



September 17, 2018

Global Wildlife Conservation
via social media and email

Dear Global Wildlife Conservation,

We write to you in response to your September 10th blog post "[Actress and Model Suki Waterhouse Gets Wild with GWC](#)" and associated social media postings.

Although you may not realize it, photos and videos like yours serve to condone primate exploitation in the pet trade. Encouraging contact between humans and exotic animals is harmful and dangerous to all involved. As experts in the field of primate care, we implore you to reconsider promoting such irresponsible treatment of animals.

The North American Primate Sanctuary Alliance (NAPSA) is a coalition of nine of the leading primate sanctuaries on the continent. In our sanctuaries, we care for over 730 primates, many of whom were formerly privately owned as pets or entertainers. Infant primates bred for private ownership or training as entertainers are removed from their mothers at a very early age – *years* before they would naturally separate. We see daily evidence of how this affects primates throughout their entire life, including social disorders, self-injurious behavior and depression.

NAPSA members are contacted constantly by people who – perhaps because they saw cute images in the media – purchased a baby primate and then lived to regret it. Sanctuaries are overwhelmed with requests to house “pet” primates, and so it is a mission of NAPSA that we reach out to organizations and celebrities who, often unknowingly, post images that send the wrong message about exotic animal welfare. When Paris Hilton was barraged with negative publicity after posing with an orangutan in 2016, she later [agreed](#) that the concerns were justified. I hope you may make a similar statement, or at the very least cancel your campaign or reshoot it with Ms. Waterhouse in a way that does not involve having animals in the studio and does not involve her posing with them.

Attached is NAPSA’s Position Statement on the use of primates in entertainment, which has helpful resources at the bottom that link media imagery to negative effects on exotic animal conservation. We would be happy to help you promote news that you have had a change of heart after receiving our message and others like them. We appreciate that you meant well, but want to ensure you are not accidentally doing more harm than good.

Sincerely,


Erika Fleury
Program Director

NAPSA is a fiscally sponsored project of Community Initiatives, an Oakland-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.
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Visit our website at www.PrimateSanctuaries.org



Advocacy Position Statement Performing Primates

The North American Primate Sanctuary Alliance (NAPSA) is opposed to the use of trained primates for entertainment. As experts in the field of primate care, we respectfully ask the public not to support public events featuring trained monkeys and apes.

While such performances may seem amusing on the surface, the primates used in these spectacles are poorly treated. Although the records of many animal rental operators are generally less than stellar, and training and housing conditions can be incredibly stressful (and often abusive), the simple fact that primates are forced to dress up and perform on cue in a terribly unnatural situation is reason enough to avoid such events.

The entire lifetime of a primate is negatively affected when they are exploited for entertainment. As infants, they are removed from their mothers at a very early age – years before they would naturally separate. They are trained using methods that intimidate and inhibit their innate behaviors. Even then, the intelligence and unpredictable nature of these wild animals means that they often can only be used for a short time as actors before they become too independent, unmanageable, and dangerous. Primates are then deemed useless to the entertainment industry, and sold into situations that range from uncomfortable to downright harmful. The lucky ones are able to spend the remaining years of their life in a primate sanctuary.

NAPSA is a coalition of nine of the leading primate sanctuaries on the continent. In our member sanctuaries, we care for over 730 primates, many of whom were formerly used in entertainment. We see how primates are forever damaged by the work forced upon them, and we look forward to the day when such archaic practices are no longer permitted.

For more information:

["The Use of Primate "Actors" in Feature Films 1990–2013," Brooke Catherine Aldrich](#)

["Apes in Media and Commercial Performances," Association of Zoos & Aquariums](#)

["Bengals Shocking Half-Time 'Cowboy Monkey' Has a Cruel History," The Dodo](#)

["Chimpanzees in Entertainment," ChimpCARE](#)

["Apes in Entertainment," Jane Goodall Institute Australia](#)

["Opposition to the Use of Nonhuman Primates in the Media," International Primatological Society](#)

["Atypical Experiences of Captive Chimpanzees \(Pan Troglodytes\) Are Associated with Higher Hair Cortisol Concentrations as Adults," S.L. Jacobson et al.](#)

["Impact of Visual Context on Public Perceptions of Non-Human Primate Performers," K. A. Leighty et al.](#)