Even though zoos aren’t a perfect solution, we should support zoos because

they help protect endangered animals. Sometimes animals are in trouble in the

wild. They don’t have enough to eat, or they are endangered.

Sometimes endangered animals are in trouble in the wild because there isn’t

enough to eat. For example, Tom French, who won a Pulitzer Prize as a journalist,

studied elephants in many zoos, and he wrote a book about them. It’s called

Zoo Story. It turns out that there are too many elephants in South Africa. There isn’t

enough food for them and there isn’t enough food for the rhino, because the

elephants eat all the trees. So when elephants get moved to zoos, it might save their

lives and it might help some other animals too. Tom French shows that in good zoos

like the one in San Diego, there are clinics with experts who will care for the elephants. The article says “

the animal clinic at the San Diego Zoo was better than any hospital in Swaziland.”

Another thing that zoos help with is breeding endangered animals. One Fox

News program showed how local zoos can help breed endangered animals and then

set them back in the wild. That seems like a good idea. If we could use zoos to

breed these animals, and then put them back in the wild, maybe they wouldn’t be endangered.

On the other hand, animals in zoos don’t always live a long time. They seem

to live a lot longer in the wild. But the chart that shows how long elephants live in

the wild is only counting the elephants who live at all. It doesn’t count the ones who

die of starvation because there are no trees, or the ones who get shot by poachers.

Tom French shows that’s what happens to lots of elephants. You might worry

about zoochosis, too. That’s when animals get lonely and sad in zoos.

But it sounds

like the San Diego zoo takes good care of its elephants. And it’s probably pretty

lonely when you face a poacher who wants your tusks.

Overall, it seems like zoos are a good idea, as long as they take good care of

the animals. They can rescue endangered animals, and they can breed them so they

won’t be so endangered. It would be even better if we could stop destroying their

land. But since we’re not endangered, that’s probably not going to happen.

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