

Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo

291 Wagner Ln., Kingwood, WV 26537

Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo, which is owned by Bryan Hovatter, has failed to meet minimum federal standards for the care of animals used in exhibition as established in the Animal Welfare Act. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has repeatedly cited Hovatter's for numerous infractions, including failing to provide animals with adequate veterinary care, failing to handle animals properly, failing to keep enclosures clean, failing to provide animals with sufficient shelter from inclement weather, failing to provide safe enclosures, failing to give potable water to animals, failing to have effective rodent- and fly-control programs, and failing to provide enclosures that could safely contain animals. Contact PETA for documentation.

February 25, 2025: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to have a written program of veterinary care, which could result in failure to address health conditions in the animals in an appropriate manner, and failing to maintain the wire enclosure housing four Prevost's squirrels. The enclosure had several areas of flaking and peeling rust. "Rust can create sharp surfaces that may cause injury or discomfort to the animals and cannot be adequately cleaned and sanitized."

January 18, 2024: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to have an environment enhancement plan that included special considerations for a juvenile primate being hand-raised, to

ensure that they received additional attention and special care consistent with the attending veterinarian's instructions for the primate's psychological well-being.

September 14, 2023: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to use transport enclosures with projecting rims and/or handholds. Projecting rims allow for adequate ventilation, particularly when the cages are stacked, and handholds can reduce the risk of unintentional contact between the handler and the animal during transport. Eight transport enclosures housing nine animals, either did not have projecting rims, adequate handholds, or both.

July 26, 2021: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to provide adequate veterinary care to animals, including the following:

- A squirrel monkey had hair loss at the base of their tail and was thin, with their ribs and pelvic bone visible. The monkey was also moving in an abnormal manner.
- A lynx was thin, with a concave abdomen and prominent hip bones. The condition hadn't been conveyed to the attending veterinarian.

Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo was also cited for failing to properly clean and sanitize primate enclosures, including the following:

- The perching platforms and attached wire fencing in the olive baboons' enclosure had excessive accumulations of waste and rust.
- The indoor housing areas for the snow macaque and ring-tailed lemur had a wood frame that was unsealed and wasn't able to be properly cleaned and sanitized.

The USDA also cited the facility for failing to

clean excessive feces, bones, debris, and other material from enclosures for multiple species (leopard, coyote, and zebra). In addition, it was cited for failing to maintain enclosures in good repair to ensure that they were structurally sound to protect the animals from injury, including the following:

- A lynx enclosure contained a wooden perching platform that was in disrepair, a nail head was exposed, and the wood on a corner of the platform was rotted out and missing.
- The wooden den box in a coyote enclosure was rotting from the elements.
- The goat barn had metal siding that was broken and bent outward. The breaks in the metal siding exposed the animals to sharp edges.
- The metal barn in a muntjac enclosure had a small hole near the entrance. The hole had created sharp points in the metal that protruded from the barn where the animal had access.

May 25, 2016: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to follow the enrichment program for chimpanzees, failing to feed 7-week-old lion cubs a nutritionally adequate diet, and failing to provide an alpaca, who had overgrown teeth, with adequate veterinary care.

August 4, 2015: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to handle tiger cubs properly. The cubs used in the facility's photo shoots were too large, strong, and aggressive to engage in direct contact with the public. One tiger growled and used his or her claws to try to escape from the handler when the animal was removed from his or her cage.

June 4, 2015: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to handle tiger cubs properly. The cubs were separated from

their mother at birth and were cared for in the licensee's home. At 2½ weeks old, they were used for public encounters, and at 5 weeks old (their age at the time of this inspection), the cubs had not been vaccinated—putting them at risk since they didn't have fully developed immune systems. Hovatter's was also cited for failing to have a nutritionally adequate feeding plan for the cubs.

September 9, 2014: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to have a safely working guillotine door in an enclosure holding leopards. The hand-operated chain used to raise and lower the door had broken, and a metal stake was used to wedge the door open, which posed a risk to the leopards because one could dislodge the stake and cause the door to come down. The inspector noted that "[t]he weight of the metal door could easily cause injury to a foot or tail or possibly cause death in an animal." Hovatter's was also cited for failing to maintain the wire enclosure fencing that held two adult tigers: There was a hole in the fence with three sharp wire ends protruding inside the enclosure.

December 3, 2013: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to store feed properly. There were several open and partially spilled bags of feed on the floor of a barn, risking a deterioration of quality and contamination by rodents.

August 13, 2013: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to give adequate veterinary care to a snow macaque who died without having been seen by the attending veterinarian for diagnosis or treatment. The macaque had been housed with other macaques, and the cause of death was never determined. Not knowing and addressing the probable cause of death could lead to the death of other

macaques. Hovatter's was also cited for purchasing a wallaby from an unlicensed source; failing to maintain the barn that giraffes were kept in, which had four areas of chewed or broken wood; and failing to give sufficient shelter to three llamas who were saturated with water and had excessive amounts of mud on them. Thirty-five animals, including goats and pigs, shared an enclosure and two shelters: The first shelter was dry and nearly filled to capacity with almost all the goats, and the second shelter was empty as the ground was saturated with water and mud. The roadside zoo was also cited for failing to organize or remove an excessive accumulation of junk, building materials, tools, and other equipment from the area adjacent to the barn stall used to hold camels when they were not on exhibit.

January 8, 2013: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to remove excessive amounts of feces from several enclosures, including one holding baboons, one holding a single ring-tailed lemur, and one holding two grizzly bears. The facility was also cited for failing to have effective method of fly control, as there were flies present in four enclosures holding primates.

November 28, 2012: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to give adequate veterinary care to Casey, a female chimpanzee, who died without having been seen by the attending veterinarian for diagnosis or treatment. The cause of death was never determined. Not knowing and addressing the probable cause of death could lead to the death of other chimpanzees. Hovatter's was also cited for failing to maintain the indoor portion of the enclosure holding grivet (two support boards were excessively chewed), failing to maintain the enclosure holding a female macaque (the particle board had two holes in it), failing to fix a damaged guillotine door

in the enclosure holding a male grizzly bear (the door had several sharp wires protruding from it, and the door was not functioning, which meant that the bear could not be moved for the enclosure to be cleaned), and failing to remove potential hazards (debris, discarded building supplies, and a garbage pile) from the enclosure holding two llamas and one camel.

October 3, 2012: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to provide a juvenile grivet with an enclosure that would keep him from escaping. There was a gap between the enclosure gate and the chain-link fence, and the inspector observed the grivet sitting on top of the enclosure and later returning to the inside. Hovatter's was also cited for failing to have an effective rodent-control program, as indicated by rodent feces observed inside the building housing chimpanzees as well as several rodent burrows around the exterior of the building.

August 22, 2012: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to handle a giraffe properly. The giraffe was being fed by the public with no staff present. Hovatter's was also cited for failing to clean enclosures properly: One used to hold rabbits had an excessive accumulation of feces and no visible clean litter, and another holding chimpanzees had dark-colored liquid and feces draining from interior enclosures into the walkways. The facility was also cited for failing to keep the enclosure holding a camel clean and in good repair: The sheltered area had a heavy accumulation of liquid and feces buildup and no dry bedding.

The roadside zoo was also cited for failing to have sufficient shelter from inclement weather for African crested porcupines and two leopard cubs. Finally, the facility was cited for failing to provide several animals

with water: The trough for the pigs kept in the petting-zoo area was too tall for them to access, and when the water was dumped on the ground, the pigs went to it and drank it; the trough used for the audads was approximately one-third full, and the young ones were unable to access it and tried to lick water dripping from the sides; and the Russian pigs had no water source.

April 24, 2012: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to remove an excessive accumulation of organic material from the resting boards located inside the enclosure holding brown capuchins and for failing to have a primate enrichment plan that was species-specific or that addressed the needs of the individually housed species. The facility was also cited for failing to use safe enclosures for several animals, including goats who kept escaping the enclosure; the prairie-dog colony, which was not enclosed; and the camel, who was kept in an enclosure that had a pole leaning into and over the fence, making the lowest point of the enclosure only 34 inches high. The roadside zoo was also cited for failing to have an effective perimeter fence (it had several areas of insufficient height, had gaps, and was damaged in some sections); failing to have a feeding plan for the large felids; and failing to control the vines growing on the perimeter fence, which could inhibit visual inspections of the fence for damage and was causing sagging in areas.

March 14, 2012: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to have a sufficient primary fence around the enclosure holding lions to contain them effectively.

October 25, 2011: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to provide a female hyena who had a wound on her back with adequate veterinary care. The licensee had been in contact with the

veterinarian about the hyena, but the veterinarian hadn't examined her. The facility was also cited for failing to have an effective barrier around the primary enclosure holding spider monkeys: The barrier was only 2 feet away from the enclosure, which could allow an adult to reach the monkeys.

September 28, 2011: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to provide two female hyenas who had hair rubbed off their backs and irritated skin with adequate veterinary care. One of the female hyenas had a 6-inch wound and was separated from the male and a second female. The hyenas hadn't been seen by the veterinarian because the licensee believed that the injuries were part of the normal breeding process of this species.

September 13, 2011: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to have an effective barrier around the primary enclosure holding spider monkeys: The barrier was only 2 feet away from the enclosure, which could allow an adult to reach the monkeys. The facility was also cited for failing to have a sufficient primary fence around the enclosure holding lions to contain them effectively. It was further cited for failing to keep the fencing in good repair in two locations: The enclosure holding audads was loose around the bottom, allowing a juvenile audad to exit and enter, and the enclosure holding a brown bear had gaps in the bottom of the fencing.

April 19, 2011: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to clean the wooden porches and boards in an enclosure holding a capuchin properly: These areas were covered in a layer of dirt and packed feces.

May 6, 2009: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to keep the refrigerator area clean and for failing to

properly store an open bag of feed, which was on the floor of the gift shop with two young animals in the area.

December 4, 2008: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for inadequately cleaning enclosures holding vervet monkeys, baboons, and tigers, all of which had an excessive buildup of feces. The roadside zoo was also cited for failing to provide a barrier between three mammoth donkeys kept in an enclosure that contained a pen holding a single bear and a pen holding two macaques.

August 7, 2008: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to have gates in the fence enclosing bison and a camel at the required height of 6 feet; the gates were only 4 feet high.

May 20, 2008: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to have gates in the perimeter fence of sufficient height to contain animals who could pose a danger to humans.

February 14, 2008: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to provide 15 adult guinea pigs with the minimum required space: The animals were kept in a horse trough that provided 1,440 square inches of space, but the minimum requirement was 2,700 square inches. The roadside zoo was also cited for failing to remove clutter from the warm room and for failing to have a perimeter fence of sufficient height to contain animals who could pose a danger to humans.

June 27, 2007: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to keep goats in a pen that would safely contain them: The pen that had a fence that was only 39 inches tall, which the goats could easily jump over, allowing them to run through the zoo.

April 10, 2007: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to protect spider monkeys from a foil-coated insulating board that was within their reach, allowing them to remove the surfacing and other pieces. The facility was also cited for failing to provide two spider monkeys with an enclosure that met the minimum space requirements: The enclosure was 25 square feet and 72 inches high, but the minimum requirement was 50.2 square feet and 84 inches in height.

July 27, 2006: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to supply adequate veterinary care to a zebra whose hooves were excessively overgrown and for failing to shear the sheep.

January 3, 2006: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to separate incompatible animals: Two cavies were being kept with five wallabies, and the wallabies were attacking the cavies.

December 14, 2005: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to store bags of feed off the floor; improperly disposing of waste meat, which was stored in buckets on the floor of the feed room; failing to properly store betadine spray, which was kept over the apples and had leaked down the wall; and failing to provide two baboons with the minimum space required. The baboons were both kept in an 8-square-foot enclosure, but the minimum requirement was 8 square feet *each*.

November 10, 2003: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to construct an enclosure for marmosets that could be easily sanitized and for failing to properly maintain the enclosure holding a camel: The fence showed signs of severe breakdown in one area, where it was almost totally on the ground and the camel was damaging it.

July 15, 2003: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for inadequately addressing the psychological needs of a macaque who showed signs of stress. The facility was also cited for failing to provide two wild-caught coyotes with a safe enclosure: The pen that the animals were kept in had been "dug out" to such an extent that points of wire were sticking out.

April 24, 2003: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to provide two wild-caught coyotes with a safe enclosure: The pen that the animals were kept in had been "dug out" to such an extent that points of wire were sticking out.

August 16, 2002: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to keep records of ongoing treatment for a tiger who had a tail infection and for failing to provide two coyote pups with an enclosure large enough for them to make normal postural adjustments and move around.

October 29, 2001: The USDA cited Hovatter's Wildlife Zoo for failing to have a responsible adult available to permit an inspection.