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ANIMALS

1. **Alaska Zoo** – Baby It's Cold Outside. Maggie has been called “a fish out of water.” She is the only elephant in Alaska, living a cruel, solitary existence in an artificially lit, concrete cell at the Alaska Zoo. The long Alaska winters are particularly hard as Maggie is locked for months inside a small barn, and forced to stand on concrete in her own feces and urine. These same deadly conditions led to the foot infections that killed Maggie's former roommate, Annabelle. Construction of an elephant “treadmill,” built to deal with Maggie's captivity-induced obesity and joint problems (though she has yet to step foot on the contraption), may have captured cute headlines but won't improve her miserable quality of life.

2. **The National Zoo** – Loved to Death (Washington, D.C.). Five years ago the Zoo euthanized an elephant named Nancy due to severe foot problems. National Zoo now faces a similar situation with Toni, a 39-year-old Asian elephant who is so debilitated that she can barely stand due to advanced arthritis. The Zoo blames the skeletal elephant's terrible condition on an old leg injury and “picky eating,” but the truth is lack of exercise, confinement to a tiny lot and hours on end in a concrete-floored stall only exacerbated Toni's leg injury and left her with severe arthritis and no way to relieve the stress on her painful joints. She cannot even lie down as elephants naturally do for several hours each night. Brings the old adage to mind: If you love someone, set them free.

3. **Los Angeles Zoo** – Out of Sight, Out of Mind. While the Zoo faces funding struggles for a cost prohibitive and still inadequate new elephant exhibit, two elephants are being warehoused in a tiny “temporary” facility that is off limits to the public and that a city report deemed insufficient for long-term holding of elephants. Gita, a 47-year-old Asian elephant who has lived there since August 2003, has long suffered from arthritis and chronic foot infections that have now invaded bone in the toes of one foot, literally causing bone to rot away. Her terminal condition means she will not live long. Ruby is a 44-year-old African elephant. The Zoo prefers to focus on Asian elephants, so poor Ruby will likely be shipped, yet again, to another zoo. What is the point of keeping these two elephants? Maybe you can tell us.

4. **Philadelphia Zoo** – Turning a Blind Eye to Suffering. The Zoo's cramped, antiquated quarters set the scene for a dangerous altercation, leaving one elephant with a serious eye injury. The Philadelphia Zoo's captive herd of three African elephants and one Asian elephant share a quarter-acre yard and a dismal 1,800-square-foot barn – about the same amount of area as six parking spaces. Small enclosures in zoos often cause behavioral problems in elephants, including neurotic behaviors such as swaying and head bobbing and increased aggression toward other elephants and keepers. Philly's Depression-era exhibit is a relic of the past and no place for elephants.

5. **Rosamond Gifford Zoo** – Breaking Up Is Cruel To Do. The Zoo was hit with a \$10,000 fine in 2005 after the death of a 4-day old Asian elephant, with federal inspectors saying the Zoo improperly handled the calf. Now, the Zoo reportedly plans to transfer the dead calf's mother Targa, along with daughter Mali, to another zoo, separating them from another mother and daughter pair with whom they share an enclosure. Extensive scientific data shows the importance of social bonds between elephants, yet zoos routinely shuffle elephants between zoos with no regard for social and family ties. Sadly, the Zoo boasts another pregnant elephant. With its small space for elephants, who will be next to leave?

6. **Six Flags Marine World -Vallejo** – Miserable Life Under the Big Top (Calif.). Six Flags-Vallejo is all about entertainment and that includes elephant rides and an elephant show, where the animals are forced to perform circus-style tricks. Incredibly, the American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA) still permits the use of chains, bullhooks, electric prods and

other coercive means to train and control elephants, even though this results in pain, injury and increased aggression. In 2004 an elephant gored and critically injured a trainer at Vallejo. It should have come as no surprise since elephants never forget abuse...or their abusers.

7. Birmingham Zoo – One Is the Loneliest Number. Even though the American Zoo and Aquarium Association's (AZA) own regulations require a minimum herd size of three, Mona has been the only elephant living at the Birmingham Zoo since January 2005, when her companion of 48 years passed away. Female elephants are among the most social creatures in the animal kingdom, and elephants are known to grieve the loss of friends deeply. Yet, Mona, who neurotically circles her stall and suffers life-threatening foot problems, remains alone. Apparently, to Dr. Bill Foster, CEO of Birmingham Zoo and past AZA President, what are rules for if not breaking?

8. St. Louis Zoo – Ignoring the Elephant in the Room. St. Louis Zoo nervously watches Asian elephant Sri, whose calf died in her womb last November and remains there. This condition is likely related to lack of exercise and fitness due to small zoo enclosures. Two elephants at other zoos have died from extensive infection after carrying dead fetuses in utero. Yet zoos recklessly continue to breed elephants, even though breeding programs in zoos serve no conservation purpose because no elephant born at a zoo will ever be introduced to the wild. So why breed elephants? Simply because baby elephants increase zoo revenues.

9. El Paso Zoo – Too Generous. After El Paso underwent a media maelstrom in 2005 with the community calling for the elephants at the Zoo to be sent to a sanctuary and the enclosure shut down permanently, the city council promised to come up with a plan to greatly improve the Zoo's inadequate elephant exhibit. It's reported that the Zoo will add a "whopping" 5,000 square feet – less than one-eighth of an acre – bringing total space for Juno and Savannah to little more than an acre. Elephants in the wild easily walk tens of miles a day, which serves to maintain foot and joint health. If this is the best El Paso Zoo can do – or can afford – it should give up keeping elephants.

10. Woodland Park Zoo – Can't See The Forest for The Trees. Due to increased public scrutiny of the care of elephants in zoos, many zoos are scrambling to expand their elephant exhibits. Yet Seattle's Woodland Park Zoo has a master plan that calls for reducing the space for elephants – while the Zoo attempts to increase its elephant population through breeding. Experts and empirical evidence suggest that elephants in zoos face numerous foot and joint, reproductive and behavioral problems resulting in enormous costs and frequent interventions for veterinary treatment directly linked to a lack of space.

Dishonorable Mention:

Lincoln Park Zoo – The Leader of the Pack. Elephants are dying prematurely in zoos – at about half their natural lifespan of 65-70 years. But Lincoln Park Zoo set a new record for its care of elephants last year, and it's nothing to brag about. Its unprecedented three premature elephant deaths in six months put the Zoo on the hot seat. Fortunately Chicago has the opportunity for vindication by passing the Elephant Protection Ordinance in 2006 that would establish a minimum space requirement and ban the use of cruel and abusive implements on elephants.



IN DEFENSE OF ANIMALS

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