

Incidents Involving Animals – Initial – Species Prompts

Exotics Quick Reference Animal Fact Sheets

These may be found in zoos, wildlife parks, private collections and domestic residences. Many will fall under Dangerous Wild Animal legislation and their living environment and security will be governed by associated guidance. However, many exotic type species will not fall under this legislation and consequently may be found in any operational context without prior warning.

Key Message

First responders should consider the type of exotic animal, the environment it is in and the context of the emergency. In most cases the correct action will be to isolate the animal and request specialist advice or assistance.

Situations that can cause adverse reactions:

- Being pressurised with no obvious escape route
- Threatening (or perceived threatening) movement or noise
- Over stimulating or fearful surroundings
- Loose animals

Exotics may respond better to:

- Reducing stimulation or removing from the source of anxiety or fear
- Non-threatening movements, calm scene
- Expert handlers

When dealing with exotics:

- Caution: Dealing with exotic species without specialist knowledge is unlikely to be within the skill set of an emergency responder. In this instance, only interact with an exotic if it is contained and if at all possible, remove from a place of danger without releasing from its containment facility
- Assess the wider situation and environment
- Can you control the environment and reduce the threat
- From information sources, determine hazards and risks. How will the species type, breed, temperament and size impact the situation? (Large or powerful breeds will affect the type and nature of potential injuries to a responder that may be life changing. Small breeds may also possess defence mechanisms which could be lethal to humans)
- At the earliest opportunity, secure the advice of an exotic species specialist
- Use of chemical capture or euthanasia methods may be required

Associated risks when dealing with exotics:

- Bites, causing bruising, puncture, crush or tear injuries
- Impalement from antlers and horns
- Poisoning
- Zoonotic infection from scratches and bites
- Mauling from dangerous large exotics
- Crushing and stampeding

Additional Information

<http://emergentdisease.org/assets/documents/exotic-pets-A5-01.5.7-digital.pdf>