



Wild Planet Trust Welfare Auditing Guidance Document

Adapted from Detroit Zoological Society's Audit Template (Kagan et al., 2015), the Wild Planet Trust audit is designed to provide an overview of the physical and social considerations for one or more animals sharing a habitat. The welfare audit consists of 28 questions designed to highlight positive and negative welfare indicators within four key areas: Animal health, Suitable environment, Behaviour and Stressors. It uses a traffic light scoring system to highlight key welfare concerns.

Firstly, the Curators are asked to make a list of priority species or enclosures that they would like to be audited (see Figure 1). If there is no preference made, a systematic plan for welfare auditing is devised.

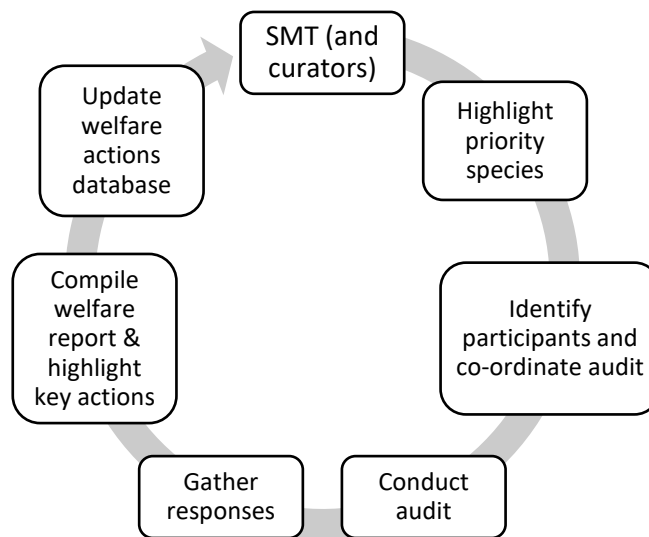


Figure 1: Welfare auditing process at the Wild Planet Trust.

A minimum of three staff members are needed to complete the audit. One neutral assessor is always present and a minimum of two keepers are required. Veterinary staff are invited to complete audits for species with greater welfare concerns, on request of the relevant Curator.

There is no maximum number of audits to be completed. All stakeholders involved with the species can complete an audit; giving the opportunity for all views and evaluations to be explored. For controversial/bias/priority species, additional audits should be completed, with additional neutral assessors and staff from other departments invited to complete an audit.

The audit takes approx. 15 minutes to complete. Questions have several answer options, including an 'Evidence/comments' section, to collect additional qualitative information. Each person completing an audit should answer the questions to the best of their ability based on their knowledge and expertise. Answers should be based on previous knowledge of the animals/ enclosure, and details observed during the auditing period.

Once completed, responses are compiled into a single audit report. This report provides an overview of the feedback given by the different stakeholders, including aspects of good welfare, and outlines recommendations for improvement. The report starts with an overview of the compiled scores to highlight the categories in the assessment where the main welfare issues were found (see Figure 2).

The reviewer reads the 'Evidence/comments' sections to identify shared views and issues highlighted in the completed audits. A more in-depth literature review is then conducted, consulting captive care manuals, scientific papers, ZIMS records, diet sheets, and keeping staff enquiries are included if necessary. Graphs and figures are used to illustrate and support reported issues. Photographs and videos may also be used as evidence if required. The audit report generates an overview of whether the welfare needs of the animal(s) are met, whilst encompassing the four different areas of the audit.

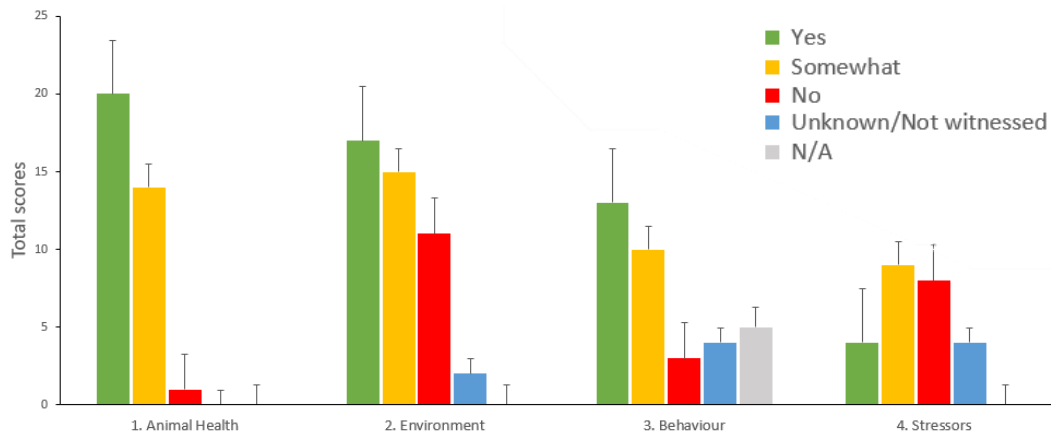


Figure 1: Example of graph used to analyse the compiled scores and highlight the main welfare issues.

Discrepancies between stakeholders can sometimes be highlighted in the audit report (e.g. different views on welfare concerns between neutral observers and keepers). It is important to evaluate staff training and bias concerning the welfare states and management of the animals in the collection.

At the end of the report, key actions are recommended, to address the welfare issues highlighted throughout the auditing process (Key actions = breakdown of tasks to improve areas where welfare needs aren't fully met).

Wild Planet Trust Welfare Audit Report

Species: _____ Completed by: Curator
 Vet Staff
 Enclosure: _____ Keeper
 Date: _____ Neutral observer

Score Summary:

Welfare measure	Compiled scores				
	Yes	Somewhat	No	Unknown/not witnessed	N/A
Animal health					
Suitable environment					
Behaviour					
Stressors					
Total					

Summary Paragraph: *(discussion of aspects of good welfare, priority concerns, and evidence provided)*

Discussed Items: *(feedback from Curator)*

Key Actions: *(actions to monitor/ improve key welfare concerns)*

Figure 2: Audit report template

When complete, the reports are submitted to the relevant Curator for review. Meetings are scheduled where the Curators can then suggest reasonable edits to the report and the actions list can be modified if needed. Following approval, the audit is considered complete and the key actions are added into a Welfare Action List (see Table 1). This list includes estimated scale of costs, timeframes and ongoing monitoring of progress for each suggested action, for each species or group of animals.

Table 1: Example of action spreadsheet (Welfare Action List) where key action completion is monitored.

Species	Scientific Name	Enclosure	Date of Review	Date of Curator approval	Welfare Audit Actions	Completed (Y/N)	Date of Completion	Cost (approx.)	Comments
Spp.	Spp.	E1	5/1/19	23/1/19	Continue monitoring and alleviate ongoing health problems	Ongoing		N/A	Ongoing as of 22/3/19
					Improve heating and lighting in the indoor area	Yes	1/3/19	£££	
					Provide more elevated platforms	Yes	1/3/19	£	
					Increase extent, complexity and density of branching indoors and outdoors	No		££	
					Provide substrate in the outdoor area	Ongoing		£	Ongoing as of 22/3/19
					Provide shelters outside	Ongoing		£	Ongoing as of 22/3/19

A “Welfare Actions List” is discussed during Curatorial and Welfare and Ethics Committee meetings, to be used as a reference for management decisions regarding the animals in the collection.

Re-auditing and comparisons between welfare states of different species:

Average welfare scores can be used to compare consecutive audits of the same species/group of animals over time or in response to housing, husbandry and social group changes. Graphs can be used for visual comparison between the audits and can highlight changes in welfare states after welfare actions are taken (see example of Figure 4).

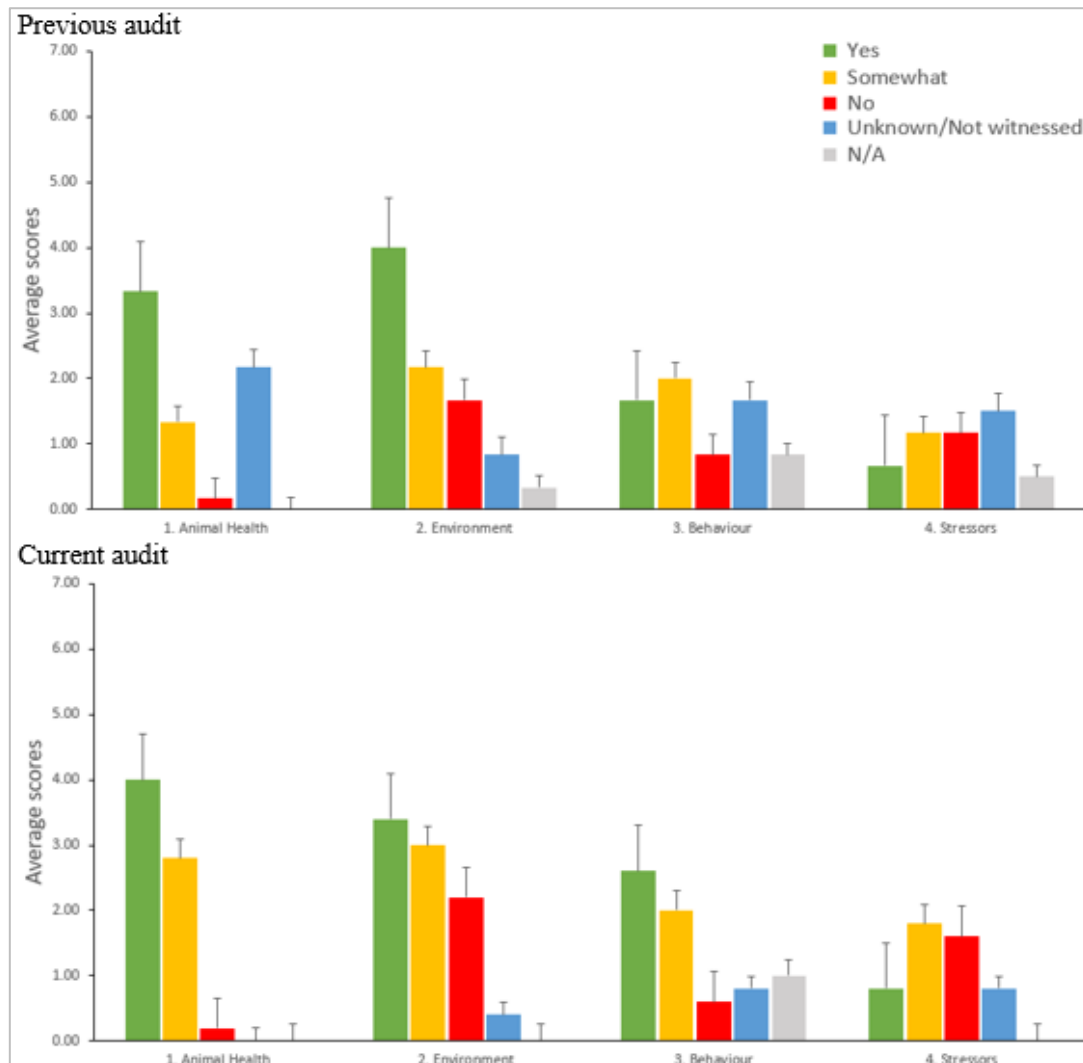


Figure 3: Example of average score comparison between two audits conducted before and after conducting changes in an animal enclosure. Analysis is meant to highlight areas where welfare states have changed between the two audits.

References:

Kagan, R., Carter, S., Allard, S., 2015. A Universal Animal Welfare Framework for Zoos. *J. Appl. Anim. Welf. Sci.* 18. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10888705.2015.1075830>