

Captivity isn't cute

Zoos in Australia and around the world are seen as *important and necessary institutions*, providing entertainment, education and conservation of threatened animals who are unable to live in the wild.

But how much of that is true?



Captivity isn't conservation

While zoos will often talk about the 'critical role' they play in the conservation of threatened and endangered species, the reality is most animals in zoos are not on the endangered species list. Those that are, will never be returned to their natural habitat and will spend their entire life in captivity.

Most zoos exist primarily for profit. In 2004, a former zoo director estimated that less than 3% of a zoo's budget goes towards conservation. More recently in 2019, Taronga Zoo told the Guardian that 11.5% of its budget was spent on conservation work, while Zoos SA spent just 6%.

National Geographic | Critics Question Zoos' Commitment to Conservation
The Guardian | From Cage to Conservation: The Reinvention of Australian zoos



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Stop supporting zoos



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Captivity isn't education

Animals do not belong in cages and seeing them this way offers little insight into their actual behaviour. Animals in zoos are forced to spend day after day in the same environment, often in isolation and surrounded by humans and unfamiliar animals.

Zoos will often offer 'experiences' such as koala cuddling or feeding opportunities, putting animals in close contact with the public. Despite this close contact being strongly discouraged by experts, many zoos offer the public the chance to directly interact with the animals.

*The Conversation | The Neural Cruelty of Captivity
World Animal Protection | Too Close for Comfort Report*

What you can do:

- Stop visiting and financially supporting Australian zoos.
- Support conservation charities that protect and rehabilitate wild animals in their natural habitats.
- Support genuine animal sanctuaries that rescue and rehabilitate animals.
- Learn and educate others about wild animals by visiting them in their natural environment, reading books and watching documentaries.
- Don't support places that offer 'animal experiences' such as koala cuddling, camel rides or wild animal feeding.
- Consider visiting zoo alternatives such as a 'hologram zoo', like the ones in Brisbane and Melbourne.

