

Tigers and gorillas for sale online

Level 2 | Intermediate

1 Key vocabulary

Fill the gaps using these key words from the text.

wildlife	investigator	exotic	endangered
specimen	stuffed	anonymous	unaware

1. If an animal is part of an _____ species, it may soon disappear completely from the world.
2. A _____ is an example of something, especially of a plant or an animal.
3. If you are _____ of something, you don't know it exists.
4. A _____ animal is a dead animal that has been filled with material so that it looks alive.
5. If something is _____, it is interesting or exciting because it is rare or unusual.
6. _____ is a general word for animals and birds that live in natural conditions.
7. An _____ is someone whose job is to find out the facts about something.
8. If someone is _____, no-one knows their name.

2 Find the information

Look in the text and find the following information as quickly as possible.

1. What does IFAW stand for?
2. How many websites were investigated?
3. What was the price of the Siberian tiger?
4. What was the price of the giraffe?
5. How many wildlife products did IFAW find in a single week?
6. How many live apes did they find?

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By John Vidal

Wildlife crime investigators working with an international animal charity say that thousands of endangered animals, which are supposed to be protected by law, are being bought and sold openly on the internet.

The investigators looked at nearly 100 websites based around the world and found a “shocking” selection of rare and endangered animals for sale. They included a Siberian tiger (\$70,000), a young gorilla (\$8,100) advertised as being in London, and other rare monkeys, birds, seahorses and whole turtle shells. One of the most expensive was a “sweet-natured” two-year-old giraffe being sold for \$15,500 in the US. “He has never been bad-tempered with me. A loving home is a must,” said the anonymous owner. The internet has revolutionised shopping for books, DVDs and airline tickets, but it has also opened up great opportunities to deal in illegal wildlife which, according to the United Nations, is worth billions of dollars a year and is now almost as big as the arms and drug trades. “Within one week we found over 9,000 wild animal products and specimens, and wild animals for sale, mainly from species protected by law,” says the report for the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW). “More than 100 traders were identified, each advertising an unnamed, unspecified number of items,” said the authors of the report.

There were enough endangered animals for sale to stock whole zoos, and the

parts of dead animals found on the web would have stocked hundreds of Chinese pharmacies. “They included some of the world’s most endangered species,” the report says. “There were live Amazonian parrots, wild cats, a green turtle which the seller said was taken from a Southeast Asian rainforest; even a live pet lion.” A total of 146 live apes were found in a week, and some were being advertised before they were even born. The commercial buying and selling of apes and monkeys is either illegal or subject to strict controls. The gorilla for sale in London probably did not exist, said an IFAW spokeswoman on Monday. “It was possibly a Congo-based operation which would capture an animal when someone ordered one.” Some of the animals were definitely real, however, including rare turtle shells, clothes made from the Tibetan antelope and stuffed lions and rare birds, which were all found, along with a stuffed polar bear that was advertised as being Victorian but looked quite new.

Although thousands of species are endangered all over the world, the sellers do not seem to have a problem finding animals to sell. IFAW says that the sellers range from individuals hoping to make money by selling a single exotic pet to professional traders who seem to have access to a regular supply. The sellers do not seem worried by the fact that it is illegal to buy and sell endangered animals. Many of them seem to be unaware that the law exists.

The Guardian Weekly 17/8/2005, page 17

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3 Comprehension check

Decide whether these sentences are True or False according to the text.

1. People selling wild animals on the internet know it is illegal to do it.
2. It is very difficult to find animals to sell on the internet.
3. The wildlife trade is worth almost as much as the drugs and arms trades.
4. Both live and dead animals are sold on the internet.
5. Animals are bought and sold secretly on the internet.
6. Some animals are advertised before they are born.

4 Vocabulary 1 - Opposites

Find the words in the text that are the opposites of these words.

1. cheap _____
2. sweet-natured _____
3. secretly _____
4. legal _____
5. common _____
6. specific _____

5 Vocabulary 2 - Word building

Complete the table.

verb	noun
1. investigate	_____
2. advertise	_____
3. sell	_____
4. protect	_____
5. produce	_____
6. identify	_____

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6 Grammar focus

Look at this example from the text.

The sellers do not seem worried by the fact that it is illegal.

This is not as categorical as:

The sellers are not worried by the fact that it is illegal.

Both *seem* and *appear* can be used in this way.

Make positive and negative sentences using *seem* or *appear*.

1. Many exotic animals are for sale on the internet. (appear)
2. The sellers don't have a problem finding animals to sell. (seem)
3. Many sellers are unaware that the law exists. (seem)
4. Many animals are endangered. (appear)
5. Trade in exotic animals is increasing. (appear)
6. People want to buy exotic animals. (seem)

7 Discussion

Should people be allowed to keep exotic animals as pets?

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KEY

1 Key vocabulary

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1. endangered | 5. exotic |
| 2. specimen | 6. wildlife |
| 3. unaware | 7. investigator |
| 4. stuffed | 8. anonymous |

2 Find the information

- | | |
|--|---------------|
| 1. International Fund for Animal Welfare | 4. \$15,500 |
| 2. Nearly 100 | 5. Over 9,000 |
| 3. £70,000 | 6. 146 |

3 Comprehension check

1. F; 2. F; 3. T; 4. T; 5. F; 6. T

4 Vocabulary 1 – Opposites

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. expensive | 4. illegal |
| 2. bad-tempered | 5. rare |
| 3. openly | 6. unspecified |

5 Vocabulary 2 – Word building

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. investigation | 4. protection |
| 2. advertisement | 5. production |
| 3. sale | 6. identification |

6 Grammar focus

1. Many exotic animals appear to be for sale on the internet.
2. The sellers don't seem to have a problem finding animals to sell.
3. Many sellers seem to be unaware that the law exists.
4. Many animals appear to be endangered.
5. Trade in exotic animals appears to be increasing.
6. People seem to want to buy exotic animals.