

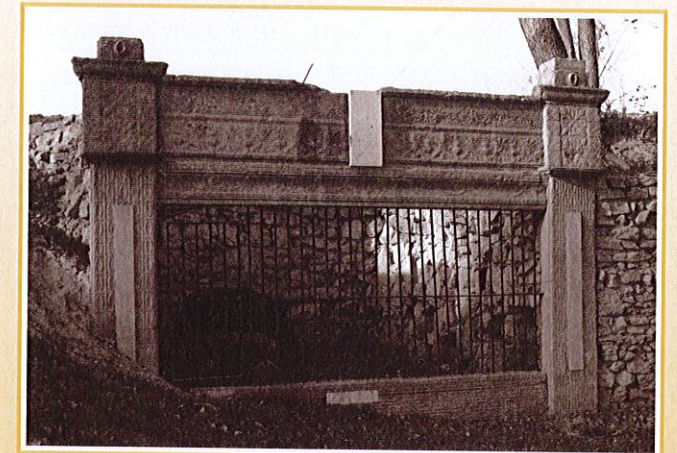
Note: Before you begin to read the text, answer Question 1 on the opposite page.

ZOOS: OLD AND NEW

The first zoo we know of was in Egypt around 1500 BC. It belonged to Queen Hatshepsut. She received wild animals as gifts from her army when the soldiers returned from lands they had conquered.

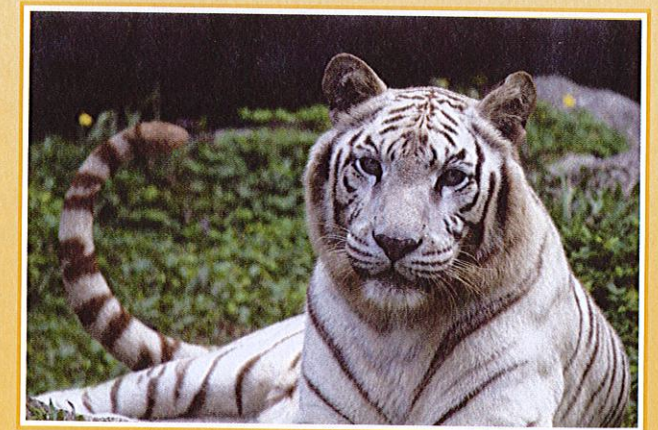
Before modern zoos, some rich people had collections of animals called menageries. In most menageries, animals were kept in small, dirty cages. In modern zoos, animals are kept in areas that look more like their natural habitats. This change took place slowly. For many years, zoos kept animals in cages, and some zoos still do. However, people often speak out against a zoo if its animals are kept in small enclosures.

Long ago, the purpose of zoos was to let people see rare animals that came from distant places which most people could never visit. Today, there are additional reasons for zoos. Many animal species are endangered. This means that they are at risk of becoming extinct. Some animals no longer exist in the wild at all, only in captivity. Zoologists try to breed the captive animals, and eventually be able to return each species to its native habitat. Yet they are not always able to do this as sometimes the habitat has been destroyed due to changes in land use.



A cage in a menagerie from long ago

At one time, hunters captured and sold animals to zoos. While this still occurs on a lesser scale, animals are usually sold or traded between zoos. Many nations have passed laws against the capture of wild animals. Most zoo animals have been born and raised in captivity.



An endangered white tiger in captivity

People concerned with animal rights don't like zoos. Others feel that zoos care for and protect the animals. They argue it is why many exotic species survive today.