

Why feeding wild animals is wrong

Social Desk

EXCLUSIVE

A video has recently gone viral in Iran, in which we see bears are being fed by mountaineers. What the bears are eating in the video is dry bread, thrown in front of them, whose nutritional value is unknown. In the video, the bears are treated like trained animals, and they are filmed while eating. The bears are being used as a form of entertainment, with some people taking advantage of their hunger. In addition, there have been advertisements for bear-feeding tours, which in all probability are illegal.

Feeding animals in the city is a mistake, but feeding wildlife in nature is an even bigger mistake. Unfortunately, Iran has been grappling recently with the dangerous trend of feeding stray dogs and feral cats, against which many experts have constantly warned. Yet, perhaps even the sternest critics wouldn't have thought that the trend might take on such bizarre twist.

Feeding wildlife not only disrupts the delicate balance of natural ecosystems, but also poses a serious threat to the survival of wild animals. Recent incidents, including tours that focus on feeding animals such as bears in their natural habitats, have once again brought this issue to the forefront, prompting experts to highlight the detrimental effects and call for responsible actions.

One of the key reasons why feeding wild animals is its disruptive impact on the natural food chains that exist in ecosystems. Animals have finely tuned instincts that guide their foraging behavior. They search for food according to their natural instinct and maintain their survival through dependencies on the food chain. When humans intervene and provide alternative food sources, it disrupts this delicate balance.

Feeding animals, especially with inappropriate or unhealthy food, can lead to numerous health risks. Human-made food may lack the essential nutrients and natural components that wild animals need for their well-being. Additionally, wild animals accustomed to human-provided food



gradually become dependent on it, reducing their ability to forage naturally. This dependence can have severe consequences when environmental changes occur or humans are unable to provide sustenance.

Repeated feeding of wild animals can trigger aggressive behavior. Animals quickly associate humans with a source of food and become conditioned to rely on this artificial feeding. When food is irregularly provided or unavailable, they may exhibit aggressive tendencies or even attack humans in their desperate search for sustenance. This poses a significant risk to both humans and the animals themselves.

Every organism plays a crucial role in maintaining the balance of an ecosystem. When humans disrupt this delicate equilibrium by feeding specific species, it can have cascading effects throughout the entire ecosystem. Overfeed-



ing certain animals can lead to overpopulation, resulting in competition for resources and potentially driving other species to the brink of extinction. This disruption can trigger a domino effect, wreaking havoc on the natural biodiversity of the area.

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Feeding wildlife without proper authorization or permits is often illegal. Many countries, including Iran, have strict regulations in place to protect wild animals and their natural habitats. Organizing tours or activities that involve feeding wild animals, without proper permission, not only contravenes these laws but also reflects a lack of responsible attitudes towards the environment.

While the act of feeding wild animals might seem harmless or even well-intentioned, it has long-term

detrimental effects on both the animals and the ecosystems they inhabit. By disrupting natural food chains, promoting dependency, triggering aggressive behavior, causing ecological imbalances, and often violating legal and ethical guidelines, feeding wildlife poses significant risks. To truly safeguard the well-being of wild animals and preserve the delicate balance of our ecosystems, we must refrain from feeding them and instead advocate for responsible conservation practices.

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special series on ta'zieh

Ta'zieh, Iran's national, religious art form

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Ta'zieh, a national and religious art form of Iran, symbolizes the harmonious coexistence of art and religion. Throughout history, ta'zieh artists have strived to uphold this religious art form. Despite facing numerous challenges, such as a brief period of obstacles in the second Pahlavi era, ta'zieh continues to thrive in Iran. Among the Ta'zieh artists, Majid Khosrovan is a notable figure, with whom we had a conversation for our special series on ta'zieh.

Born in 1989, Majid Khosrovan holds a bachelor's degree in cultural management. He currently serves as the director of the religious board of the University of Applied Science and Technology. Khosrovan's journey into this art form began at the age of six, encouraged by his father, with his own interest guiding the way.

"I was fortunate to learn from esteemed teachers such as Hashem Fayyaz and the late Rahmatollah Eskandi," he said.

His first public recital was the ta'zieh 'Bazaar-e Sham' – recounting the passions of Imam Hossein's family – which he recalls with fondness, particularly the excitement he felt when the trumpets and drums were played.

Khosrovan shares some of his cherished memories from performing ta'zieh. One such memory is his first performance as Hazrat-e Abdollah in the ta'zieh of Imam Hossein. He recalls the joy of showing his body, painted blood red to signify his character's martyrdom, to his family after the performance. He also fondly remembers the anticipation of attending weekly ta'zieh meetings during his childhood.

Khosrovan takes great pride in his ability to evoke the events of Karbala and Ashura through his performances. He believes that performing ta'zieh has a profound impact on a performer's behavior and

morals, serving as a deterrent against committing sins. For him, ta'zieh is a priority in all situations, as it has enriched his life with love and blessings.

Khosrovan expresses his preference for playing the role of Imam Hossein. He finds it spiritually fulfilling when people ask him for prayers in light of Imam Hossein's role and his ta'zieh costume. He believes that the art form conveys significant messages such as sacrifice, martyrdom, chivalry, and freedom.

"Those who understand and live by these principles will undoubtedly succeed in life," he said.

Since ta'zieh is a national and religious art form of Iran, Khosrovan has had the opportunity to perform the role of Imam Hossein in four European countries – Finland, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark. His performances were well-received by European audiences. He has also participated in numerous festivals and currently serves on the board of directors of the Ta'zieh

Association of Iran. His group has performed over 500 assemblies at cultural centers and universities. Khosrovan concluded our conversation with the expression of his desire for more support to promote

professional ta'zieh. He urged all relevant bodies to contribute to the elevation of this art form.

"I also appeal to anyone who could assist in any way to help enhance and expand ta'zieh," he said.

