



University of Victoria

How to Think About Wild Animal Suffering



Image: Jimboomba Police, The Times

A free lecture by Dale Jamieson, PhD

Professor of Environmental Studies and Philosophy,
New York University

Director, Center for Environmental and Animal Protection

Monday, February 3rd, 4:00 – 5:20 p.m.
David Strong Building, Rm. # C126

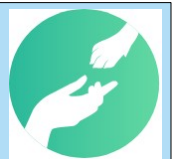
It has been widely reported that more than a billion animals have been killed in Australia in the fires that have been raging since late last year. The Australian grandmother who risked her life to save a Koala from a burning tree is widely seen as a hero. Yet in the normal course of events billions of animals die every day (including about 150 million for food). Are we obliged to do what we can to save them all? The logic of at least some animal protection philosophies seems to say “yes:” We should eliminate suffering whenever and wherever we can, whether it is caused by human action, by the predation of one animal on another, or by the impersonal workings of nature. But to many environmentalists and others, this vision of “policing nature” seems mad or worse. Questions about wild animal suffering not only threaten to disrupt alliances between animal protectionists and environmentalist, but go to the very heart of what it is to be human living in a natural world. While I do not purport to provide the correct answers to the many questions in this area, I do hope to clarify some of the issues and contribute to thinking clearly about them.

Dale Jamieson is Professor of Environmental Studies and Philosophy, Affiliated Professor of Law, Affiliated Professor of Medical Ethics, Director of the Center for Environmental and Animal Protection, and Affiliated Professor of Bioethics. His most recent books are *Discerning Experts: The Practices of Scientific Assessment for Environmental Policy* (Chicago, 2019, with Michael Oppenheimer, Naomi Oreskes and others), *Love in the Anthropocene* (OR, 2015), a collection of short stories and essays with Bonnie Nadzam, and *Reason in a Dark Time: Why the Struggle to Stop Climate Change Failed – and What It Means for Our Future* (Oxford University Press, 2014).



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