

# Training Animals for Hollywood:

## BEATINGS, FEAR, AND ISOLATION

### THE TRAINERS' DIRTY LITTLE SECRETS

Hollywood animal trainers who provide great apes for films, TV, and advertising harbor horrible secrets when it comes to animal care and treatment. Many have repeatedly failed to comply with minimal federal standards of animal care. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has cited great ape exhibitors for violations that include failing to provide veterinary care, failing to provide environmental enhancement to promote the psychological well-being of primates, filthy and unsanitary cages, unsafe handling, and failure to provide minimum space. Unfortunately, the USDA rarely pursues sanctions against even chronic violators of the Animal Welfare Act.

To make matters worse, no agency monitors the removal of baby chimpanzees and orangutans from their mothers or the inevitably cruel training sessions.

The following is but a tiny sample of the secrets that animal trainers don't want anyone to know about.

### HOLLYWOOD TRAINERS

- **GARY GERO'S BIRDS & ANIMALS UNLIMITED HAS RECEIVED FOUR OFFICIAL WARNINGS FROM THE USDA FOR CHRONIC VIOLATIONS.** Birds & Animals has also been cited for **failure to maintain animal enclosures to prevent injuries and escapes**, failure to provide environmental enhancement to promote the psychological well-being of primates, **failure to provide veterinary care to suffering animals**, **failure to clean filthy and foul-smelling cages**, failure to protect an orangutan from unauthorized

access, failure to provide minimum space, failure to provide adequate shelter from weather extremes, and failure to separate animals who were fighting.

A child actor filed a lawsuit against Birds & Animals for injuries sustained when he was bitten in the face by a chimpanzee.

- **A CHIMPANZEE FROM STEVE MARTIN'S WORKING WILDLIFE WAS FOUND DISCARDED** at the poorly run pseudo-sanctuary Amarillo Wildlife Refuge. He was being sustained on a diet of **dog food and rotten produce**. In order to get rid of another chimpanzee who was no longer profitable, **Martin ran a "free chimpanzee to a good home" advertisement in Animal Finders' Guide**, a publication in which exotic animal auctioneers, trophy-hunting facilities, breeders, dealers, and members of the public advertise animals for sale.

Martin has been cited by the USDA for failure to keep primate enclosures clean, failure to have an



environmental enhancement program for the primates, allowing water and debris to accumulate in a chimpanzee enclosure, **failure to provide proper diets to animals, failure to provide shelter from the elements, failure to provide drinking water,** and caging animals in dangerous conditions.

## **GREAT APE TRAINERS PRESSURED TO GET OUT OF THE BUSINESS**

- **IN 2005, BOB DUNN HAD HAD ENOUGH** and sent his 11 chimpanzees and six orangutans to a sanctuary. Prior to that, the **USDA had cited Bob Dunn's Animal Services for unsanitary conditions in a baby-chimpanzee enclosure,** allowing **standing water** and sand to remain in a baby-orangutan enclosure, failure to have a current program of veterinary care, and **failure to maintain proper records of animal disposals.**

PETA found Chubbs, a chimpanzee supplied by Bob Dunn's Animal Services for the remake of the movie **Planet of the Apes,** languishing in a **dark, barren concrete pit filled with garbage** in a roadside zoo in Texas.

- **IN DECEMBER 2006, SID YOST GAVE UP HIS THREE CHIMPANZEES** and agreed to stop owning or working with primates as part of a lawsuit filed by animal advocacy groups that accused Yost of violating the Endangered Species Act and the California anti-cruelty statute. **An investigator at Sid Yost's Amazing Animal Actors found systematic abuse that caused immeasurable pain and suffering to chimpanzees.** In October 2003, the Chimpanzee Collaboratory released a report detailing the findings of a 14-month undercover investigation conducted at Yost's facility. The investigator, primatologist Sarah Baeckler, revealed that chimpanzees were forced to live in tiny cages and that **young**

**animals were routinely punched, kicked, and beaten.**

Yost has been cited by the USDA for unsafe handling of chimpanzees, providing **inadequate space,** failure to have an adequate environmental enhancement plan, and **operating without a license.**