

## **RESOLUTION: RESPONSIBLE EXOTIC ANIMAL OWNERSHIP**

Whereas throughout the world animal populations are declining at an alarming rate with many facing extinction;

Whereas private owners of exotic animals have become the final hope for many endangered species recovery programs through conservation research, release programs, and by being a portal through which the general public can view and appreciate disappearing wildlife;

Whereas private owners of exotic animals are population managers of keystone and cornerstone species, emphasizing the restoration of not just endangered species, but also the delicate balance of nature;

Whereas private owners of exotic animals are vital advocates for conservation, participating in the fight for species survival and preservation of the natural homelands of the animals they care for through public awareness, education, and exhibition;

Whereas private owners of exotic animals work closely with others on conservation research projects, which provide important information to help preserve rare and endangered species and learn more about species which may become threatened in the future;

Whereas private owners of exotic animals have become animal caretakers devoting their lives to caring for these animals;

Whereas private owners of exotic animals have become the spokespersons for vanishing wildlife, carrying the conservation message of habitat loss, endangered species, and preservation of nature's threatened wild lands to the public;

Whereas private owners of exotic animals have committed their lives to ongoing professional development and training in becoming animal specialists, educators, choreographers of animal behaviors through enrichment, behavior managers through operant conditioning, and reproductive specialists through improved observations and husbandry;

Whereas private owners of exotic animals increase public awareness about the need to preserve precious habitats and the animals which inhabit them and to recognize the invaluable roles that we all play in animal conservation and education;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that we:

- 1) recognize the valuable contribution private owners of exotic animals make to the care and conservation of captive exotic animals as well as their important contributions to research, public education, and recreation
- 2) express a renewed dedication to the appreciation and preservation of animal wildlife and nature and an invigorated effort to foster deserving conservation projects and increase awareness on the need for the preservation of natural resources and animal life
- 3) encourage individuals to engage in programs, activities, and ceremonies which encourage species conservation and public awareness of the important role of private ownership in wildlife conservation.