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I am a UK taxpayer. Please treat this and any future gift to The Winton Foundation as a Gift Aid donation until I notify you otherwise

You can donate online at www.wintonbearfoundation.org

Please send me information on regular giving ☐

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Please return this form to:

The Winton Foundation for the Welfare of Bears,
54 West Windygoul Gardens, Tranent, East Lothian, EH33 2LA

Registered Charity No SC042614

The Hard Facts

There are eight species of bears throughout the world.

They are all under threat due to humans and their activities.

They are one of the most persecuted animals in the world.

Bears often live longer in captivity, but sadly this leads to greater and prolonged physical and mental suffering.

Our Vision Statement

A world where no bear will ever again be hurt, exploited or tortured for human gain, profit or entertainment. Where bears can live free from fear and peril inflicted by humankind and can be their majestic selves, living full and natural lives.

The Winton Foundation for the Welfare of Bears works through fund and awareness raising to assist with new and established projects around the world to help bears.

We are not tied to any one organisation but work in partnership with other groups, to allow us to be as effective as possible.

We are part of the global network working to help end the abuse and exploitation of bears throughout the world and to provide care for them following rescue from such atrocities as bear farming, bear baiting and dancing bears to name a few.

The Winton Foundation for the Welfare of Bears,
54 West Windygoul Gardens,
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The Winton Foundation
for the Welfare of Bears



Making it bearable

Bears in Entertainment

Bears have been exploited for 'entertainment' for hundreds of years, being forced to dance, perform demeaning tricks, endure being attacked by dogs, and being imprisoned in small cages as tourist attractions.

There are estimated to be over 300 bears in European zoos and circuses alone, needing moved to better conditions.

Bears in Circuses

Bears held captive in circuses are kept in small cages and dragged from town to town in 'Beast Wagons' only being briefly released from their cages to be brought into the arena for a performance. Circus bears suffer greatly from painful training techniques to get them to perform degrading acts such as standing on their hind paws, balancing on balls, riding bikes and boxing. These bears are denied everything they would enjoy in the wild and often show signs of fear and deep distress through pacing, rocking, bar biting, and self-mutilation.



Photo courtesy of Animals Asia

Bear Baiting

One of the most savage blood sports still in existence in the world today, continues to take place in rural Pakistan. Bears used in baiting events are tethered to posts, often having had their teeth and claws removed so they have little means of defence. The bears are then set upon by trained fighting dogs. The fight lasts around three minutes. The attacks can take place up to six times a day, without the bear having any of its injuries treated leaving sensitive areas exposed and causing the bear great pain and distress.

Bear Dancing

Dancing bears have been eradicated in Greece, Turkey and Bulgaria but unfortunately they still exist in India, Pakistan and Nepal. Bears used for 'dancing' endure a lifetime of physical and mental distress. Many people are unaware of the cruelty behind the spectacle. Usually caught as a cub from the wild, a dancing bear will have a hot poker pushed through its nose to create a hole for a ring, then a rope is pulled through the ring. Tugging on the rope causes the bear great pain. The bears are then beaten on the legs and buttocks while music plays, and they then associate pain with music and therefore 'dance' in anticipation of pain. Dancing bears often go blind through being beaten or malnutrition.

Bears in Zoos & Bear Parks

Bears are also very common in zoos and animal parks where living conditions are often extremely poor. Many zoos have no understanding of the needs of animals such as bears. Bears can languish for years in barren enclosures with little or no environmental enrichment or mental stimulation. In Japan this is taken to the extreme in bear parks, where bears are kept in concrete pits and forced to beg for food. There can often be 50 bears in a barren pit and with nothing to occupy them, resulting in the bears frequently fighting and receiving serious wounds. The bears suffer terribly from overcrowding, boredom, malnutrition, injuries and infection.



Photo courtesy of WSPA

Hunting & Habitat Destruction

Loss of habitat through deforestation and human encroachment is having a massive impact on many bear populations. Many species of bear will not be able to survive without properly protected habitats. Instances of human/bear conflict often

arise due to humans encroaching into bear territory, but these instances can be avoided through simple solutions such as bear proof rubbish bins allowing bears and humans to live in harmony. In many countries, bear hunting is often seen as a 'sport' or 'trophy hunting' and bears are often hunted for their meat and body parts. Hunting often results in cubs being orphaned and requiring care in rehabilitation centres.

Bear Farming

Across Asia, thousands of bears live a life of torture on bear farms. Often confined in horrendous 'crush' cages or marginally larger cages, they endure dreadful physical and mental suffering year after year. The bears have an opening carved into their abdomens so that they can be 'milked' for their bile up to twice a day – excruciating for the bear. The bile is then used to make medicine and toiletries, despite manmade alternatives existing. The bears often sustain self inflicted injuries through desperate but always futile attempts to free themselves from the cages.

Bears used as Tourist Attractions

Bears often have to endure the trauma of being held captive in small, rusting cages outside restaurants and petrol stations as tourist attractions, pets or for photo opportunities often illegally caught from the wild. Many of these bears suffer greatly from poor diets and little or no veterinary care and often turn to self mutilation and suffer serious mental anxiety.



Blind bear 'Max' - enduring a life chained to railings, as a tourist attraction. Photo courtesy of WSPA

Practice responsible tourism if you encounter any of these practices in your travels. Do not pay or take photographs and write to your travel agency to voice your concern.