need to know where the animals they are guarding roam so they can better protect them from poachers. Being a ranger is a very dangerous job.







## Terrapins on the Loose

Red-eared Terrapins are wild animals that people keep as pets. They come from North and South America. But many pet terrapins have been released into UK ponds and rivers, dumped by owners as they outgrew their fish tanks and ended up the size of a dinner plate. The terrapins are predators which eat native fish and amphibians.

## Buyers Beware! Animals on the Internet

The Internet makes it easy for criminals to buy and sell illegal wildlife and wildlife products. On the Internet, sellers can hide who they are and lie about what a product is made of or where it came from. The good news is that online sites are starting to ban the sale of wildlife products. And **consumers** are becoming aware of the dangers of buying products online and the harm caused by commercial wildlife trade.

Wildlife trade can hurt an environment and the whole community of animals, plants and people that depend on it to be healthy. Poachers may destroy habitats by making pathways through wild areas to get to animals. They may kill so many animals of the same species that they wipe out a whole group living in one area. They may catch or kill animals they are not hunting. For example, they may catch sea turtles in nets meant for fish. And removing any animal from its environment can affect other living things in the community.

Sometimes wild animals kept as pets escape or their owners let them loose. The natural home of these animals may be far from where they escape or are released. They may harm animals and plants in the habitat where they are let loose.



The International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) has worked with several major online marketplaces to stop ivory sales. In 2009, eBay Inc., banned the sale of ivory items on all of its sites worldwide. Soon after, Alibaba and Taobao in China banned a variety of wildlife products from their sites. In July 2014, Etsy banned not just ivory but all wildlife products from its site.



## It's the Law

Many countries, states and cities have laws protecting wild animals from commercial wildlife trade. But in some places, it is perfectly legal to buy and sell some animals or their parts, even if it's harmful. In other places, the laws are not **enforced** well enough or the **penalties** are not strong enough. Poachers still sneak into protected parks. Wildlife smugglers still hide animals on ships and aeroplanes. Criminals still sell illegal wildlife and wildlife products in secret on the Internet. More laws and better enforcement are needed to help stop wildlife trade.

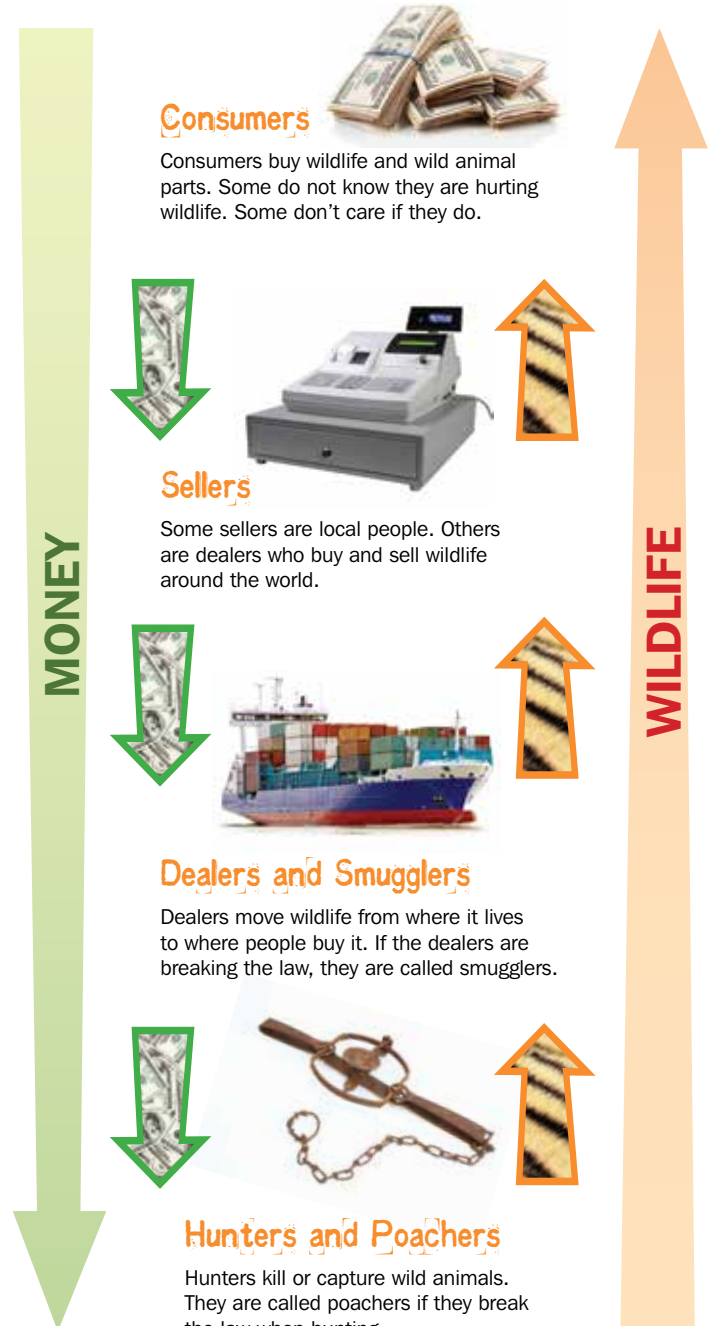
## Help End Wildlife Trade

Many people do not know about the commercial wildlife trade, or they may not realise that it hurts animals. Animal welfare and conservation groups show where wildlife trade is taking place and how it hurts animals. They help pass new laws to protect more animals. They help uncover illegal trade and report it to the police.

What else can people do to save animals from wildlife trade? Most wildlife traders buy and sell animals for just one reason: money. To help stop these traders, consumers must stop buying wildlife and wildlife products. You can help.

## Why Do People Trade Wildlife?

Money runs the wildlife trade. The source of the money is consumers. Consumers are people who buy things.







Eco-tourism involves travelling to a natural environment. Responsible eco-tourism encourages tourists and local people to protect plants and animals. Children in Dominica watch over hawksbill sea turtle hatchlings to ensure they are undisturbed as they make their way to the water as part of a community-based conservation, eco-tourism and education programme.

Wildlife trade might be taking place near you. You might see wild animals for sale in your local pet store or marketplace. You might see wild animal products like elephant ivory carved into a statue in a shop or on the Internet. If you think something was made from an animal, ask where it came from. Don't buy it if you think it came from a wild animal or are not sure. Tell a trusted adult what you saw, and tell your friends and family why you decided not to buy it.

## Wild Words

**commercial:** having to do with buying and selling to make large amounts of money

**consumers:** people who buy things

**enforced:** carried out

**extinct:** no longer existing

**habitat:** the combination of resources, such as food and water, and environmental conditions, such as temperature, in an area that makes it possible for an animal or plant species to survive and reproduce

If you travel, spend your money in ways that help both wildlife and local people. In many places, visitors can hire local guides to show them wildlife in their natural home in a way that does not harm the wildlife. Don't participate in any activity that is cruel to animals or encourages the poaching of wild animals. For example, don't have your photograph taken with chimpanzees or take rides on elephants.

We are all consumers. We can think before we buy. We can help end wildlife trade.

**penalties:** punishments

**poaching:** taking wildlife in ways that are against the law

**products:** things that are made for people to sell and use

**social:** having to do with relationships among animals or people



# Think Twice Before You Buy

Commercial wildlife trade is a huge business. We may not always be aware of all of the wildlife products around us.



**See if you can find the wildlife products in this store.**

(Answers are on page 2.)



# Sniffing Out Wildlife Trade



Some animals are helping in the fight against illegal wildlife trade. Working Dogs for Conservation trains dogs to sniff out elephant ivory, elephant meat, leopard skins, pangolin scales, rhino horn and other wildlife products. The dogs search vehicles, luggage and shipping containers. The wildlife products they find never make it to the sellers.

## Good dogs!



### What makes a good sniffer dog?

Good sniffer dogs have boundless energy. They work incredibly hard for the reward of a special food or playtime with a favourite toy.

The wildlife sniffer dogs are 'rescues'. They are rescued from animal shelters or other places. But only about one dog in every 1,000 has what it takes to become a working sniffer dog.

### How are the dogs trained to find wildlife products?

The dogs are trained to connect the smell of many different wildlife products to a special reward. To teach dogs to search vehicles for ivory, trainers hide small pieces of ivory in old cars in a junkyard. Then, the dogs sniff all over the cars. When the dog smells the ivory, he or she sits still and waits for the reward.

### An Incredible Nose!

Dogs are expert sniffers. A dog's sense of smell is 10,000 times better than a human's. A dog's nose has 300 million special smelling sensors. Human noses have six million.

### What happens when these dogs retire?

The dogs retire to a good home, often with their handler or another human co-worker they know.



# Meet Ruger: A Sniffer Dog



Ruger is enjoying a bit of play with his favourite toy.

**Adopted from:**

A shelter in Montana, United States

**Place of deployment:**

Zambia

**Trained to find:**

Ivory, elephant meat, wild buffalo meat and learning more all the time

**Favourite reward:**

Playing a game of tug with his favourite toy

**Career highlight:**

After just a couple of months on the job, Ruger found ivory that had been ground into a powder.

Ruger is an expert sniffer dog. He is not distracted by anything! He keeps searching even when chickens, dogs and elephants are nearby. Once, he knocked bags of rice and corn onto himself while enthusiastically searching luggage.

Amazingly, Ruger has a special 'power' that probably helps him stay focused. He's nearly blind. But it doesn't matter to him! His nose works great, and he's always safely on-leash with his handler.





# Whose Fur? Whose Feathers?

In the shade of a birch tree,  
In Russia,  
How quietly the tiger lies.  
Orange and black, his striped coat keeps him warm,  
And lets him blend into the grass – stealthy hunter!  
The tiger needs his pelt to survive,  
*But people don't.*



Under the sparkling waves,  
In the ocean,  
How gracefully the sea turtles glide.  
Green, gold, or brown, their sturdy shells protect them  
As they paddle far to lay their eggs – hardy travellers!  
Sea turtles need their shells to survive,  
*But people don't.*



Across the waving grass,  
In Southern Africa,  
How swiftly the rhino runs.  
Made of matted hair, her two horns offer defence,  
And help her shield her calf – protective mother!  
The rhino needs her horns to survive,  
*But people don't.*





Beneath the salty spray,  
In cool waters,  
How smoothly the shark swims.  
Sturdy and strong, her triangular fins give her balance  
As she zips side to side – aquatic acrobat!  
The shark needs her fins to survive,  
*But people don't.*

Between the water and the baobab,  
In the African savannah,  
How majestically the elephant moves.  
Curved and sharp, his tusks dig in the dirt,  
And even push down trees – useful tools!  
The elephant needs his tusks to survive,  
*But people don't.*

Inside a hollow tree,  
In Indonesia,  
How loudly the cockatoo calls.  
The colour of sunshine, his crown of feathers curls  
And communicates with other birds – friends or foes?  
The cockatoo needs his freedom to survive –  
*All wildlife does.*





# A CLOSE LOOK AT WILDLIFE TRADE

## ELEPHANTS AND ECOSYSTEMS

Elephants have a jumbo problem. People want their tusks. Long ago, people used elephant tusks to make ivory combs, jewellery, piano keys and many other things. When plastic was invented, however, people didn't need to use **ivory** anymore.

But people didn't stop using ivory. In fact, people wanted ivory more than ever. Ivory objects made people feel rich and important.

### BAD NEWS FOR ELEPHANTS

In just over the last 100 years, more than half of the elephants in Africa have vanished. Authorities estimate that 25,000 to 50,000 elephants are killed for their tusks each year. At this rate, some elephant populations may become **extinct**.

Smaller groups of elephants suffer, too. Elephants are not only the largest land animal in the world, they're also highly intelligent and social animals. Elephants take care of each other. When one dies, experts believe they mourn. When elephants are killed, the elephants left behind suffer.

### A KEYSTONE OF THE ECOSYSTEM

Elephants play a big role in the **ecosystems** in which they live. Elephants are so important they're called a keystone species. A keystone is the stone that fits at the top of an arch. Without the keystone, the arch falls apart. Elephants knock down trees, making grasslands for other animals. They dig for water, creating watering holes that support other life. They disperse seeds in their dung. What happens to elephants affects all the other species around them.



## MYTHS ABOUT TUSKS

### Myth #1 Elephant Tusks Just Fall Out

No—they don't. Tusks are two enormous front teeth. They're rooted into the elephants' mouths and skulls just like our adult teeth.

### Myth #2 Tusks Regrow

No—they don't. Although tusks keep growing as the elephant ages, they don't regrow when they're taken by a hunter.

### Myth #3 Taking Tusks from Elephants Doesn't Hurt Them

Yes—it does. Hunters kill elephants to take their tusks. Tusks only come from dead elephants.

### Did You Know?

Male and female African elephants both have tusks.

## PROBLEMS FOR WILD PETS

Many people like to keep wild animals, such as birds and reptiles, as pets. This creates a jumbo problem for these animals, too.

Hunters capture birds and reptiles in faraway countries. After being trapped or pulled from their homes, they're packed into crowded containers and shipped long distances. These animals are often known as **exotic pets**.

During the journey, animals suffer. Turtles are taped inside their shells and shoved into tube socks. Birds are stuffed into plastic tubes. Shipping may take weeks or months. Most of the animals die.

Survivors are sold in pet stores and markets. But after the excitement wears off, many people don't want them anymore. Most of the animals die in less than a year.

Some people keep wild animals to breed them. Then they sell the babies as exotic pets. While this might seem kinder than capturing wild animals to be pets, it's not. From time to time these breeders must capture additional animals from the wild so they have enough animals to breed. And, no matter how well people treat them, all wild animals suffer when they are not where they belong – in the wild.

## IGUANAS ARE WILD!

Iguanas are a popular reptile in the UK. They are imported and sold as pets but buying one is usually a big mistake. In a few years, the small lizard can grow to 1.8 metres long. Their sharp teeth and requirements for space, heat and food are too much for many owners. Some iguanas end up stowed away in cold, dark places or are abandoned and left to fend for themselves.

## KEEP WILDLIFE WILD

Whether animals are big or small, the wild animal trade thrives because people buy them. People like you and me. You can help by thinking *before* you buy. You can also support organisations that protect wild animals and help them recover in the wild. If you want to share your life with an animal, consider adopting a domestic cat or dog from an animal shelter. But do your homework first – cats and dogs have needs that you must be able to meet, too. Your actions can make a difference.

### Did You Know?

Animals carry germs, just like people do. Reptiles and amphibians can spread **salmonella**.



## Wild Words

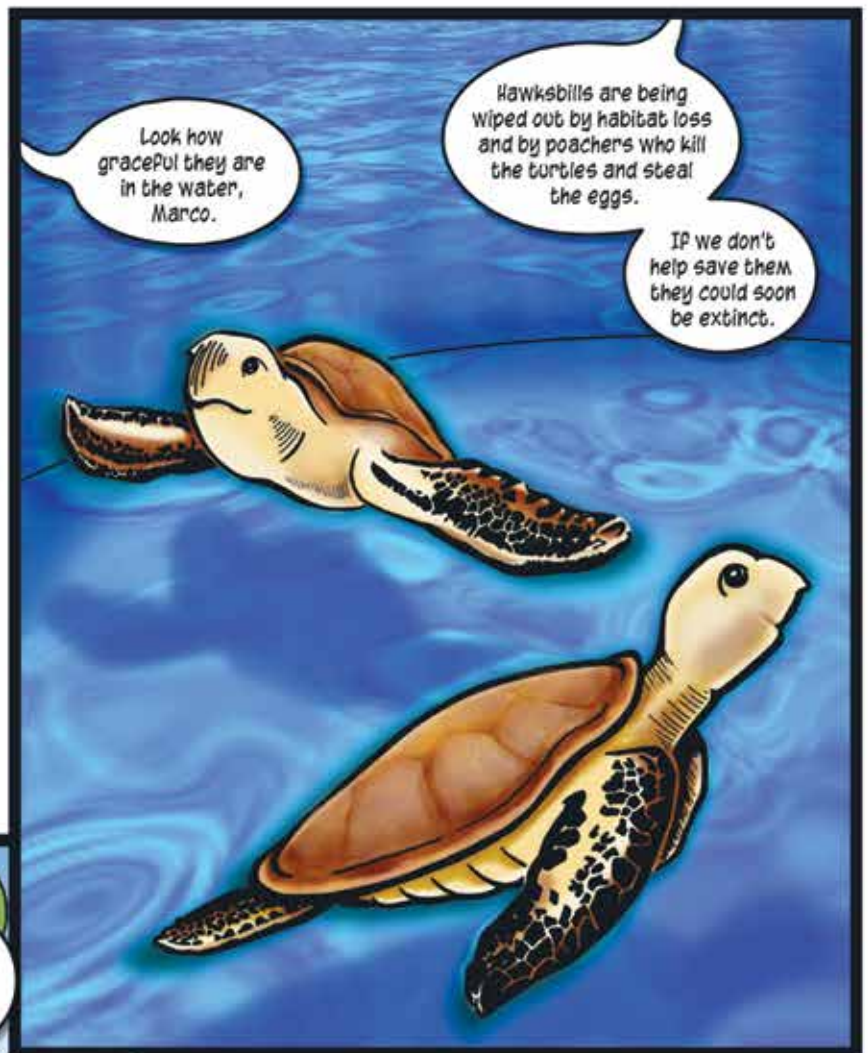
**ecosystem:** a complex set of relationships between all the living and non-living things in an area

**exotic pets:** wild animals kept as pets in places outside of the area where they naturally live

**salmonella:** a bacterial disease that affects the intestinal tract. Symptoms may include diarrhoea, fever, or cramps.



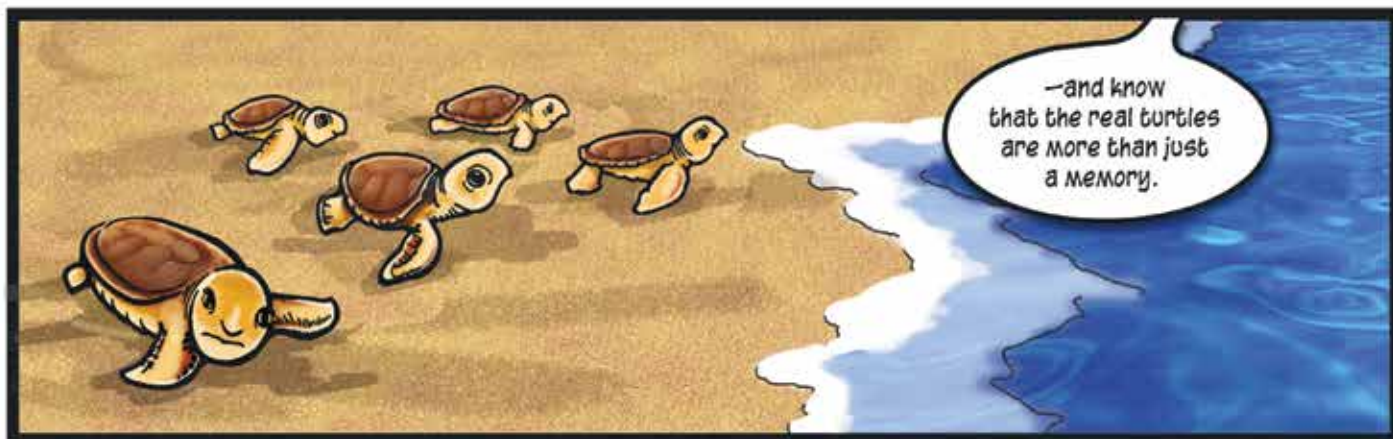
# Remembering the Turtles













## Students Say Wild Animals Aren't Pets

posted on April 12

BERGDORF, Germany – Sixteen students stood in the rain outside a pet shop on April 11th, hoping to stop people from buying monkeys, turtles, reptiles, hedgehogs and other exotic pets. “Wild animals are not meant to be kept as pets,” said 13-year-old Otis Becker, a member of the Animal Welfare Club (AWC). Sylvia Morris, owner of the pet shop, said people have a right to choose what kind of pet they want.

“My job is to find the right person for each animal at Sylvia’s Pet World,” said Morris.

AWC members from Costa School said customers may not realise what wild animals need. “We shouldn’t take animals away from their natural habitats,” said Otis. He pointed to a python at the shop. “That snake is from a warm climate thousands of kilometres from Bergdorf.”

The students said taking animals from the wild was cruel. “Wild animals might be trapped or stolen from their mothers,” said Mia Neiman, age 12. “Some are stuffed into glass jars or tiny boxes and shipped. They might go weeks without proper food. Things might not get better after they’re sold.”

“Most of the animals we sell at Sylvia’s Pet World are not taken from the wild,” countered Morris. “They come from responsible local breeders. And we give all our customers instructions on caring for their pet.”

But Otis responded, “Breeders and pet owners can never create a suitable environment for wild animals. And what happens when people no longer want their wild pets? Piranhas have been found in the Erft River. The owner of the fish grew tired of them and dumped them in the warm river.”

The students were concerned that released wild pets can be dangerous. Some have spread sickness or attacked people. Others do not survive. Those that do survive can prey on local species or compete with them for food.

The students didn’t stop people from entering Sylvia’s Pet World. “We just wanted to share information,” Mia said. She handed a brochure to Mark Reed, who stops by the shop every Saturday to buy mice to feed his snake.

Marissa Dolan, age 11, visits the store’s hedgehogs once a week. On Saturday, she finally had enough money to buy the hedgehog.

But she left the store empty-handed.

“I didn’t know a hedgehog is a wild animal,” Marissa said. She headed home to research before making a decision.



Python in captivity

**“Consumers may not realise what wild animals need.”**



Hedgehog in the wild



I'm getting a bit angry because poachers are killing rhinos for their horns. Without them the world just wouldn't be the same.



The more we buy ivory, the more it encourages poachers. It's so sad. We must find a way to protect wildlife.

People are killing wild animals for products that nobody needs. Stop the killing!



We must stop the criminals, stop the trade. If we don't buy, they don't die!



They are not trinkets. They are not trophies. They are not fashion. They are not medicine. They are living creatures.



IFAW – the International Fund for Animal Welfare rescues and protects animals around the world. IFAW rescues individual animals and works to prevent cruelty to animals. IFAW speaks out for the protection of wildlife and their habitats.

IFAW also inspires young people to care about the welfare of animals and the environment.

IFAW believes that wild animals belong in the wild. IFAW works to make sure that wild animals are protected from the illegal trade in wildlife.



**IFAW**  
International Fund for Animal Welfare