

Why Owning a Pet Chimp is a Horrible Idea

By Alex Taft

Have you ever wanted to own a pet chimp? Maybe you could have it wear a tuxedo and serve food like a cute little chimp waiter. Sounds awesome, right? Well, owning a chimp would actually be more like having an angsty teenage boy on steroids for a pet. Along with this and the fact that chimps are endangered, it becomes apparent that owning a chimp would be less than ideal.

If you had a pet chimp, it would probably rip your head off once it gets big enough. You see, chimps are not easy to domesticate due to their natural tendencies to be extremely active and wild; veterinary technician Adrienne Kruzer explains that “Even though they are quite endearing, pet chimps still behave like wild



animals.” Although cute, chimps are near impossible to ever truly domesticate. As a result, your pet chimp would continue observing the tendencies of a wild chimp, meaning that you’re welcoming all of the potentially destructive and dangerous behaviors of a wild animal into your home. Furthermore, chimps are extremely strong, making a chimp’s wild behavior extra dangerous. Dr. Matthew O’Neil, after reviewing chimp muscle performance with his colleagues, found that on average, chimps are 1.5 times more powerful than a human male. Imagine having an MMA wrestler that just goes absolutely insane every once in a while in your house at all times; that’s essentially what having an adult chimp in your home would be like. A chimp would also

be especially dangerous to have around a baby, as the chimp may see the baby as food. In an official report from Gombe National Park, a national park in the African nation of Tanzania, an instance of a chimp kidnapping, killing, and partially eating a 14-month-old human baby is detailed. The chimp reportedly approached a woman with a baby in the park, then took the baby and ran off into the forest with it. Researchers were able to find the ape, and detailed that “When he was next seen, by one of the researchers, he was in a tree and the baby was dead, but after eating only a little portion he left the baby on a branch, descended the tree, and moved away, apparently to avoid the observer.” This is a very tragic story, and acts as a warning that as loveable as chimps are, they’re ultimately still wild animals that have the potential to be dangerous, and thus should not be kept as pets.

While also having violent wild tendencies, chimps are also listed as an endangered species in the wild by the World Wildlife Foundation, making owning them a threat to wild chimp conservation efforts. Chimps are endangered, with the main reasons for the endangerment of chimps being habitat loss and hunting for bushmeat, according to the World Wildlife Fund. Owning a chimp would therefore stunt conservation efforts, as the issues of habitat loss and illegal hunting for bushmeat continue to increase, and as many chimps as possible are needed to fuel breeding efforts. Additionally, chimps are very hard to replace through conservation as it is, with the Wildlife Conservation Society elaborating that “if an adult is killed, it takes 14-15 years to replace him or her as a breeding individual.” With the slow rate of replacement being enough of a problem in chimp conservation efforts as it is, taking away chimps that could be used for conservation efforts or released into the wild and owning them as

pets would stunt conservation efforts. As a result, the chimp population is more guaranteed to continue falling due to habitat loss and bushmeat hunting, making owning a pet chimp a threat to conservation efforts.

Owning a pet chimp isn't all that it can be made out to be. Instead of getting a cool chimp bro that you can dress up and train to be a waiter, you get a WWE wrestler that's prone to just go absolutely insane every once in a while. On top of that, owning a chimp is just a bad idea in general because doing so would stunt international chimp conservation efforts. All in all, owning a chimp would be pretty bananas, and not in a good way.