

In spite of economic prosperity the world is getting poorer. Resources are drying up, pollution is wide-spread, nature is being eaten away by development and every day thousands of animal and plant species are dying out and becoming extinct. Yet people are becoming greedier, everyone wanting more consumer goods, a larger share of the wealth. It is a source of sadness to me that young people are unconcerned about these problems or if they are, they show but a token interest with no real urge to become active in doing something to stop the decline of our natural world. It is their future world after all.

While wild animals are declining in number due to loss of habitat, domestic animals are increasing, especially pets, dogs and cats. After people save enough money to buy a house they want a dog, often an expensive pedigree one, as a status symbol. Rare cats too have also become fashionable. Yet when people's circumstance change or they grow tired of their pet or they find it too troublesome to keep, they easily give it up. They may send it to a horrible death at the hokensho or they may just abandon it on the street or a mountain side or by a river. Whichever they choose, the end for that animal is terrible. This is where I come in.

My free time is devoted to helping animals in need. Why animals? The answer for me is a simple one. Animals cannot talk, they cannot tell us when they are miserable or badly treated, they suffer silently. Too few people care what animals think, they regard them as lower than humans (who are after all animals too) to be eaten, abused or used in some way for the benefit of human life. But animals can and do suffer, pain, stress, discomfort in the same way that we do because they have a nervous system like ours. They are in fact more sensitive. All my life I have had contact with animals; horses, cows, pigs, poultry, dogs and cats. By observation and communication I have learnt how they think and how they feel. They have given me a lot of pleasure and love and now I feel it is my turn to help them.

Three years ago I bought a wide tract of land in Nose. Here I keep about 60 animals mostly dogs, as well as cats, a pony, goats and poultry. All these animals have been thrown away, abused or ill-treated in some way. My home is a sanctuary for them. Of course I cannot keep them all indefinitely so I try to find good homes for them through a network of friends. We check people and their homes carefully before giving any animal away. But rescuing can be an endless process as the number of abandoned pets in Japan runs into millions. My aim is therefore not only to rescue but to provide education in the better care of animals.