



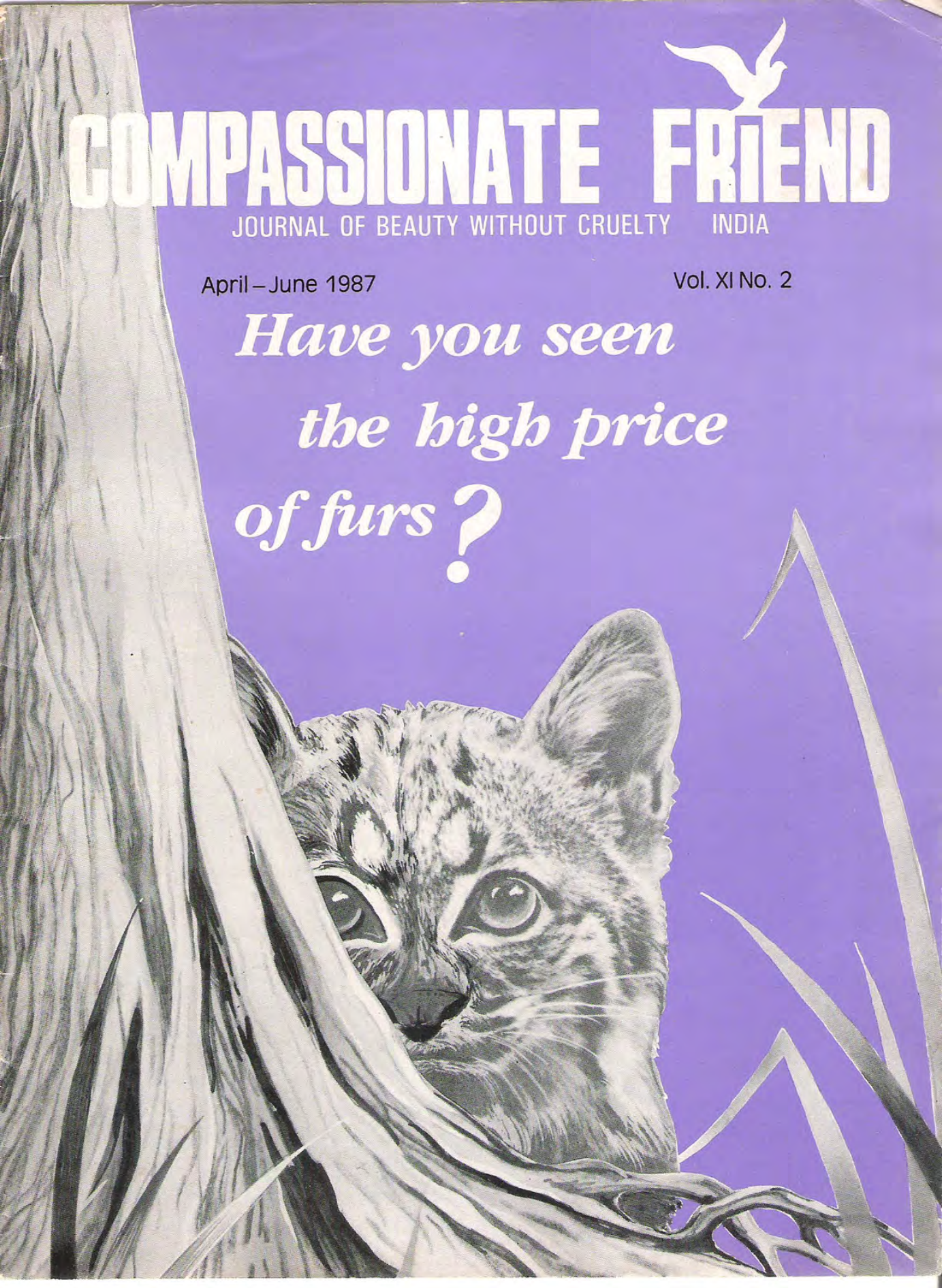
COMPASSIONATE FRIEND

JOURNAL OF BEAUTY WITHOUT CRUELTY INDIA

April - June 1987

Vol. XI No. 2

*Have you seen
the high price
of furs?*



Beauty Without Cruelty

AN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL CHARITABLE TRUST FOR ANIMAL RIGHTS



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is a way of life
which causes no creature
of land, sea or air,
terror, torture or death.

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Magazine edited by
Ms. Diana Ratnagar

Cover design 'Bobcat'
by Ms. Rita Braganza

This issue has been kindly sponsored by

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Information & Action

In response to our article entitled "Animal Abuse in the name of Religion", (October-December 1986), we received an excerpt from Mahatma Gandhi's Autobiography which should interest readers:

"To my mind the life of a lamb is no less precious than that of a human being. I should be unwilling to take the life of a lamb for the sake of the human body. I hold that, the more helpless a creature, the more entitled it is to protection by man from the cruelty of man.

It is my constant prayer that there may be born on earth some great spirit, man or woman, fired with divine piety, who will deliver us from this heinous sin, save the lives of the innocent creatures and purify the temple."

The above was written on the Mahatma's visit to a Kali temple in Bengal which was flowing with "rivers of blood" — flocks of sheep obviously having just been slaughtered.

Recently we have been reading some shocking stories of wild animals being poached in areas where they should actually have received protection. As many as 13 tigers were said "to have committed suicide" in the Dudhwa National Park. Later, it was reported that they had been poisoned for their bones, a vital ingredient for the making of "tiger wine" in China. The authorities in southern China had earlier announced that anyone found selling or killing precious wild animals and birds such as leopards, owls, cranes and other rare species would be severely punished. Therefore it seems that the unscrupulous "tiger wine" makers are resorting to neighbouring countries for their requirements.

Another reported story: a large number of monkeys including some rare gibbons, were being killed in the forests of Assam by groups of Naga and Kuki hunters. Local representations have unfortunately failed to halt these poaching activities.

Yet another report: In Tamil Nadu, Zoology students are required to collect insects, including butterflies. Extra marks are awarded to each student for his/her collection... students are forced to catch all kinds of beautiful insects and starve them to death.

Wanton destruction of our wild life **must** cease... the public **must** be educated... law-breakers **must** be dealt with severely ... so only will our wild life not be stripped and denuded.

As the number of wild creatures poached in Jammu & Kashmir is considerably higher than in other parts of India, many illegally traded wild life products originate from this state. We are therefore pleased to hear that during this year the Government plans to set up ten more sanctuaries in the area.

However, we are certainly not happy to know that "Project Pheasant", and other similar projects for breeding creatures in captivity, have also been initiated. These programmes which commence as conservation measures, end up in exploiting the species, directly the animals have multiplied sufficiently and their population is no longer considered threatened... The message of Compassion, stressed by the world's great sages, is forgotten when the all-important goal is economic gain.

This issue carries an article entitled "Pet-watch" which is about pets stolen in U.K. Domestic animals such as cats and dogs fare no better in India. Sailors from Korean ships docked in Ballard Pier (Bombay's harbour) are known to steal dogs from Colaba and surrounding areas. One dreads to imagine the plight of these pets... the people of Korea relish dog meat.

However, it is not always a sad ending: some years ago, a member from Bombay reported that she saw a boy buying a cute pure white kitten. On enquiring she was told the animal would be killed and skinned for its beautiful fur. Shocked, she immediately purchased this live bundle of fur and today a lovely feline shares her home.

Diana Ratnagar
Chairperson

News: Good and Bad

Good News:

Jewellery for Animals

Brigitte Bardot, the famous actress turned animal activist, who now lives in Saint-Tropez (France) has put up some of her jewellery for auction. The money raised will go towards forming a foundation for animal protection.

The sale will take place at the Druout auction house in Paris on 17th June 1987. The jewellery is estimated to be worth about \$ 420,000.

Vegetable fibre Wool

"Cashmilon" or 100% Acrylic fibre wool is now not the only substitute for wool derived from sheep. The Central Sheep & Wool Research Institute at Avikanagar, near Jaipur, have developed a new blend of wool using vegetable fibres such as ramie and palt (pineapple leaf). These fibres are well suited for hand spinning and handloom weaving. The new product is therefore likely to open a vast opportunity for the cottage industry sectors.

Ban on Grand National demanded

The Royal S.P.C.A. has demanded that the Grand National be banned or else drastic changes be made to Becher's Brook where beautiful horses in peak condition are made to attempt clearing a 4ft. 10in. fence and 5ft. 6in. brook and contend with a steep slope on landing. Horses have to pay a terrible price (injured ones are shot); a jockey has also been a victim.

Japan relents

Japan's extensive commercial fishing in the Antarctic finally resulted in threatening not only Western industry interests, but also the very existence of certain species of fish and whales in particular. Environmentalists joined hands with the U.S. and European countries and strongly protested against the Japanese incursions. Reluctantly, Japan agreed.

Bad News:

Have a heart!

In 1985 Japan imported 380 kgs of musk obtained from the endangered Himalayan musk deer. This amounts to secretions collected from about 15,000 male musk deer, poached in the Himalayas. In the West, musk is used as a fixative in perfumes, but in Japan and China (the country which started musk deer farms) it is the main ingredient of a traditional heart tonic.

Now, due to pressure being applied by CITES, Japan plans to spend an initial amount of 120 million in setting up a musk deer farm at Sichuan. The innocent, highly strung musk deer will be bred in captivity and subjected to the torture of being milked for musk.

Live Targets

In the Middle East, Arabs specially train falcons for their traditional hunt of houbara bustards. To train falcons other species of bustards need to be sacrificed. Thousands are required as "live targets". Despite the Kenyan ban on trapping of birds for export, white-bellied, crested and kori bustards are smuggled out of the country in great numbers.

Mad over Anti-rabies Injections

People are scared to get their dogs injected against rabies. Anti-rabies injections are often resulting in the dogs actually contracting the disease. This is particularly in the case of L.E.P. (Low Egg Passage) vaccines of chick embryo origin. The other deadly anti-rabies injection to avoid (also made in Government institutions) is of sheep brain origin for which unsuspecting sheep are injected with the virus and their brains scooped out with saw — a totally barbaric and obsolete method in other parts of the world. What then should be done — should dogs be "protected" or not? Tissue culture vaccines like Rabcin are certainly more advisable, safer, have a much longer immunity period and turn out to be economical in the long run.

PET WATCH

National Petwatch was founded in March 1983 in response to the clear need for an animal welfare charity to devote its full time to

specifically monitoring the loss and theft of family pets.

Within a year it was apparent that nationally cats are the biggest loss and their disappearance by colour and type from certain areas and at certain times does suggest that they are being stolen for the fur market. The size of the problem is impossible to determine for many cat owners neither report their losses to the police nor advertise the fact, believing, naively, that the cat has wandered. However, the evidence gathered from the National Petwatch network of missing pets bureaux, lost and found columns, newspaper articles and casual monitoring by our supporters is overwhelming. The circumstantial evidence points to A VERY GRAVE NATIONAL PROBLEM.

National Petwatch began a major investigation into the reasons behind these losses and appears to have uncovered very disturbing facts that many would have preferred us to have left undisclosed.

It is a fact that the bodies of a vast number of dead animals put to sleep by veterinary surgeons, the RSPCA and the PDSA are not incinerated as many people believe but are collected by hide and skin merchants who provide each customer with a freezer to store bodies. The carcasses of the cats and dogs are skinned and the remains are passed on for such industrial by-products as fertilisers, shampoos, glues and soaps.

Following our investigation we have on video



COMPASSIONATE FRIEND

From Beauty Without Cruelty, Printed in India, April - June 1987

tape scenes taken inside the warehouse of a London furrier showing the baskets of cat skins. The skins are separated by colour, graded then plated (a furrier's term meaning stitched together). Some are dyed and sold as imitation mink but their main use is for cheap 'fun fur' or the linings of more expensive coats as well as gloves and small fur toys. Gingers, tabbies and patterned cats are the most useful to the furrier. Male cats produce a slightly better quality coat as does a winter-coated cat.

In West Germany where the wearing of cat skin garments is quite

SCANDAL OF CAT FURS

Sunday Mirror special inquiry

NIMAL lovers will be appalled today as

acceptable, National Petwatch acquired a cat skin waist-coat clearly marked 'Katzen' - made from the skins of six tabby cats and bought from the department store, Kaufhof, for £80. At the same time a plain coloured cat pelt stamped 'MEDICAT' by STEINGRAF was purchased for £15 from a medical shop in one of the major cities. It claims to ward off arthritis and rheumatism - presumably if placed against the affected part of the body. The de-luxe version at £30 made into a belt for the wearer claims to improve the slipped disc problems.

Cat tail key rings were seen for sale on market

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SCANDAL OF CAT FURS TRADE

Plush showrooms where pets' pelts hang on racks

A FUR COAT CALLED GINGER

THE HEAVYWEIGHT trade in the skins of such loved pet cats now revealed in the Sunday Mirror special inquiry. The sale of the millions of the dealers who make their dead cats from animals with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the Furriers Association for Stock Animals. They sell the skins for fur coats and line garments for Britain.

Close to getting illegal in the dealers' activities but many of the cats come from heart-breaking animals who have had to have their eyes put down permanently and quietly executed.

Today we spotlight the trade in furs including cat pelts.

By JOHN LISNERS, KEN ROSS and STEVE BAILEY

SKINNERS Lane is the aptly-named street the

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CITY OF LONDON
 SKINNERS LANE EC4

So much love for these pets

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Ginger's pelt - it was on sale for £7.50

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The Sunday Mirror exposing the trade in pet skins.

"Some cats' skins are dyed and sold as imitation mink but their main use is for cheap 'Fun Fur'"

stalls in Cologne and we are currently investigating the report that teddy bears made from cat skins are now being sold. Subsequent inquiries by National Petwatch in West Germany have revealed a keen interest by the fur trade in buying British cat skins and Steingraf were interviewed about their interest. Their main source of supply is Australia and Holland and they claimed

to already have a dealer in England but declined to reveal his identity. A family firm established in 1922, Steingrauf deal principally in cat skins for the MEDICAT market and fashion furs. They were keen to discuss additional British sources but thought that a quantity of 20,000 to 30,000 cat skins per annum would be insufficient and would be looking for much bigger quantities.

West Germany is the major importer of fur in the world and London is the biggest fur trading centre with a £400M turnover each year. In 1984 major fur traders were claiming that 'trading is riding buoyant on a wave of increasing demand for fur from Japan and the 1972-82 growth in the retail fur trade has probably increased ten fold.

In December 1984 National Petwatch revealed through the national press and television and existence of the cat fur trade and the widespread loss of cats and began asking the RSPCA, the British Veterinary Association and the PDSA to give urgent attention to alternative methods of disposal - especially in

view of the RSPCA's current campaign against the fur trade. In addition, National Petwatch formally requested that the RSPCA should spoil the coats of the dead animals with dye or paint to render them useless to the fur trade. After considerable pressure the RSPCA finally agreed to instruct all branches to mark the carcasses. However, National Petwatch has met with resistance to the suggestion that all vets' surgeries and animal welfare premises should offer a declaration to the public and customers about the disposal methods they use and similarly there is a reluctance to discuss alternatives.

The processing of cat skins within the fur trade in Britain for the export trade suddenly became a controversy when earlier this year the British Fur Trader Association denied that any of its members dealt with cat skins. Indeed, they accused National Petwatch of manufacturing the whole concept - "Such nonsense is blatant propaganda put about by her organisation with the aim of discrediting an old-established and reputable trade, and collecting

a few pounds in the process." They have also tried to suggest that we have accused them of stealing cats. Although we have frequently discussed both the legitimate and black market sources of pelts we have never accused either furriers or veterinary surgeons of being involved in theft or supply for the black market trade. Recently, however, the BFTA has acknowledged

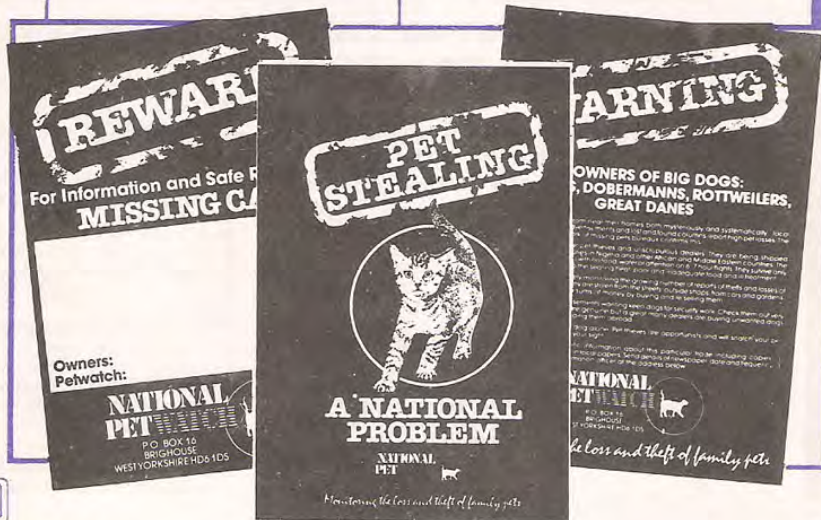
"It is a fact that the bodies of a vast number of dead animals put to sleep by vets are collected by hide and skin merchants"

the legitimate use of cat skins within the fur trade.

Having defined the problem, National Petwatch is now working towards the complete ban of cat skins (and dog pelts) from this country.

Joan Wearne

Courtesy 'COMPASSION'
(magazine of B.W.C.
International).



COMPASSIONATE FRIEND

From Beauty Without Cruelty, Printed in India, April - June 1987

Ornamental fascination

Cowries have fascinated man since pre-historic times. Primitive people used them as ornaments, charms, currency and as religious symbols. Fortune tellers still cast them to predict the future.

Today we hear of exhibitions which display artistically designed items made from a variety of shells. Cowries are extensively used in shell craft—shell jewellery, lamps, serving dishes, different types

of decorations, etc. The demand seems to be on the increase.

But, do we realise when we purchase such items that lives are at stake? Cowries inhabit rocky ground, particularly in and about coral reefs. Being nocturnal, they emerge at night in search of food — that is when they are gathered. Beautiful shells made ornamental for monetary gain... but Mother Nature has been exploited.



Shells and shell items on sale at Kanyakumari

FORM IV

Statement about ownership and other particulars about the newspaper entitled COMPASSIONATE FRIEND as required to be published in the first issue every year after the last day of February.

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4 Prince of Wales' Drive, Wanowrie, Poona 411 040.

Dated 31st. March 1987

I, Diana Ratnagar, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

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Sd./- Diana Ratnagar
Signature of Publisher

Man has always been attracted towards that which is rare and not easily available. And very often innocent animals have had to bear the brunt of this fascination. One such helpless victim of man's greed is the snow leopard.

Snow Leopards lead a solitary life at an altitude of 3000 metres where temperatures drop to far below zero degrees. At present, there are estimated to be not more than 5000 snow leopards in existence and even these are being threatened by fur hunters. The snow leopard's beautiful fur, a natural protection against severe cold climatic conditions is unfortunately in great demand. Though they have been sold in China for ages, snow leopard skins have recently gained popularity with European tourists visiting Nepal, Pakistan, Bhutan and India. Adults, as well as cubs are trapped and killed for their skins. To make one fur coat four to five leopard pelts are required. What a ghastly status symbol!

The capture and killing of these gorgeous creatures would have continued unabated had it not been for the tireless efforts, in the form of campaigns, carried out by the International Union for Conservation of Nature & Natural Resources (IUCN) against the hunting and sale of wild furs. The IUCN-SSC cat specialist group has also taken up investigations into the conservation status of the snow leopard.

Various methods have been undertaken in order to protect and preserve the snow leopard. In Ladakh, the Land of Buddhists, the snow leopard is one of the animals responsible for the increased tourist interest. Universal efforts are now required in order to protect the animal from becoming extinct.

A firm in New Delhi had its licence to trade in wild life withdrawn and was made to pay a fine of Rs.10,000/- after it was found in possession of a snow leopard skin coat. Government Wildlife Officials were sent to seize the garment. In the scuffle that followed, the coat disappear-

To each his own

— Pinky & Flora



ed and it was some time before the officials were able to re-locate it. The garment was made from the skins of two adult snow leopards.

In Australia, the Customs Service confiscated from Fletcher Jones and Staff Pty. Ltd., a department store in Victoria, some woven fabric which contained one percent snow leopard hair. This fabric had been woven by Taylor & Lodge of U.K. and was advertised as "a unique combination of Summer Kid Mohair, Lamb's Super 100's, Cashmere and Snow Leopard". Under pressure from the public, Fletcher Jones withdrew the fabric from sale. Taylor & Lodge have stated that in future they will not be involved in the use of snow leopard hair.

It has been suggested that captive breeding of snow leopards be undertaken as a step against their extinction. But isn't captive breeding a form of slave trade where innocent victims are subjected to caged abuse? Besides, once they increase sufficiently in number, the animals will be skinned for their furs in their first winter, the prime of their lives Is this fair play?

The simplest solution for saving the snow leopard is to let the animal wear its own fabulous coat, i.e. to each his own!


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"Harvest" Victims

In 1975, the Government of India initiated a Crocodile Breeding and Management Project as a conservation measure. The project operated until 1982 on advice from a UN-FAO Chief Technical Adviser with finance from U.N.D.P. Thirty-four crocodile rehabilitation centres were established throughout the country in Andaman Nicobar, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal. The project involved collecting eggs from the wild, incubating them and rearing the hatchlings up to a size at which they could be released.

Twelve years ago, **Beauty Without Cruelty**, expressed its deep concern about the ultimate fate the crocodiles would face after they had increased sufficiently in number. Such schemes which started out as "conservation measures" could very easily turn around to be potential sources of commercial exploitation.

Beauty Without Cruelty's fears seem to have now materialised. The Tamil Nadu



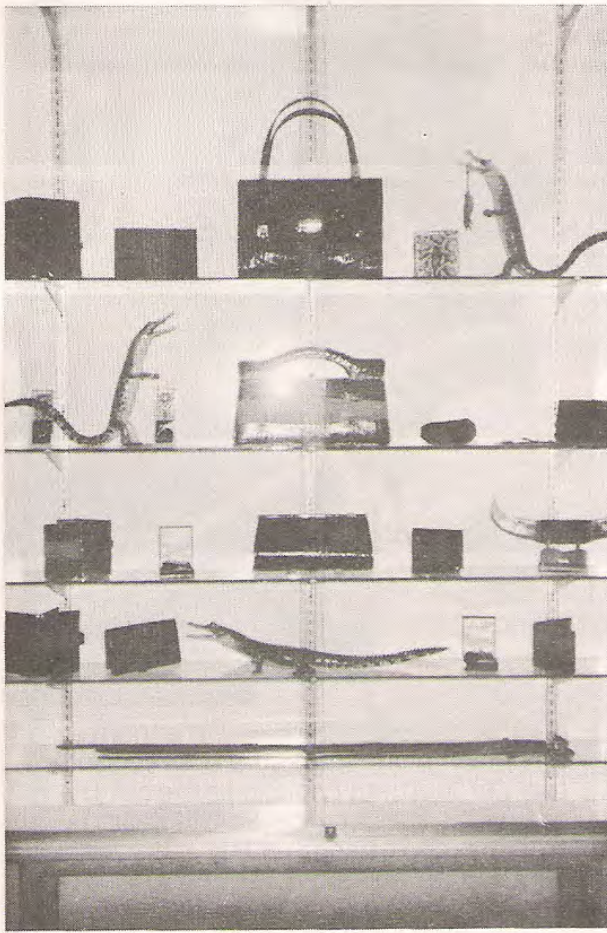
Forest Department has requested permission from the Centre to "harvest" the crocodiles which have increased to 1200 in number at Hogenakkal, Sathanur and Metur Dam thanks to the successfully planned and executed conservation and breeding programme. In addition, the Amaravathi Crocodile Farm of the State has started a pilot project to assess the feasibility of rearing crocodiles with the view of producing skins for sale by 1990.

There was a time, not very long ago, when "harvest" meant only to gather returns in the form of grain, vegetables and fruit. Similarly, "cultivate" meant to grow plants.

Today, animals are "cultivated" (specially bred) to be "harvested" (exploited and slaughtered) for commercial gain. The crocodiles of India seem to be next in line.

The original idea was to breed the crocodiles in captivity and once they had grown to be one metre in length, they were to be released into the Cauvery river. But, this was never done due to a so-called apprehension that they would reduce the fish population and be a threat to humans. These points should have been seriously considered before the captive breeding project started.

Crocodiles may not be lovable creatures, nevertheless, it is no excuse to convert their skins into items such as ladies shoes



and handbags, wallets, belts, watch straps and many other fashionable vanity items. It took very long for India to ban this trade and luckily now we do not find such goods for sale.

Are we so selfish that we only care for and protect wild life which is close to extinction ("protected" under law) but when these very same species increase in number, we think there is absolutely nothing wrong in killing them for monetary benefits? Our ruthlessness and greed has already upset the ecological balance of nature. And now, we are striving hard to set it right.

At such a critical time, if permission is granted by the Ministry of Environment & Forests, they will be undoing their own work for not only will the crocodiles of Tamil Nadu be "harvested" but very soon Indian traders will have created a big enough consumer demand for crocodile skin items. Thousands of crocodiles will continue to be bred and confined under grossly unnatural and overcrowded conditions, only to be mercilessly killed. Moreover, it is very likely that the majority of the skins which will reach the markets will have originated from the crocodiles poached in areas where they are still "protected".

Never to forget

Theresa Griffiths

An experience I had when visiting a Crocodile Farm when I was last in what is now Zimbabwe, illustrated the fact that fish not only have feelings but can also take action to demonstrate their state.

There was a large enclosure for breeding fish with a sluice at one side some yards long. When the gate was opened, a quantity of fish would wash down to a canal below where crocodiles congregated to devour them!

To my amazement the fish so washed down leapt up and out of the current to-

wards the now closed gate and this, time and time again, (like salmon?) but unfortunately with the added force of the water, it became too much for them and their escape alas completely cut off.

Held in a momentary trance, I suddenly felt sick in my stomach and turning I walked away — never to forget.

Courtesy: THE ARK

Think it over....

Sympathy for the lower animals is one of the noblest virtues with which man is endowed.

— Charles Robert Darwin

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Donkeys in the News

Derek Beaman

I have always loved donkeys. As G.K. Chesterton wrote of one:-

"When fishes flew and forests walked
And figs grew upon thorn,
Some moment when the moon was blood
Then surely I was born;

With monstrous head and sickening cry
And ears like errant wings
The devil's walking parody
On all four-footed things."

They have the mark of a cross on their backs, which Christian legend says appeared there after Jesus sat on a donkey for his entry into Jerusalem a few days before his arrest and death on the cross.

How amazing, then, to hear on the B.B.C. World Service recently of an annual fiesta in Spain, a Christian country, where a donkey is crushed to death for fun by the men of a certain village! Apparently an elderly donkey is bought each year at the pre-Lent carnival time and dragged through the streets with the fattest man in the village on his back. When his legs buckle beneath him, others leap on. Finally the gentle, patient creature dies under a tonne of pounding "humanity", who add to his suffering by stabbing him with butchers' knives. The longer the animal lives, the greater the regard and esteem the villagers have for him — like a brave bull in the bull-ring lasting out against the picadors and matadors with their cruel weapons, another so-called "sport" of the Spanish.

This year word of this cruel custom reached Britain, arousing a public outcry and signature-campaign. As a result a brave woman flew out to the village near Madrid to try and save the poor, wretched donkey, known as Blackie. Supported by a vast wave of British disgust, she faced the hostile villagers who, to the delight of all animal lovers, finally agreed to sell the donkey (at a vastly-inflated price



paid by a newspaper), and the donkey was flown from Spain to a donkey sanctuary in Southern England to live out the rest of his life in peace. So this year the story has had a happy ending — Blackie, a gentle, hard working beast of burden, representing Beauty, can now live without Cruelty. But what will happen in future years?

A much more civilized custom takes place annually nearer home, not far from Ahmedabad. According to the Indian Express, 'during a fair, which attracts hundreds of people every year, donkeys are bathed, then painted and fussed over with multi-coloured laces tied round their necks. (To my way of thinking, paint and coloured laces add nothing to the donkeys' beauty — but that's beside the point!)

The donkey owners go there to be blessed by Siddeshwar (Lord Shankar) at the confluence of seven rivers. The fair is attended mainly by those to whom a donkey is their life-line: they use it to eke out a living by hauling sand, bricks, or other building material. A large open ground is converted into a huge donkey-mart, and it is not uncommon to see a herd of donkeys led into the holy waters after

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the deals are through.'

Another tribute to the donkey that I have seen in the newspapers recently comes from Italy: 'Councillors in the tiny Sicilian community of Antillo near Messina have decided to erect a monument in their village to the humble donkey.

'They said the move was "an act of moral compensation" for the long-suffering beast in a technological society that had almost forgotten the donkey's sterling load-carrying abilities.'

"The tattered outlaw of the earth,
Of ancient crooked will;
Starve, scourge, deride me: I am dumb,
I keep my secret still."

says Chesterton's donkey. We know that the donkeys near Ahmedabad have their day, but it does not take much imagination to realise that, like Chesterton's donkey, the daily life, both of them and of those near Messina is very hard. How much happier is Blackie now escaped from the barbarous death planned for him, as he relaxes in his sanctuary!

Champion Desert Runner

Vinod Tiwari

If the camel is the ship of the desert, the wild ass is the desert's champion runner. Even a jeep at fifty kilometres an hour will take a long time to beat a wild ass running full pelt on the soft desert sand.

Primarily a denizen of the desert, the Asiatic Wild Ass inhabits the sandy areas of Baluchistan and the Little Rann of Kachchh in Gujarat. Most of their number is concentrated in the Little Rann of Kachchh. The Tibetan Wild Ass is regarded by some as a distinct species while others consider it to be a race of the Asiatic Wild Ass.

The wild ass is also known by the name 'ghorkar'. It belongs to the same group of animals as the horse. These have only one enlarged toe-hoof, on their legs. This hoof, a semi-circular firm bit of bone, two to three centimetres long at the end of each foot, is an adaptation for speed.

Difficult to Domesticate

Efforts at domesticating the wild ass have so far ended in failure, probably because the animal is so accustomed to range free in the limitless open spaces of the deserts that confinement is difficult for it to get used to. Perhaps also because it is specialised to subsist on the sparse, thorny desert vegetation and cannot survive on the fodder that can be made available to it under domestication. What-

ever may be the reason, the wild ass shuns human company and keeps itself as far away from settlements as possible.

The wild ass is usually a light brown or ashy grey in colour. The chest is white or yellow brown. There is a dark brown band running from the base of its neck to the root of its tail. The tail is not very long and is tipped with a tuft of brown hair. A full grown wild ass may stand 120 cm high and weigh some 300 kg.

At home in the desert

The wild ass usually lives in small herds. Each may contain 20 to 30 animals. The desert vegetation on which it subsists also provides some amount of its water requirement. In the drier parts of the year when the main food plants perish, the wild ass moves over to greener areas.

It spends most of its time moving about the expansive desert terrain. The scorching rays of the desert sun and the burning sand seem to have no effect on it.

The breeding season is between August and October with a gestation period of eleven months. Three months after birth the little foal is strong enough to run with the herd and face the rigours of desert life. In six months it can rival any of its elders in speed.

In spite of the unapproachable terrain and its natural shyness, the wild ass is one of the most endangered animals of the world. Its number in the Little Rann of Kachchh is a mere thousand. It is in grave danger of becoming extinct.

Compassion for all Life

Amrita Shodhan

Found in every prosperous village and town throughout Gujarat and in some parts of Rajasthan the panjrapol is a unique institution which demonstrates the community's concern for all living beings. **Panjrapol** literally means a residential lane (pol) of cages (Panjra) where animals are kept. The panjrapol houses, feeds and cares for old and sick domestic animals.

"On a typical day ... (there were) 265 cows and bulls, 130 buffaloes, five blind cattle, 895 goats, 20 horses, seven cats, two monkeys, 274, fowl, 290 ducks, 2000 pigeons, 50 parrots, 25 sparrows, five kites, 33 miscellaneous birds and an uncountable number of insects in a special room", says a late nineteenth century British account describing the animals in a panjrapol. All these animals would have died without the special care, medical attention and food given in the panjrapol.

Though panjrapols chiefly look after cattle, other animals such as horses, camels, sheep and goats also find refuge here. These animals can be left in the care of the panjrapol by any one free of charge. Donations by individuals and institutions take care of the recurring expenditure. Panjrapols thus provide an opportunity for the community to show its gratitude to animals that have contributed to its wealth.

Another related institution found in every little village and all the large cities or towns is the **Parabadi** — a built up space where birds can feed undisturbed by humans. This is usually situated in the village square where people gather or at one end of the village which once again is a meeting place for the villagers. People come here to feed the birds and provide water for them. Clearly this is recognition of the importance of birds to the whole living world. What is significant is that this awareness is not articulated by the society.

The older generation recalls that during the fifties and sixties, in Ahmedabad, Patna, Bombay and other towns and cities, there was an institution called the **Jivatkhana** or **kidiyara**. This institution, set up either by the local panjrapol or independently by the Jain community looked after insects and small animals. Anyone could take an injured bird or animal to the jivatkhana. There the animal would be kept in a small cage and treated till it recovered and could be released. Besides such small animals, the jivatkhana also looked after pests and insects. People relate stories of how on hot afternoons a man would come round with a pot on his head shouting "kidiyara jivatkhana". Women would come out with small vatis or boxes in which they would have collected lice, weevils or any such small household pests. These would be deposited in his earthen pot and he would return to the Kidiyara where all the insects would be separated and kept in separate boxes and fed with grains till they died.

How It began

When and how these institutions began is not certain. Early references to the panjrapols are found in eighteenth and nineteenth century records.

The late Pandit Sukhalaji, a noted Jain scholar, felt that the institution perhaps began in the times of Kumarpal in the middle of the twelfth century. He is associated with a period of great prosperity of Gujarat when the kingdom covered vast regions to the south and east. Though he is known to have followed his family's Shaiva tradition, the noted Jain scholar perhaps under the guidance of the Acharya Hemchandrasuri and Jain Minister Uday, persuaded the Jains to start such institutions. He also banned the killing of animals in his kingdom on particular days.

Gujarat's history is full of examples of kings supporting panjrapols through land and tax grants and therefore Sukhalaji's suggestion doesn't sound far fetched.

For example, in 1850 the Bhavnagar king gave the Chhapariyali village and its revenue as grant to the panjrapol.

Panjrapols could also have begun as a result of spontaneous popular initiative. The Vaishnav panjrapol at Manek Chowk which began in Ahmedabad somewhere around 1800 is one such institution. This was established with contributions from a Vaishnav trader who was the leader of the seven Mahajans of Ahmedabad. His position and status must have recommended that he establish a panjrapol.

The other Jain panjrapol in the city, called the Ahmedabad panjrapol collected funds by a levy paid voluntarily by merchants of all the communities in the city — the Jains, the Vaishnavs, the Parsis etc. but was collected by the Jain Sangh. There are some interesting references to this levy. It is said that if the Jains criticised some important Vaishnav festival and its practice, the Vaishnavs would stop paying levy. The fact that the levy was paid voluntarily is amply proved by the fact that when the British took control of Ahmedabad, the Jains petitioned that the British regularise it, but the British collector decided that it would be safer to follow the practice of the earlier rulers and leave it as a voluntary payment.

The motivation

Obviously in that period the ideology or the ideas which supported such institutions were powerful and strong enough to sway governments and merchants towards showing concern for animals. This was the ideology of *Jivdaya* — compassion for all life. According to this belief, all objects have life. All life is important and should be respected. It should not be taken in vain. According to Jain belief, if we do not care for living things, our life system would be destroyed and all that is good and pure in human beings and in the world would be lost.

A parallel though differently phrased doctrine is that of all environmentalists. Even they believe that all beings together

maintain the earth in an equilibrium. Thus if humans destroy other life forms, they will upset the equilibrium and lead to their own destruction.

Thus the killing of one species endangers the existence of another — and hence practices which disregard this equilibrium or continue in violent killings will eventually lead to the destruction of all good things as we know them — the earth will become barren and human life would be imperilled.

How similar are these two theses! The first was preached by the Jains and especially propounded to the world at large 2500 years ago by Mahavir. It became the first principle of Jain practice. It was followed and practised by his followers. Many stories, legends and myths have arisen regarding this practice. All serve to indicate to the believers the extent to which, life is and should be respected. An unusual example is the story of the man who slept on a bed full of bed bugs for a few hours every day to feed the bugs. When he realised he was dying he left money in his will to hire someone to lie on the bed for a couple of hours a day so that his dependents would not suffer after his death.

While such extreme cases are few, they serve as examples to inspire ordinary people to do what they can for the cause of protecting life. Thus was preserved the tradition of reverence for life in Jain homes and in the Jain tradition. Often these were picked up by neighbours and the values spread in society.

It was after modernisation and the impact of colonialism that we began to ignore our traditions and adopted practices which ridiculed such concepts. With no support forthcoming for the *kidiyaras/-jivatkhanas*, they have died out.

Before we lose all our environmentally relevant practices, let us look to our tradition and revive some of them and establish new practices which will ensure that human beings behave in a manner that is environmentally sound. For this we need to build our own code and legends to promote environmental awareness and conservation. (CEE-NFS)

Help! — I would like to be a vegetarian

For quite some time now I have been feeling I will some day become a vegetarian. And, slowly but surely all the arguments have been faced and several have been successfully silenced.

Mentally, I see the need to stop stuffing myself with the 'carcasses' of animals I love when they are alive.

Emotionally I know that caring truly means being so at-one with what you love that you could not possibly sustain yourself at its expense, even if it meant your 'death'.

Physically even, my body often protests at the unacceptable diet I indulge in, by literally vomiting out what it is expected to digest.

Two things remain irrefutable so far: The apparent lassitude which takes over in an individual who is normally bursting with energy whenever any 'vegetarianism' is encouraged for protracted periods.

The other is the undeniable appetite for non-vegetarian food which, if anything, is on the increase as all the other factors seem to be closing in to clinch the arguments towards being a vegetarian.

One hears of 'bodily' appetites, but can you really call them that when even the physical activity of digestion is rejecting and revolting against the values known as health-giving non-vegetarian foods?

What then is 'appetite'? What is this satisfaction one finds in the consumption of food which tastes like nothing a vegetarian will ever appreciate? It is undoubtedly only for the few seconds/minutes that it is in the mouth, supported also by the strength and vitality it is reputed to maintain.

The proof of several others being as vitally energetic as yourself, who have never touched any food that is not vegetarian will not hold any interest for the one who is apparently affected by a vegetarian diet, resulting in a depletion of his/her dynamic initiative in life's fields of activity.

I don't want homilies on how good it will be for my soul should I succeed in disciplining my appetite and gradually training the body to be as active on a vegetarian diet as it at present is on a non-vegetarian one. Nor would I like to be shown the values of vegetarianism as a way of life — of that I am already convinced to the extent of happily eating and enjoying vegetarian meals in homes which serve nothing else.

Is there another type of rational approach which will so obliterate the 'appetite' that the desire will not be manifest? If so — please let me have your ideas on the subject. I can only do whatever I do wholeheartedly — so help me to become a whole-hearted vegetarian!!
K. E. B.

Editorial Note

Readers are invited to air their views in reply to K.E.B.'s appeal for help. The next issue of "Compassionate Friend" will carry letters on the subject.

Your Recipe

Readers are invited to send us the recipe of their favourite vegetarian dish.

Address to:

Beauty Without Cruelty

Post Box 1518, Poona 411 040.

Vegetarian recipes from our readers

Rosgolla

— Padma Chugani

Ingredients

1 litre milk
1 level teaspoon maida
¼ teaspoon rava (sooji)
6 cups water (standard size)
1½ cups sugar
½ tsp. citric acid.
Rose water for the Syrup
Ilaichi powder for flavouring paneer

Method

Boil the milk and when cool, keep in the fridge overnight. Next day remove the cream.

Bring the milk to boil once again and while stirring continuously, add ½ cup of water mixed with ½ teaspoon of citric acid. Stir gently till the milk curdles. Leave this curdled milk to cool overnight.

Next morning, strain the curdled milk through a muslin cloth loosely tied and allow the mixture to drain for about 15 to 20 minutes. The paneer is now ready for use.

Knead the paneer, maida and rava together thoroughly to form a smooth paste. Flavour with Ilaichi powder. Divide into approximately 16 portions and form into balls.

In a small round vessel (the vessel should be small for when the balls increase in size during cooking they will be packed closely and will maintain their round shape) dissolve 1½ cups of sugar in 6 cups of water over a medium flame. When the syrup starts to boil, add the balls and cook for 5 minutes with the vessel uncovered. Cover the vessel partially and continue boiling gently for the next ten minutes while adding a little water every minute or so to keep the syrup from thickening. Remove the lid and let the rosogollas boil for another 10 minutes. Remove from the fire and allow to cool. Add rose water.

Puffed Powah Chiwda

— Gunial V. Mehta

While buying, ask for "mola mamra" (Un-salted puffed rice — It is different from ordinary "momra", "powah" or "dhani". Though called "mola mamra", it is more like puffed "powah", hence it is called Puffed Powah Chiwda.)

Ingredients

½ kg. "mola mamra"
1 cup ghee
100 grms. peanuts
100 grms. dry grated cocoanut
150 grms. split cashew nuts
150 grms. shelled & halved roasted grams ("dalai")
1 level tsp. tumeric powder
1½ tsp. salt (or to taste)
1½ tsp. chilli powder (or to taste)
40-50 curry leaves
4-5 chopped green chillies

Method

Sieve and clean "mola mamra".

Dry in sun.

Roast it over low flame and sieve again so that the sand particles are removed.

Roast peanuts over flame, remove the skin and split.

Roast grated cocoanut over low flame till light brown in colour.

In a big vessel take little ghee, heat it and fry cashew nuts and peanuts seperately till pink in colour. Remove from ghee and keep aside in another vessel.

In the same ghee fry the curry leaves and keep aside with cashew nuts.

In the same ghee fry chopped green chillies and keep aside with cashew nuts etc. Heat remaining ghee in same vessel, and mix turmeric powder, "mola mamra" and halved gram. Roast over low flame.

After removing from fire add salt, chilli powder and all other roasted ingredients and mix well.

This Chiwda tastes better when fresh. If stored well in an air-tight container, it will remain fresh for long.

In Solidarity with Animals

Janita H.C. Grady

Most of you are vegetarians and it is my cherished hope that in time ALL readers will eliminate animal flesh from their diet. We all want to see pain and suffering reduced in farm animals. Did you know that every one per cent reduction in their birth-to-death agony will accomplish more than all other animal protection campaigns put together?

WHY? More than 4,000,000,000 (yes, that's four BILLION!) factory farmed animals are murdered each year after a life of incredible suffering. Ninety-five per cent of all the animals we SAY we care about are inhumanely raised and inhumanely slaughtered. The other five per cent are the dogs, cats, etc., etc. on which we spend most of our time.

have rights, then consider this:

The chickens purchased from a supermarket are 'factory-farmed-battery raised birds.' They are in total confinement for their entire lives, so overcrowded they can never stretch their wings, never scratch the earth, never feel the sunlight. This living death is so horrible that they are debeaked lest they commit suicide or cannibalize each other. The end of their pitiful lives is what you see cut up in parts and neatly packaged in the supermarket. Consider the confinement of farrowing sows who for weeks on end cannot walk or turn around, forced to be living breeding-machines, surrounded by iron on every side. (This is the pork you buy in the supermarket all done up in plastic). They



Do you remember that scientists have evaluated the intelligence of a pig and found it to be higher than most dogs and horses? Why would anyone eat a pig and pet and pamper a dog? They both have the same capacity to feel fear, pain, contentment and affection. Ask the person who has had both pigs and dogs as pets. How could anyone EAT one and embrace the other? This is such hypocrisy!

Although I consider the killing of any animal morally wrong, the principle is more than that. It is a deprivation of rights. I don't think any person is so primitive that they do not believe that animals have rights — If you DO believe animals

were once thinking, feeling creatures just as you and I, tortured by thinking, feeling creatures just as you and I — except that a pig, in all its intelligence would never consider torturing a human. THAT would be beyond their capacity. Only man of all the animals is SADISTIC! Cattle raised for food endure even more harrowing cruelty.

To quote the prime question put forth by Henry Spira (and others) may force the public to consider, "WHICH ANIMAL DO YOU PET AND WHICH ANIMAL DO YOU EAT? AND WHY?"

Your only reward is knowing you have put a drop of healing water in the ocean of animal suffering, have put a bandaid on Mother Earth, or enlightened one other person to the pitiless exploitation of animals and raised the consciousness of another.

Courtesy: TAP Int.

COMPASSIONATE FRIEND

From Beauty Without Cruelty, Printed in India, April - June 1987

FASHION TO DIE FOR

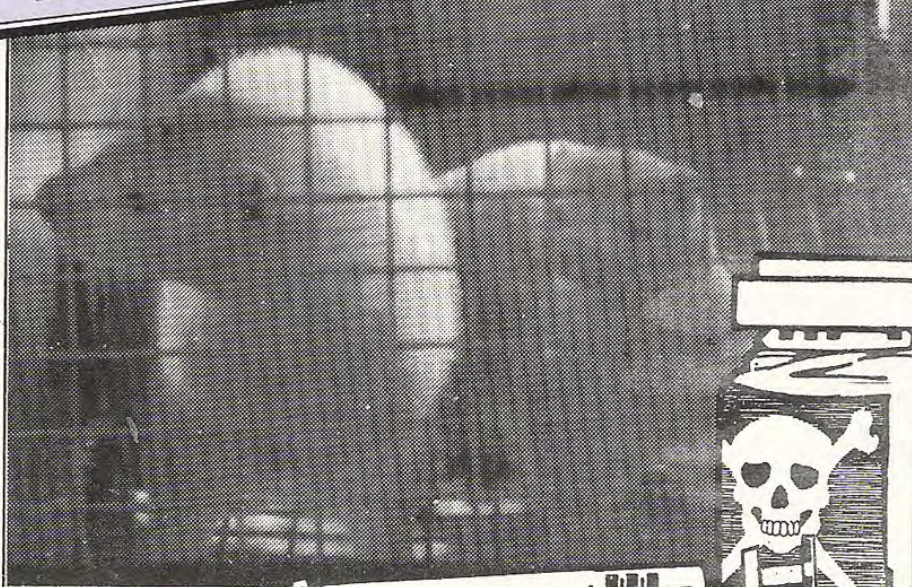


Photo by Anti-Bond Comité

HELP STOP THE UNNECESSARY AND AGONIZING SLAUGHTER OF MILLIONS OF WILD ANIMALS FOR VANITY AND ADORNMENT. DON'T BUY FUR.

Farmed furbearers, including mink, fox and chinchilla, suffer extreme deprivation, kept for life, usually in very small, barren cages. Self mutilation, stereotypic behavior and the many diseases described in fur farm publications occur. Naturally active mammals probably can never have the biological abilities to attain well being in fur farm cages. They are killed as cheaply as possible. Methods include

home made electrocution, painful gassing, decompression, or cheap injection by unskilled employees. The fur market is highly competitive. Expensive and humane euthanasia is not a priority. Millions of enlightened people now regard all furs—trapped *and* farmed—as insensitive and dated.

Are you really that cold?

Beauty Without Cruelty

India Branch : 4 Prince of Wales' Drive, Wanowrie, Pooa 411 040.
Please help us place this ad elsewhere and send for our list of cruelty-free cosmetics.

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