

TITLE: PRIMATES UNDER SIEGE
AUTHOR: BASSAM IMAM

PRIMATES UNDER SIEGE

Humans are the most successful primates, granting us the title of the 'Undisputed Alpha Primates' (UAPs). We have virtually colonized every part of this world, except for Antarctica. But even in this frozen remote region, scientists and special purpose teams can be found therein be it in small numbers, and vessels can be found in the unpredictable Arctic Ocean. Unfortunately, humanity has used its superior intelligence, might, and technology to wreak havoc on other primates. This is not to say that all humans are hostile towards primates. On the contrary, there are many benevolent organizations, institutions, and people who care about primates (great apes, lesser apes, gibbons, lemurs, tarsiers and slow loris). For ease sake, when I use the word 'Primate' in this book it will refer to non-humans, except where if it is noted otherwise.

The International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) recognizes over 600 species and sub-species of primates. Also, keep in mind that every primate species is listed by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES).

Nevertheless, organizations that profit from, or feel that it is essential to kill, ship, kidnap, torture, experiment on, use body-parts for medicinal or other purposes, display, train, or eat primates are here, and often-times they have a strong intent and desire to get what they want irrespective of international laws or the laws of their respective jurisdictions, using brute or deadly force if needed.

In Central and West Africa Great Apes including chimpanzees, gorillas, and bonobos are being hunted to extinction and are losing their habitats quite rapidly; in Borneo and Sumatra Orang-utans face identical problems, in Madagascar lemurs are being eaten. A good quote from a 19th century hunter describes the cruelty and brutality of primate trophy hunting, and it was a good predictor of things to come.

"With a groan that had something terribly human in it and yet was full of brutishness, he (most likely a Western lowland gorilla) fell forward on his face. The body shook convulsively for a few minutes, the limbs moved about in a struggling way, and then all was quiet—death had done its work, and I had leisure to examine the huge body."(Paul Du Chaillu on killing a male gorilla, Explorations and Adventures in Equatorial Africa, 1861 via The Appendix: Hunting Gorillas in the Land of Cannibals: Making Victorian Field Knowledge in Western Equatorial Africa, June 12, 2014, by Elaine Ayers)

In Africa, the flesh of primates, snakes, bats, rats, pangolins, elephants, deer, and other wild animals is referred to as Bush-meat (eating in the bush or forest meat). The problem is referred to as the Bush-meat Crisis, and the commercial aspects are referred to as Bush-meat Trade. Poaching is the illegal act, whereas, poachers or Bush-meat hunters are the people involved in this wicked enterprise. Often-times, these words are used inter-changeably to describe the problem as a whole. Please keep in mind that primates are the subject matter of this book.

The logging industry plays a big role in the destruction of primate habitat and sustaining the Bush-meat trade. This industry clears vast areas of forest enabling poachers to find targeted primates. Furthermore, loggers use the meat of primates as food, or they can sell captured (dead or alive) primates. The meat is easily transported, along with other plucked logging materials.

The Bush-meat trade is a very dangerous enterprise, not only for the thousands of African endangered apes, but for

anyone who tries to stop the Bush-meat hunters. A few thousand Bush-meat hunters supported by the logging industry will go to t any length to illegally kill and butcher endangered Great Apes and wildlife; if you get in their way they may kill you on the spot. The Bush-meat Trade involves a massive operation entailing the killing of wild animals, many of which are endangered. Furthermore, pristine Virgin forests are sliced into, creating passageways for this enterprise to flourish.

In 1999, notable wildlife and animal welfare organizations in North America connected with The Bush-meat Project in an understanding that the Bush-meat Crisis is a top priority of interest.

Great Ape meat is expensive, but consumers are willing to pay for it. It's considered a delicacy for those who are rich. The poor who are desperate consider it a valuable food source. Traditionally, this meat was procured by villagers for their families. Today a Bush-meat hunter can earn between several hundred dollars annually to more than one thousand. Considering the economic situation of the affected regions, this is a very large sum, indeed. And none of the money is taxed.

The Bush-meat Trade has become quite intrusive into Great Ape populations in the Congo Basin. So much so, it is now the number one threat to the respective populations, outdoing habitat loss. Neither industry is merciful upon Great Ape populations. Over 5 million tons of Bush-meat is plucked from the Congo Basin. The Bush-meat Trade is estimated to be worth 2 billion dollars annually, and we must take into consideration the abject poverty of much of the affected areas.

"The Bush-meat crisis is the most significant and immediate threat to wildlife populations in Africa today," said Dr. Jane Goodall, DBE. (The Jane Goodall Institute of Canada)

Extreme desperation and starvation can induce refugees and victims of war to eat non-traditional foods, or to hunt endangered animals. The recent stream of Congolese refugees into Uganda is one such case. Congolese custom allows for the eating of primates. These animals can be carriers of the Ebola virus, creating additional problems to the Bush-meat Crisis. The simple act of handling an infected primate can spread the virus.

Furthermore, the Ebola virus and other horrors related to the Bush-meat Trade can easily spread afar, even to nations wherein the population considers the eating of primates repulsive. Some Bush-meat eating Africans living in the United States can satisfy their cravings for primate meat through the underground black market. The flesh can be smuggled into the U.S. or other non-African countries by being smoked, partially cooked, in raw form, and may be labelled as another food item.

"From 2009 to 2013, U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents confiscated 69,000 Bush-meat products with an estimated 15,000 pounds being smuggled every month. In 2002, it was estimated that the trade in bush-meat saw sales of more than \$50 million per year and could grow more over the next few decades. This global trade in wildlife meat has contributed to the emergence and spread of infectious disease." (By Mo Barnes, August 27, 2014; Rollingout.com: Africans Eating Monkey Meat Expose America to Ebola Virus.

Cities in the U.S. containing vibrant West African populations have had a prosperous trade in African primate meat. The meat is a delicacy costing \$100 U.S., for just a few pounds, making this a lucrative criminal enterprise that will attract criminal elements. Infected food can act as a pipeline for dangerous pathogens to disperse.

The fact the USDA bans all meat products from Africa isn't enough to stop the trade. The transport or possession of these food items must become a felony, at the federal level. All societies have the right and obligation to protect themselves from food-borne dangers. In particular, port of entry officers across the globe need special training in identifying and detecting the presence of dangerous food items.

UC Berkley researchers identified the mode of delivery of poached gorilla meat: "They found that most illegal meat is carried in suitcases and also is shipped in parcels and large containers coming through JFK and Miami airports. Inspectors say they can only catch about one percent of the total coming into the country." (Taken from an article in Primatology.net via Takepart: Gorilla Poaching: The Sad, Savage Reality).

Meat is not the only smuggled item in this enterprise, body parts; the hands are used as magic charms, ashtrays, or are eaten as a delicacy; the heads are considered awesome souvenirs.

Although Ugandan cultural practices and beliefs protect primates, the large numbers of Congolese refugees fleeing the war into the Democratic Republic of Congo and cuts in food aid have resulted in a state of desperation; refugees purchase food items from the same markets as Ugandans.

"Especially Central and Western African countries, there's a lot of eating of chimpanzees, and it's the biggest threat to the survival of primates in Africa. To Uganda that has not been the case, but it's an emerging issue that we are very keen to dig into right now ... We have encountered local Ugandans actually hunting primates and being in possession of them, and them saying by themselves that 'Yes, we are going to eat them'," said Lily Ajarova, Director of a chimp refuge in Uganda. (ibid)

The Bush-meat Project was formed to aid partnerships that will support people of Equatorial Africa to safeguard the

region's key ecosystems and dynamic societies. This is a long-term program offering economic and social motivation, and to help facilitate and improve conservation. A primary endeavour of the Bush-meat Project has been the attempt to transform 'poachers into conservationists'.

The goal of primate tourism is to make primates worth more alive than dead, and to educate people about the desperate plight of many species of primates. If local communities can benefit from this venture, they'll have something to gain by protecting their primate neighbours. This has already been done for whales.

The Jane Goodall Institute (JGI), founded in 1977 by world renowned primatologist Dr. Jane Goodall, has been very instrumental in the fields of wildlife research, conservation, and education, in helping to better this world. Emphasis is placed on:

- Advancing global comprehension and treatment of Great Apes through the use of research, public understanding, and advancement.
- Aiding in the preservation of Great Apes and their respective habitats by linking conservation with education and advancement of sustainable livelihoods in local communities.
- Setting up of a global chain of Young people who have empathy for their human community, all animals, and for the environment.

Some of JGI's award-winning programs include Tchimpounga Chimpanzee Sanctuary (Congo), Better Beginnings Stronger Families (DRC), Healthy Communications and Forests (DRC), Primate Research (Tanzania), Greater Gombe Ecosystems Project (Tanzania), Roots & Shoots (Uganda), Growing Hope (Uganda), Ngamba Island Chimpanzee Sanctuary (Uganda), Teacher Workshops (Uganda). It's clear that tackling the Bush-meat Crisis requires a multi-pronged approach with many players; societal and cultural values must change.

Studying primates in the field in a humane manner can be educational and useful. Destroying their populations will serve no useful purpose.

According to the Bush-meat Crisis testimony in 2000, "This illegal trade is destroying free-ranging populations of chimpanzees {and other primates} just when a proposal has been made that their protection in the wild may be important for understanding how to control the spread of AIDS and other infectious diseases among humans." (WildChimps.org: Chimpanzees in Danger: Poaching: A HUGE Threat to Chimpanzees)

The Bush-meat Trade can be quite dangerous to humans too. Men and women in uniform who deal directly with poachers in the forests risk their lives.

One such case occurred in Cameroon on September 27, close to Lobeke' National Park near the border of the Central African Republic. Two unarmed forest rangers were on patrol in South-East Cameroon when they discovered the carcasses of 2 critically endangered Western lowland gorillas in a camp. Shortly thereafter, they confronted at least 6 poachers. The poachers in turn opened fire on the 2 unarmed forest rangers, resulting in a bloody and deadly scene.

Forest Ranger Jean Fils Mamendji was shot in the arm and shoulder; miraculously, he was able to flee the scene but couldn't help his partner. Zomedel Pierre Achille, on the job for 12 years, was shot in the chest and back.

Later, a rescue mission was sent back to the area where the shooting occurred. Following an all-night search they discovered the body of Achille, tied to a tree. Worse yet, it appeared that he'd been badly beaten before dying. Poachers shoot anyone they perceive as getting in their way, or as a retaliatory act. Earlier in 2011, 6 Baka pygmies were shot and wounded by poachers.

"This is the saddest day in the history of conservation in south-east Cameroon ... It is a clear testimony of the danger we face - and calls for firm action to be taken against poachers," said Basile Yapou, World Wildlife Federation (WWF) director in Cameroon. (October 6, 2011; WWF.org.uk: Forest Ranger Killed by Gorilla Poachers)

"Rangers are putting on a uniform every day to protect their wildlife, their forests and ultimately, the wellbeing of their communities from individuals who seek only to commit criminal acts such as trafficking protected species," said David Greer, Great Ape Co-ordinator in Africa. (ibid)

The Bush-meat Trade adversely affects group cohesion, destroys habitats, and creates immense mental anguish for survivors. The butchering of adult primates may be carried out through the use of firearms or hatchets. Youngsters, even babies are often left behind. Those who are old enough have terrible memories of their parents and other primates in their group being brutally killed. If the target is a baby or a youngster, to be taken away to a zoo, circus, or raised for entertainment, any adult protectors including the parents are usually slaughtered to eliminate any kind of a resistance stance.

The slaughter of primates in the Congo Basin is not always for Bush-meat or monetary gain. In a small number of cases, rebel or militia groups, poachers, or villagers may slaughter an individual primate or an entire assembly of them. For whatever

reason/s, the butchers hate their victims, or send a serious message to rangers by committing these heinous acts. Irrespective of why the act occurred, the victims always suffer immensely.

In July of 2007, park rangers discovered 4 mountain gorillas shot dead in The Democratic Republic of Congo's Virunga National Park. The Gorillas included 3 females and a silverback. Thankfully, Ndeze, the baby of one of the dead Gorillas, named Safari, was found alive. Although she was severely dehydrated, she was otherwise fine. The dead gorillas were located beside each other.

Referring to Ndeze's rescue, Pauline Ngobobo, head ranger of the southern sector of Virunga National Park said, "an amazing piece of news ... We had given up hope on Ndeze." (By Stefan Lovgren for National Geographic News, July 27, 2007; NationalGeographic.com: Update: Baby Gorilla Found Alive After Mass "Execution" in Congo)

In an act of love and courage, it was Ndeze's brother who took her from her dead mother's clutches, literally rescuing her. He couldn't do much more thereafter; he was unable to feed her. Thankfully, when Park rangers took Ndeze from her brother he was calm. Perhaps he was too terrified to put up a resistance, too weak, or sensed that the rangers had good intentions.

The slaughter of the 4 mountain gorillas saddened the rangers and conservationists who work in the region. It's their job to help protect endangered gorillas within their park.

Earlier in 2007, a female gorilla from the Kabrizi family was discovered shot dead in Virunga National Park. She also left an orphaned baby. Furthermore, another family member had gone missing since the discovery; assumed to have been killed.

"We don't think it was the villagers who did it ... This was deliberate ... An act of sabotage," said Emmanuel de Merode, director of WILDLIFEDIRECT. (ibid)

In the Republic of Madagascar, commonly referred to as Madagascar, the cultural taboo against eating Lemurs has weakened considerably. During a recent ceremony in a tiny village in eastern Madagascar, a group of distressed seniors made a sincere, polite request to their ancestors, requesting that they negate the ban on hunting and eating lemurs.

There's a trend among Madagascar's youth to disregard the old traditional beliefs. They illegally hunting and eat endangered species, eating their meat as though it was a cheap snack. The weakening and flaunting of taboos, along with feeble enforcement of wildlife laws in the country has resulted in a significant increase in poaching, irrespective of the fact that large fines are supposed to be meted out to violators.

Nevertheless, even when villagers or towns-people don't support the poaching, usually they can't do anything to stop it. Poachers tend to be well-armed and are intent in getting what they want.

"There's no [enforcement] of the law in remote areas, control is not easy," said Jonah Ratsimbazafy, a primatologist at the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust in Tananarive, Madagascar. (By Sara Reardon, December 15, 2011; Sciencemag.org: Falling Taboos Put Lemurs on the Menu in Madagascar)

Another problem in Madagascar is the inability of many people living in small towns and villages to adequately raise animals for food. Hunger is causing these people to eat the flesh of Lemurs (in particular Giant Indri and Diademed Sifaka) as a source of protein.

"It's very, very difficult to see really robust estimates of people's illegal behaviour, and they've done a great job in doing that ... We can't stop people becoming more westernized, but we can work with traditional elders to emphasize the cultural value ..." said E. J. Milner-Gulland, a conservation scientist at Imperial College London. (ibid)

Orang-utan populations of Borneo and Sumatra have been devastated by the logging, palm oil, pulp, mining, pet, and rubber industries, human encroachment and farming, and hunting

Orang-utans are defenceless against humans, watching their habitats being destroyed, young ones snatched from their mothers, and other heinous crimes. Furthermore when their land has been burned for farming or destroyed by other means, they can never return, and unless they can somehow move on to new forest-lands, they're literally homeless.

In a story revealed in late 2011, an estimated 700 Kalimantan, Borneo rainforest orang-utans were killed by villagers primarily for food, but also because of a grave concern of being attacked, harvesting the flesh to make traditional medicines, and snatching the babies to sell. Ironically, the word orang-utan means 'man of the forest', named as such because of their similarity to humans. Acts of this sort and major deforestation have forced orang-utans to venture onto farmlands in desperate search of food; they're starving, have seen much of the rainforests destroyed, the survival instinct is activated. Total orang-utan population (Borneo and Sumatra) is estimated at 15-25 thousand individuals.

Describing the killing carnage Miss Suci Utami Atmoko, a Field Coordinator with the Nature Conservancy said, "Some residents were desperate and had no other choice but to kill them after spending three days hunting for food." (By Richard Shears, November 3, 2011; Daily Mail.co.uk: Hungry Villagers Kill Hundreds of Orang-utans for Food)

A survey by the Nature Conservancy, The World Wildlife Fund, The People's Resource, and the Borneo-Orang-utan Survival Foundation regarding this atrocity was done between April 2008 and September 2009, which included the questioning of about 7000 people in nearly 700 villages.

More than two thirds of the villagers questioned were aware that orang-utans were a protected and endangered species at the time of the hunting. The fact that The Government of Indonesia permitted human development in Borneo aggravated the situation. Apparently, the government didn't take the plight of the inhabiting orang-utans into consideration. In my opinion, their plight was conveniently ignored.

Speaking to the Jakarta Post, Neil Makinuddin, The Nature Conservancy's programme manager said, "We must soon open conservation areas for {orang-utans} or their population will become extinct ... The government should punish {orang-utan} killers." (ibid)

"Uncontrolled killing will soon diminish their population," said Mr Erik Erik Meijaard, forest director of People and Nature Consulting International. (ibid)

Populations of wild orang-utans are adversely affected by the orang-utan pet trade. Baby orang-utans are very cute and helpless, evoking a maternal or paternal response from potential buyers.

A contemporary report by the Centre for orang-utan Protection and Nature Alert revealed that the number of captured or killed orang-utans in Java in the past 10 years has been a whopping 20 thousand. The sad fact is that local and national authorities often choose not to enforce the law. Even when the law is enforced, the penalties are light. High ranking members of the smuggling ring are hardly affected by weak penalties. Usually it's the low-level poachers and smugglers who are apprehended and punished.

The goal is to ship them off as cheaply as possible; deaths are considered a natural consequence of the enterprise. Many baby and adult primates are stuffed into very tiny, filthy enclosures, forced to travel long distances with little or no food, water, veterinary medical care, or love. More so, if a troublesome situation arises, the animal may be darted, drugged, or beaten into submission. It's a living hell.

"For every baby that makes it to the backstreet markets of Bangkok or Taiwan another two have perished. And to 'harvest' the babies a further five mothers have been killed." (Orangutans.com.au: Illegal Pet Trade)

Irrespective of the international prohibition on the trading of primates, this heinous enterprise is expanding. Poachers will try their hardest to find new avenues,

opportunities and locales to send their primates. One of the new markets is Turkey other new markets include Greece, Israel, Mexico, Japan, Russia, Spain, and Thailand. Although it's against the law to sell chimpanzees in Turkey, some shop owners choose to do so. Unfortunately, for every chimpanzee that's sent abroad at least several have probably died. If the primates reach their final destination, they're subjected to more pain, agony, and torment.

One such case is that of Lucky, a baby chimpanzee that was imprisoned in a dark, squalid attic at the Istanbul Animal Imporium. Chances are, he will stay in that putrid place until someone comes along and purchases him, almost certainly to be a pet. His owners will almost certainly be ignorant about chimpanzee health and well-being matters. The sellers don't seem to care, or understand. They just want the big pay-off from each sale.

"We're not really supposed to be selling chimps ... but I'll let you have this one for 58,000 {currency wasn't mentioned}," said the owner of the Istanbul Animal Imporium. (Los Angeles Times via Monkeyworld.org: Chimp Poachers Find Market in Turkey)

Continuing the conversation, a shop assistant boasted, "Many of our customers are rich mafia types ... They buy the chimps to cheer up their mistresses." (ibid)

The sale of chimpanzee photos by beach photographers has been making a comeback. But thankfully, there are people who are combating this heinous menace. Tourists are enthralled and enticed into holding a chimpanzee on a beach while a local beach photographer takes their photo. This enterprise thrived in Spain, but pressure from within the country and abroad eradicated it, for a while, then it made a comeback. This enterprise also exists in Greece and Israel.

When snares and other painful traps are used by poachers, primates will suffer a prolonged agony. Some manage to escape but mutilated, or with an amputated hand or foot. Infection is common.

Referring to a recent story conveyed by TAKEPART, a group of tourists and researchers were literally astonished while watching 3 young Gorillas advancing towards a poacher's snare in Rwanda. Instead of playing with it and then becoming entangled, the three individuals successfully dismantled it, under the watchful eye of a Silverback Gorilla. Incredibly, they approached another snare repeating the sequence.

Nevertheless, the fact that they knew what a snare was, and were able to loosen it indicates that there are many of these devices laying in wait, and of course, many potential victims too. Snares are the non-explosive counterpart to a landmine;

both are cruel and sadistic. Sadly, for every miraculous event of this sort, there are countless catastrophes. Only 2 days earlier a Gorilla named Ngwino was killed by a snare.

The primate pet trade is rampant with suffering. Non-human primates can never be human, nor can they ever be as domesticated or as 'humanized' as companion dogs and cats. Every single non-human primate is a wild animal, irrespective of what their owners want to believe. They have needs desires special diets and must receive adequate veterinary medical care; their behaviour can be unpredictable at times.

Worse yet, many of these imprisoned primates suffer immensely, both physically and mentally. In the UK there is an estimated 5000-9000 primates kept by private individuals. It's safe to assume that a large proportion of these 'keepers' do not, don't wish to properly care for their primates. Primates belong in the wild, in a sanctuary, or in a legitimate good zoo, not in a private owner's home.

"This is a cause close to my heart as I have been involved in primate rescue, rehabilitation and conservation for the last decade. Having cared for orphans of the bush meat trade and ex-lab monkeys in South America and ex-pet monkeys here in the UK, there is no question in my mind that these animals suffer immensely when denied the opportunity to live in their natural homes, with their families and thrive without human intervention. Damage caused to primates kept as pets is not just physical, but emotional and psychological. Sometimes that damage cannot be undone, even after years of rehabilitation. It is vital that we ban the keeping of primates as pets in this country {U.K.} to prevent further suffering", said Liz Tyler, Director of Captive Animals Protection Society. (January 15, 2014, Captiveanimals.org: Call to Ban the Primate Pet Trade: Because Your House Will Never be Their Home)

Additional laws pertaining to this matter must be put in place. Furthermore, the laws must be enforced. No civilized nation can support, condone, or ignore the plight of so many persecuted primates.

Wildlife Futures was conducive in helping to establish DEFRA's (The Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs UK) Code of Practice for the Welfare of Privately Kept non-Human Primates (2010).

Entailed in this code are the actions that must be taken by primate keepers in order to ensure observance with the Animal Welfare Act. Although it was an honourable step in the right direction, rampant primate suffering and horrid accommodations throughout the UK are still a menacing problem. Therefore, in the opinion of many animal protection organizations and agencies, caring and empathic people, and the author, a total

ban on the keeping of wild primates by private citizens is a necessity. There are simply too many victims in this enterprise, and they're not suffering from mild ailments either.

"We have been gathering evidence for quite some time now. It is clear that current UK legislation is failing these socially complex and highly intelligent animals. The situation is tragic, especially in light of the UK's reputation as a nation of animal lovers. We are sure that the best and only option is to ban the primate pet trade in the UK," said Brooke Aldrich, Campaign Manager at Wild Futures. (November 15, 2013; WILDLIFEXTRA.com: Time to Ban Monkeys from UK Pet Trade)

Wildlife Futures' Monkey Sanctuary houses many victims of the pet trade, suffering from both physical and mental ailments. To name a few, a Capuchin monkey named Grips suffers from diabetes. This poor monkey was fed unsuitable food. Chanel, a monkey, endures persistent mental anguish; his behaviours include perpetual clapping, head rocking, and self-harm. There's no telling how much Chanel suffered in his so-called previous home.

Licensing can be another issue of concern. More than 80 percent of rescued primates housed at Wildlife Futures' Monkey Sanctuary were either inaccurately licensed, or were unlicensed prior to their appearance at the sanctuary. Animal sanctuaries must work very hard and be dedicated in order to provide for the necessities of the animals in their care.

"Wild Futures must be congratulated for what it has achieved in providing for the welfare of primates taken into its care. The expertise which Wild Futures has gained over the years and its deep commitment will undoubtedly help in the work to conserve something of the natural world for future generations," said Peter Bunyard, Climatologist and Co-Founder, The Ecologist. (Wildfutures.org: How Can You Help: Support Our Campaign)

Prospective primate buyers must understand, although infant and Young monkeys and apes are a delight to look at and may appear baby-like, raising one of these individuals is not like raising a human child. When chimpanzees are babies they're defenceless, appear as though they couldn't harm a soul, nor cause any problems in a household. But these primates grow fast, and they become incredibly strong. A male chimpanzee can be as strong as between 5 and 8 men. And, that's not all if a chimp loses its temper trying to subdue it is more difficult than its strength because by nature this is a wild animal. During a fit of rage, it doesn't fight, flail, strike, bite, or move around as a human could ever do. Furthermore, when primates and other animals fight or go combative, they give it 100 percent without any holding back whatsoever, no human can do that, not even a champion ultimate fighter.

As monkeys and apes grow they need additional stimulation and satisfaction. At around the age of 5, chimpanzees reach the age of incredible strength, can be quite destructive, and often-times are bitter and offended at being disciplined. More so, by now, they're well-aware of their incredible strength. Humans are nowhere near as strong as adolescent or adult chimpanzees. Regarding monkeys, they may appear small, but may bite, scratch, move around rapidly, and be extremely destructive. Never mind, urination and fecal matter.

Depending on the particular species of primate, a bite can be quite horrible, indeed. Great apes can easily bite off a human's fingers, toes and ears, and it does happen. Much worse injuries can occur too. Some primate owners opt to yank out the canines or many of the teeth of their 'primate child'. In some cases, the nails and even thumbs may be removed. This is mutilation. After which, the victim will be deemed defence-less in the primate world.

Having the teeth removed can result in serious infection, jaw damage, and additional personality problems. More so, the victim will have to be under special care for the rest of its life. A primate with its will not be able to chew on and eat many of its natural foods.

Irrespective of this, your monkey or ape pet can still pose an incredible danger to a human baby or young child. What about other animals in the house? Primates in human homes can feel sibling rivalry, envy, jealousy, and rage.

Primates have opposable thumbs. Most individuals are quite curious and love to investigate furniture and other objects in their human home. Their opposable thumbs allow them to open and extract almost anything that its human owners can; a toolbox, refrigerator, oven, microwave, medicine cabinet, and so forth. More so, if it gets too jumpy, the television, DVD player, stereo, toaster, and other articles within its reach can be dropped, yanked, or otherwise destroyed. Aside from damages, danger looms. For instance, a monkey may chew on, play with, or yank an electrical cord. Worse yet, it may play with the electric socket. Most primates can't be taught to not be curious it's in their inherent nature to be like that.

Angry, frustrated, anxious, or terrified primates may bite, pull hair, scratch, or toss objects around, or at a particular person. Regarding the latter the object is sometimes feces. Some zoo primates will toss feces at onlookers.

Although primate pets have special dietary needs, they'll often try to eat the foods that their owners eat, perhaps when the owner isn't looking. Unfortunately, many primate owners willingly feed their pets a variety of human foods, including but not limited to junk food and drinks.

"If you try to keep them {monkeys or apes} as pets you're creating a mentally disturbed animal in 99.9 percent of the cases ... The animal will never be able to fit in any other home. Never learn how to get along with other monkeys. And, more often than not, will end up with a lot of behavioural traits that are self-destructive," said Dr. Kevin Wright of the Phoenix Zoo. (By Maryann Mott, September 16, 2003; National Geographic.com: The Perils of Keeping Monkeys as pets)

Primates can be carriers of dangerous pathogens. For instance, monkeys can be carriers of Hepatitis B, infecting a human through a bite or a scratch; Zoonosis (Any animal disease that is transmittable to humans). In a general sense, primates can infect humans or be infected by them. Even a common cold may wreak havoc on a primate's health. Primates need not be sickly to infect a human. Their dirty teeth and claws are scary enough.

In the U.S. primates can cost anywhere from over \$1,000 to more than \$50,000. Keep in mind that this is a shady business. Illegal shipping and smuggling of primates, under-handed deals, and forged documents are something to watch out for. Like dogs and cats, primates for sale can also be found in newspaper ads or in the internet websites. Buyers often act hastily, not using logic and common sense. It's a long commitment too. For example, a relatively healthy housed chimp can live up to 60 years.

Monkeys can have a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde personality. Their behaviour may seem bizarre at times. In human terms we'd label them bipolar, psychotic, hyperactive, neurotic, impulsive, irritable, and unstable. A monkey may rock back and forth, suck its thumb, self-hug, or self-bite.

The entertainment industry fuels peoples' desires for owning a pet monkey by featuring a monkey actor that in no way characterizes the true nature of or behaviour of a monkey in the wild, or the typical monkey pet.

Many movie and television viewers are instantly taken-in by the erroneous image of monkeys in shows and ads. What isn't seen are the biographies, housing, training methods, and the tossing away of monkeys that are no longer needed by the industry. Some monkeys receive fame, thereby, further igniting the flames of monkey adoptions, almost all of which go wrong in one way or another.

Crystal, the capuchin monkey actor, who attained fame, has been blamed for a significant rise in the number of people desiring to own a pet monkey. In reality, only a small number of prospective buyers truly knows or understands how difficult it is to properly care for a pet monkey. Most want-to-be monkey owners are deceived by the Entertainment industry, thinking that their pet monkey can somehow be moulded into behaving like the

animal actor in the respective show. This of course, is far from the truth.

"You have people who think it's cool to keep a monkey - so there's a certain amount of status involved in it ...There are very, very few people who keep monkeys who intend to do any harm ... But **if** you don't know what a monkey needs, then you can do a whole lot of harm without realising it," said Brooke Aldrich, the campaign manager of Wild Futures, a primate sanctuary in Cornwall, UK. (Tumblr.com: Performing Capuchin Crystal Sparks 'Epidemic of Cruelty', September 2012)

Animal Practice (2012-2013), was a television series starring Crystal, a capuchin monkey. Millions of people have, and will be watching this television show, taking keen notice of the star. Crystal's career began in 1997 wherein she played the part of a baby monkey in company with Brendan Fraser in Disney's Tarzan spoof, George of the Jungle, Night at the Museum, and other prominent roles.

"She {Crystal} has sparked a sometimes cruel trend - with 1,200 of the animals now being kept as pets in the UK," said Sanchez Manning of The Independent. (ibid)

The British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (BUAV) uncovered a cruel and covert trade in endangered baboons. The poor victims were being sold, from Tanzania to medical research organizations in the United States {and likely elsewhere}. According to BUAV hundreds of Olive baboons were being trapped and detained in horrific conditions {not surprising at all} and cautioned that this trade was hazardous to the primates' future. CITES classifies Olive Baboons as potentially in danger of extinction. Trade and shipment of this particular baboon species is strictly regulated. Other problems include habitat loss and the bush-meat trade.

"Clearly if the trade continues unregulated then the chance is they will become even more endangered," said Sarah Kite, BUAV director of investigations. (Nairobi, October 31, {year not indicated}; Abcnews.go.com: Cruel Trade of Endangered Baboons)

BUAV's report indicated that the baboons were detained in rows of small crates, standing up wasn't possible, and turning around was difficult. Food and water are minimal, if at all. As is widely known, many transported baboons will die of dehydration, extreme hunger, illness, shock, the long treacherous trip, the elements, mental anguish, and/or being cramped inside a tiny, filthy enclosure for a prolonged period of time. It is safe to assume that all are terrified throughout the ordeal.

The baboons can expect no love or empathy from the poachers, and physical and mental abuse is always a possibility. These living beings are treated like commodities. Some of the

baboons are very young, snatched from their mothers, which brings about unimaginable suffering. The ones that survive can expect a life of abject misery.

According to a BUAV report pertaining to a market in Arusha, Tanzania ... [They] "were incarcerated individually in rows of small, dark wooden dilapidated crates, poorly constructed with bits of wood nailed together and broken wire ... Many peered nervously out of a small piece of wire at the top of the crate. Others, clearly petrified, cowered and tried to hide as they were approached." (ibid)

Another problem besetting baboons and other primates include traps in general and snares in particular. What's more, some or many of the traps may be intended for wild game animals. Therefore, the unfortunate baboon becomes a non-targeted victim. Irrespective of this, the snared baboon is forced to endure a horrendous ordeal, unable to free itself from the pain, the snare, or the bodily damage that ensues. Sometimes, the hunters may return soon afterwards to collect their dead or still living prize. At other times, the hunters don't return for a lengthy period of time, and yet in other cases the hunters don't return, the reason is irrelevant to the suffering baboon. Sometimes, the baboons must be caught alive; they're kept as pets, and may also be used as good luck charms.

Kinda baboons are eaten in some part of Zambia. Therefore, traps of whatever sort, firearms, spears, and hunting dogs are used to capture or kill them. In the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) baboon meat is considered a delicacy.

In forested areas kinda baboons commonly scale trees in order to hide or escape the hunters, but they don't know what a firearm is or how it works, unless they've seen hunters using them in previous hunts.

Baboons may be killed because they're perceived as vermin, or crop raiders. When these remarkable primates are driven out of their habitats, or in cases of massive human encroachment, they must search for food, thereby raiding crops. It has become a problem in Tanzania. Farmers can apply for a special license to kill baboons in designated areas.

But every-so-often a person kills a primate, in this case a baboon, for fun or for no apparent reason. In October of 2009, restaurant critic AA Gill (he should critique himself) made it publicly known that he shot and killed a baboon to know what it would feel like to kill someone. He shot the baboon from roughly 250 yards, striking its lung.

"I took him just below the armpit. He slumped and slid sideways. I'm told they can be tricky to shoot: they run up trees, hang on for grim life. They die hard, baboons, but not this one. A soft-nosed .357 blew his lungs out," said Gill.

(October 26, 2009, by Robert Booth; Theguardian.com: AA Gill shot baboon 'To See What it Would be Like to Kill Someone')

Worse yet, Gill clearly admitted that he didn't have a good reason for killing the baboon and also admitted that there was no excuse for his act. Gill committed his cowardly heinous act, called a 'hunt' from inside a truck full of firearms. Indeed, Gill has made many enemies around the world.

"This is morally completely indefensible ... If he {Gill} wants to know what it's like to shoot a human he should take aim at his own leg. When man interacts with animals he owes a duty of care. If you are killing to eat, that is a different matter. This is killing for fun", said Steve Taylor, a spokesman for the League against Cruel Sports. (ibid)

When humans keep primates as pets, the possibility of abuse and cruelty are always looming. Regardless of the reason for keeping a primate on the premises, it's not a human being, nor will it ever be like a domesticated dog or cat. Some people are either too ignorant, or have hearts made out of stone when it comes to the suffering of their 'pet primate' or other wild animal.

"I found Lucy chained to a tree with a knotted chain and two tyres to bed down in. Almost daily I went to feed her fruit and water. After a few visits she recognised me and after feeding would come over dragging her knotted chain since it had damaged her hips which looked and smelt gangrenous. I subsequently managed to undo the chain after many visits and prior to leaving Mozambique. She touched me immensely and hopefully has a choice now in her future. People there keep them as good-luck charms - the bastards," said Hans Walter. (Uploaded on You-Tube by Hans Walter, December 7, 2011; Lucy - abused & chained Baboon in Mozambique)

"This is a story of Bamboo the Baboon, and how she lived with me for 7 days after buying her from a few abusive children. She is now at Abu Dhabi Wildlife Centre in the U.A.E. with another young Olive Baboon," said Chris Colwell. (Published on April 27, 2013, by Chris Colwell; Baboons are not Pets!) (www.chriscolwelltv.com)

It's a tough job caring for a primate. More so, if the owners plan to travel or leave the area on business, who will be able to properly care for the primate left behind? What about veterinary medical care? In general town and city veterinarians aren't trained in primate care, and they will almost certainly refuse to treat one. Animal shelters are not equipped to properly care for or house a primate. Even if the owners take their primate with them while vacationing, jurisdictional laws must be respected.

Thank You for previewing this eBook

You can read the full version of this eBook in different formats:

- HTML (Free /Available to everyone)
- PDF / TXT (Available to V.I.P. members. Free Standard members can access up to 5 PDF/TXT eBooks per month each month)
- Epub & Mobipocket (Exclusive to V.I.P. members)

To download this full book, simply select the format you desire below

