

Animal welfare starts at home

As Japan has led by example on the world stage and signed the Biodiversity Treaty, which in short signifies its willingness to preserve and protect the animal and plant life of the world, let us see it first start to practice the goals of this treaty in its zoos.

A visit to the Tobu Dobutsu Koen (animal park) makes obvious that Japan still thinks that zoos exist for people, not for the animals that are displayed in them.

Unfortunately it is more often than not a necessity for them to be there as many of the animals are unable to live in their natural environment due to the rapid destruction of it by so-called progress.

After seeing the cramped, concrete cages at the Tobu zoo, I felt that no attempt had been made to provide a natural environment or comfortable living conditions for the inhabitants. What was most distressing was that many of the animals had no water in their cages. Of those that did, the water was unfit to drink, much of it was inaccessible to the animals, and had excrement floating in it.

Also, many of the animals had no protection from the sun. Looking around, my friends and I noticed that the public had taken full advantage of the shade areas and numerous soft drink machines conveniently located nearby.

Spare a thought for those and many other animals in Japanese zoos during the humid summer months. Animal welfare starts at home.

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