BEAR WAREHOUSING IN CHINA

Today in China there are over 10,000 bears being held on "farms" for the purpose of extracting bile from their gall bladders. Confined in cages not much larger than the size of their bodies, the bears have metal tubes inserted into their gall bladders through an incision which causes pain, distress and inflammation. The bears are subjected to this cruelty so their bile can be used in traditional Chinese medicine.

Many defend the practice of "farming" bears, stating that for every bear on a farm 40 wild bears are saved from hunting. An investigation by the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) would suggest otherwise. WSPA has determined that wild bear populations continue to decline in China as a result of the on-going demand for bear bile and other bear parts. Contributing factors in their decline are habitat destruction and the removal of bears in the wild to be placed on the bear "farms." WSPA investigators state that the "continued captivity of bears on farms throughout China only serves to fuel the demand for these products, and forces thousands of bears to endure miserable lives of suffering." The widespread use of bear bile for medicine in China is one of the primary reasons for continued bear poaching in the U.S.

In addition to bears being held in "farms," there are a number of bear "parks" that have been opening in China. The bears in these parks are primarily being supplied by owners of the bear "farming" facilities. WSPA investigators identified one such park at the Great Wall. The "park" held over four-hundred bears in four pits, each no larger than the size of a tennis court. The bears exhibited signs of severe mental and physical distress, and were fighting for scraps of food thrown by tourists.

What You Can Do:

Contact the Chinese Ambassador to the U.S. and ask that bear farming and bear parks be outlawed in China. Ambassador Li Daoyu, Embassy of the People's Republic of China, 2300 Connecticut Ave., Washington, DC 20008. You can also call 1-800-LIB-BEAR to receive petitions that call for the end of bear farming. ■

TRIMMING OUT FUR

In the September issue of *Canadian Living*, fashion designer Linda Lundstrom had a large, two-page fur ad for her new "Laparka" line of coats featuring beaver fur trim. Her excuses for using fur are many. Some of them are: To support the natural Native-American way of living, she chose to use real fur to "revitalize their traditional way of life;" she chose beaver because it is plentiful; the beaver is trapped using "humane methods;" and, "Just as natives use every part of the animal, the 'Laparka' design uses the entire pelt —nothing is wasted."

All of the reasons above are blatant propaganda. Only a small percentage of fur used in the industry actually comes from Native American trappers—most of it comes from "fur farms" or other trappers. Purchasing fur does not "revitalize" Native American life; nor is the method used to trap a beaver a humane one (underwater traps usually drown the animal). Unfortunately, the beavers' rights *are wasted* for a frivolous trim design on a non-essential garment.

What You Can Do:

Write to *Canadian Living*, c/o Telemedia Communications, Inc., 25 Sheppard Ave., W., Suite 100, North York, Ontario, Canada M2N 6S7.

Also call Linda Lundstrom at 1 (800) 665-4632, and let her know that her fur fashions are non-fashions. ■

photo courtesy of **The Beaver Defenders**

STOP CANNED HUNTING AT SEMINOLE RESERVATION

The Big Cypress Seminole Reservation has become another one of our country's many canned hunting areas. The Reservation has been stocked with a number of exotic animals that "hunters" will pay to shoot. Just as with other canned hunting facilities the Seminole Reservation is a closed-in facility, leaving no chance for the animals to escape the guns of hunters.

In 1989, the Animal Rights Foundation of Florida advocated a boycott of the Seminole Reservation's tax-free cigarettes and bingo halls when the idea of opening a canned hunting business was originally proposed. In response to the boycott, the Seminole people decided to shelve the plans. Unfortunately, the policy has now changed and the hunting has begun.

What You Can Do:

Contact Seminole Chairman James Billie at 6073 Stirling Rd., Hollywood, FL 33024, (800) 683-7800, and ask that he stop the canned hunting operation. Tell him that until the hunting stops you will not purchase products from any Seminole establishments when visiting Florida. ■

ACTIVATOR UPDATE

AT&T CALLING

Donna Cunningham of AT&T's public relations department immediately responded to The AAVS regarding October's *Activator*, "AT&T Funding Cruel Animal Experiments." Her response:

"The test referred to in your article was conducted by the Denver Wildlife Research Center (DWRC), part of the Department of Agriculture, which conducts such tests for cable and duct manufacturers and users in communications and power industries. Contrary to your report, it was not done by or for AT&T, though AT&T is among the 58 companies for which the Center has done such research.

...The DWRC uses appropriately sized cages under good conditions replicating the gophers' burrow environment. The light level is reduced or off. The animals need to gnaw so their incisors—which grow as much as 12 inches a year—won't grow too long for them to be able to eat. They are given wood blocks to chew on and are well fed (carrots, rodent laboratory chow, hay cubes). In a test, a cable is placed across the gopher's path, to be encountered as it might be in the wild."

Gophers safe?

We contacted Donna Cunningham to further investigate whether or not the gophers are killed in the experiments. Cunningham responded that the gophers, about 50 or so, are kept under proper, environmentally replicated conditions throughout their natural life (about five years whereas it would be about one year in the wild), or euthanized only if they become ill. She added that the gophers are trapped in tubular humane traps that are checked every two hours.

Cunningham explained that AT&T prides itself as a company that takes care of its employees and customers, and cares about preventing further electrocution deaths to burrow wildlife. AT&T feels that this method is the safest one for the animals.

You can contact AT&T at Room 56A-3N26, 5 Wood Hollow Road, Parsippany, NJ 07054-2899 and thank the company for its immediate response. ■