41 Undomestic, Domesticated Animals - mental_floss on YouTube (Ep.8)

List Show
https://youtube.com/watch?v=mngNpBYCvZc
https://nerdfighteria.info/v/mngNpBYCvZc

Hi, I'm that guy, welcome to my salon. This is mental_floss, and today we're going to be discussing 39 exotic domesticated animals. Well actually, let's just say animals that have been kept as pets because as we will see, many of them, are not domesticated. So anyway, don't try this at home. Seriously, this is not an endorsement, this is just an acknowledgement. Mark, why are you showing my brother instead of me?

[mental_floss Intro]

1. Skunks are often kept as pets, although it is illegal in most states in the US and also a terrible idea. But you'll be surprised to learn that you are allowed to have them in Florida, where Don and Brenda Hawk live with their 15 rescued pet skunks.

2. Tonie Joubert of South Africa owns a 10-year-old hippo named Jessica. He rescued her from a flood when she was a baby and he's had her ever since. Jessica drinks coffee. 10 liters a day to be exact because, you know, if you're going to have the most dangerous animal in the world as a pet, you should give it coffee. Anyway, Jessica gets along with the family's dogs and is very tame. Allegedly. I'll believe it when I see it which I will never do because hippos are terrifying. It's actually my #1 problem with the movie Madagascar. It promotes inadequate fear of hippos among children.

3. Flying squirrels have been kept as pets for hundreds of years and many flying squirrel owners claim that their animals are very loving and affectionate. Fun fact: Wrestler Ellis Coleman, who competed for the United States Olympic Wrestling Team got the nickname "Flying Squirrel" for his signature move: Somersaulting over the person he was wrestling with and tackling them from behind. But when people started calling Gabby Douglas "Flying Squirrel" during her rise to fame as a gymnast in the 2012 Summer Olympics, Ellis Coleman went out and bought a $500 flying squirrel at the mall and named it Rocky to prove that he was the original Flying Squirrel. Coleman's Twitter handle by the way? @DaFlyinSquirrel.

4. Looking for a featherless flying pet but the flying squirrel just isn't exotic enough for you? You may want to consider getting some sugar gliders, which are marsupials from Australia. And yes, I did say plural because they are happiest in groups. In fact, one of the the designers from the TLC show Trading Spaces has sugar gliders. You know, Trading Spaces. It was that show that was on TLC before all of their programs were about obsessive couponing and people who eat rocks. Or you could just get a bat. Mark, could we pull up that Venn diagram of recreational bat owners and people I avoid? Yeah, that's it. Thank you.

5. And speaking of rodents, chinchillas are often kept as pets. When Tom Felton was a kid, he had a pet chinchilla named Stanley. That's not very Draco.

6. If playing Sonic just makes you say, 'Man, I wish I had a hedgehog in real life', worry not! Hedgehogs are actually fairly common pets in the U.S. And they're not just pets, they're political candidates. In New Zealand, the parody political party The McGillicuddy Serious Party actually got a hedgehog on a Parliamentary ballot, although it did not win. As I know from Crash Course World History, New Zealanders are just delighted to be mentioned. Right now, they're in comments like, 'Oh my god, you know we exist!' Well, we've seen Flight of the Conchords.

7-12. In 2006, two men were arrested in Michigan for bringing their pet alligator into PetSmart on a leash. Mark, remind me never to take our office dog to PetSmart, because she will die. Speaking of pet alligators, President John Quincy Adams had one. He took it to the White House and everything.

8-12. But that's nothing compared to Teddy Roosevelt's zoo of bears, snakes, a badger, a hyena, and also, a one-legged rooster.

13. Salvador Dalí had an ocelot named Babou, who traveled with him on his yacht, the S.S. France.

14. Lord Byron, most famous for writing poetry and having affairs, brought a bear to Trinity College out of spite, because they didn't allow dogs, but there was no specific rule against bringing bears. You know, that's funny at first, but then you have to live with a bear.

15. Famous astronomer Tycho Brahe owned a pet moose, which he liked so much that he tried to send a moose to a fellow astronomer, Landgrave Wilhelm. Which just goes to show you that astronomers in the 1500s were very generous people, and also weird.

16. Tippi Hedren had a pet lion, which explains why her daughter Melanie Griffith is so well-rounded.

17. Audrey Hepburn had a deer, Pippin, which slept in a bathtub. By the way, Audrey Hepburn, I know that you didn't know this was coming, but Tumblr is extremely fond of that deer.

18. Aerosmith's Steven Tyler has a raccoon that he likes to bring fishing with him. President Calvin Coolidge also had raccoons, which is one of the many things that Calvin Coolidge and Steven Tyler have in common. You know, pet raccoons, leathery skin, not that great with money.

19. Paris Hilton had a kinkajou, which bit her in 2006. Uhh...there are almost too many jokes that I can make here, but I'm gonna stick with the fact that she called it "Baby Luv." B-A-B-Y L-U-V. Does Paris Hilton know how to spell the world love? The world may never know.

20. Speaking of celebrities, Charlie Sheen had a Chinese water dragon. It's dead. True story.

21. The star of everyone's favorite movie Cool as Ice Vanilla Ice owns a kangaroo named Bucky Buckaroo as well as a goat named Poncho. The trio were briefly separated in 2004 when Bucky Buckaroo and Poncho escaped and were found wandering around--wait for it--Florida.

22. Both Elvis and Michael Jackson had chimpanzees, which isn't even to mention the episodes of Kardashians and Hogan Knows Best, where the quirky families get a monkey with a diaper for an episode, and then, ahh...it's mysterious what becomes of it.

23. Also, never forget Ikea monkey. Ikea monkey, that wonderful meme that lasted from 2012 until several hours later.

24-25. Mike Tyson really did have a tiger. That wasn't just in The Hangover. Also, he has pigeons at his second home in Bushwick, Brooklyn, and he wrote a blog for the New York Times defending pigeons, claiming them to be highly intelligent animals and, arguably, the most loyal. If I may quote the article directly, "My pigeons have gone on an amazing journey with me from a child to a man." What can I do, Mark? Everybody has a gift; mine is mimicry.

26. Nic Cage, or, as I like to call him, J. C. Penney, Jr., owns a cobra, which he claims helped him with the part of the Ghost Rider, so I think we all owe that cobra a thank you.

27. Nic Cage also bought an octopus for $150,000. Man, that J. C. Penney money must be rollin' in.

28. Leo DiCaprio has a pet tortoise. Oh, god, to be Leo DiCaprio's pet tortoise...

29. Also, K-Stew has a wolf-dog hybrid, but he doesn't have Lautner abs.

30. Tori Spelling owns a pet chicken named Coco. She likes to knit ponchos for her. To be clear, Tori Spelling likes to knit the ponchos for Coco. Otherwise, that would be a miracle.

31. George Clooney, Megan Foxx, the Beckhams and Denise Richards all own pigs, so if you want to be beautiful, get a pig.

32. The Gaboon viper is a surprisingly popular pet choice among, you know, people who are making ill-advised life decisions. But the 18-pound snake is not a good pet because they have two-inch-long fangs and a fatal bite, which has injured or killed owners on many occasions.

33. Speaking of snakes, in 2004, Alice Cooper's albino python--you'll never guess what he named it: Alice--consumed a 12-by-14-inch heating pad after its dinner of a live rat was presumably not satisfying enough. A veterinarian surgically removed the heating pad from the snake. The procedure cost $1,000, but the snake survived.

34. The Institute of Cytology in Russia gained notoriety for domesticating foxes using genetics to breed those who like being around humans and generally showed dog-like qualities. They even started to look more like dogs over time. The experiment started in the 1950s and is still going on today.

35. And speaking of breeders creating exotic animals, the Savannah cat, officially recognized as a breed by the International Cat Association, is part regular cat, and part African serval. I think the real surprise here is that there's an International Cat Association. They probably would not approve of our kitty-in-a-jar.

36. In 2012, parents in California--the Florida of the West--gave their daughter a zebra for her 10th birthday. The father explained his reasoning: "I want her to actually have to come out and do something...give him water and feed him every day." Because, you know, you don't have to do those things for a fish. Also in California, two escaped pet zebras had to be tracked down by police in Sacramento in 2010. Turns out, it is not legal to own zebras in California.

37. If you're looking for a more legal exotic pet, maybe try the bearded dragon or Pogona, native to Australia. You can likely even pick one up at your local PetCo. If that's not exotic enough for you, Todd Ray owns conjoined-twin bearded dragons connected at the torso. They're named Chang and Ang.

38. Llamas are often recommended as exotic pets, unless you're Napoleon Dynamite. They're very friendly and calm, but one of the maintenance requirements is toenail trimming, so yea--no.

39. Let's finish up with three more animals that have known to be pets, but that here at mental_floss we do not endorse. For instance, it is illegal in the United States, but penguins are sometimes still kept as pets. Lala, a pet penguin living in Japan, is perhaps the most well-known. Also famous on YouTube.

40. In Nairobi, Kenya, the Rothschild family owns 8 giraffes. Their house doubles as a hotel known as the Giraffe Manor. Famous visitors include Ewan McGregor, Sir Richard Branson, Mick Jagger, Johnny Carson, and Brooke Shields. Where hasn't she been?

41. And lastly, in the 1940s, Life Magazine published an article about a domesticated squirrel in Washington, DC. The article contained an entire photo shoot spread of Tommy the Squirrel dressed up in his little outfits. He had 30 outfits, custom-made by his owner, Mrs. Bullis. I'm sure this was all very impressive before America saw a squirrel water skiing.

Thanks for watching mental_floss, which is made with the help of these nice people, mostly my brother and myself, apparently. Every week, we endeavor to answer one question that you have asked. This week, the question is, "Is my blood really blue until it comes out of my veins?" Just like last week's question, there is a one-word answer to this one: no. Unless you're a lobster, then it is blue. But then, how--how did you type...with your claws?

If you have a question that you'd like answered, please leave it in comments. Thanks again for watching, and as we say in my hometown, don't forget to be awesome.