

Members of Community and
Protective Services Committee
City London
By email



28 March 2022

Dear Members of Community and Protective Services Committee

Reference: Support for recommendations March 2022 AWAC report

On behalf of World Animal Protection and our more than 160,000 supporters in Ontario, I would like to register our concern about the potential opening of a Reptile zoo in the City of London and our support for the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee (AWAC) recommendations:

- Council to affirm that the exemption in the Animal Control By-law for animals licensed by the province is limited to the animals held under their provincial license, and that all other animals will be subject to the municipal animal control by-law.
- Council direct staff to send a clarification to the owner of Reptilia Zoo regarding the exemption limitation and a copy of the by-law highlighting that many animals within the Reptilia Zoo collection may be prohibited or restricted in the City of London pursuant to the by-law.

World Animal Protection is a leader on issues related to the global wildlife trade global and a voice for animal welfare, for more than 70 years we have been collaborating with local communities, the private sector, civil society and governments to find practical, science-based solutions to animal welfare issues.

The use of potentially dangerous animals like large constrictor snakes, venomous reptiles and crocodylians, especially during contact-programs, pose a serious public health and safety risk since these animals are capable of severely injuring or killing a person. Therefore, to address this concern, many municipalities, including the City of London have banned the keeping

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World Animal Protection is the operating name of World Society for the Protection of Animals Canada.
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We were known as **WSPA**
(World Society for the
Protection of Animals)



of these animals. Such bans are critical to keep the public and the animals safe and should be enforced consistently.

We are also very concerned about animal welfare. There is ample of well-supported evidence that the use of reptiles in entertainment settings can have a detrimental impact on their physical and psychological health and welfare. The cognitive, emotional and social capabilities of reptiles, in combination with a broad suite of other complex behaviours and the need for specific environmental conditions makes them utterly unsuitable for use in contact-programs, whether it is on-site at a zoo or at an off-site location. We also have welfare concerns associated with the keeping of reptiles in static, basic zoo conditions.

In summary, World Animal Protection strongly supports the recommendations of the Animal Welfare Advisory Committee. The responsibility for addressing almost all of the issues associated with exotic animals within city limits lies with the City of London. Following through on the AWAC recommendations will provide more control to the City of London, safeguard animal welfare and human safety, and make it easier to address any problems that arise.

If you have any questions about this submission, please reach out to 416-369-0044 x 115 or michelehamers@worldanimalprotection.ca.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michèle Hamers".

Michèle Hamers
MSc, MRSB, EurProBiol
Wildlife Campaign Manager
World Animal Protection