

The Cute Curse

If you love sloths, why you should say no to holding one



Hair stains

Sloth hair stains red from tourists' toxic bug spray and sunscreen.



Sickness

Exhibit signs of sickness like respiratory and skin infections.



Thin and small

Without a proper diet, they are thin and don't grow to adult weight.

Investigations into the sloth trade

Sloths are found naturally throughout Central and South American countries. In almost every country, examples of sloths being abused for the selfie and pet trade can be found. In a study conducted by World Animal Protection (2014-2017), 70% of sloth selfies on social media were of sloths being held and used as photo props and sloths were the 2nd most frequently abused animal for wildlife selfies.

1

WILD CAUGHT

Sloths are captured from the wild to fuel the selfie and pet trade.

2

POOR WELFARE

Sloths at selfie tourist attractions are not cared for properly and live a stressed life.

3

DIE EASILY

Sloths are very sensitive, making survival in captivity rare, even under good conditions.

Many victims

Sloths are often captured in mass for shipment within and outside of habitat countries.

In Roatan, Honduras, TSI field staff witnessed hundreds of people passing around a handful of sloths for photo opportunities. Every sloth exhibited “survey” behavior the entire time which indicates that they were constantly looking for a way off of the tourist. In a normal environment, wild sloths only survey on average 2.9% of the time.



Multiple sloths are captured from the wild at one time. In countries with lax laws and

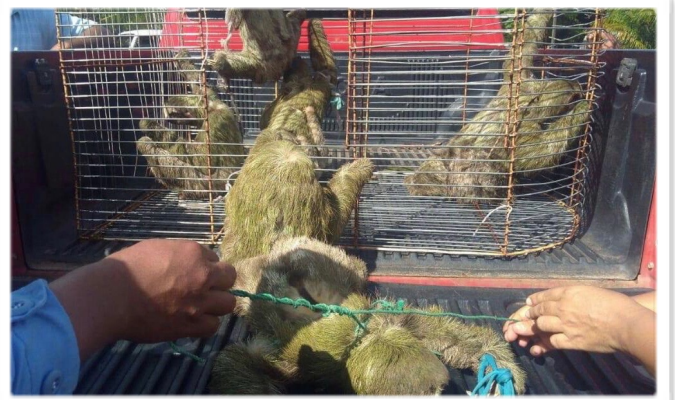


Image source: Instituto de Conservación Forestal (ICF) Facebook Page

enforcement, the sloths are often shipped to other countries where their fate is most likely death. TSI knows of one shipment, in the Caribbean, that contained 27 sloths, who all died shortly after confiscation. The ‘lucky’ sloths that survive transport are stuck in these tourist selfie camps for the rest of their lives. Join us in setting an example for how wild sloths should be respected.

“They were constantly looking for a way off of the tourist”

HOW YOU CAN HELP!

- 1) Take photos with stuffed sloths instead (Like our mascot, *Freedom* pictured on the right) and post online with the hashtags: **#SayNoToSlothSelfies** and **#StopAnimalSelfies**
- 2) Educate your friends by sharing this message and handout!
- 3) Always say NO to opportunities to hold, feed, pet or take photos with sloths.
- 4) When visiting sloths in zoos, ask where the sloths came from and find out if that zoo supports sloth conservation in the wild.



All photos, unless otherwise noted, were taken during TSI investigations into the sloth trade