Living with Wildlife through One Health

EcoHealth Alliance

Wildlife and Ecosystem Health

Wildlife is an essential part of a healthy ecosystem. They play a crucial role in pollination, seed dispersal, pest control, and provide nutrition and welfare to human communities.

Disease Risk for People and Animals

Sometimes diseases can spread between people and animals.

The health of animals and people is closely related.

Basic Principles

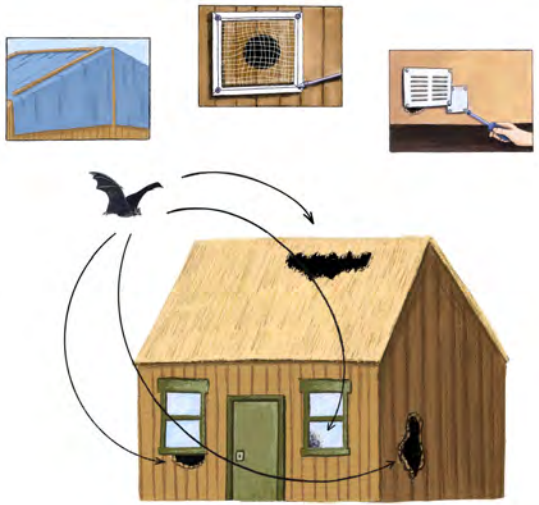
Avoiding contact with wildlife is the best way to keep animals and people safe and healthy.

- It is crucial to keep a distance from the areas where wildlife live and to avoid disturbing them.

- If you have contact with animals, their bodily fluids, or food they have touched, always wash your hands with clean, running water and soap for at least 20 seconds.

Prevent Contact with Wildlife at Your Home

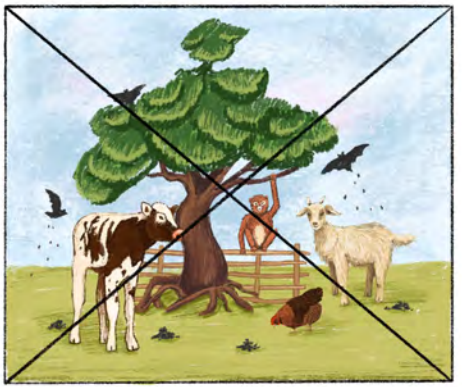
Try to prevent wild animals from entering your home, especially in the kitchen or where food is prepared and stored.



- Cover holes or cracks in your home to prevent small animals such as rats and bats from entering.
- If possible, keep food and trash covered or tightly sealed to avoid attracting animals nearby.

Protect Domestic Animals

Domestic animals can get sick from contact with wildlife, and sometimes spread the illness to people.



- Provide proper veterinary care, keep their vaccinations up to date, and regularly check for ticks and fleas.
- Do not leave domestic animals in places where they may contact wildlife (e.g., under trees used by wildlife especially bats).

Protect Crops

- Set fences around crop fields, cover fruits and crop collection tools to prevent animal contact.

- Harvest crops that may attract animals before they are fully ripe.

- Do not eat or feed your domestic animals with harvested crops if there are signs of animals touching the crops.

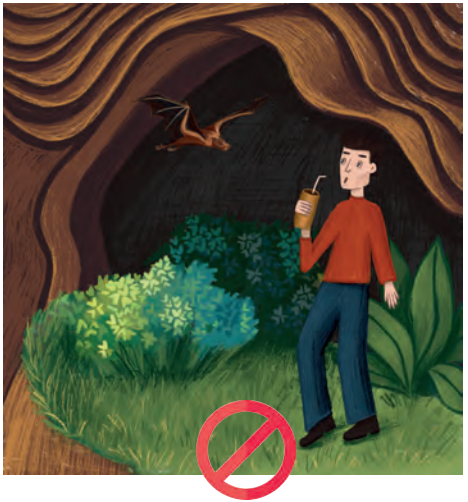
Wildlife Trade

- Hunting, trading, and eating wild animals may increase the risk of disease transmission among animals and humans. These activities are dangerous and sometimes illegal.

- Keeping wild animals in captivity requires specific knowledge, skills, facilities, disease prevention measures, and government permissions.

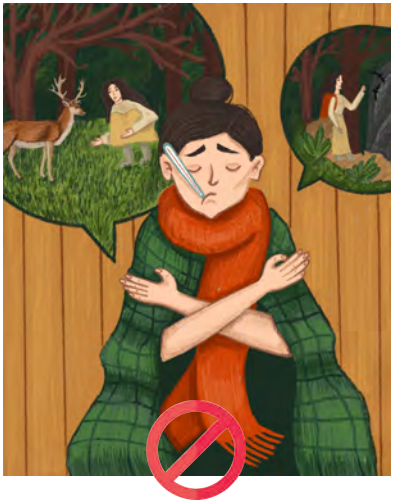
Ecotourism and Recreation

Protect yourself and wildlife when you are enjoying activities in nature.



- Do not eat or drink around wildlife and their excrement.

- Do not get close to the wildlife to take pictures.

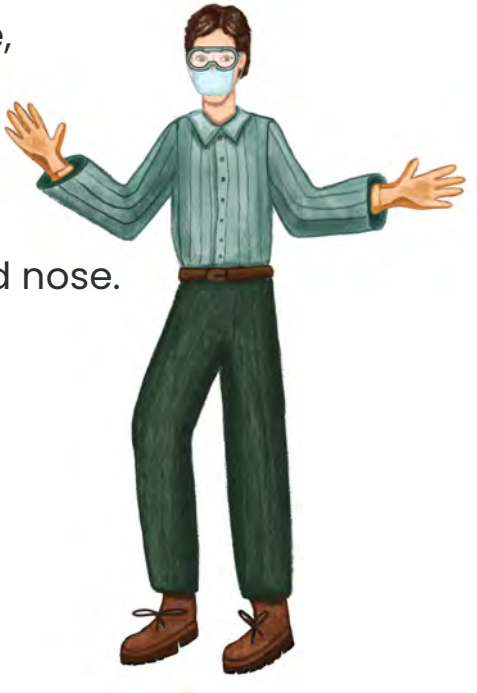


- Do not feed wildlife.

Personal Protection Equipment

If you must make contact with wildlife or clean up their droppings, here are some basic protections you can take to keep yourself safe:

- Cover your eyes, nose, and mouth. If you cannot find a face mask, you can use a cloth or bandana to cover your mouth and nose.



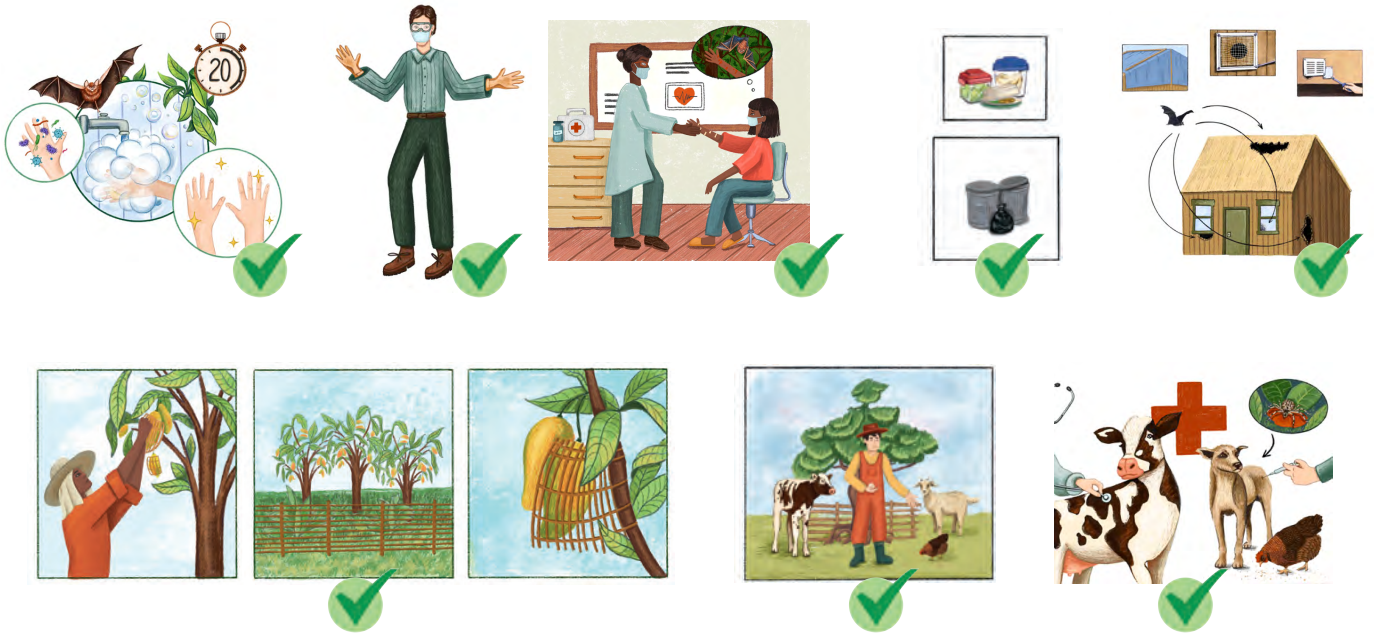
- Wear long-sleeve shirts, pants, and gloves to protect yourself from animal scratches, bites, or bugs.

Seek Help and Treatment

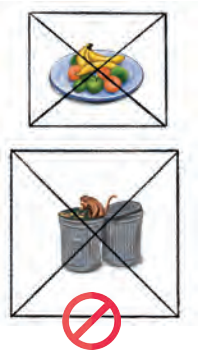
If you feel ill after contact with an animal, call or visit a healthcare professional and tell them about your encounter with the animal.

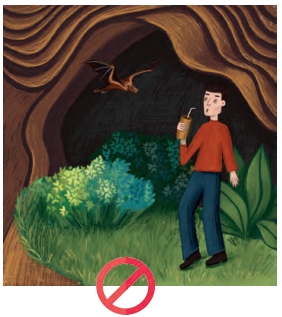
Take Action

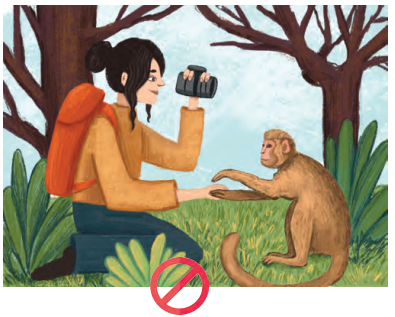
The health of wildlife and people is dependent on all of us. We can learn to take action to help reduce disease risk and build a healthy community living safely with wildlife.



Make Changes







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Acknowledgment:
The development of this document is supported by Wallace Research Foundation and Samuel Freeman Charitable Foundation. Special gratitude goes to Tom Hughes (Conservation Medicine), Jimmy Lee (Conservation Medicine), Mary Chambers (Oxford University Clinical Research Unit), Vu Duy Thanh (Oxford University Clinical Research Unit), Vu Thanh Phuong (Oxford University Clinical Research Unit), Vo Quynh Chi (RMIT Vietnam) and Quan Bao Phuong (University of Medicine and Pharmacy HCMC) who have provided valuable comments to help improve this document.

Suggested citation:
EcoHealth Alliance. (2022). Living with Wildlife through One Health.

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Conservation Medicine