

# NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

## THE HIDDEN COST OF **WILDLIFE TOURISM**

SPECIAL REPORT

People who love animals can unknowingly fuel their suffering



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## On the Cover

A captive sloth peers out of a cage in Amazonian Peru. Sloths and other animals—elephants, tigers, dolphins—often suffer abuse in the thriving wildlife tourism industry.

KIRSTEN LUCE

## PROOF



# 8

### On Hallowed Beaches

Over the decades, a photographer has returned to the shores of Normandy to capture a place forever defined by war.

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS  
BY DAVID BURNETT

## EMBARK

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### THE BIG IDEA

#### In Search of the Kissing Bug

Though some 300,000 people in the U.S. have this parasitic infection, many don't know it.

BY DAISY HERNÁNDEZ

### GENIUS

#### Ma Jun

He gives people in China the power to fight pollution.

BY RACHEL HARTIGAN SHEA



### ALSO

Baby Planets  
Popcorn Robots  
Fluorescent Squirrels

## EXPLORE



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### GETTING THERE

#### Trek to the Deep

In Vietnam, jungle and leeches greet hikers venturing into two of Earth's largest caves.

BY ALESSANDRO CERÈ

### THROUGH THE LENS

#### Where Reptiles Rule

In a paradise on an isolated coral atoll, a photographer discovers he's just part of the ecosystem.

BY THOMAS P. PESCHAK

### ALSO

Dragonfly Tricks  
Movie Soundmaking  
Queer History





## FEATURES

## A WILDLIFE WATCH SPECIAL REPORT

**Wildlife Tourism**

It's a lucrative part of the booming global travel industry, fueled by social media users' love of posing with exotic animals. But what wildlife tourist attractions do to amuse humans can have brutal consequences for animals.

BY NATASHA DALY  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
KIRSTEN LUCE

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**Pangolins** ▲

The mammal is killed for its scales and meat.

BY RACHAEL BALE  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
BRENT STIRTON

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**The Brave Ones**

These women rangers are shaking up the conservation landscape.

BY LINDSAY N. SMITH  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
BRENT STIRTON

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**Pacific Ring of Fire**

This 25,000-mile-long hot zone threatens growing populations.

BY MANUEL CANALES  
AND MATTHEW W.  
CHWASTYK

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**Seaweed That Feeds**

A stunning array of life fills the Sargasso Sea.

BY JAMES PROSEK  
PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
DAVID DOUBILET AND  
DAVID LIITTSCHWAGER

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**JUNE 2014** Fireworks commemorate the 70th anniversary of D-Day, when 156,000 Allied troops made a bloody landing on French shores to fight German forces.



PROOF

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# ON HALLOWED BEACHES

LOOKING  
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FROM  
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STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS  
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For decades, a photographer  
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SPECIAL REPORT

# Wildlife Watch

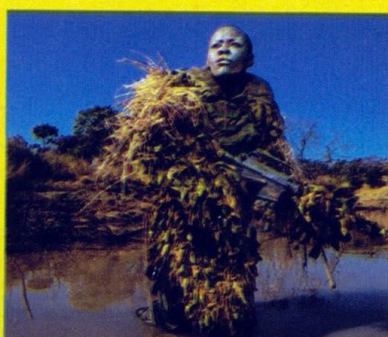
IN OUR MISSION TO HELP PROTECT ANIMALS, WE EXAMINE NEW THREATS—HARMFUL SELFIE-DRIVEN TOURISM AND TRAFFICKING THAT ENDANGERS PANGOLINS—AS WELL AS **NEW HOPES** RAISED BY ZIMBABWE'S COURAGEOUS WOMEN RANGERS.



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Pangolins at Risk p. 78



Brave Rangers p. 102



# The Wildlife We See,

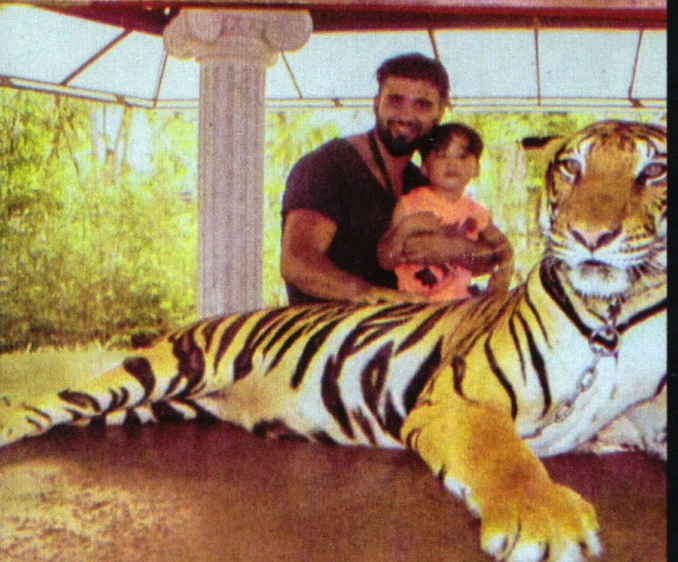
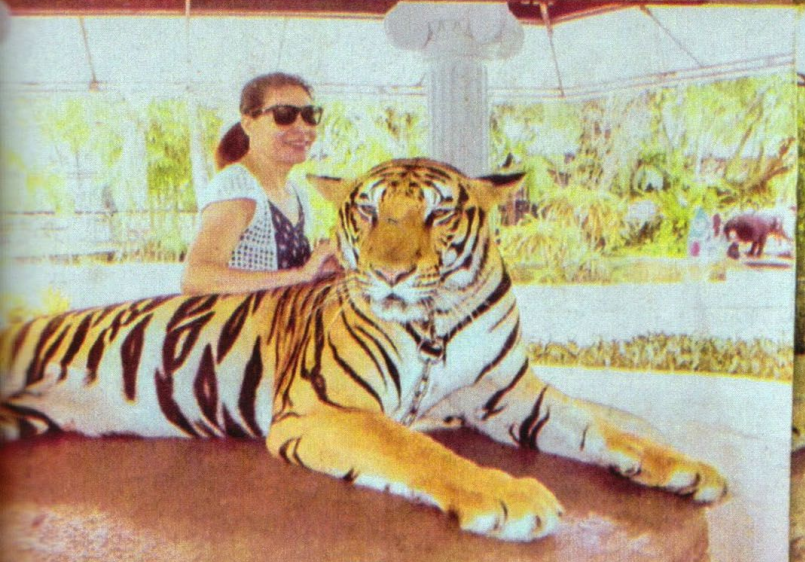
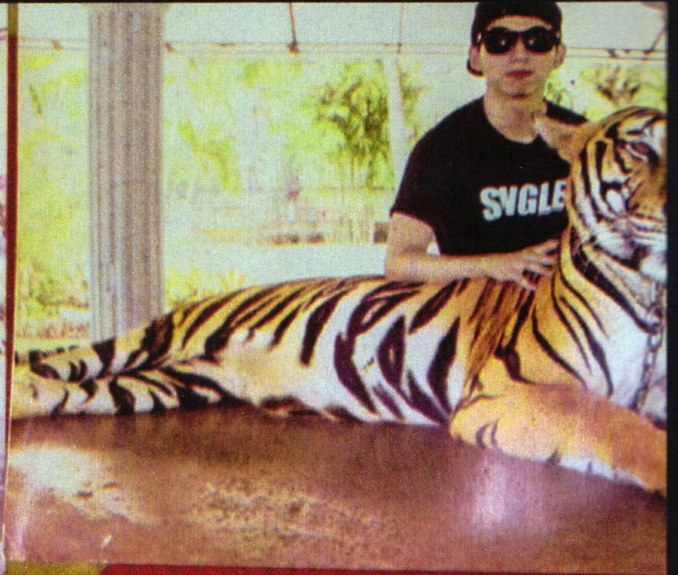
BY NATASHA DALY | PHOTOGRAPHS BY KIRSTEN LUCE



For \$10, tourists can pose with this tiger at Phuket Zoo, in Thailand. Examples of souvenir photos are displayed here on a poster board.



# The Suffering We Don't



The tiger is held by a short chain and can't stand up. Tigers may be declawed, or even drugged, to protect people around them.



# HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES WITH EXOTIC ANIMALS ARE THRIVING, BOOSTED BY SOCIAL MEDIA.





#### IMAGES ON FLAPS

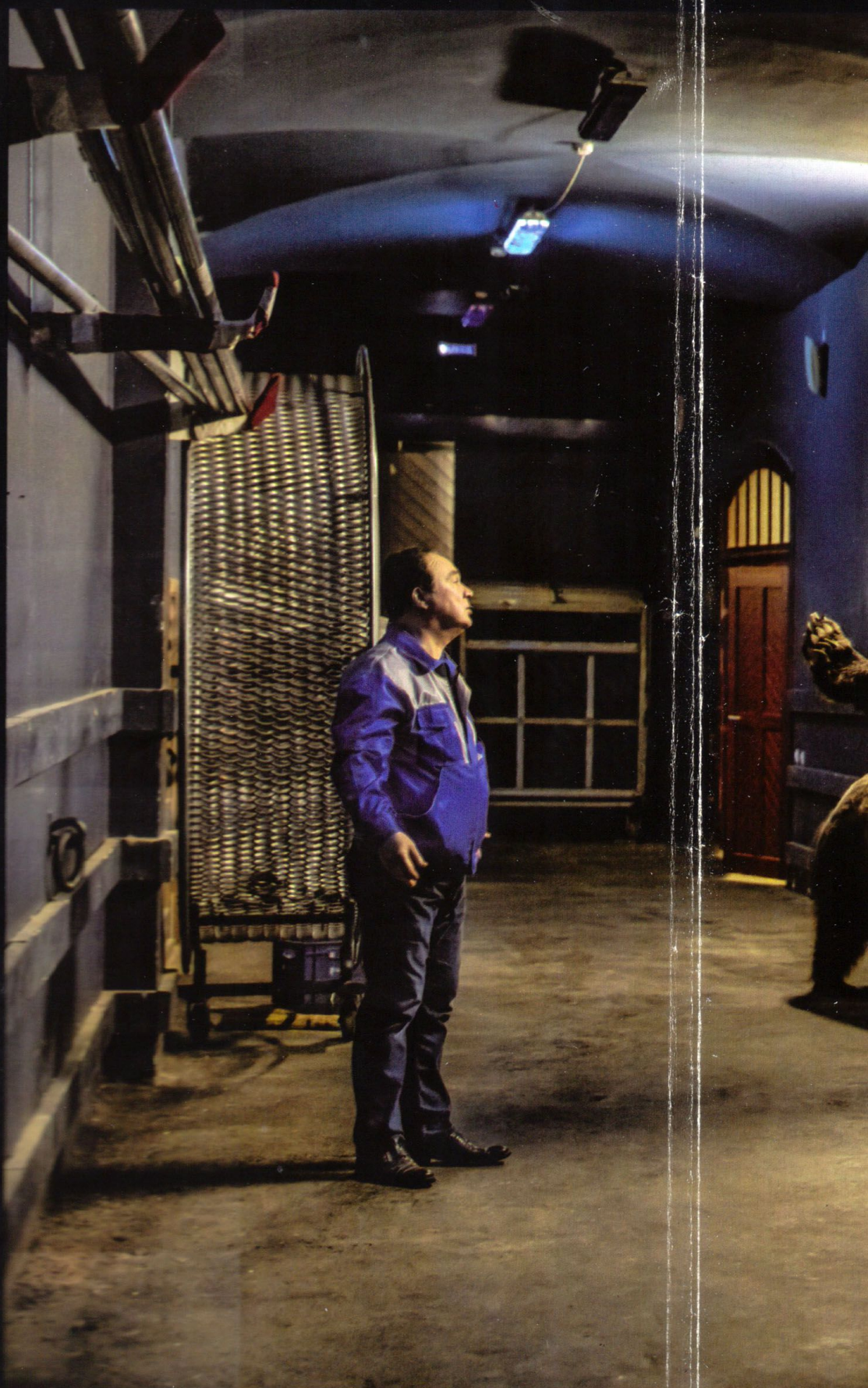
Photos of tourists with captive wild animals abound on social media platforms such as Instagram. With the tap of a finger, travelers post their images of exotic animals for the world to see. But often travelers and fans alike are unaware of what the animals' lives are really like.

#### RIGHT

Muzzled and chained, three performing bears face their trainer, Grant Ibragimov, after a rehearsal at the Bolshoi State St. Petersburg Circus, in Russia. To make bear cubs strong enough to walk on two legs, trainers may keep them in a standing position, tethered by their necks to the wall.

#### FAR RIGHT

Gluay Hom, a four-year-old elephant trained to perform tricks for tourists, is chained to a pole in a stadium at Samut Prakan Crocodile Farm and Zoo near Bangkok, Thailand. His swollen right foreleg hangs limp. At his temple is a bloody wound from lying on the floor.





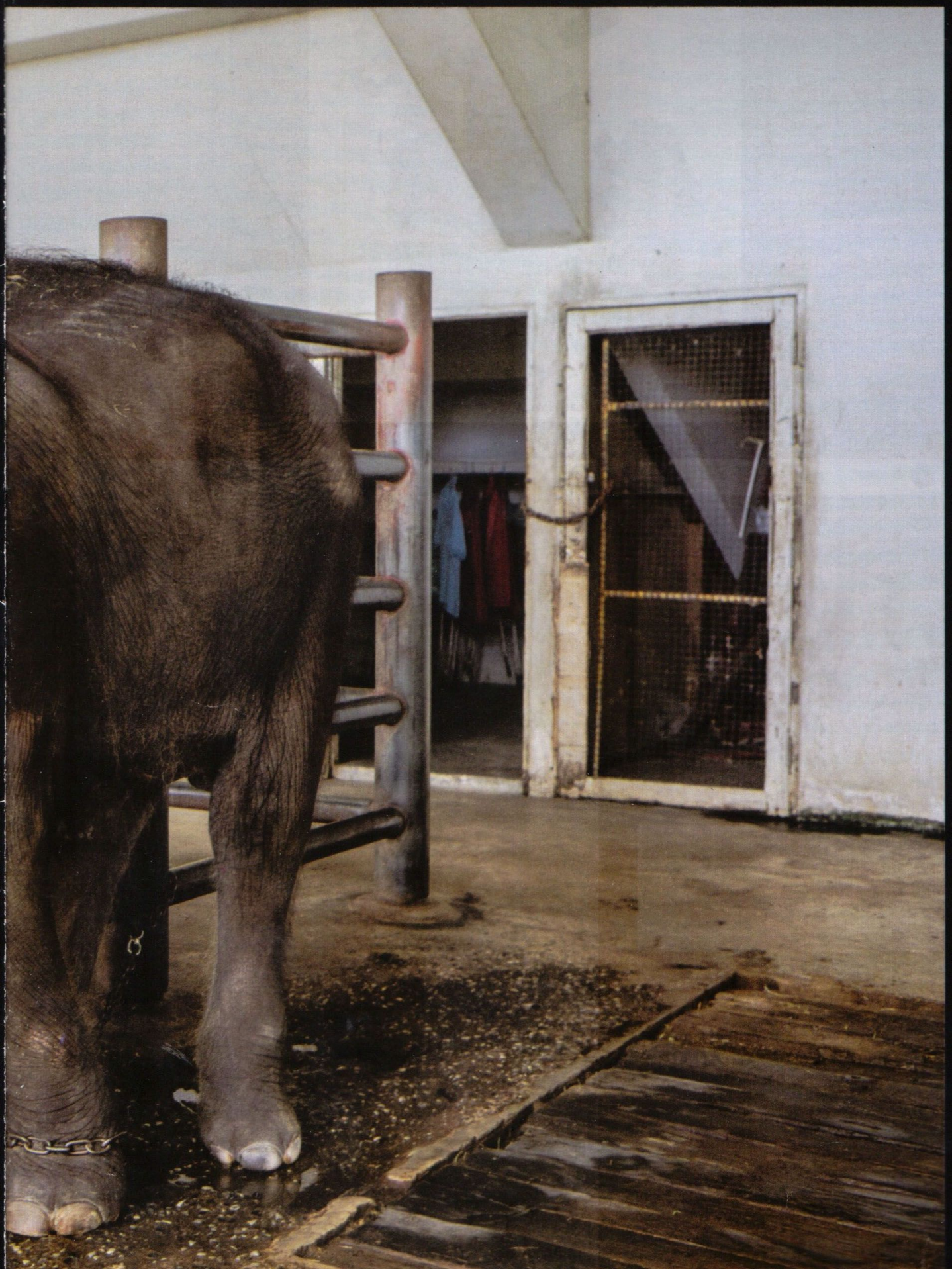




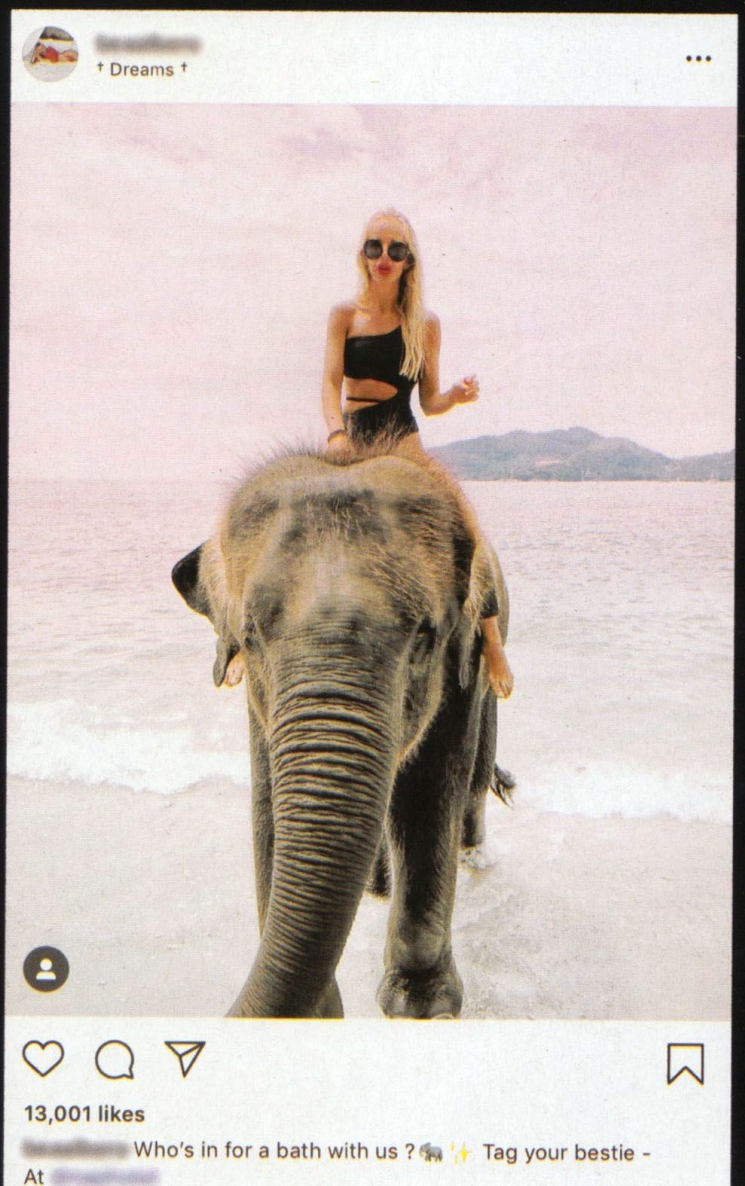
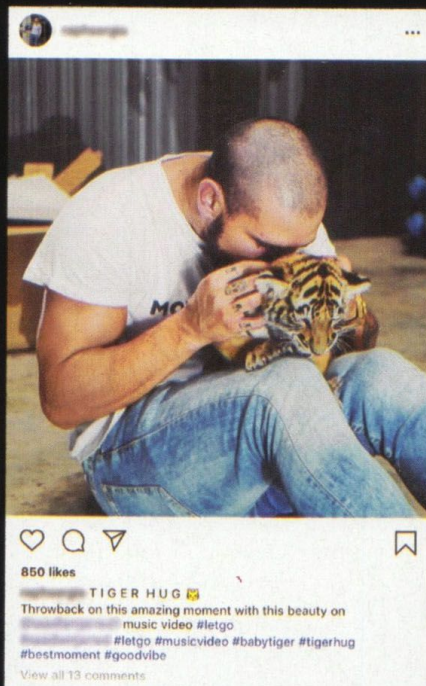
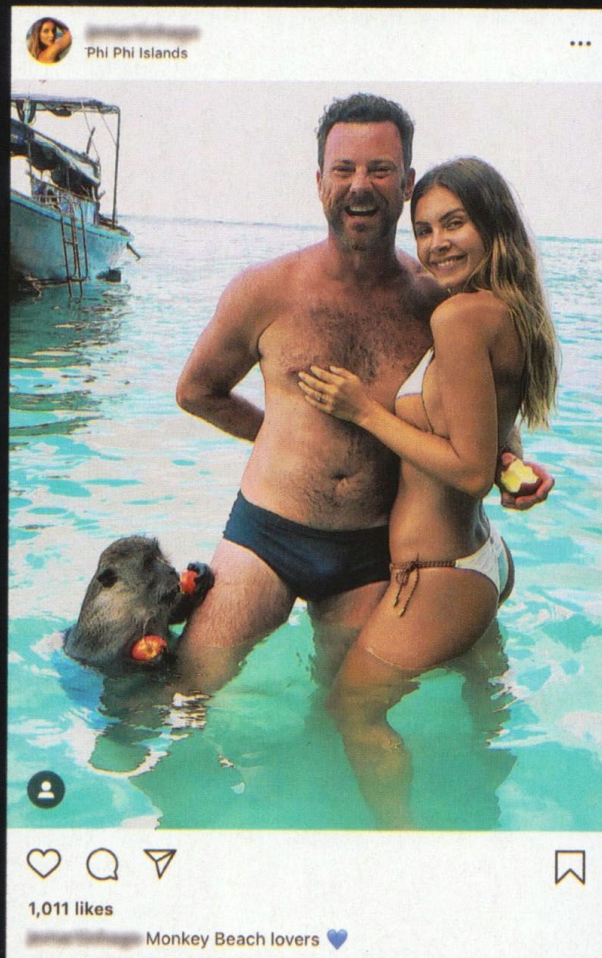




**BUT BEHIND THE SCENES, ANIMALS INVOLVED IN  
TOURISM OFTEN LEAD MISERABLE LIVES.**















Tourists on the Rio Negro in Brazil swarm an Amazon dolphin lunging for a baitfish dangled by the tour operator. Many of the numerous scratches on the dolphin's skin are from brushes with other dolphins vying for bait. Hands-on wildlife encounters are popular in the region.