



# Canned Hunts

## Spreading Like a Disease

Canned hunting is the killing of an animal in an enclosure to obtain a trophy. The animals are sometimes tame exotic mammals; some, in fact, may have been hand-raised by the canned hunting operation or a breeder. These animals do not run from humans. Many groups that support hunting scorn canned hunting for its unsportsmanlike practice, because patrons are often guaranteed a kill.

From Maine to Arkansas, canned hunting operations are sprouting up all over. The Humane Society of the United States estimates that there are more than 1,000 canned hunt operations in at least 28 states. They are most common in Texas, but they are found throughout the continental United States and Hawaii. Safari Club International has done its part to promote canned hunting by creating a hunting achievement award, the "Introduced Trophy Game Animals of North America," which may support the operation of canned hunts.





## Big Business

The sale of exotic mammals to canned hunts is big business for private breeders, animal dealers, and disreputable game parks and zoos. The overbreeding of captive exotic animals exacerbates the problem. Indiscriminate breeding produces surplus animals, which are then sold, traded, or otherwise disposed of to exhibitors, circuses, animal dealers, game ranches, or individuals. Hunt operators purchase animals directly from such sources, or at auctions.

## The Victims

Clients pay large sums of money to participate in canned hunts, which take place in confined areas from which animals cannot escape. The victims may be exotic (non-indigenous); or native animals, including several varieties of goats and sheep; numerous species of Asian and African antelope; deer, cattle, swine, and zebra.

## Tame Targets

The killing of a confined or restrained wild animal is slaughter for the sake of amusement. Unlike situations in which animals can use their natural and instinctual abilities to escape predation, a canned hunt affords animals no such opportunity. In fact, animals may be hand-reared, fed at regular times, and moved regularly among a system of corrals and paddocks. These practices lessen the natural fear and flight response elicited by human beings, and ensure the hunters an easy target. Animals may be set up for a kill as they gather at a regular feeding area or as they move toward a familiar vehicle or person. Once a pattern is established, even the most wary antelope can be manipulated effectively, guaranteeing a kill.





## Legislation

Most states **allow** canned hunting of native and exotic mammals. At this time, no federal law governs canned hunting. The Animal Welfare Act does not regulate game preserves, hunting preserves, or canned hunts. Although the Endangered Species Act protects species of animals listed as endangered or threatened, it does not prohibit private ownership of endangered animals and may even allow the hunting of captive-bred, endangered exotics.



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