Tourists Urged to Boycott Exotic Animal Cafés as Welfare Charity Launches Public Pledge

Tuesday 10 February, 2026

[LONDON / TOKYO, 10th February 2026] Global animal welfare charity, Wild Welfare, has today launched a ‘call-to-action campaign’ urging for an end to the exploitation of wildlife within the exotic animal cafés across Asia. The ‘Just Say No’ pledge invites the public to look beyond the ‘cute’ aesthetics of these increasingly popular tourist spots, and to recognise the harsh and cruel realities lived by the animals kept within them.

The rise of animal cafés, particularly across Japan, has become increasingly visited experiences by tourists, likely driven, in part by their frequent social media exposure. Guests are promised close-up encounters with exotic species such as owls, otters, capybaras and even fennec foxes, however, behind their “cute cafe” image, lies a stark reality of highly compromised animal welfare. Wild Welfare, working alongside a network of Japanese animal welfare NGOs’ and experts, is sounding the alarm on the distress these commercial environments are causing animals along with their risk to visitor health and safety.

“People visit these cafés because they ‘love’ animals, but the tragic irony is that their decision to visit fuels a cycle of suffering,” says Georginal Groves, a Senior Animal Welfare Advisor at Wild Welfare. “Our research and technical paper, carried out through the support of the charity ‘Animal Welfare Japan’, demonstrates that these crowded, noisy environments are fundamentally incapable of meeting the complex needs of wild animals. From over handling, to the inability of species to perform any natural behaviours; thousands of animals in these cafes are existing in a state of chronic stress.”

The ‘Just Say No’ pledge is part of a broader strategy which has seen Wild Welfare working with partners to advocate for the end of exotic animal entertainment cafes. The organisation provides technical expertise to assist the transition of the international tourism industry toward more ethical, welfare-friendly practices.

By taking the pledge, supporters are making a tangible commitment to the welfare of captive wild animals and helping to shift the global demand away from the over commercialisation of wildlife.

Take a few seconds to stand up for animal welfare and add your name to the online pledge today at https://wildwelfare.org/animal-cafe-pledge/

ENDS

Media:





Related Sectors:

Charities & non-profits :: Environment & Nature :: Farming & Animals :: Travel & Tourism ::

Related Keywords:

Animal Welfare :: Exotic Animal Cafe :: Japan Animal Cafe :: Owl Cafe Tokyo :: Otter Cafe Japan :: Animal Welfare Japan ::

Scan Me:

Company Contact:

_

Wild Welfare

E. communications@wildwelfare.org
W. WildWelfare.org

Additional Contact(s):
Andy - Communications Manager, Wild Welfare

View Online

Additional Assets:

Newsroom: Visit our Newsroom for all the latest stories:
https://www.wildwelfare.pressat.co.uk