

# **Trapping, legalized animal abuse ? Why is it still allowed in the USA?**

[http://cfhs.ca/wild/types\\_of\\_traps/](http://cfhs.ca/wild/types_of_traps/)

Recently Idaho has opened their trapping season on wolves. Now trapping has been around for many centuries in North America and it is nothing new to the people in the Northern States what this entails to wildlife not to speak of pets and people.

I supply here a link to a page that gives us some insight on traps used for furbearing animals which includes the wolf. The practice of trapping has a certain romantic ring to the ear of the unenlightened mind.

For our purposes we will concentrate on the trapping of wolves. To trap wolves generally a no 4 leg hold trap will be used. Modern leg hold traps have been designed with smooth jaw (no teeth). Some are even lined with synthetic rubber to be more 'humane' to the animal.

Traps are legally set anywhere, yes anywhere. A trapper can set his trap next to a road or on a well traveled footpath where people , their children and their pets often wander. Steel jaw traps do not differentiate between children, Rover deer or wolves. Anything or anyone that steps on such a trap will be held tight. The smaller the creature or person the higher the injuries.

We can safely say that traps are nothing more than mechanical medieval land mines.

Trap inspection intervals can be as high as five days but generally the highest will be 72 hours which is 3 days.

This means that an animal trapped in one of these leg hold traps on the first day will be held in excruciating pain, fear and anxiety often without water to drink. This does not end when the trapper arrives. One would think that trappers will kill their victim outright but that is not the case.

Some trappers will club their victims to death, or simply strangle it. Some will just stand on the suffering animal with their full weight and the animals will slowly suffocate because it will not be able to breathe.

To the average human this all sounds like horrible unreal stories of animal abuse but it is real. It is all part of the time honored outdoor activity of trapping in the good old USA and right now it is happening in the Northern States of Idaho and soon in Montana. Trapping is alive and legal in the USA.

Now average Joe in the city will say, 'that's not my problem, who cares about wolves...anyway?' Take a look at some of these photographs. These animals are some of your pets caught in this time honored cultural activity.



Courtesy HSUS Someone's favorite cat??

Some of these are not necessarily leg hold traps. Some are snares and other head clamps but they all have one thing in common. They are cruel and they kill and maim without discretion.



Courtesy HSUS

Rover perhaps? Was just searching for his favorite ball that you tossed nonchalantly over the side of the road whilst taking a walk as you always do.

Would you like to see your pet in one of these barbaric contraptions? Let me tell you something, if this trapper reach your dog before you do he will probably kill Rover in the same way as he will a wolf or a coyote.

Because why? Because Rover sprung his trap and caused him to lose out on his target animal. He will be angry and he will take it out on your beloved dog.

Trappers do not care for non target animals falling prey to their traps. These are called 'rubbish'. Whether it's a cat, dog, deer or even an endangered animal species. It will be killed and tossed aside without any respect. These people's rights to kill indiscriminately are protected by law. The trap will be set again to wait for its next victim. All legal in most states of the USA. As long as we can keep to our time honored traditions all is well.

### **Hypothetical Scene.**

Tomorrow or the day after the family leaves for their annual holiday spent camping in the Yellowstone area. Great times ahead. But somewhere lies in waiting a forgotten steel jaw leg trap. Set for an unsuspecting wolf. It was lying there half covered with debris. Its owner was struck down by a heart condition derived from an unhealthy diet and too much drink. The trap forgotten. In fact several traps were set in close proximity of the first one.

The first day camping was great excitement as we pitched the tent and set the scene for a wonderful time. The children and Plax our Labrador x Retriever were running around the camp chasing butterflies and having a ball. Joey my six year old boy was at the age of daring. His blond curly head sister tries to keep up and Plax was having the time of his life.

It was after I had pitched the tent that I noticed an ominous silence. Moments ago the children were dashing thru brush some thirty meters from our camp site. I heard a sudden yelp. Plax was in trouble. His yelps became howls of fear and pain.

I ran toward the brush and found Joey staring wide eyed at Plax. I recognized the steel jaw trap. Plax was in so much anxiety that I could not come close enough to free him. The trap had already gnawed thru his skin and blood was pouring as it severed arteries in his leg. The children started screaming. I grabbed them and ran back to the tent. In the SUV I found a blanket they used to sleep under during the trip.

Back with Plax who was sitting wide eyed and hyper ventilating. The trap still biting into his flesh. I covered him with the blanket. He was so frightened that he did not move and made whimpering sounds.

With much effort I managed to pry open the jaws of the trap and freed Plax. That done I picked the wounded dog up and carried him back to the tent. The wound was bleeding profusely. Luckily for Plax it was not that serious and I sterilized and bandaged it with stuff from the emergency kit I kept in the SUV.

He hobbled to the vehicle and his eyes said.. ‘Lets leave this awful place..’ I silently agreed with him.

First I went back to the trap to see if there was some kind of identity that I could use to contact the trapper. My surprise was great when I could find no identity but instead, now that calmness was upon me once more after the excitement I saw three more steel traps waiting to be sprung. One with razor sharp teeth jutting out like the jaws of a shark. It was so close to the one that caught Plax and I never noticed it. The prints of my hiking boots was mere inches from its cruel jaws.

I could just shiver when I think of the nightmarish possibilities of being caught in such a trap, your dog also trapped and your children without an adult to watch over their safety. Worse even, what if Joey or little Loni got caught.

The thought was too much to bear. Our camping trip was cut short and that same evening we were packed up and heading back to the safe streets of suburbia.

While driving my thoughts kept drifting back to those traps, now sprung as I jammed a stick in each of them but there are others and wild or domestic, human or animal, it was waiting for its prey with cruel indifferent patience.

If you think that the above scenario was too hypothetical and imaginary. Check out this true story in the AWI Quarterly. This is a true story that happened in 2005. It also shows the lack of respect trappers have in general to others. Not to mention the lives of animals.

[http://labanimals.awionline.org/pubs/Quarterly/05\\_54\\_2/542p14.htm](http://labanimals.awionline.org/pubs/Quarterly/05_54_2/542p14.htm)

Is this what you would like your holiday to be like? It’s a great possibility as just like land mines, traps are set and forgotten and they are there waiting no matter what you are told.

### **Are we waiting for this to happen to our children?**



A victim of a personnel mine in Angola. A rusted steel jaw bear trap can do the same to a child.

Quite a few African countries have outlawed traps and snares and although poachers often use them they are illegal. Is it that darkest Africa draws the similarity with landmines or are they just plain and simple far ahead of the USA in countering unnecessary cruelty to wild animals.

**Why is it that in the USA cruelty to domestic animals is illegal and frowned on but cruelty to wild animals has become a time honored activity even though it poses great danger?**

**Endangered Bald Eagle caught in a trap**



It is time that we stand up to this type of barbarity perpetuated under the guise of tradition and sport. Trapping should be banned in the USA and any other country that calls itself civilized.



**The Poison trap M44**

M44 is a device that ejects cyanide into the mouth of an animal and is commonly used to kill coyotes. They are not selective and therefore kill non-targeted animals including dogs. Most states have banned this brutal device for use by the public, but it is used by the Federal Wildlife Services. M44 is deployed on both public and private land.

**Lets stand together and stop all trapping in the  
USA**