Zoos in Maritime Canada

An Investigative Report

Published by:

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Prepared by

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October 1996

Foreword

As knowledge of the physical, psychological and social aspects of animal well-being increases, attitudes toward the keeping of animals in zoos, aquariums, safari parks and roadside menageries are changing. Increasingly, members of the public are becoming concerned about the way individual zoo animals are housed and cared for, and whether or not their confinement in zoos actually supports a legitimate agenda of conservation, education and science.

Unfortunately, most zoos today are little changed from their 19th century predecessors. They remain essentially menagerie-style collections of animals constituted to satisfy public curiosity and a desire to view wild animals up close. Most of these zoos cause considerable physical and psychological animal suffering.

Ontario currently has no legislation requiring the licensing of zoos or regulating the care and housing of captive wildlife. This has resulted in a proliferation of zoos and roadside menageries estimated to number more than 70 -- more than any other Canadian province.

The Canadian Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums (CAZPA), a national organization of zoos, operates an accreditation program for its member institutions. To become accredited a zoo must meet the association's standards for animal management, facility cleanliness, veterinary care, financial stability, education and several other areas. Only five Ontario zoos are currently accredited.

In 1984, the British Zoo Licensing Act came into effect. This act required all zoos to obtain a license to operate and subjected them to periodic inspections. In order to assess how Ontario's zoos would rate under the standards of the British Zoo Licensing Act, the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) and Zoocheck Canada invited Dr. John Gripper, a veterinarian and appointed inspector under the British act, to conduct an inspection of a representative sample of Ontario's zoos.

Dr. Gripper was asked to provide comments and criticisms on each facility he visited; to offer his opinion as to whether or not each zoo would gain a licence under the British Zoo Licensing Act; and to make recommendations as to how zoo practices in Ontario can be upgraded and improved.

It is the intention of WSPA and Zoocheck Canada to initiate debate on the well-being of wild animals kept in captivity in Ontario and contribute to the improvement of zoos generally by providing recommendations as to how the zoo industry can achieve that goal.

Although there are critical elements in this report, it is our hope that it will stimulate thoughtful discussion on how to achieve the goal we all share of improved standards of care and housing for all captive wildlife. If zoos are to exist, WSPA and Zoocheck Canada believe they must place the physical, psychological and social well-being of the animals as their highest priority.

Silia Smith, World Society for the Protection of Animals

Rob Laidlaw, Zoocheck Canada Inc.

About the Author

Dr John Gripper is a veterinarian who has spent over 30 years in general practice in the United Kingdom. During this time he was a wildlife vet at the Cotswold Wildlife Park, Burford, Oxfordshire. He has been an appointed zoo inspector in the U.K. since the Zoo Licensing Act came into operation in 1984.

He is an Advisory Director of WSPA and a member of its Zoo Task Force. He has advised WSPA on the construction of bear sanctuaries in Greece and Turkey. On behalf of WSPA and the Born Free Foundation he has visited zoos in many countries around the world including Belgium, Croatia, Greece, Hong Kong, Lithuania, Romania, Russia, Siberia, Slovakia, Sweden, Taiwan, Tanzania, Turkey, Ukraine and Zimbabwe.

He is Chairman and founder of the Sebakwe Black Rhino Trust which supports a free range black rhino conservancy in Zimbabwe.

Introduction

A zoo is defined as a park or institution in which living animals are kept and usually exhibited to the public. For the purposes of this report, 'zoo' will include zoos, aquaria, reptile houses, wildlife parks and other public and private animal collections.

During this inspection of zoos in Maritime Canada, I concentrated on those aspects of the zoos that can be seen by the public, supplemented by information supplied by zoo attendants or management. The inspections were held June 24-29, 1995.
This report will discuss enclosures, animal welfare, animal welfare, environmental enrichment, conservation, education and public safety and security, but will not include comments on veterinary care, staffing, management, record keeping, feeding and diet of the animals.

My inspection and recommendations for these zoos in Maritime Canada is based on the standards set by the U.K. Licensing Act. Throughout the report, I refer to voluntary guidelines for accreditation by the Canadian Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums (CAZPA) and the European Association of Zoos and Aquaria (EAZA).

I would like to acknowledge the help and assistance I received during this tour and inspection of the zoos from Rob Laidlaw of Zoocheck Canada, Silia Smith of WSPA Canada and zoo owners/directors and their staff.

Enclosures

An enclosure is defined as any accommodation provided for animals in zoos. Standards for animal care and housing for zoo animals were set out in April 1994 by the CAZPA as follows:

Animal enclosures in which animals are on public display should:

a) Be of a size which enables the animals to:

i) exercise natural behaviour to facilitate public education and interpretation;
ii) achieve a distance from the public and other specimens at which the animals are not psychologically or physically stressed;
iii) achieve a full range of body movements and physical movements normally performed.

b) Contain 'furniture' and or/procedures to physically and psychologically enrich the environment and stimulate normal physical movement and behaviour.

c) Contain natural or man made shelters enabling the animals to protect themselves from natural conditions (e.g. sun, rain and snow).

Space, Exercise and Grouping; Comfort and Well being

Guidelines prepared by the EAZA set the following standards for the accommodation and care of animals in zoos.

Animals to be provided with an environment, space and furniture sufficient to allow such exercise as is needed for the welfare of the particular species.

Enclosures to be of a sufficient size and animals to be so managed:

a) to avoid animals within herds or groups being unduly dominated by individuals;
b) to avoid the risk of persistent and unresolved conflict between herd or group members or between different species in mixed exhibits;
c) to ensure that the physical carrying capacity of the enclosure is not overburdened;
d) to prevent an unacceptable build-up of parasites and other pathogens.

Animals, not to be unnaturally provoked for the benefit of the viewing public.

Animals in visibly adjoining enclosures to be those which do not interact in an excessively stressful way.

Separate accommodation for pregnant animals and animals with young to be available, if necessary, in the interests of avoiding unnecessary stress or suffering.

Animals in outdoor enclosures to be provided with sufficient shelter from inclement weather or excessive sunlight where this is necessary for their comfort and well being.

Modern zoo practice accepts that there is a need in any enclosure for the animal to be able to retreat from the view of the visiting public, from cage mates or from negative environmental factors. This advice is also contained in the CAZPA recommendations that "animals on display should have access to stressless cover or an adequate area to remove themselves from contact with the public".

There is no international catalogue of minimum space needs laid down for each species, except for marine mammals. In the United States, minimum pool sizes for marine mammals are regulated by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) under the Animal Welfare Act.

In Canada, the CAZPA has developed some proposed voluntary guidelines.

Safety and Security

Some of the zoos I inspected in the Maritimes had a lack of stand-off barriers between potentially hazardous animals and the public. In addition, some of the barriers were not child proof. There were occasional closed doors without padlocks, and often, no perimeter fence was in place to deter animal escape. Supervision by facility staff often non- existent.

Adequate safety and security practices and systems are critically important measures to protect the animals in the collection as well as the visiting public and the facility staff.

Safe animal accommodation is best achieved by a combination of a variety of measures including:

a) The employment of a knowledgeable and trained staff b) Facilities that are designed, built and maintained in a manner that precludes injuries to animals c) Understandable safety related instruction (with signs and written guides) to the visiting public. d) An adequate security system e) Reasonable levels of supervision during all periods of the day to help insure the protection of the animals against malicious, unintentional, or accidental harm, as well as to advise and protect the public.

Both CAZPA and the EAZA provide general guidelines that define adequate security standards that are designed to avoid injury to members of the public and also to prevent escape of wild animals.

Animal Welfare

Some scientists equate animal welfare with biological fitness, claiming that welfare is only reduced if the animal's inability to survive and reproduce is impaired.

However, professor Donald M. Broom of the animal welfare department of clinical veterinary medicine at Cambridge University, U.K. (1991) argues that although physical condition is important, an animal's welfare may also be poor in the absence of physical problems; for example, if the animal is frightened, anxious, frustrated or bored.

Other researchers have distinguished between physical animal health and animal suffering caused by an unpleasant mental state.

Assessing welfare is relatively simple for those who think that breeding and physical health are the definitive measures to use. The measurement is more difficult for those who believe that an animal's feelings are a more important determinate of its welfare.

The interpretation of animal welfare and suffering involves a subjective judgement based on observation and knowledge of normal animal behaviour.

Environmental Enrichment

Many of the animal enclosures and exhibits I visited in the Maritimes had a barren environment, and there seemed an overall lack of understanding by zoo staff of modern enrichment procedures.

While the quantity of space can be considered a core requirement in the housing of all captive animals, attention paid to methods or systems for environmental and/or behavioral enrichment of the animal's surroundings plays an essential role in providing a high quality space. Quantity and quality of space act synergistically to satisfy the physical and psychological needs of the captive animal. Enclosure design and placement, building materials, cage furnishings, and daily management can be critical in the elimination or mitigation of welfare problems manifested by stereotypic behaviour patterns.

The goal of any enrichment tactic is twofold; first, it provides an animal with power or the ability to make a choice in its daily routine; and secondly, it provides a means by which an animal can express a facet of its natural behaviour. The enrichment or enhancement of a captive environment should take into consideration the nature of the subject species and the personality of the individual animal(s).

What is now often thought of as enrichment began when we moved beyond the sterile cage to the naturalistic habitat. If such a habitat is sensitively and appropriately designed and maintained from the outset, little more in the way of enrichment may be needed. However, numerous situations exist where enrichment modifications are in order to make up for the flaws or shortcomings of typical captive accommodations.

Environmental enrichment can be carried out by the management of husbandry procedures such as variations in the feeding regimes; for example:

a) random feeding times;
b) frequency of daily feeds;
c) varying amounts of food;
d) feeding methods, i.e. scatter feeding and hiding food to encourage foraging;
e) varying food types fed.

Enrichment can also be implemented by improvements to the layout of the enclosures:

a) change of enclosure;
b) change of layout;
c) introduction of natural habitat, i.e. tree trunks, branches, climbing frames, shrubs, wood piles, nesting areas, straw, water pools;
d) introduction of devices, such as swings, bungee rubbers, ropes, toys, bars and tires.

Education

Many of the zoos I visited in the Maritimes had only minimal educational information with little or no literature or displays available for children and the general public.

Education should be an important and integral function of all zoos and is part of the justification for keeping wild animals in captivity.

However, a negative image is portrayed to the public when the animals on display are not in a state of well-being or are in sub-standard accommodation or enclosures. For this reason all zoos must move towards behaviourally stimulating naturalistic exhibits.

Education is more than just putting up a sign with the name of the species outside the cage. Detailed information about the animal species should be displayed near or on the exhibits and this should be supplemented by hand-out literature and informative guide books, pro-active audio-visual aids and educational programs for zoo visitors, including specialized children's programs.

The essential goal of a quality educational program at a zoo is to help people develop an appreciation and understanding of different species of animals and their place in the natural world. In order to meet this goal, visitors must be exposed to animals behaving in a natural manner in a simulated natural habitat.

However, unless it can be demonstrated that the keeping of a species in a zoo is making a positive educational contribution, over and above the provision of the non-live animal program, then education should not be regarded as a justification for the keeping of the species in question.

Conservation

Based on my inspection of Maritime zoos, I conclude that their conservation value is minimal.

The Rio Summit, The Convention on Biological Diversity and the recently amended 'mission statement' of International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), all have one objective at the centre of their agenda which may be summarized as follows:

The conservation and sustainable management of natural ecosystems and the wild species that inhabit them.

Ex-situ conservation programmes through captive breeding of endangered species in zoos and reintroduction back to the wild have been of limited success.

The future of successful conservation programmes is wild habitat based, where the natural ecosystem is preserved and supported by the local people. This may have to be supplemented by in-situ captive breeding.

The World Conservation Union brings together states, government agencies and a diverse range of non-governmental organizations to lead and coordinate the conservation and sustainable use of the world's biological diversity and the management of habitats and natural resources.

Conservation programs which have been undertaken by zoos have, in the main, been based on captive breeding and rarely on the re-establishment and release of endangered species. In order to make more than a marginal impact, they should be more involved in overseas field projects and research involving the protection of both endangered animals and the local habitat, and addressing those factors which undermine the survival prospects of those species in question.

Furthermore, it is extremely important that the public be given full information about the relevant conservation programs including how an individual member of the public can assist.

Legislation

The Criminal Code of Canada contains provisions dealing with cruelty to animals but they are not sufficient to deal with many of the problems faced by captive wild animals. For example the Criminal Code is punitive and not preventative; it does not provide for inspections or licensing; it is based on the suffering of animals and not their welfare; to be deemed criminal a human action must be done with intent; pain, suffering and/or injury must be deemed unnecessary; there is no power of confiscation; and it does not contain standards for animal care and housing.

Many of the problems inherent in the Criminal Code of Canada are also applicable to provincial SPCA Acts. Despite this, most SPCA Acts do provide for the issuance of orders to alleviate the suffering and distress of animals, and in certain circumstances, the seizure of animals.

New Brunswick

The New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources and Energy (DNRE) currently requires all zoos and wildlife parks to obtain an annual permit to operate. Each zoo must supply a completed animal inventory form, an additions and deletions to/from inventory form, and a health certificate from a veterinarian. There is currently no animal care and housing standards or regulations that need to be adhered to, and there is no inspection associated with the issuance of zoo permits.

Beginning in 1996, the DNRE changed its approach with respect to the permitting of zoos and wildlife parks, and has adopted the criteria of animal care and housing developed by the Canadian Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums (CAZPA) as a requirement for permitting. This requirement is being phased in over a three year period.

Nova Scotia

The Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) currently requires all zoos and wildlife parks to be licensed on an annual basis. To obtain a new license or renew an existing license, the applicant must undergo a facility inspection and be approved by a three member panel made up of the Nova Scotia Supervisor of Wildlife Parks, a DNR regional biologist, and a representative of the Nova Scotia Society for

the Prevention of Cruelty. The inspection process is primarily subjective.

The DNR is currently reviewing its zoo and wildlife park policy and may institute additional requirements in the future.

Prince Edward Island

The Fish and Game Protection Act currently allows for the issuance of licenses for the keeping of wildlife in captive situations, including the keeping of "wildlife in a wildlife park where a fee or charge is levied for admission of the public".

Prince Edward Island currently has no operating zoos or wildlife parks, and has recently adopted a policy of discouraging new zoos and wildlife parks from opening.

Comparative Legislation

In the U.K., the Dangerous Wild Animals Act of 1976 does not apply to zoos but requires individuals to obtain a license for keeping a "dangerous wild animal". In 1984, the Zoo Licensing Actwas introduced which brought all zoo collections under an inspection and licensing system.

Following the introduction of the Zoo Licensing Act, many substandard zoos closed down, and there was improvement in the standards of the remaining zoos.

However, the Zoo Licensing Act is itself now under review. Experience has shown that this Act would be more effective if licensing inspections were carried out far more frequently and included a category of independent inspectors whose primary interest is in animal welfare.

International

There are no international laws governing the possession, treatment, and/or public display of wildlife, though trade in endangered species is controlled throught the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

Recommendations

1) All captive wild animals must be kept in a manner which ensures their well-being and addresses their physical, behavioural, psychological, nutritional, and social needs. Captive wild animals must be housed in environments that stimulate the widest possible repertoire of natural behaviours.

2) Zoo licensing legislation that requires the licensing and inspection of all zoos, aquaria, wildlife displays, reptile houses, and other public and private animal collections should be introduced in each Maritime province by the appropriate authority.

This legislation should require:

a) appropriate standards with regard to the accommodation and care of animals, such as the CAZPA accreditation standards; b) the issuance of permits for the provincial import and export of animals; c) standards for the rehabilitation of indigenous wildlife.

3) Within the framework of the present animal welfare legislation, the provincial humane society or SPCA should adopt a proactive attitude to orders and prosecutions for cruelty and distress in zoo animals.

4) Provincial agencies should review their policies regarding the disposal of injured or abandoned wild animals. The practise of supplying unqualified individuals and institutions with injured, orphaned or debilitated wild animals should stop.

A legislated set of wildlife rehabilitation standards, which include a facility inspection process, should be developed by each Maritime province. Only individuals and institutions who meet or exceed the standards should qualify for the keeping of injured, orphaned or debilitated species of indigenous wildlife for the purposes of rehabilitation.

5) Prior to the establishment of a zoological facility, owners and operators should be required to demonstrate that they have acquired adequate experience in this field at a recognized zoological institution, or undergo a mandatory course of training in basic animal husbandry, care and zoo management.

6) CAZPA accredited facilities should take active responsibility for improving the conditions at all zoological institutions in the Maritimes, regardless of the membership status of the institution. This effort should include setting standards for zoos, teaching modern methods of maintaining captive wild animals, developing educational programs and working with appropriate regulatory agencies and animal protection groups to insure the proper care of animals in zoos.

7) All zoos should be held accountable for the surplus animals they produce. The Maritime zoo industry should develop and implement a regional strategy to control breeding to prevent the production of surplus livestock.

8) Each zoo should be held accountable for any animal they sell or of which they transfer ownership. The transfer or ownership should only be made to CAZPA or internationally accredited zoos.

9) All custodians of captive wildlife should be required to keep permanent identity passports to monitor the transfer of animals to ensure their long term well-being. This passport should include all information about the lineage of the animal, date of birth, breeding record and a full medical history.

10) The Maritime zoo industry should have mandatory procedures for the humane disposal of surplus livestock. Qualified individuals and institutions should be prohibited from passing animals directly, or through an intermediary, to substandard zoos, research laboratories, animal auctions, hunting ranches, or unqualified private individuals. Humane disposal may include sanctuaries for retired zoo animals and/or humane euthanasia.

11) The Maritime zoo industry should work cooperatively with animal protection organizations in designing educational programs to inform the public about wild animals and habitat preservation, and to raise funds for field conservation projects.

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Zoo Reports

Acres of the Golden Pheasant Bird Park

Aquarium and Marine Center

Cherry Brook Zoo

Ferme Aqua-Zoo

Lameque Zoo

Magnetic Hill Zoo

Oaklawn Farm Zoo

Reptile Ocean Inc.

Provincial Wildlife Park (Shubenacadie, NS)

Upper Clements Wildlife Park

Woolastook Wildlife Park

Acres of the Golden Pheasant Bird Park
Truro, Nova Scotia
25 June 1996

Species Observed

Cockatiel, Parakeet, Parrots, Budgerigar, Rosella, Finch, Peacock, Pheasant, Crow, Canada Goose

Accommodation

The birds were housed in ramshackle wooden and wire aviary buildings which had been constructed in the owner's back yard. Many of the birds had access to both indoor and outdoor pens. The enclosures did not appear to have been designed for the purpose of displaying birds to the public.

Food & Drink

Fresh food and water was given to the birds.

Behaviour

No abnormal behaviour was evident on my visit.

Animal Health

One of the cockatiels had a severely overgrown beak. The crow and Canada goose were rescued birds and both were blind.

Public Safety

There was no risk to public safety.

Education

Apart from a few signs of indicating the name of the bird species in the enclosure, there was no attempt at public education. A brochure advertises the bird park but contains no information of educational value.

Conservation

No conservation programs for endangered species are being undertaken.

Additional Observations

This is a private aviary owned by the Zwanepol family and run commercially as a bird breeder and retailer of bird seed.

Conclusions

This is a small collection of pheasants and tropical birds which are bred for sale to the public. It also undertakes some rehabilitation and release of native birds.

VERDICT

This bird collection would not have passed an inspection under the U.K. Zoo Licensing Act.

Recommendations

1. If this bird collection is to graduate from a backyard breeder's aviary to one for public display there must be major reconstruction of all the enclosures and its surrounding area.

2. More emphasis should be placed on public education with better signs and an informational hand out

Aquarium and Marine Centre
Shippagan, New Brunswick
29 June 1996

Species Observed

Harbour seal, various native salt and freshwater fish species, various native invertebrate species

Accommodation

The harbour seals were in a clean, deep circular pool approximately 20 feet in diameter. The fish were housed in clean display tanks of various sizes. There was an outdoor touch tank where visitors could handle shellfish, crabs and starfish.

Food & Drink

Feeding of the seals or fish by the public was strictly prohibited.

Behaviour

The seals were fed by the staff twice daily and performed a routine of tricks to earn their food.

Animal Health

I am concerned that unless there is very strict supervision, children might injure the fish in the touch tank while handling them.
I feel there is a possibility of overcrowding fish in the tanks. On my visit, the tank with Russian and Siberian sturgeon appeared crowded.

Public Safety

There were effective stand-off safety barriers for the public around the seal pool.

Education

Excellent informative signs were placed beside each exhibit. There were a series of audio visual presentations for viewing by the public and a number of interactive educational displays for visitors. There was a large lecture theatre which gave regular educational

presentations on fishing and related topics. A brochure with general information about the aquarium was available.

Conservation

The seals and the majority of fish on display are species native to the Gulf of St Lawrence and New Brunswick's lakes and rivers.

Additional Observations

This marine centre was jointly funded by the Province of New Brunswick and the Federal Department of Regional Economic Expansion. The centre is administered by the Department of New Brunswick Historical Resources.

Conclusions

The marine centre is housed in a new building which has been well designed in an attractive and modern manner as an aquarium and educational centre for the fishing industry. The centre is accredited by CAZPA.

VERDICT

This aquarium would have passed the standards of the U.K. Zoo Licensing Act.

Recommendations

1. The degree of supervision at the touch tank should be reviewed.

2. Care should be taken to make sure that the aquariums are not overstocked.

Cherry Brook Zoo
Saint John, New Brunswick
26 June 1996

Species Observed

White Tailed Gnu, Zebra, Chinchilla, Porcupine, Dwarf Rabbit, Quail, Silver Fox, Jacob's Sheep, Pot-Bellied Pig, Golden Agouti, Mouflon Sheep, Llama, Sicilian Donkeys, Jaguar, Pygmy Goats, Black Fallow Deer, African Lion, Yak, Tiger, Rhea, Golden Lion Tamarin, Brown Lemur, Black Capped Capuchin, Black Cebeles Ape, White Handed Gibbon, Wallabies

Accommodation

The majority of animal enclosures were of a satisfactory size with adequate environmental enrichment**.** Rust had corroded the wire net fencing in some areas and it was in need of replacing; for example, the enclosures for Mouflon and Jacob's Sheep and Pygmy Goats.

Rust had also corroded the metal upright posts and metal gate at the enclosure for the Vietnamese Pot Bellied pigs and needed replacing.

The Yak, Gnu and Zebra enclosure needing to be enlarged to give the animals more space. The Jaguar enclosure was poor. It had no water pool, hardly any enrichment and was covered by rust corroded wire. The African lion had no raised wooden platform. The tiger enclosure needed a water pool deep enough for swimming. The primate house was an older-style building with small enclosures that needed renovation and enlargement.

Food & Drink

There were several notices at the zoo prohibiting any feeding of the animals by the public. There was an excellent notice near the entrance which explained the reasons for this policy.

Animal Behaviour

I was concerned that the Black Capped Capuchin, Black Cebeles Ape and White Handed Gibbon were single specimen exhibits.
At the time of my visit I saw no signs of stereotypic behaviour .
All animals were able to retreat from the public, except for the primates.

Animal Health

The animals appeared to be well fed and in good physical condition.

Public Safety

There was a newly constructed perimeter fence around this zoo. There was no public safety stand off barrier for the Llama or the chinchilla enclosure (although there was a warning sign). The other public safety barriers which had been erected outside the enclosures with dangerous animals were effective and child-proof.

Education

There were excellent educational signs at each enclosure, but the sign for the Mouflon Sheep was difficult to read as it had been erected inside the enclosure.

There was an excellent exhibit on endangered species using goods confiscated by customs officials. The zoo had good school educational programs.

Conservation

The zoo was an active member of the Species Survival Plan and was breeding golden lion tamarins with the intent of eventual return and release to the wild in Brazil. It also was involved in an SSP program for the preservation of the Siberian Tiger. The zoo is part of an international exchange program for brown lemurs.

Additional Observations

This zoo is run by a managing director under a Board of Governors as a non-profit trust on behalf of the people of Saint John and is supported financially by the local authority.

The managing director is Leonard Collrin. Linda Collrin is the director of development. The zoo encompasses 20 acres. Attendance last year was 50,000. This zoo was accredited by CAZPA in 1992

Conclusions

I was pleased to see a policy of no feeding of the animals by the public was being rigidly enforced.

Major improvements were made to this zoo in the early 90s to reach CAZPA accreditation standards. The zoo should continue to upgrade the zoo and should strive to maintain high standards of modern zoo practice and animal welfare.

VERDICT

This zoo would have passed an inspection under the U.K. Zoo Licensing Act subject to an improvement in some of the enclosures as set out in the recommendations.

Recommendations

1. All fencing with rust corrosion should be replaced.

2. The jaguar enclosure needs major reconstruction.

3. The primate house needs improvement and renovation.

4. There should be safety barriers erected outside the llama and the chinchilla enclosure.

5. There should be improvements in environmental enrichment in the lion (high platform) and the tiger enclosures (deep water pool).

Ferme Aqua-Zoo
Edmundston, New Brunswick
28 June 1996

Species Observed

Red-Eared Slider Turtles, Emu, Raccoons, Domestic rabbits, Trout, Sheep & Cattle, Virginia Deer, Guinea Pig, Yak, North American Bison, Miniature Pony, Llama, Domestic Donkey, Fallow Deer, Goats, Jacob's Sheep, Silver Fox, Arctic Fox, Red Fox, Porcupine, Great Horned Owl, White Tailed Deer, Coyote, Peacock, Wolf, Black Bear, Sika Deer, Elk, Pot-bellied pig, Turkey, Bobcat, Lynx, Beaver, Raccoon

Accommodation

The fencing erected around the different enclosures was ramshackle and corroded with rust. Some parts of the enclosure fences had sharp protruding wire; ie.fallow deer, donkeys, wolves, bears, raccoons and yak.

The shelter constructions for the animals were very dilapidated, some had jagged tin rooves with sharp metal edges; ie. the donkey, elk and white tailed deer.

The beaver enclosure was unsuitable for the physical, behavioral and psychological well-being of the animal. It was too small, and had no water for swimming. The enclosures for the lynx, bobcat and raccoons were very small and the animals had no den or box where they could retreat from the view of the public.

There had been no attempt at environmental enrichment in any of the enclosures.

Food & Drink

Food was on sale for the public to feed the animals. It consisted of bread and apples. Food pellets were for sale from a vending machine by the trout pond.

On the day of our visit the standard food being fed to the zoo animals, irrespective of species, consisted of restaurant waste and was a mixture of lettuce, oranges, lemons, tomatoes, melon, potato peelings, egg shells, cabbage, celery, mushrooms and bread. The raccons had been fed fried chicken. The cow had bread dough.

At the two bear enclosures, this food mixture was pushed through a wooden flap where it collected in a pile on the ground, along with the uneaten food from the previous day. The result was a foul smelling, filthy accumulation of rotting food.

A number of enclosures had pools of stagnant water which were mosquito infested**:** for example, virginia deer, bears and white tailed deer.

Many enclosures contained dirty water receptacles; for example the raccoons, bobcat and beaver.

Behaviour

One of the bobcats was showing stereotypic pacing behaviour. The Coyote were displaying anxious pacing behaviour.

Animal Health

The animals appeared to be in good health, except for a donkey that needed his feet trimmed and the Yaks which had badly overgrown hooves.

I believe this diet of restaurant waste will lead to digestive troubles in some of the ruminant animals.

The beaver had no branches to chew and I would expect dental problems to develop.

Public Safety

Many of the enclosures had no stand-off barriers for the protection of the public; ie the owls, coyote, wolves, foxes, porcupine, emu, raccoons, bobcat, lynx and llama.

There was a dilapidated perimeter fence but this did not surrounded all of the zoo.

Education

There were signs with basic information about the species outside each enclosure. There was a Park brochure but this gave no information about the animals on exhibit.

Conservation

This zoo was not involved in any Species Survival Plan (SSP) or international conservation program for endangered species.
Some animals were brought to the zoo for rehabilitation and release.

Additional Observations

This is a private collection of indigenous wildlife and farm animals set up in 1984 by Oscar Laforge and his family.

Conclusions

This zoo is a run down collection of ramshackle enclosures and rusty broken fencing with substandard housing for the animals. The manner and conditions in which some of the animals are kept i.e. lynx, bears, bobcats,and beaver are an affront to animal welfare.

VERDICT

This zoo would have failed an inspection under the standards of the U.K. Zoo Licensing Act.
Recommendation

This zoo should be closed immediately and the animals disposed of.

Lameque Zoo
Lameque, New Brunswick
28 June 1996

Species Observed

Japanese Macaque, Ring Tailed Lemur, Coatimundi, Raccoon, Nubian Goats, Domestic Donkey, Various waterfowl species, Wild Turkey, Llama, Fallow Deer, Sika Deer, Jacobs Sheep, Domestic goat, Pygmy Goats, Barbados Sheep, Guinea Fowl, Pheasants, Guinea Pigs, Miniature Ponies

Accommodation

The fencing around the llama, fallow and sika deer, nubian goats and Jacob's sheep enclosures was dilapidated. The fence construction was a combination of rotted wood and corroded metal uprights. The top of this fencing consisted of strands of rusted barbed wire. The gates into these enclosures were made of broken and rotted wood and were unsafe. There was sharp protruding metal in the raccoon pen. There was a rusty old shelter in the bardot hinny's enclosure which had a broken floor posing a potential danger to the animals.

The paddocks for many of the enclosures were barren with no grass (ie. fallow and sika deer, miniature ponies, jacob's sheep, pygmy goats). There was no attempt at providing behavioral enrichment for the animals.

The Japanese macaque, Ring tailed lemur and coatimundi were kept in small barren cages with no ropes, swings, playthings or other forms of environmental enrichment. These cages did not provide for the social and psychological well-being of the animals.

The raccoon was unable to retreat from public view. The llama pen, situated by the zoo entrance, was very small and provided no shade or area for the animal to retreat from public view.

Food & Drink

Corn was for sale for the public to feed to the animals.

In some of the pens, water bowls were placed at floor level and contained dirty water (ie. raccoon, chickens, guinea fowl, pheasants). In some instances, the water container had been tipped over and was

empty (ie. chinese chicken, wild turkey)**.** Some enclosures had pressure sensitive automatic drinking stations, but most were very stiff to operate and the animals may have had difficulty obtaining water.

Behaviour

No stereotypic behaviours were observed at this zoo.

Animal Health

The animals appeared to be in good physical health.

The raccoon enclosure and the small llama pen by the entrance both had substantial piles of faeces which had accumulated over a number of days. Lack of a clean environment many directly impact animal health.

Safety and Security

None of the doors to the enclosures were padlocked. There was a perimeter fence at the front of the zoo.
There were no public safety barriers for the raccoon or llama exhibits.

Education

Other than hand written signs outside most of the enclosures indicating the name of the species, there was no attempt at public education. There was no informational brochure.

Conservation

This is a collection of mainly indigenous wildlife and domestic livestock. This zoo is not involved in any recognized zoo conservation programs.

Additional Information

This is a privately-owned collection of mainly indigenous wildlife and domestic livstock. The owner, Mr Gildrad Savoie, informed me he intended to close the zoo later this year, but may continue to operate as a petting farm.

Conclusions

The animals in this collection are housed in run-down, barren enclosures with little or no environmental enrichment. The conditions do not meet adequate standards for animal comfort and well-being.

VERDICT

This zoo would have failed an inspection under the U.K. Zoo Licensing Act.

Recommendations

This zoo should be closed immediately and the animals dispersed to more suitable facilities.

Magnetic Hill Zoo
Moncton, New Brunswick
26 June 1996

Species Observed
Sika Deer, Mouflon Sheep, Elk, Pheasant & Peafowl, North American Bison, Cougar, African Lion, Siberian Tigers, Emu, Jaguar, Canadian Lynx, Squirrel Monkey, Common Marmoset, Great Horned Owl, Black Vulture, Oryx, Fallow Deer, Arctic Wolves, Swainson Hawk, Saw Whet Owl, Sicilian Donkey, Llama, Raven, Domestic Goat, Various parrot species, Barbary Sheep, American Bald Eagle, Reindeer, Commomn Otter, Japanese Macaque, Lion-tailed Macaque, Baboon, White Tailed Deer, Black Bear, Red-eared Sliders, Jacobs Sheep, Vietnamese Pot-bellied Pig, Capybara, Miniature Horse, Lar Gibbon, Zebra, Maribu Stork, Wildebeest, Dromedary Camel, Brown Lemurs, Porcupine, Barred Owl, Raccoon, Muntjac

Accommodation

Many of the enclosures have been upgraded in the last few years. The bear enclosure was antiquated and unsatisfactory, but there are plans to relocate the bears to a new four acre natural enclosure**.**

The baboon enclosure was small and overcrowded, and needed upgrading to a larger, more natural enclosure.

Some of the enclosures did not allow the animal to retreat from public view i.e. lion, tigers, jaguar, otters, bears, vulture, hawk and porcupine.

Some of the animals would have benefitted from added enrichment or enhancement of their environments. For example, logs and tree trunks should be added for the cougar and lion; and ropes and swings for Japanese and long tailed macaques and lar gibbons. The great horned owl needed higher perches.

Food and Water

The public were asked not to feed any of the animals except from the feed dispensers within the zoo.

A small number of enclosures had water bowls on the floor where they could become contaminated by faeces i.e. squirrel monkeys, common

marmoset, lemurs, great horned owl, black vulture and long tailed macaques.

Behaviour

I did not observe any stereotypic behaviour.

Animal Health

The animals appeared to be well fed and in good physical health.

Public Safety

There was a perimeter fence surrounding the zoo.

Public safety barriers need to be extended around the full length of the Lynx enclosure. Public safety barriers needed to be erected around the enclosures containing the llama, swainson hawk, black vulture, lemur, emu and the lar gibbons. The safety barriers for the brown lemur and raccoons should be made childproof.

Education

There were good educational signs for each animal enclosure and a map of the zoo was provided for visitors. The zoo had an educational co-ordinator working from an educational centre with an extensive educational program for school children.

Conservation

The zoo is not currently involved in any SSP or international breeding programs.

Additional Observations

This zoo received CAZPA accreditation in 1993. The zoo manager, Bruce Dougan, is the current President of CAZPA.

The zoo is owned and funded by the Moncton local authority. The number of visitors who came to the zoo last year was 118,000.

Conclusions

This zoo has made many improvements in the last five years to reach accreditation status. There are future plans to expand the zoo and to

continue the upgrading of the enclosures.

VERDICT

This zoo would have passed an inspection under the U.K. Zoo Licensing Act subject to the rebuilding of the bear enclosure and an improvement in the public safety barriers.

Recommendations

1. The planned relocation of the bear and the baboon enclosures to a new larger sites should proceed as quickly as possible.

2. There is a need for some additional safety barriers to be erected and for existing safety barriers to be made child proof.

3. All the animals should be able to retreat from the view of the public.

4. The drinking water bowls on the floor should be replaced by raised bowls or automatic refilling drinking devices.

5. The zoo should consider an involvement in a SSP program with a link to an overseas 'in situ' conservation project for endangered species.

Oaklawn Farm Zoo
Aylesford, Nova Scotia
24 June 1996

Species Observed

Long-tailed Macaque, Spider Monkey, Capuchin Monkey, Brown Lemur, Black Lemur, Ring-tailed Lemur, Ruffed Lemur, Gibbon, Matshie Tree Kangaroo, Jacobs Sheep, Domestic Donkey, Domestic Horse, Llama, Ostrich, Zebra, Zebra-Donkey Hybrid (Zonkey), Dromedary, Pygmy Goat, Domestic Rabbit, Mara, Capybara, African Lion, Fallow Deer, Emu, Yak, Eland, Beaver, Roe Deer, North Chinese Leopard, Cougar, Snowy Owl, Siberian Tiger, Jaguar, Bengal Tiger, Agouti, Raccoon, Genet, Barred Owl, Great Horned Owl, Black Bear, Red Fox, Silver & Arctic Fox, Muntjac, Binturong, Japanese Macaque, Vietnamese Pot-bellied Pig, Python, Snow Leopard, Egyptian Fruit Bat, Guinea pig, Saw-Whet Owl, American Bald Eagle, Peccary, Rhea, Cuscus

Accommodation

The animals in this collection were in a variety of enclosures. The latest type to be constructed for the snow leopard was a large metal greenhouse frame building with excellent environmental enrichment. However, there were some older enclosures that were due for replacement - such as the corn crib cages for the gibbons and ruffed lemur where the wire was corroded with rust.

The enclosure for the north chinese leopards, cougars and Siberian tigers were too small.

The aviary by the farm buildings was unsuitable and needed replacing. It did not give enough height or space for the birds and some of the wire was corroded with rust.

Shade from the sun was needed for the open enclosures with camels and miniature donkeys and more shade required in the adjoining enclosure for the dromedary, zebra and ostrich.

There was no high perch for the horned owl.

Food & Drink

Visitors were asked not to bring outside food for the animals but corn dispensing machines were provided around the zoo.

The pools for the eland, beaver and lions were filled with stagnant dirty water and should have a constant supply of clean running water. The pool for the two jaguar was not large enough for swimming.

The water bowls for the barred and horned owls housed in corncrib cages and the saw-whet owls were on the floor where they were liable to become contaminated from bird droppings.

Behaviour

There were no signs of any stereotypic behaviour from the animals at this zoo.

Animal Health

All the animals appeared to be well fed and in good physical health. No smoking notices were displayed prominently around the zoo. There was a problem of over population and overcrowding in some species - fallow deer, guinea pigs and pygmy goats.

Public Safety

All of the zoo had good public safety barriers around the dangerous animals except for the American bald eagle and the llamas. There was no perimeter fence that encompassed the zoo.

Education

Only about half of the exhibits had good educational notices. The other half just had the species and pet name of the animals in the exhibit. There was a zoo brochure which provided only limited information about the animals at the zoo. There was a loft area above the reception that could be further developed as an education centre.

Conservation

Some of the animals in this zoo are part of the Species Survival Plan (SSP). There was no indication that any of the animals were part of an international breeding program.

I was concerned that uncontrolled breeding had been allowed to take place to produce the hybrid Zonkey (Donkey + Zebra). There was also uncontrolled breeding among the large cats which can lead to difficulties over proper disposal of surplus animals.

Additional Observations

Oaklawn Farm Zoo is family owned and operated by Ron and Gail Rogerson as a private commercial venture. During the summer months there are a total of 19 staff and an annual attendance by the public of approx 100,000.

There was a close relationship between Mrs Gail Rogerson and the lions and other large cats which could be a potential problem.

Conclusions

After meeting the owners I am satisfied that they are totally dedicated and committed to the welfare of the animals under their care, but are overstretched by the number of animals in the zoo which limits their ability to be able to upgrade the enclosures to the high standard expected in a modern zoo.

I believe that they should devise a plan the future of this zoo. Breeding should be controlled and a reduction of the numbers and species of animals should be undertaken so that the remaining animals can be displayed in improved and modern enclosures with full environmental enrichment.

VERDICT

This zoo would not have passed an inspection under the standards of the U.K. Zoo Licensing Act.

Recommendations

1. The zoo should improve its standards so that it can become CAZPA accredited.

2. The older style cribcage enclosures and the aviary should be replaced by more modern enclosures.

3. Educational notices with full information should be displayed outside each enclosure

4. Breeding of animals should be more carefully controlled.

5. There should be clean running water in all the animal pools.

6. Floor water bowls should be replaced by raised modern automated drinking bowls.

7. The owners should take time off to visit high quality zoos in other areas where they can meet owners and zoo curators to see and discuss future trends in modern zoo practice.

8. A long term strategic plan should be drawn up for the future development of the zoo which should include a reduction in the number of species on display.

Reptile Ocean Inc.
Campbellton, New Brunswick
28 June 1996

Species Observed

American Alligator, Red-eared Slider, Albino American Alligator, Caiman, Green Basilisk, Nile Monitor, Monkey-tailed Skink, Piranha, Budgetts Frog, Tomato Frog, California King Snake, Albino Canadian King Snake, Spring-tailed Iguana, Egyptian Tortoise, Greek Tortoise, Pueblan Milk Snake, Savannah Monitor, Reticulate Monitor, Indian Python, Three Toed Box Turtle, Burmese Python, Crocodile Tree Monitor, Golden Tegu, Green Anaconda, Yellow Anaconda, Water Monitor, Soft-shelled Turtle, African Land Crabs, Corn Snake

Accommodation

The reptiles were displayed in various sized tanks, some of which were too small.

Food & Drink

Feeding by the public was not allowed. The water in the tanks was clean.

Behaviour

All of the reptiles were showing the normal behaviour expected to be seen in captivity.

Animal Health

All the reptiles seen appeared to be in good health.

One of the alligators had been sutured following a bite injury.

Public Safety

There was protective glass partitions between the public and the exhibits. This collection contained no venomous snakes at the time of our visit.

Education

There were good educational signs outside each exhibit. No informational brochure was available for this reptile collection. Parties of local schoolchildren were given guided tours.

Conservation

Some of the reptiles in this collection were protected under CITES.

Additional Observations

This collection is owned by Jean Claude Savoie and was opened at the beginning of 1996. He plans future expansion including a display of venomous snakes. It is his intention to supplement the income from visitors by selective breeding of reptiles and sale to other zoos.

Conclusions

This collection was well displayed and the reptiles are maintained in a clean environment and supplied with heating facilities in the winter. Mr Savoie is a young enthusiastic amateur collector who has only recently embarked on this commercial venture. In my opinion, it is only likely to be financially viable if he can obtain a national reputation as a successful and knowledgeable breeder of reptiles.

VERDICT

This collection of reptiles would have passed an inspection under the standards of the U.K. Zoo Licensing Act subject to an increase in size of the smaller tanks.

Recommendations

1. The smaller tank exhibits should be increased in size.

2. If venomous snakes are to be on display then there should be full protection for the public and staff against snake bites.

3. An educational brochure should be produced for visitors.

4. Mr Savoie should expand his knowledge of reptiles by reading all available literature, joining herptalogical groups and associations and visiting other reptile collections.

Provincial Wildlife Park
Shubenacadie, Nova Scotia
25 June 1996

Species Observed

Groundhog, Red Deer, White-tailed Deer, Wild Turkey, Rhea, Cougar, Fallow Deer, Harbour Seal, Badger, Caribou, Sable Island Horse, Mouflon Sheep, Barbary Sheep, Coyote, Grey Wolve, Bobcat, Lynx, Pine Marten, Grey Squirrels, Moose, Red Fox, Arctic Fox, Fisher, Short-tailed Weasel, Ferret, Domestic Rabbit, Raccoon, Skunk, Beaver, Snowshoe Hare, Porcupine, Otter, American Bald Eagle, Peregrine Falcon, Black Bear, Great Horned Owl, Snowy Owl, Barred Owl, Red Tailed Hawk, Broad Winged Hawk

Accommodation

Many of the animals were housed in large, natural enclosures which closely resembled the animals natural habitat, i.e. deer, bobcat, coyote, wolves, lynx and barbary and mouflon sheep.

Although a large new enclosure had recently been constructed for the cougar, the water pool was to small and shallow and the enclosure needed the addition of large tree trunks and logs to enhance the environmental enrichment.

Some of the enclosures did not provide sufficient privacy for the animals to hide from the public i.e. red fox, fisher, arctic fox, porcupine, badger, ferret, skunk and beavers.

The bear enclosure was unsatisfactory. There was little environmental/behavioral enrichment. The floor was concrete and the height was too low which prevented any natural climbing activity.

Two cribcage enclosures and the enclosures for the snowshoe hare and the short tailed weasel are unsatisfactory and are due for replacement. The great horned and the barred owls need higher perches in their enclosures.

Behaviour

The arctic fox was a single specimen and was displaying anxiety and stereotypic running behaviour. Both the black bears were showing stereotypic pacing.

Food & Drink

According to the information on the back of the zoo map and signs in the zoo, feeding by the public to the animals is not allowed except for water fowl from the feed dispensers. However I saw members of the public openly feeding animals without any disciplinary action or rebuke from the zoo staff.

Animal Health

The animals appeared to be well fed and in good physical health.

Public Safety

The perimeter fence did not completely encompass the zoo. The safety barrier at the bear enclosure needed wire netting to make it childproof.

Rust had corroded the wire fencing in a number of places, i.e. enclosures for white tailed deer, rhea, caribou and by the pool in the moose enclosure.

Education

There were three excellent educational 'pods' at the zoo entrance with good interactive exhibits for the children. The zoo issued a map to the visitors which contained a full list of the animals on exhibit. The signs at each species exhibit were excellent. The plastic signs for the water fowl had been broken by the public and were being replaced by new laminated signs. It is the zoo's intention to build an educational classroom.

Conservation

This zoo makes no pretence that it is engaged in any conservation of endangered species. It does however take part in re-introduction/rehabilitation programs for indigenous species.

Additional Observations

This zoo is run by the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources. It had an annual attendance last year of 105,000 and has 8 permanent staff and between 2 and 16 staff employed on a seasonal basis.

Conclusions

With a few exceptions this zoo is a collection of indigenous species to Canada. In the main these animals have been well displayed in their natural habitat and good use has been made of environmental enrichment.

VERDICT

This zoo would have passed an inspection under the U.K. Zoo Licensing Act subject to the completion of the perimeter fence, and an improvement in the bear enclosure.

Recommendations

1. Some of the older style enclosure cages should be replaced.

2. The perimeter fence should be completed so that it encompasses all of the zoo.

3. The bear enclosure should be replaced by a large enclosure, 2 to 3 acres in size using natural habitat.

4. All of the animals should be able to obtain privacy and retreat from the public.

5. Higher perches should be constructed in the owl enclosures.

6. This zoo should seek accreditation status with CAZPA.

Upper Clements Wildlife Park
Annapolis Royal, Nova Scotia
24 June 1996

Species Observed

Lynx, Bald Eagle, Porcupine, Raccoon, Skunk, Red Fox, Bobcat, Arctic Fox, Black Bear, Sable Island Horse, Cougar, Moose, Coyote, Red Deer, White-tailed Deer, Woodchuck, Barred Owl, Domestic Rabbits

Accommodation

The enclosures for the deer and moose were of a satisfactory size and provided a good, natural free-range environment. However, the lynx, bobcats and cougars were in very small, unsatisfactorily furnished corncrib cages. These older-style cages do not provide the adequate space for the long-term care of the animals.

The floor space of the bear enclosure was of a fair-size, but the enclosure was inadequate because the floor was concrete and little had been done in the way of environmental or behavioral enrichment. The height of the enclosure was also very low which did not allow any climbing.

Higher perches were needed in the enclosures for the American bald eagles and the barred owl. This would allow the birds to better take advantage of the vertical space provided by the height of the cage. The bobcats, red fox and raccoons had no access to privacy areas.

Food & Drink

Feeding by the public was discouraged. Some water bowls were at floor level and were likely to get contaminated i.e. bald eagle and barred owl.

Behaviour

One of the lynx exhibited stereotypic pacing behaviour. One of the bears exhibited advanced stereotypic pacing behaviour. This behaviour was likely caused by the lack of environmental enrichment in the husbandry procedures and in the layout of the enclosures. The enclosures for both these animals lacked natural habitat items such as tree trunks, branches, climbing frames, shrubs, etc.

Animal Health

The animals appeared to be well fed and in good physical condition.

Public Safety

There were good stand-off/safety barriers for the public around the enclosures for all the dangerous animals. The wire fence for the Red Deer enclosure was corroded by rust. There was a satisfactory perimeter fence around the zoo.

Education

There were excellent signs outside each animal enclosure that gave full information about the species and its normal habitat. There was also a park brochure, but this gave very little educational information about the animals on exhibit.

Conservation

This was an indigenous collection of animals which was not involved in any Species Survival Plan (SSP) or international conservation program.

Additional Observations

The Upper Clements Wildlife Park was originally constructed by the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources in 1973. Since 1995, it has been operated by a twelve-member Board of Directors elected by the local community. The Wildlife Park encompasses some 1,400 acres, 30 acres of which include the animal exhibits. There was a high standard of cleanliness and tidiness in the Park area around the animal exhibits.

Conclusions

This wildlife Park is set in a beautiful woodland location of trees, lakes, ponds and streams. It is unfortunate that in this spectacular setting of natural wild habitat, most of the predator animals are caged in very small outdated enclosures.

VERDICT

This zoo would have failed an inspection under the standards of the U.K. Zoo Licensing Act.

Recommendations

1. All the old style corncrib cages should be replaced with modern enclosures which give the animals more space within the natural habitat of the Park. Ample environmental enrichment should be provided for all animals.

2. The bear enclosure must be replaced by a large open enclosure, 2 to 3 acres in size, where the bears are free to roam among the trees. A water pool large enough for the bears to swim should be provided.

3. All of the small enclosures could be improved at once at little cost by the introduction of environmental enrichment.

4. Floor water bowls should be replaced by drinking nozzles or raised automated refilling bowls.

5. All of the animals should be allowed to retreat from the view of the public.

6. If sufficient funds are not available to replace and rebuild all the old cages and enclosures then many of the zoo animals should be disposed of and the Wildlife Park should in future only maintain ungulates and water fowl.

Woolastook Wildlife Park
Fredericton, New Brunswick
27 June 1996

Species Observed

White Tailed Deer, Moose, Great Horned Owl, Rough Legged Hawk, Bobcat, Woodchuck, Black bear, Porcupine, Red fox, Fallow deer, Domestic Rabbit, Coyote, Wolf, Raccoon, Grey Squirrel, Raccoon, Silver Fox, Mink, Cougar, Lynx

Accommodation

The white tailed deer and moose were in natural large grassy open-space enclosures but had no shelter from the elements. The fence around these enclosures had three strands of barbed wire at the top which was broken in places with the loose wire hanging free.

The Great Horned Owls and the Rough Legged Hawk were in small old-fashioned cages which limited their ability to fly. The cages had wire floors and the birds had no nest box where they could retreat from the public for privacy.

A nursery section had been set up, where young or orphaned animals brought in from the wild could be raised and rehabilitated. Many of these animals were housed in small cages with wire mesh floors.
The remainder of the animals at this wildlife park were in totally unsuitable, small, bare octagonal cages of low height (3 to 4 ft). These cages were too small to allow for exercise and were detrimental to the social and psychological well-being of the animals. The cages contained no provision for the behavioral enrichment of the animals. The floors of these cages were composed of wire mesh. In some instances the mesh was partly covered by the occasional plank of wood. These cages had all round public viewing and did not contain a den or nest box where the animal could retreat from the public. The only protection from the elements was a small piece of chipboard on the roof.

Food & Drink

Food was for sale at an entrance kiosk for feeding to the animals. This consisted of compound protein nuts in an ice cream cone.

Many of the water bowls were corroded with rust.

Animal Behaviour

Severe stereotypic repetitive pacing and anxiety behaviour was observed in the Coyotes, Wolf, Raccoons and Bear.

Animal Health

The animals appeared to be well fed and in good physical health. Those animals showing advanced stereotypic behaviour appeared mentally disturbed. Stereotypic behaviour is usually irreversible.

Public Safety

There was a perimeter fence, but in some places the height was only 4 to 5 ft. Near the cougar cage this perimeter fence had rotting wooden uprights. There was a hole in the wire mesh perimeter fence which was large enough for a lynx to escape through.

In two places a tree had fallen across this fence, so that if any of the animals escaped from their cages they could easily have climbed over the perimeter fence.

The cougar cage had a rusty wire-mesh floor which had holes in several places where the mesh had corroded and broken off. This was not only hazardous to the animal but also posed the potential for escape.

Many of the exhibits had low wooden stand-off barriers, which were not childproof and in many cases did not encircle the whole cage, so that visitors could walk around them. They were quite ineffective for safety and protection of the public. The gates to the cages were unlocked.

The bear cub at the rehabilitation centre appeared quite vicious and had no safety barrier to prevent children being bitten or scratched.

Education

No informational leaflets about the animals or the zoo are available. Most of the exhibits had signs providing information about the animals.

Some of signs were weathered and were difficult to read. There was no indication of any educational school programs.

Conservation

This was an indigenous collection of animals and would not have been suitable for any conservation of endangered species.

There was a rehabilitation centre that was rescuing and releasing wildlife.

Additional Observations

This zoo is situated on a very attractive wooded area with lake and wildfowl. The land was owned by the Province and leased to Laurie and Stephen Bartlett who also run the miniature golf course, water park and camping site.

Conclusions

The safety precautions at this zoo were quite inadequate to prevent injury to the public. I believe there is a potential risk for animals to escape from this zoo.

The type of cages and the conditions which the wildlife at this zoo are kept is quite unacceptable from an animal welfare viewpoint.

It is my opinion that the owners have been irresponsible to maintain animals at this low standard of care. They have failed to observe basic rules of public safety and should not be allowed to continue to keep wildlife under these conditions.

VERDICT

This zoo would have failed an inspection under the U.K. Zoo Licensing Act.

Recommendations

This zoo should be closed immediately and the animals transferred to more suitable facilities.