"It was the sadness in their eyes that has continued to haunt us."
—STEPHANIE SANTANA AND SHAUWN LUKOSE

Keep animals in zoos! We don’t think so. There is documented research that many animals removed from their natural habitat and kept in captivity have developed a kind of mental illness known as zoochosis.

Animals with this disease often pace back and forth, twist their necks, bob their heads up and down, turn in never-ending circles, and even tear holes in their own skin. Can you imagine being so miserable that you would want to inflict harm on yourself?

Once, when we visited a zoo, we noticed that some of the animals kept in cages were grabbing onto the bars and shaking them. If you could have looked into these animals’ eyes like we did, you would have seen deep sadness. It is this sadness that continues to haunt us to this day.

It has been documented that Junior, a killer whale, was removed from his natural habitat in Iceland and placed in a tank in Niagara Falls. He died four years later, deprived of outside air, sunlight, and companionship.

Junior is not alone. There are many aquatic animals that are taken from their natural habitats and placed in water tanks in
aquariums around the world. These animals are separated from
their families and are forced to live in groups that are nothing like
their own families. As though that isn’t enough, animals like
whales and dolphins, who are accustomed to swimming up to 100
miles in one day and diving hundreds of feet, are forced to live in
confined spaces. Do you think they can get this type of exercise in
a water tank? We don’t think so.

Wait! There’s more. Aquatic animals have a special way of talking
to one another and finding their prey. They use sound patterns, or
echolocation. This natural process is sometimes non-existent in
aquariums because of the noise level and the glass enclosures. This
type of confinement is unacceptable for any animal, anywhere.

The Born Free Foundation performed a worldwide study of
zoos which revealed that zoonosis is rampant in confined
animals around the globe. Another study found that elephants
in zoos spend 22 percent of their time engaging in abnormal
behaviors, such as repeated head bobbing or biting cage bars, and
bears spend about 30 percent of their time pacing, a sign
of distress.

Although zoos claim that their main purpose is to
help prevent animals from becoming extinct and to help
educate people about animals, we think the only thing
zoos do is make animals crazy!