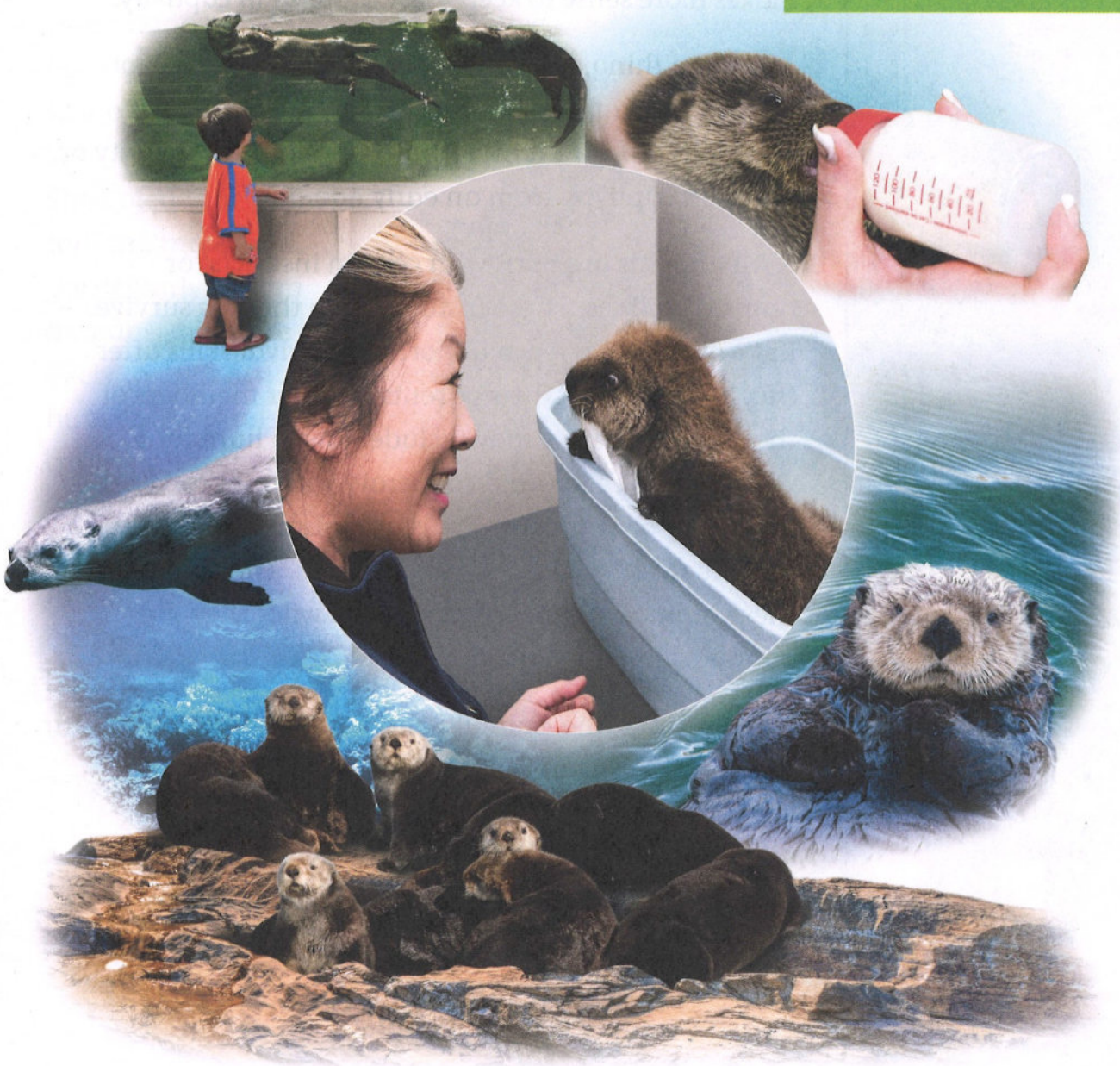


Don't Release Animals Back to the **WILD**

BY RENÉ SALDAÑA JR.



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Synthesize Information

How is this text similar to and different from *Let Wild Animals Be Wild*? Highlight text evidence that supports your answer.

cooperate work together, participate in shared activity

- 1 Sometimes wildlife needs a helping hand. Biologists and conservationists often rescue orphaned, injured, or endangered animals. It's the only way to ensure their survival. Helping animals may require keeping them in captivity for weeks, months, or even years. Endangered species, in particular, may need to stay in captivity for extended periods. That way, they can begin to rebuild their population. Then what? One argument is that wild animals always should be released back to the wild. However, scientific research raises serious questions about the benefits of doing so. For several reasons, it makes more sense to keep these animals in captivity.
- 2 For one thing, many animals that have been kept in captivity simply can't survive in the wild. This is especially true of animals that were born in captivity or raised in captivity from an early age.
- 3 All animals are born with certain instincts, or natural abilities. These instincts help them to survive. But animals also learn important survival skills after they're born from their parents or other members of their species. These may include how to hunt for food, recognize enemies, and cooperate with others. When orphaned or injured animals are raised in captivity, they miss out on this learning process. Therefore, when these animals are released into the wild, they are poorly equipped to survive.
- 4 Scientists at the Animal Behavior Research Group at the University of Exeter, England, examined the survival rates of animals released in the wild. The scientists studied 45 cases that involved 17 different species. The species included wolves, bears, foxes, African wild dogs, and otters.

Analyze Argumentative Texts

Underline reasons the author gives to support the main claim.

5 The first group was made up of animals born in captivity and released into the wild. The second group was made up of animals caught in the wild and moved to a new area. The scientists found that the animals born in captivity had a much lower survival rate in the wild. These animals were more likely to starve to death. That's because they lacked hunting skills. The captive-born animals were also less likely to find mates and start families. That means their species as a whole was less likely to thrive.

6 The captive-born animals also were less likely to avoid dangerous situations. "Captive-born animals have less natural fear of other large carnivores," said researcher Kristen Jule. She noted that "animals that are more bold, particularly toward humans, are more likely to die." African hunting dogs raised in captivity, for example, were frequently attacked by lions. Many African hunting dogs were also hunted or trapped by humans after their release into the wild.



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Analyze Argumentative Texts

How does the author use reasons and facts to support the text's claim? Underline examples to support your answer.



13 Individual endangered animals also may be rescued, taken to zoos or sanctuaries, nursed back to health, and kept in safe surroundings. For example, the Jungle Place in Quintana Roo, Mexico, provides food, shelter, medical care, and attention to rescued spider monkeys. The monkeys were victims of illegal pet trade, poaching, and habitat loss. There's no longer any safe wild environment for them in Mexico. Sanctuaries such as the Jungle Place keep these monkeys safe.

14 There's a third reason to keep rescued wild animals in captivity rather than releasing them back into the wild. Both scientists and the general public can learn a great deal from captive animals.

15 Carefully observing captive animals allows scientists to make discoveries about species' health and behavior that they can't make in the wild. What scientists learn about captive animals can benefit other members of the species that remain in the wild.

16 Seeing wild animals in captivity also helps people appreciate wildlife and wildlife-protection efforts. People are more likely to contribute to conservation organizations after seeing a member of an endangered species up close. That's unlikely to happen in the wild. Zoos, sanctuaries, and similar places also offer signs, guides, lectures, and other information to educate people about the animals living there.

17 In October 2014, the Monterey Bay Aquarium, in California, rescued an orphaned sea otter. She was part of a population of threatened Southern California otters. The pup was thought to be less than a week old. She was far too young to be without her mother.

**Analyze
Argumentative
Texts**

Underline a restatement of the text's main claim.

18 Staff cared for the pup for a month. Then they moved her to the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago, Illinois, and named her Luna. They knew they couldn't release Luna to the sea. Pups learn most of their survival skills from their mothers. Luna missed out on this learning stage. She wouldn't last long in the wild.

19 Luna soon became a huge attraction for the public and the media. Tim Binder oversees the aquarium's animal care and its rescue program. He refers to Luna as an "ambassador" for her species and her ecosystem. Binder says Luna "reminds us that what we do on land has repercussions on the ocean environment and the animals that live there, inspiring us to make a difference." By studying Luna, scientists at Shedd have learned important information about sea otters and how to care for them. For example, they now know the exact calorie intake and activity levels an otter needs to grow to full size. Scientists can use such information to help sea otters in the wild.

20 In some cases, captive wild animals can, and should, be released to the wild. For example, if a sick or injured animal can be treated quickly, it can probably be released with little risk. However, for many captive animals, release is not worth the risk. Captivity offers safety, health, and well-being. It may even save entire species. For animals in peril, those benefits far outweigh freedom.

