

AZA Primate Advisory Groups'
Primate Pet Trade Position Statement



There is an active trade in pet primates in many areas of the U.S, where it is still possible to buy primates in pet stores, from private breeders and through animal dealers. The four primate advisory groups of AZA, the Prosmian TAG, the New World Primate TAG, the Old World Monkey TAG, and the Ape TAG, support the elimination of the trade in pet primates for the following reasons:

- 1) Pet primates pose a risk to public health and safety through communicable illness/diseases such as Herpes B, hepatitis, intestinal pathogens and injuries sustained during sudden and unpredictable episodes of aggressive behavior.
- 2) Elimination of the legal trade in pet primates aids enforcement of federal legislation that prohibits private ownership of those nonhuman primates regulated by the Centers for Disease Control (Code of Federal Regulations Subchapter F - Quarantine, Inspection, Licensing Part 71 Foreign Quarantine).
- 3) Pet primates are often maintained in inadequate housing and without consideration for their social and psychological needs.
- 4) There is an adverse impact on wild populations through the smuggling and import of primates which ultimately end up in the pet trade.
- 5) Pet primates are unable to contribute genetically to those conservation programs in which they are needed due to their isolation from the managed population and also in many cases to serious deficits in their social skills related to their rearing and maintenance in isolation from others of their kind.

It is the consensus of AZA's primate advisory groups that **education** about primates and **legislation** to restrict the trade in primates as pets are likely to be the most effective means of curbing the trade in pet primates, and the following actions will be necessary for AZA institutions to effect an impact on the trade:

- 1) manage zoo collections to eliminate the sale, trade or other disposition of zoo primates to individuals, or to animal dealers known to place primates with individuals;
- 2) recruit educators to develop and produce materials for zoo visitors and potential primate buyers;
- 3) align with other groups (including the American Society of Primatologists, animal advocacy groups where appropriate, and local municipal and legislative bodies) to influence and enact the legislation needed to restrict the trade in pet primates;
- 4) investigate existing regulations in place in the U.S. (state by state) relating to privately-owned primates.