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Saving Animals: API's Reason for Being

**A Message from Michelle Thew,
Chief Executive Officer**

In my position as the head of API, I want to encourage an ongoing dialogue between the organization and you. That's because you — our readers, members, and supporters — create a powerful network of advocates all across the country. This *Bulletin* is designed to inform you about the latest actions API is taking on your behalf. I also hope it inspires you to take action and participate in this crucial fight to protect animals from cruelty and abuse. By making your voice heard, positive change *will* happen!

I encourage you to stay in touch with API. Let us know about local efforts to protect animals in your area. Copy us on correspondence you send to legislators, business leaders, and decision-makers, as well as any responses you receive.

An important principle of nature is symbiosis, in which two or more organisms depend upon and benefit from each other. I like to think of API's dialogue with you as a type of symbiosis, with each of us gaining understanding and strength from the other



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and using our power to protect the animals who so need us.

I welcome your comments, ideas, and stories. Contact me directly at 916-447-3085, mthew@api4animals.org, or write to me at API.

Cruel and Dangerous: Possessing Exotic "Pets"

Wild animals were never meant to be kept as "pets." Yet some people insist on possessing exotic animals, despite the inherent cruelty of this practice and the risks it poses to public health and safety.

In 2003, prairie dogs kept as pets were linked to an outbreak of monkeypox, a rare and sometimes fatal viral disease that can afflict humans. Prairie dogs who enter the pet trade are either taken directly from their native homes or are bred in captivity. In addition to threatening human health, keeping prairie dogs and other wild animals as companions leads to tremendous suffering for the animals themselves, who are denied the opportunity to carry out their most integral natural behaviors.

One of API's major campaigns is to end the private possession of wild animals. Recently, API helped pass an ordinance in Green Bay, WI that bans the keeping of exotic "pets" (including prairie dogs). API is also a member of the Prairie Dog Coalition, a collaborative group that facilitates the sharing of information and advocacy on behalf of prairie dogs. Through the Coalition, API recently signed on to a petition to get the Gunnison's prairie dog protected under the federal Endangered Species Act. And thanks to the efforts of both API and the Coalition, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and the Food and Drug Administration have placed an interim ban on the private possession of prairie dogs to curb the spread of disease. A final decision on whether to make this ban permanent is expected over the summer and, of course, we'll keep you posted on the outcome.

For More Information:

Visit the "Exotic 'Pet' Campaign" section of API's website www.api4animals.org/321.htm where you'll find fact sheets, action alerts, sample letters, laws, a database of reported

incidents, and position papers related to the private possession of wild animals.

API Leads the Way to Cruelty-Free Cosmetics

There's nothing pretty about inflicting cruelty upon animals, especially in the name of beauty. Every year, the testing of cosmetics and other personal care and household products brings intense pain, suffering, and death to millions of animals around the world.

By assuming the position of chair of the Coalition for Consumer Information on Cosmetics (CCIC), API is taking a leading role in the fight against animal testing in the U.S. The CCIC is a coalition of eight animal protection groups that promotes a meaningful, reliable, anti-animal testing standard and logo for cosmetics, personal care, and household products. API will work tirelessly until the testing of cosmetics on animals is consigned to the history books.

Before the CCIC was established in 1996, there was no single, reliable standard or certification that designated products as cruelty-free. That situation changed with the advent of the Corporate Standard of Compassion and the "Leaping Bunny" logo. Now, when a company signs the Standard, it means that both it and its suppliers have agreed not to test on animals during any stage of product development. Every company that signs the Standard and uses the Leaping Bunny logo is subject to an independent audit of its ban on animal testing.

What You Can Do:

- Support companies such as The Body Shop, Tom's of Maine, and Kiss My Face. They, along with many others, have signed the Corporate Standard of Compassion, which certifies that their products are 100 percent free of new animal testing.
- Look for the Leaping Bunny logo when shopping for cosmetics, personal care, or household products.
- Patronize companies listed in CCIC's Shopping Guide.
- If a company you like is not in the CCIC Shopping Guide, email or write it, letting it know you want to see the Leaping Bunny logo on its products.
- Encourage local stores to display cruelty-free items

prominently.

For More Information:

- www.leapingbunny.org
- info@leapingbunny.org
- 888-546-CCIC

Buy the Bunny!

Want to save animals every time you shop? The CCIC makes it easy — just look for the Leaping Bunny logo on cosmetics, personal care, and household products. When you "buy the bunny," you can be assured that you are buying a product completely free from any new animal testing.



Beware of impostors, though. In response to consumer demands for cruelty-free products, some companies have designed their own "bunny" labels, which abide by unverifiable definitions and standards.

CCIC's Shopping Guide lists more than 100 makers of products not tested on animals, including 20 who have signed the Corporate Standard of Compassion and have licensed the Leaping Bunny logo. Get your copy of the guide online at www.leapingbunny.org/shopping_guide.htm, by calling 888-546-CCIC; or by sending an email to info@leapingbunny.org. Open your wallet ... and your heart.

Will Hypocrisy Kill Cormorants in Canada?

Recently, the Canadian government adopted a "separate but definitely not equal" approach to wildlife protection, deeming some animal species worthy of saving, and sentencing others to death.

In early March 2004, Ontario Minister of Natural Resources David Ramsay announced a decision to increase protections for wolves in the province, citing the critical role that the predator species plays in maintaining the ecosystem's natural balance.

During the same week, however, Ramsay approved the shooting of thousands of double-crested cormorants, an impressive and skillful avian predator of the Great Lakes aquatic system that also plays an essential part in its habitat.

Minister Ramsay claims that the birds, who nest in large colonies in Presqu'île Provincial Park, destroy unique vegetation and must be removed. But rather than destroying habitat, cormorant nesting colonies are a key part of the Presqu'île ecosystem, and are part of the natural process of soil formation and the regeneration of plants and trees. API and many others believe that Ramsay's true motivation is to curry favor with recreational anglers, who view cormorants as competition for fish.

By speaking out on behalf of *all* imperiled species, API is leading the fight to end Canada's deadly double standard. There is little difference between cormorants and wolves from an ecological standpoint; they are equivalent in their role as top predators. Rather than playing politics with species protections, wildlife officials must recognize that all creatures play a key role in the balance of nature. They cannot pick and choose which predators receive protection and which ones are shot dead.

What You Can Do:

Send a letter to Minister Ramsay thanking him for protecting Ontario's wolves, and strongly encouraging him to offer the same protections to cormorants, an equally important predator species. Let him know that there is no ecological justification for his proposed cormorant kill in Presqu'île Provincial Park.

Send your comments to:

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