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Wild Animals are not Pets!
Campaigning in Argentina

In many countries around the world, demand for exotic pets is a key driver behind the illegal trade in wildlife. Such is the case in Argentina where purchasing native, and often endangered, wildlife is increasingly popular. Not only are at-risk species trafficked domestically, they are sold to other countries as well, pushing more than 50 species of mammals and birds to the brink of extinction, not to mention the steady loss in biodiversity.

Despite the decline in wild animal populations, many people are unaware of the issue. In response JGI Argentina launched a campaign in 2017 to end the local exotic pet trade. Through their efforts, the Argentina office has worked closely with teachers, community members and students, to raise awareness about the important difference between domesticated animals that are suitable as pets and wild animals that are not.

Educators have supported the campaign, extending the message to their students. Young people, in turn, have spread the message even further. Hundreds of students enthusiastically joined the “Animal Parade” in Buenos Aires as a celebration of biodiversity and to draw attention to the problem of poaching wildlife for the pet trade. Buenos Aires is the centre of illegal wildlife trading and four of the most trafficked, and very special, local species were showcased as ambassadors for the campaign: the tortoise, toucan, howler monkey and yellow cardinal. Children from local schools and Jane Goodall’s Roots & Shoots groups made costumes with recycled materials and dressed up as one of the four animals.

In their colourful costumes and masks, the parade was festive and fun. Between attendance and participation, more than 2,000 people were engaged. At the same time, students also started to understand for themselves the very real threats faced by the animals they represented and the urgent need for conservation. Some of the children, such as the pre-school Roots & Shoots group “The Jaguar Explorers” (“Los exploradores yaguaretés”), even got their families involved. Local celebrities lent their support through a widely shared video: [Campaign video \(https://youtu.be/hKom2_an_iA\)](https://youtu.be/hKom2_an_iA)

Jane Goodall was on hand to join the parade, encouraging everyone to share her vision for a world where we can live more harmoniously with nature.

JGI Argentina’s campaign is still going strong. This year, children have been making posters and [videos](#) about the threats that jaguars face from poaching.

To date, 15 schools and nearly 700 youth were involved in JGI Argentina’s campaign and helped extend the message to their family, friends and the public. With many of the young people having once owned wild animals as pets, this campaign hit home with immediate impact.

[/ Learn more in https://youtu.be/QnnrHtBbmSU](https://youtu.be/QnnrHtBbmSU)

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Preparing for the Animal Parade [NB accompanying photos are in Argentina story folder]

Associated information:

- *Live trafficking of wildlife causes immense suffering to animals during the hunt and during their clandestine journey to their destination. They are often handled inappropriately and may suffer terrible conditions in transportation and captivity. Many animals die en route.*
- *All sorts of animals are trafficked for the exotic pet market and there are markets all over the world. Reptiles and amphibians, including vulnerable species, are trafficked in the greatest numbers. According to TRAFFIC, more than 6040 Indian star tortoises were seized globally in 2017. Birds are also widely trafficked as pets.*
- *Demand for exotic pets is a driver of wildlife trafficking. With protected species openly traded, eg on social media, buyers may be unaware that their interest in animals is funding crime, cruelty and environmental damage.*
- *People who see adverts for exotic pets which may be trafficked on social media should report this to the company using the platform's reporting tools, eg:*
 - *Facebook:*
[Reporting](#)
[Community standards; No sale of animals online (commercial policy)]
 - *Instagram:*
[Reporting abuse of the Community Guidelines](#)
[Community guidelines 'Follow the law'; Terms of Use 'you can't do anything unlawful']
 - *WhatsApp:*
[Reporting](#)