



# Pseudo-Sanctuaries

There are many places that call themselves sanctuaries – but not all of them are legitimate. The Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) defines a sanctuary as a facility that rescues and provides shelter and care for animals who have been abused, injured, abandoned, or are otherwise in need. There can be no commercial trade, no invasive or intrusive research, no unescorted public visitation, or contact in wild animal sanctuaries, and no removal of wild animals for exhibition, education, or research. In a best case scenario, wild animals brought to sanctuaries can one day be returned to their natural environment — the wild — to live out their lives in peace. But in reality, few of the animals that reach sanctuaries can ever be released.

Those who operate true sanctuaries understand that all lives have value and each of us has the obligation: “to attempt to right the wrongs that some humans have done to animals.” Unfortunately, “pseudo-sanctuaries,” as we shall call these others, believe otherwise. Instead, by exhibiting, breeding, selling, and mistreating the animals under their care, these operators exacerbate the already horrific plague of animal abuse in this country and around the world.





# Sanctuaries Operate by Certain Essential Guidelines:

- **The animals are not allowed to breed.** Life in a sanctuary is far better than what the animals had before they arrived there, but no animal should be deliberately brought into the world (this practice is known as captive breeding) to live in other than natural conditions. That would be a disservice to them and would undercut the message of respect for the value of all life that we wish to promote. (Exceptions may be made when an animal's species is on the verge of extinction and a scientifically-based breeding and reintroduction plan is in place.)
- **Use of the animals in commercial activities is prohibited.** Animals will not be bought (except in extraordinary circumstances), sold, traded, or hired out for entertainment or other such purposes not consistent with their natural ways. Body parts are not sold. **Public access to the animals is restricted and only occurs under conditions of non-intrusiveness and respect for their privacy.**



# Sanctuaries Operate by Certain Essential Guidelines:

- **Sanctuaries accept lifetime responsibility for their resident animals.** This may include rehabilitation and release in an appropriate habitat or transfer to another legitimate sanctuary that is better suited to their needs. Wild animals may not be adopted, but companion animals and animals who are typically farmed may be if standards of care are high and prohibitions on breeding and commercial activity are complied with.
- **Responsible sanctuaries recognize that the welfare of animals is always primary and that respectful collaboration with others on behalf of that welfare is obligatory.** This not only best serves the animals but further demonstrates the fundamental value of respect for all life that is at the foundation of sanctuary existence.
- **Member sanctuaries maintain all required licenses and permits in good standing as well as their federal 501(c)(3) not-for-profit status.**

