



KINSHIP CIRCLE

FOR ANIMALS...

ADVOCACY ▲ EDUCATION ► DISASTER AID  
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# FACTS HUNTING



## A HUNTER'S STORY

He remembers the day he laid down his gun. After 38 years, he decided to call it quits. It wasn't a big moment, because he wasn't a particularly big-moment guy. But he'd hunted since age 7.

He fondly recalls early morning treks into the woods. A wee-sized imitation of Dad, he wore rugged boots, a flannel shirt and cap. They hiked under graceful trees in search of squirrels, rabbits or nesting ducks. His beloved beagles joined them for the hunt.

He cherished their quiet camaraderie — the silence interrupted by occasional blasts and rustling leaves. It's not that he lacked empathy for the animals he hunted. He really never thought about them at all.

But one day something changed. He shot a flying duck who screeched and fell to the ground. At that moment, the hunter heard leaves crackling and another duck's frantic quacking.

He encountered an odd scene: An apparently grief-stricken male duck stood vigil over the wounded female. Ducks mate for life. This one must be the dying duck's partner.

He wasn't sure what to do. He considered shooting the second duck or spooking him, so he could claim his prey. Instead, his fingers froze around his gun. He watched the duck's anguish.

One bleeding duck's life DID matter to someone — to the other duck.

So, although he knew his buddies would chide him for walking away, he simply left. They'd say he'd gone soft, had turned into "a woman."

But he knew better. Stealing the life of an animal is probably a pretty lame excuse for a sport. Maybe a "real man" sees the pain in a dying animal, along with the grief of another animal who cares for her... He decided to hone his golf game and play more softball with his kids. Those are real sports. He'd leave hunting to the losers.



Story above is a composite, from reflections of former hunters.



## MANIPULATING NATURE

▼ **THE MONEY GAME:** In the U.S., wildlife is controlled to artificially inflate animal populations for hunters to kill: "Habitat is managed for maximum deer numbers; wildlife is trapped and transplanted to hunting areas; fires are set; trees are planted; trees are mown down; fields are flooded; fields are drained; tests are conducted to determine if dietary supplements will produce larger antlers; research projects try to identify the hardiest non-native pheasant species to release; predators of game animals are destroyed so that hunters can kill them instead." *State Wildlife Management: The Pervasive Influence of Hunters, Hunting, Culture, and Money* • Humane Society of the U.S. [HSUS], [www.hsus.org/wildlife/hunting](http://www.hsus.org/wildlife/hunting)

Hunting and fishing licenses comprise an average 42.9% of state wildlife funding. *Sportsmen's Alliance*

Legal hunting/killing requires: Purchase of license, guns, ammo, bows, arrows, gear, apparel — costs amplified by manufacturers' excise tax.

Hunters' dollars bankroll a system designed to perpetuate itself. "The more licenses hunters buy, the more influence they have over wildlife agencies and management. The more states focus on producing animals that hunters want to kill, the more they can sustain hunter interest and keep them buying licenses, so that hunters can kill more wildlife." [HSUS]

Governors appoint state wildlife commissions, whose members typically represent dogged support for hunting, trapping, and other consumptive/recreational uses of wildlife — despite majority opposition to recreational killing in the U.S.

When HSUS surveyed commissions to ascertain backgrounds and biases of members... their study found 73% of commissions are dominated by hunting supporters. No state indicated its commission contains non-hunting members; anti-hunters are unheard of. [www.hsus.org/wildlife/hunting](http://www.hsus.org/wildlife/hunting)

## HUNTING UPS POPULATION

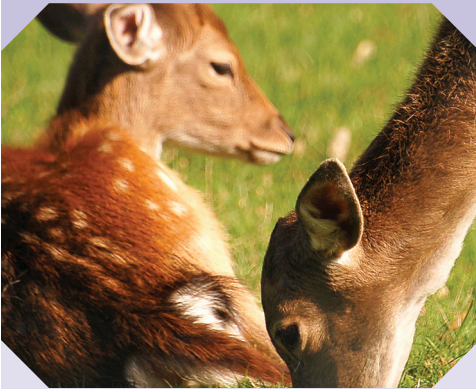
▼ **DEER MYTH:** Nature maintains itself through habitat size, food/water availability, natural predators, weather. Urban encroachment on wildlife habitat calls for the establishment of refuges — not sport hunting.

"Nuisance animal" hunting "controls" deer, who account for just 2% (6 million) of 200 million animals killed annually. 25% are mourning doves 15% are squirrels, millions more are geese and ducks.

Deer hunting actually ups reproduction in populations. In the study "*Community Based Deer Management at Watchung Reservation in Union County, NJ*, researchers found 57% of killed pregnant deer had twins in their wombs after 2 years of hunting. After a third year, 60% had twins and 8% had triplets!

Similar studies show that deer who live under non-hunting conditions typically bear one child. If hunted, birth rates double or triple. When hunting eliminates part of a population, particularly bucks, survivors rebound due to food abundance. Mating is the herd's primary focus because fewer males vie for territory.

▼ **PREDATOR MYTH:** Predators, critical to any ecosystem, balance wildlife numbers and limit herbivores and habitat degradation. When predators (wolves, cougars, coyotes) are hunted, they offset the decline by reproducing more swiftly and soon rebound to pre-slaughter or higher numbers. 53.5% of Alaskan poll responders disapprove of aerial predator-control to boost moose and caribou numbers and renounce same-day aerial wolf hunting. *Dittman Research Corp., commissioned by Alaska Wildlife Alliance*



## NOT A SPORT

In team sports (soccer, football, hockey, basketball) and individual-effort sports (pole vaulting, marksman-ship, skiing, tennis) participants choose to take part and understand the object, skills, rules of the sport. **With hunting, key participants (nonhumans) do not know they're participating and do not choose to do so.** They do not know the object is to kill them or the rules or regulations that govern hunting... Even in the most violent of sports, killing participants is never the object. *Why Hunting Is Not a Sport, David Cantor, executive director, Responsible Policies for Animals*

**BOWHUNTING** (hunting with bow and arrow or cross-bow) cripples more animals than any other style. Up to 50% of deer suffer slow death from arrow wounds.

## HUMANE HUNTS?

Hunters claim it's more humane to shoot deer (or other animals) than allow them to starve to death. But hunters hardly track the sickliest deer to "wean" the herd. Starvation is an essential mechanism of natural selection. The weak naturally die off and strong survive. Left to itself, nature manages itself in cycles. "The two major causes of extinction are hunting and habitat destruction." *Federal Endangered Species Act*



## TARGETING YOUTH

Since 1989, hunters annually kill 42% less animals. To keep the \$20-billion-a-year industry profitable, promoters recruit children by lowering or nixing minimum hunting ages and exempting kids from hunter safety courses. [hsus.org/wildlife/hunting](http://hsus.org/wildlife/hunting). **People who don't experience hunting before age 16 or 17 are unlikely to hunt as adults.** *Responsive Management, public opinion research firm for natural resources matters*

## FALLING NUMBERS

Hunting/trapping industries "remain in a state of decline" with fewer preserves and hunters...and diminished demand for fur. Ethical debate will gain publicity in coming years. *4/27/11 - IBISWorld, private research firm that analyzes 700+ U.S. industries.*

Every 5 years, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service publishes a National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation. As of June 2011, the last survey was in 2006. [fws.gov/hunting/huntstat.html](http://fws.gov/hunting/huntstat.html)

### USFWS FINDINGS SHOW:

- 12.5 million people hunted in 2006 — a 4% drop (about half a million) since 2001. From 2001-2006, a 12% decline in anglers.
- 10.7 million are big-game hunters (deer, elk).
- Decline in small-game, upland and migratory bird hunters since 2001. 4.8 million hunt small game (squirrels, rabbits). 2.3 million hunt migratory birds (doves, waterfowl). 1.1 million hunt other animals.
- *Nearly 34 million people fish and/or hunt while 71 million engage in wildlife-watching. Hunters comprise 5.5% of Americans 16 years and older. Wildlife watchers outnumber them 6-to-1, at 31%.*
- A notable increase in hunters ages 6 to 15.
- Nearly 10% of new hunters are women.
- Less hunters, but more revenue — Some \$25.9 billion for licenses, permits...in 2006 Nearly half of state game agency funds come from hunting.

U.S. consumptive wildlife practices (hunting, trapping, fishing) have steadily fallen since 1970s. Conversely, wildlife watching, hiking, bird watching...have risen. 39% of wildlife recreationists are sportspersons and 81% are watchers. Watchers show increase in wildlife-related recreation, but sportspersons do not.

## CANNED HUNTS: CAGED & KILLED



At guaranteed-kill games ranches or shooting preserves, hunters pay hundreds to thousands of dollars to kill confined, tame animals at close range. **There are an estimated 1,000 canned-hunt operations spread across 25 states. None are federally regulated.** Animals familiar with human contact are accumulated from circuses, zoos or exotic pet ranches. Most have lost their instinct to flee. They live staked, hobbled, caged or fenced. Over time, they grow so accustomed to feedings and care, they no longer see humans as predators. Some even approach their killers in anticipation of food. The "hunters" commonly sit in blinds to take out animals at feeding stations.

Comparable to picking off puppies in a pet-shop window, many traditional hunters believe canned hunts violate the basic principle of "fair chase." 65% of those surveyed oppose hunting animals in enclosures or fenced-in ranches; 12% endorse it; 23% have no opinion. *Field & Stream national hunting survey 2003.* Trophy hunters often shoot to maim rather than kill in order to preserve a clean trophy without head wounds. Amateurs shoot an animal numerous times. Injured animals die slowly and painfully.

"In some states, experts believe canned hunts, with their high concentrations of animals, encourage transmission of chronic wasting disease in native deer and elk populations... Because interstate commerce in exotic animals is common, federal legislation is essential to control these cruel practices," *Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ), author, Sportsmanship in Hunting Act of 2005 to ban interstate sale/transfer of exotic animals to canned hunt operations. Hunting is permitted on 60% of U.S. wildlife refuges and in many national forests, state parks. On federal land alone (half a billion acres+), more than 200 million animals are killed every year.*