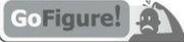


# Owning Exotic Pets

## Owning Exotic Pets



After the owner of dangerous exotic pets released them into communities around Zanesville, Ohio, the subsequent shooting and killing of the animals by authorities has raised questions regarding the legality of owning certain exotic animals as pets.



Credit: Dreamstime.com

**75 deaths** attributed to exotic pets (1990-2011)

Species	Deaths
<b>Big Cat</b> (tiger, lion, liger, jaguar)	21
<b>Reptile</b> (python, constrictor, viper, mamba, rattlesnake, iguana)	18
<b>Elephant</b>	14
<b>Bear</b>	4
<b>Marine</b> (killer whale)	2
<b>Other</b> (deer, elk, buffalo, gnu, wolf-hybrid)	16

**Between 5,000 and 7,000 tigers** are kept as pets – more than exist in the wild.



Tiger population in the wild, as few as 3,200, are at an all-time low.

**90%** Estimated percent of all reptiles that carry and shed salmonella in their feces.



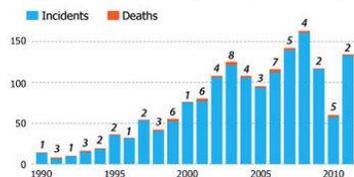
**Herpes B, monkeypox and salmonellosis**

Many exotic pets can transmit deadly diseases to humans.



CDC/ Joe Miller

**1,610** Reported incidents involving exotic pets (1990-2011)



### State exotic animal laws

- Bans most dangerous captive wildlife as pets (big cats, bears, wolves, primates, some reptiles)
- Does not ban dangerous captive wildlife but requires permits for certain species
- Bans some species of dangerous captive wildlife but allows others
- Does not regulate or restrict dangerous captive wildlife at all



SOURCES: BORNFREEUSA.ORG, THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES, WORLD WILDLIFE FUND, CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

R. TORO / © LiveScience.com

True / False	Police had to kill 50 exotic animals, like bears, monkeys, and lions because Mr. Thompson let them loose.
True / False	Exotic pets have killed few people since 1990.
True / False	A boy was mauled (attacked) by a chimpanzee.
True / False	Exotic animals, like monkeys and reptiles can infect people.

## Vocabulary

- **incident (event)** /事件/ incidente
- **authorities (police)** / 当局/ autoridades
- **regulate (control)** / 监察/ regular
- **variability (difference)** / 变异/ variabilidad
- **harm (danger)** / 伤害/ daño
- **indicates (shows)** / 表明/ indica
- **infections (sickness)** / 感染/ infecciones

The escape of 50 exotic animals near Zanesville, Ohio, last month brought into the spotlight the complex issues, as well as dangers, of keeping wild animals as domestic pets.

The **incident** happened Tuesday (Oct. 18) when resident Terry Thompson set loose his menagerie of lions, tigers, bears, monkeys and other animals from their cages.

**Authorities** had little choice but to shoot and kill nearly 50 of the untamed animals before they injured people.

And apparently Ohio is one state that doesn't **regulate** or restrict keeping wildlife captive.

In addition to state-by-state **variability** in captive wildlife regulation in general, the Captive-Bred Wildlife Registration Program currently allows people in the United States to own so-called generic tigers; these are tigers that can't be identified as being from one of the known subspecies (Bengal, Sumatran, Siberian/Amur or Indochinese). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has proposed to ban this "loophole."

In addition to the possible **harm** that could be done to these wild animals kept in private homes, the lions and tigers and other "exotics" also pose danger to humans. Born Free USA, a nonprofit advocacy organization that strives to end the ownership of wild animals, has documented some 1,500 attacks, including 75 human deaths, escapes and other incidents involving exotic pets since 1990, according to MyHealthNewsDaily.

Born Free data **indicates** several harmful interactions between humans and these wild animals, with one incident involving a 4-year-old boy in Texas who was hospitalized after being mauled by a pet mountain lion kept by his aunt.

These animals could also potentially transmit deadly **infections** to humans. For instance, reptiles can carry salmonella bacteria, and monkeys can carry the herpes B virus, both of which can be deadly in humans. Another case documented by Born Free involved a 37-year-old man who contracted the fungal disease blastomycosis after being bitten by his pet kinkajou, a rain-forest mammal.