

Please Look After This Bear - International Animal Rescue Calls on Public to Support Their Dancing Bear Christmas Appeal

Wednesday 26 November, 2025

International Animal Rescue (IAR) has launched its Digit Bear Christmas Appeal, calling on supporters to help care for rescued dancing sloth bears who continue to suffer the consequences of one of India's cruellest wildlife trades.

Christmas marks two milestones for this ongoing appeal, as the first dancing bear was rescued in December, as was the last. This appeal will support their continued efforts to help rescued sloth bears, including the unforgettable Digit, a bear whose story inspired a generation of animal lovers around the world.

While India's dancing bear trade was stopped 16 years ago, rescued sloth bears continue to suffer the long-term consequences of years of physical and psychological trauma. This Christmas, IAR is once again calling on supporters to donate towards vital care, comfort and enrichment for bears such as Digit who have been so cruelly scarred by this shameful trade.

IAR first rescued Digit in 2009. He had been taken from the wild as a cub, prepared to be a 'dancing bear', and suffered from infected wounds and an unhealed rope piercing his muzzle. Today, 16 years on and thanks to IAR's close partnership with Wildlife SOS, Digit is a happy, cheeky bear who has made a full recovery from his early years. But the love, care and compassion needed to help bears like Digit has never been more vital and nor has the need for public support. Any gifts made before 19 December will be matched, up to £13,000.

"Our teams of vets and caregivers are nothing short of guardian angels," said Alan Knight OBE, President of IAR. "They know every bear's favourite food, every quirk, every fear, and they devote their lives to ensuring these animals feel safe, secure and loved. But we can't do it without our supporters. A gift made before 19 December will go twice as far to bring comfort and care to these beautiful bears. It truly means the world to them."

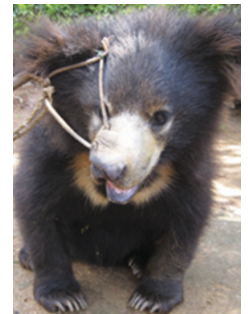
With the colder months approaching, **IAR is calling on supporters to donate** a Christmas gift that will make life safer and happier for Digit and the bears who have made sanctuary their home. Each donation could provide bear treats, enrichment or soft straw bedding to keep rescued bears warm during the cold months.

To show their appreciation to **those who donate, IAR will be sending a special Christmas decoration to supporters**, along with an invitation to send a message for the bears and their carers to be displayed on IAR's Christmas tree.

"The world is still a dangerous place for bears in India," said Knight. "But with your help, we will never stop fighting to keep them safe."

Supporters can make donations online at <https://bit.ly/PleaseLookAfterThisBear> and any gifts made before 19 December will be matched, up to £13,000.

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Bears open Christmas gifts for enrichment sent by International Animal Rescue and Wildlife SOS Supporters.

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