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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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Tourism, animals & the vacant niche: a scoping review and pedagogical agenda

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ABSTRACT

The topic of animal ethics has advanced in tourism studies since its inception in 2000, based on a diverse range of studies on species involvement, types of uses and contexts, level of engagement, states of animals, and theoretical perspectives. While there is still considerable scope to amplify research on animal-based tourism, a gap exists in tourism pedagogy amidst the field's emphasis on a new expanding consciousness platform. We review the depth of existing scholarship on animal ethics in tourism and develop an agenda for advancing animal ethics pedagogy for the future. Our intent is to issue a call to action for curriculum committees, programme administrators, and educators to recognise and act on this critical moral domain in tourism education.

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Introduction

The field of tourism has gone through several decades of scholarly evolution, as identified in Jafari's (1990) Advocacy, Cautionary, Adaptancy, and Knowledge platforms. These platforms show a clear line of thinking toward sustainable tourism (Hardy et al., 2002; Macbeth, 2005), and ethics (Macbeth, 2005) in tourism's continued expansion. However, as tourism and tourism research advances, there have been few efforts to combine ethics and sustainability in developing a more responsible industry. Fennell (2018) suggested that the blending of sustainability and ethics 'represents a new platform, *expanding consciousness*, which encapsulates the new tourism research on ethics, sustainability, rights, justice, care, responsibility, compassion, and respect' (Fennell, 2018, p. 12). Research that is representative of such a view includes work by Rastegar (2020) on justice and the role of governments, Higgins-Desbiolles (2008) on justice and alternative globalisation, Coles et al. (2013) on corporate social responsibility and tourism, and Jamal and Higham (2021) on justice.

As this expanding consciousness platform advances, it does so in parallel to an equally flourishing focus on the moral issues tied to the use of animals in tourism. (Note, we henceforth refer to other-than-human-animals as 'animals' due to space constraints.) This sub-field has steadily advanced over two decades and includes a range of animal uses and contexts and how these uses may be informed by an array of theoretical perspectives. However, in being critical and honest, it is essential to recognise the belated nature of the animal turn in tourism studies compared to other fields. As part of this, while a variety of animals have been studied, a far greater variety has been ignored by tourism researchers. The emergent nature of tourism animal studies grounded in concerns around welfare, ethics, and justice is mirrored in the fractured (geographically and across species) nature of the tourism industry's concerns about animals as anything other than objects of human enjoyment and financial gain (Carr & Broom, 2018).

Even though animal ethics studies are now expanding in our journals and books, how dedicated are we to matching what occurs in research with academic programmes and teaching? While courses may offer a unit on animal ethics within a broader topic, such as tourism or conservation, a poll of TRINET uncovered just two courses being taught in tourism and animal ethics (Brock University in Canada and Appalachian State University in the USA). This stands in opposition to the point that we are, collectively, consumers of hundreds of thousands of animals at tourism attractions that are some of the most popular and enjoyable of any attraction. Such attractions do not include all the other animals that tourism impacts in myriad ways, from the cockroaches and mice exterminated in restaurants and sniffer dogs at airports to the multitude of animals killed each day by tourists as they travel by land, sea, and water.

The disregard we have for animals in tourism is represented in the UNWTO's Global Code of Ethics (UNWTO, 2022) which has almost nothing to say about the quantity and quality of care needed for animals, despite the argument for Article 11 on animal welfare and respect (Fennell, 2014). Kline et al. (2022) have also elucidated the lack of Wildlife Equity (WE) within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Such asymmetries between scholarship, teaching, and industry practice represent a vacant niche that we argue needs filling now. It represents, in other words, a gap between tourism knowledge produced by researchers and its use within the world of tourism practice, policy, and education (Tribe & Liburd, 2016). As we see it, an inquiry that seeks to identify and address such gaps is necessary for tourism's maturation as a critically reflexive field (Tribe & Liburd, 2016) and sustainable industry.

Correspondingly, this paper aims to investigate the treatment of animals in global tourism and hospitality programmes (the academic habitat), relative to the depth currently in scholarship. We do this with a focus on Figure 1, which includes broad categories of animal classes, types of animal use in terrestrial and aquatic settings, engagement modes, animal states, and theory, caught in the turbulence and schism between global principles vs local practices (Fennell, 2022c). The figure is informed by the initial work of Cohen (2009) and Fennell (2012a) and we, as a collection

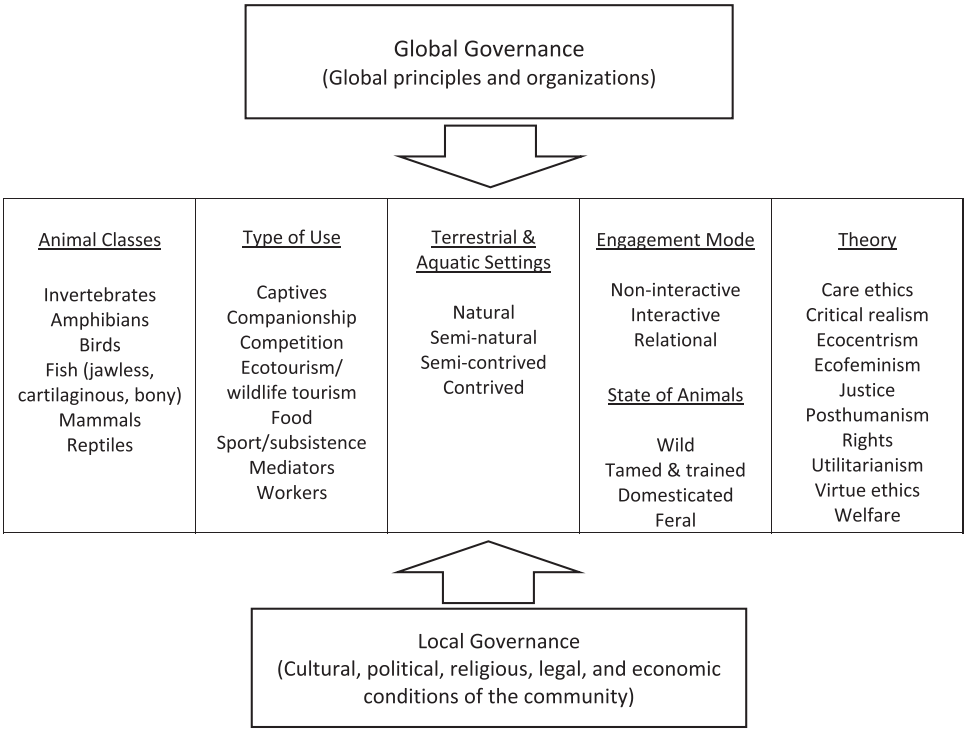

Figure 1. The Touranimalscape. Source: Adapted from Cohen (2009) and Fennell (2012a).

of scholars specialising in tourism and animal ethics, made slight refinements to the framework to reflect the broad spectrum of work being conducted in this area. These categories, therefore, represent the main focus (and issues) of past studies on this topic, reflected in Fennell's (2021) reference to the *touranimalscape*, defined as 'evolving patterns of animal concern and (including refusal of use), on the part of use on the part of individuals, cultures, regions, and organizations connected with the tourism industry' (p. 259). Our paper follows a scoping review approach which typically address a broad question by assessing the gaps to knowledge, how research is being conducted on a topic, and how this knowledge fits or can be organised into different groups (Covidence, 2023; Munn et al., 2018). We further argue that based on the breadth of animal ethics scholarship, new scholars stand poised to take on innovative and intersectional roles within the academic habitat. However, to do this, we need to collectively engage with the notion of animals as sentient beings with welfare needs, shifting the narrative away from the radical fringes of activism to the centre stage as we widen the circle of morality in tourism pedagogy.

The touranimalscape

Animal classes

Taxonomy and tourism attractiveness

In advancing a case for animal ethics in tourism, we recognise the breadth of the over one million named species with which we share the planet. These are found in six main taxonomic classes of animals: invertebrates (over 1 million species), fish (30,000 species), amphibians (8,000 species), reptiles (10,000 species), birds (18,000 species), and mammals (6,000 species). With important exceptions, people tend to express more positive attitudes to species that are relatively more like human beings (Kellert, 1985), a phenomenon called phylogenetic affinity. The tendency for

human interest to decline as species become less like us is also related to human preferences for species with larger body sizes and vibrant colours, alongside less easily defined levels of charisma, rarity, and exotica (Curtin & Papworth, 2020). Accordingly, some of the most globally popular animal tourist attractions are mammals with large body sizes that have high intellectual capacity (Moorhouse et al., 2015).

Other species, such as particular types of birds and large reptiles, are highly sought after by tourists. Sharks, crocodiles, snakes, and bats are among those animals who may lack charisma but can still appeal due to their exotic nature (Carr, 2016a). Ideally, tourism revenues generated from highly appealing species can be used to justify conservation of other ecologically important species with little or no tourism appeal. However, such an 'umbrella species' approach to conservation has a mixed record of success (Caro, 2010). While megafauna species, such as cetaceans and big cats, tend to be overrepresented in animal tourist attractions (Winter, 2020), invertebrates are occasionally important attractions (Lemelin et al., 2019). Examples include migratory monarch butterfly watching in Mexico (Lemelin & Jaramillo-López, 2020), Odonata (dragonflies and damselflies) (Lemelin, 2007), and multiple fish species (Bessa et al., 2017).

Tourism attractions featuring large, high-profile species have generated necessary legal actions to protect animal welfare. For example, bullfighting has been banned in several countries after public awareness campaigns about the cruelty of the practice (Humane Society International, 2011), and the documentary *Blackfish* prompted such a public outcry that Seaworld was pressured to end its captive orca breeding programme (Ventre & Jett, 2015). Although it may be too early to conclude, the documentary *Tiger King* appears to have prompted public disgust over the treatment of large exotic cats in private captivity. The protagonist of the show has been credited with the passing of the Big Cat Public Safety Act in the USA (Bennett & Johnson, 2021).

Forgotten species

While charismatic species take centre stage, less 'loveable' species are essential both as components of the global ecosystem and in their own right. However, they are underrepresented in academic and popular considerations of tourism (Lovelock, 2015). For example, there has been consideration of threats to wild bird habitats (Huhta & Sulkava, 2014), and a few studies discuss ethical concerns over attracting bird species to tourist areas using various artificial methods, such as call playback (MacKinnon, 2004). However, relative to the popularity of bird-focused tourism and the size and diversity of the global bird population, there remains a dearth of research on the negative impacts of tourist activities on birds and associated ethical considerations (Connell, 2009; Fennell & Yazdan Panah, 2020).

Likewise, invertebrate species must be included in critical tourism discussions (Lemelin, 2015). However, a search within Web of Science found that insects have been featured in only one publication regarding ethics in tourism practice (surrounding consumption of insects) (Perdue, 2018), and submarine invertebrates in only two (Contador et al., 2018; Schlacher et al., 2014). Such a dearth occurs even though invertebrate attractions, such as butterfly enclosures, insect museums, and migration sites, are popular tourist attractions (Çelik & Topsakal, 2017). The lack of research has meant they have largely escaped scrutiny regarding ethical practice. As part of this, firefly tourism is an emerging enterprise (attracting over one million tourists across 12 countries) which could benefit from critical examination (Lewis et al., 2021).

Amphibian species, often living in remote areas, also deserve more ethical consideration in the face of the threats posed by expanding tourism practices (Courtois et al., 2015; Kok et al., 2022). The need for such work is exemplified by the increased probability of infection with chytridiomycosis in amphibians, which can cause losses exceeding 90% in some species, and has been linked to tourist activities in South America (Kok et al., 2022). Despite the global risk of extinction (90 amphibian species are already presumed extinct from the infection), amphibians remain one of the 'forgotten species' in tourism studies (Fisher & Garner, 2020). This example links to the point that animals are not just impacted as tourist attractions. Instead, tourism activities can indirectly impact them in

myriad ways. In addition, through being labelled as pests, the antithesis of an attraction, animals risk being exterminated within the touranimalscape. In both cases, these animals are ignored or expunged from the collective memory.

The ethical issues may (or may not) be unique for these forgotten species, however the selective focus on charismatic species and terrestrial species leads to an understated and skewed view of the scope of the problem. Surely the complexity of research perspectives shown to past and current issues into *homo sapiens* prompts consideration of the need for additional knowledge on a slew of other species by understanding impacts of tourism on individual animals, social groupings, and ecosystems, and within varying national and economic contexts. If we collectively do not think this is needed, we most certainly reinforce the anthropocentric, hierarchical view of animals that has placed us in the biodiversity and climate crises that we currently find ourselves. Additionally, new 'calculations' on the moral weight of animals, species-adjusted measure of suffering-years (Weathers et al., 2020), and comparisons of welfare status across species (Fischer, 2024) demonstrate that fresh approaches to our view of animals may be shifting – and imply frameworks that some are considering for fair governance within macro global issues. Lest the tourism industry engages in a continual renewal of prevailing investigative topics and contexts, we may find other disciplines not only leaving us behind in knowledge about animals in tourism but also quite possibly dictating the approaches found in the tourism industry itself.

Type of use

The animal classes section, above, provides a foundation from which to demonstrate the magnitude of animal consumption in tourism (Fennell, 2012a). Animals labour within the tourist experience as beasts of burden, objects for human sensory consumption, producers of bodily products, and 'managers' of the ecosystem services that provide the backdrop for the destination itself. As such, there is no such thing as non-consumptive animal tourism, though the nature of the consumption clearly differs. As tourist spectacles (Barua, 2017), be it in captivity or as part of immersive nature-based eco-tours, animals are subject to the gaze of onlookers; their living bodies are commodified as tourist souvenirs (Burns, 2015; Hooper, 2022). For game animals, it is their killing, remains consumed, and motivation for the physical trophy, which are used to 'celebrate' the tourist's domination of the 'wild'. Thus, while anthropocentrism governs the lives of animals in tourism, the diverse ways humans use animals in tourism present nuanced and varied ethical considerations. Indeed, the level of impact experienced by animals in tourism occurs along a spectrum rather than a dichotomous ranking of animal tourism as either interactive or non-interactive, an issue we will return to later in the paper. Likewise, animal labour is woven throughout the performative processes for animals in tourism, detailed throughout this section.

Tourism's most apparent and socially abhorred forms of animal labour involve observable physical impacts on individual animals or the environment. Such practices, and the facilities which offer them, are met with scrutiny as tourists demonstrate an increasing consciousness about animal welfare (Daud & Rahman, 2011; Flower et al., 2021; Taylor et al., 2020). Capitalising on this trend in tourist attitudes, the historical and current use of animals' physical labour can be treated as a spectacle, either glorifying or problematising the practice (Barua, 2017). For example, photographic exhibitions of animals working in Myanmar's timber industry have been used in tourism materials (Saha, 2017, p. 170) and at 'retirement camps' to educate tourists. These spectacles may instead serve to commodify further the very individuals they seek to help. Photos of wounded, suffering, or mistreated animals are regularly used to increase donations to charities seeking to 'help' these individuals (Swim & Bloodhart, 2015). The below categories allow us to review the ethical considerations of animal uses; animals likely fall within several categories simultaneously.

Transportation and physical labour

In a range of countries, Asian elephants (*Elephas maximus*) have been put to work by humans in military actions, logging, farming, and forest management for over 4000 years (Sukumar, 2012). However, their use shifted towards tourism as logging bans increased during the 1980s, and 'modern' equipment (such as trucks) replaced them (Kontogeorgopoulos, 2019; Sukumar, 2012). More than a quarter of the world's Asian elephant population resides in captivity (Sukumar, 2012). While some live in zoos throughout the Global North, most of these individuals are employed as tourist safari transport within range states (Schmidt-Burbach et al., 2015), carrying up to six tourists at a time, up to nine times a day into forests and jungles (Szydlowski, 2022a). In addition, these elephants are made to perform other labour, such as painting, playing instruments, and doing other more overt 'tricks' for human audiences (Laohachaiboon, 2010). Despite our long, shared history, elephants are not domesticated but rather must be 'broken' (a process involving both great physical and emotional violence and ritualistic observance, the latter being wholly humancentric) to ensure safe, anthropocentric inter-species encounters (Cohen, 2015; Kontogeorgopoulos, 2019; Szydlowski, 2024).

Domesticated equids serve as goods, attractions, tourist transport and leisure providers in diverse landscapes. Donkeys have long worked alongside humans in Australia, Europe, Africa, and North and South America, playing a vital role in mining, war, and trading practices (Mitchell, 2018). However, these animals have shifted to roles in tourism, participating in 'mountain man' races, donkey rides through national parks, and seaside children's rides (Giampiccoli, 2017; Tully & Carr, 2020). Equids pull tourist carts through parks and cities in Asia, Europe, and North and South America (Vial & Evans, 2015), provide leisure riding services to tourists in rural regions (Helgadóttir & Sigurðardóttir, 2008), serve as rural entertainment through equestrian events, at festivals, and as symbols of ethnic identity (Dashper et al., 2021; Evans & Chevalier, 2015). For example, z*onkeys* (donkeys painted as zebras, not hybrids, in this case) in Tijuana, Mexico, offer cart rides and pose for photographs, garnering notoriety as the city's unofficial cultural representatives (Quintero & López, 2021). Dogs are also widely used in the transportation of tourists, such as dog sledding using huskies (García-Rosell & Tallberg, 2021), and in sports like greyhound racing that attract the attention of tourists across the world, despite often defined by abuse and violence (Atkinson & Young, 2005).

Consumable goods

Animals are eaten on an industrial scale within global tourism. 'Tastescapes' allow tourists to experience a place via the sense of taste and are typically reserved for foods that seemingly contribute to a region's cultural heritage (Bruncevic & Linné, 2018; Kline, 2018). This contribution is particularly evident in the case of farm animals, who, with the exception of equids and although providing a variety of services to tourists (cultural/gastronomic experiences, food, therapy, entertainment), are seldom investigated in the tourism/leisure literature (some contributions in Bertella, 2021; Kline, 2018; Tully & Carr, 2021).

While animals serve as tastescapes, such as haggis in Scotland and foie gras in France, not all animal-derived foods in tourism are authentic tastescapes. For example, whilst an emerging industry, civet coffee in Bali has undergone rapid and effective marketing, resulting in widespread belief amongst visitors that civet coffee is synonymous with local Balinese tradition (Hooper, 2022).

Many animal products have also been adopted by tourism activities regardless of location, such as the consumption of fast-food meats at football matches across North America, Europe and Australia (Gaffney & Bale, 2004), insect-eating in Asia (Perdue, 2018) and seafood cocktails on sun stripped beaches the world over (Rodrigues & Villasante, 2016). Animal products such as wool (Tourangeau & Sherren, 2020), ivory (Underwood et al., 2016), crocodile skin or skulls (Keul, 2018), and even living fish and reptile keychains (Ho, 2011) also enter the sphere of tourism as souvenirs. Animals also serve as consumable goods in both religious and cultural tourism. Visitors flock to witness the mass sacrifice of animals (up to 450,000 deaths at a single event) in festivals such as Dashain or Gadhimai in Nepal (Acharya et al., 2019), religious practices such as the Jewish Kapparot

(Wrenn, 2015), or through other types of 'cultural experiences' which result in animal deaths, such as cock, dog, and bullfighting (Cohen, 2015; Quintero & López, 2018).

Another practice where animals are consumable goods is animal sex tourism, which consists of the movement of people to visit animal brothels and engage in prostitution, either legally or illegally (Fennell, 2012a; Markwell, 2015). In these practices, animals are sexually assaulted in ways that range from touching them erotically and using them for pornography to penetrating them (López & Quintero, 2021a). Sexual acts are coercive and cause psychological damage, as evidenced by the case of Pony, an orangutan subject to prostitution, who was chained, shaved daily, forced to wear jewellry and repeatedly raped by men who visited the brothel in Central Kalimantan, Indonesia, where she was kept (López & Quintero, 2021a). After her rescue in 2003, she was sent to a rehabilitation centre, but every time her former pimp visited her, she screamed and defecated.

Dark animal tourism

Dark tourism is about the commodification of death – real or represented in the past or the present – in tourism environments (Stone et al., 2018). The concept of dark animal tourism was introduced into the field of critical animal studies by Panko and George (2018) and Quintaro and López (2018), López and Quintero (2021b) and comprehensive model of animals as dark tourism attractions by Fennell et al. (2021) to establish the fact that the death of animals is also commodified by tourism. Practices vary, as do their perceived degree of gravity. The intervening factors in such perceptions include the time in which the action has occurred and whether it is a real death or a representation.

When the torture or death of an animal has occurred in the past, the perception is less harmful than when it happens in the present. For example, the interest of tourists in visiting the Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, a World Heritage Site in Alberta, Canada, honouring First Nations cultural practices, lies in the opportunity of imagining how buffaloes were led towards a precipice to seriously hurt and weaken them to facilitate their slaughter (Fennell et al., 2021). However, the interest in the real-time slaughter of animals, such as during bullfights or cockfights in Spain and some Latin American countries, has profound ethical implications from a posthumanist perspective. That such practices continue to exist even as the public becomes increasingly aware of their injustice is indicative of the many economic interests behind the commodification of animals (López & Quintero, 2021b). Similarly, when the tourist attraction consists in hounding and killing an animal, as happens in so-called cynegetic tourism and sport fishing, the satisfaction of the human need for recreation is put before the primary needs of animals (see Dickson, 2009). Trophy hunting now contributes substantially to the GDP of several African countries like Namibia and South Africa but is also a context in which hunters may behave less ethically compared to the standards they normally uphold at home (Von Essen et al., 2020) Finally, a museum exhibition of dead animals (embalmed, dissected or plastinated) elicits a less negative perception of its supposed educational purpose.

Captive spectacles

Zoos and aquaria are one of the most recognised ways animals serve as tourist spectacles though it is essential to recognise the heterogenous and contested nature of these institutions regarding concerns for animal welfare. The display of animals for human observation is well documented as a form of anthropocentric domination (Malamud, 2017), with the attention of onlookers forcing submission by the observed (Holland et al., 2017). For example, Bone and Bone (2015) found the gaze of tourists to play an essential role in the othering of animals (and women) in Thai tourism. However, more than passive observation is needed to quench the thirst of tourists seeking experiences with animals forced to interact with tourists directly. Unfortunately, historical, and ongoing violence is often intrinsic to these interactions, such as drugging individuals for docility while engaging with tourists (Cohen, 2013; Hooper, 2022). Captive animals are bred and 'culled' for various reasons, sometimes by only being born the 'wrong' sex (Cohen & Fennell, 2016). Temple tigers and elephants are expected to receive multitudes of tourists without physical reaction (Sukumar, 2012; Szydlowski,

2024). Likewise, sacred cows and the snakes of charmers serve as cultural icons and spectacles for tourists and are expected to remain calm and aloof as humans swarm around them (Krishna, 2010).

Carr and Broom (2018, p. 32) suggest that touching and interacting with wildlife can be interpreted as a form of social capital – a sociological concept defined as resources derived from our social networks – with 'such experiences being perceived to be worth more than merely seeing an animal'. Social media has been identified as a key driver of this practice given how eagerly some tourists share their experiences online to their networks and followers (Von Essen et al., 2020). One particularly concerning trend that aligns with this tendency is 'wildlife selfie tourism', in which tourists hold, pet, or get too close to wild animals – often in captivity – while taking a photograph of themselves. A slightly looser definition of 'selfie' would also include photographs taken of the tourist and animal by another person. Recent research conducted by World Animal Protection found that this practice increased by 292% between 2014 and 2017 (Winter, 2020). As a result of this increase and concerns about the welfare of wildlife involved in the practice, Instagram has recently taken action to warn their users about images associated with certain hashtags such as '#slothselfies'. In Japan, animal cafés (cats, dogs, owls, hedgehogs, rabbits, etc.) are places for providing affective human-animal interactions. Both domestic and exotic animals are exploited for human needs. Some cafés also have renting services (e.g. Rent-a-Cat) (Plourde, 2014).

Mediators

Animals have been mediators since the beginning of time through our lived experiences and conceptualizations of existence on this planet – contributing to and shaping our collective human consciousness. Berland (2019, p. 8) observes that 'Animals have served as mediators for human interaction as far back as records exist. They have been conscripted as sacrifices, symbols, items of trade, gifts, and tokens in the circulation of kinship, wealth, belief and power.' Dolby (2019) speaks to the increased reflection within environmental education regarding ambassador animals' sentience, cognition, and emotional lives. Hoarau-Heemstra and Kline (2022) argue that animals are mediators that serve as a conduit of meaning for tourists to gain a deeper understanding of the culture and connection with the outdoors. Within these and other variations of mediator identities, the humans who facilitate experiences involving animals in a tourism context span those highly trained to work with animals to those with no training at all.

Caregiving tourism

Care-focused tourism facilities are carefully curated portraits of 'sanctuary'. These 'relational' (as opposed to 'transactional') tourism experiences in an ideal world rely on a sense of humans and animals willingly serving one another. Promotional materials highlight the dependency of these animals and their environment on tourists for their ongoing care (Bertella, 2014; Taylor et al., 2020), and often frame the animals as rescued or retired from exploitation (Carr, 2021). Likewise, facilities market the need for volunteers to feed and clean resident animals, keep records, and thus ensure ongoing successful 'rescues' (Chan, 2010). Agency-reaffirming language such as 'farm animal' rather than 'farmed animal' (Tully & Carr, 2021), describes the animals as *residents* who *choose* to interact with tourists in 'natural' ways (Bertella, 2013; Tully & Carr, 2021).

However, what constitutes 'natural' interaction is carefully constructed by the tourism provider and often demands performance from the animal, requiring them to behave in specifically trained ways (Guo, 2021; Szydlowski, 2024; Tully & Carr, 2021), such as accepting interactions (baths, feeding, grooming, etc.) from human strangers. Other allegedly non-invasive forms of tourism, such as photo safaris and birdwatching trips, will be discussed below in greater detail (see 'engagement modes' section). Increasingly there is a need to examine the ethics of volunteer tourism practices surrounding animal care. An example of a tour operator providing transparent, ethical business principles is Animal Experience International (AEI; https://www.animalexperienceinternational.com/), which has been in business for ten years as a Benefit Corporation. Finally, animal tourism that makes no pretense about promoting convivial interactions with individual animals, may nevertheless

market itself as producing conservation benefits on the population level. The trophy hunting industry, for example, offers a moral dilemma in permitting the sacrifice of individual animals to contribute to their conservation in the wild. This trope been called the 'saviour' or hero complex and represents a utilitarian rationale for promoting animal tourism (Tickle & von Essen, 2020)

Settings: terrestrial and aquatic

Moorhouse et al. (2015; Moorhouse et al., 2017) identified 48 different forms of wildlife tourism attractions (WTAs) to question the negative conservation implications of wildlife tourism. Most of these were terrestrial, notably bear/elephant parks, predator interactions, animal sanctuaries, animal product farms, street performances, and wildlife viewing. The growing literature on animal ethics in tourism examines culturally relative activities outside WTAs, such as dog sledding (Fennell, 2022b) and alligator wrestling (Riordan et al., 2020). Nature-based recreational activities can also have indirect and unintended effects on animal wellbeing, such as rock climbing's negative impact on the biodiversity of avian communities (Covy et al., 2019).

The case of zoos brings up fundamental tensions that apply to other terrestrial forms of tourism, especially WTAs. For example, how do we ethically manage the imbalance of agency between humans and captive (or at least constrained) wildlife? Fennell (2022b) suggests applying a bioethical model of informed consent for animals to provide a more equitable distribution of agency in human-animal interactions. Ramont et al. (2021) illustrate examples of comfortable and well-resourced retreat spaces where goats in petting zoos can relax if they are not interested in interactions with visitors. Additionally, AEI practices consent-based tourism in the experiences they arrange with local communities whereby the communities, the animals, and the visitors all consent to engaging in the given activity (Livingstone, 2022).

How might we sustainably manage animal-based tourism attractions to ensure that they adhere to individual animal welfare and conservation benefits? One can imagine five groups of human actors: 1) individual visitors, 2) tourism operators, 3) governmental agencies, 4) communities situated within the tourism setting, and 5) animal tourism ethics researchers and students. However, Moorhouse et al. (2015) note that despite the impacts on animals at WTAs, only a small percentage of visitors express concerns. Thus, it is difficult to rely on tourists to keep animal tourism ethical (Kline & Fischer, 2021). Such was also found by Macdonald and Wester (2021), who wrote that tourists need to be made aware of technical definitions of wildlife tourism, nor do they expect operators to uphold principles of ethical practice. Similarly, Warsaw and Sayers (2020) suggest that zoo visitors value accreditation, yet few recognise the accreditation body itself. While voluntary accreditation and professional peer accountability may be helpful in an ethical wildlife tourism future, these measures will likely only be effective when they possess sufficient public recognition (Fennell & Sheppard, 2021). Conversely, there is a legitimate concern of overreliance on 'certified ethical' accreditation systems that may be harmful by abdicating the public of any responsibility to critically scrutinise a wildlife tourism attraction (Sin, 2017).

Research also indicates that tourism activities threaten the conservation status of many species. For example, 21% of 129 marine mammal species are recognised as threatened or endangered by the IUCN (Bejder et al., 2022). Such is attributed mainly to habitat alteration or disturbance by wildlife-watching operations. Considerable efforts have been made to understand the biological relevance of animals' behavioural responses in aquatic tourism, especially in marine mammals (Lusseau et al., 2003; Pirotta et al., 2015; Pirotta et al., 2018; Senigaglia et al., 2016). The fields of metabolomics and endocrinology are advancing to analyze the impacts of disturbance on the body that measure ecological health and functional diversity (Bejder et al., 2022; Pimiento et al., 2020). Such indicators assess animals' critical life functions to manage tourism impacts. These advancements have conceptualised maximum sustainable tourism yield, common pool resource theory in whale-watching, and restricting seasonal access to sandy beaches due to disturbance on microscopic marine animals or meiofauna, as examples (Bejder et al., 2022; Higham et al., 2016). Thus, the physical

sciences have helped advance a conservation ethic approach in the tourism industry and confirm decades of scholarly endeavours within the subfield of animal ethics in tourism (Winter, 2020).

Parsons (2012) reviewed the observable effects of marine mammal disturbance in whale-watching encounters and criticised the inability of local jurisdictions to adapt to codes of ethics established by tourism scholars (Garrod & Fennell, 2004). Similar ethical frameworks have assessed culturally close aquatic encounters like the killing of narwhal (Buckley, 2005), the ethics of sport and recreational fishing or 'catch and release' (Fennell & Nowaczek, 2010; Mordue, 2009; Øian et al., 2017), and the cognitive dissonance of tourists who engage in swimming with dolphins in captive settings (Curtin, 2006; Curtin & Wilkes, 2007). However, animal ethics and the established sciences have shifted societal concerns over the last decade, and governments and industries struggle to adapt. For example, Bach and Burton (2017) use choice modelling to show how primarily western citizens value better welfare for captive animals over proximity or time spent in close encounters.

Table 1. Deep approaches to student learning on the topic of tourism and animal ethics.

Type of learning	Characteristics	Example: The question of whether a swim-with animatronic dolphin experience is preferable to a real captive dolphin swim-with experience. Animal class: Mammal Type of use: Captive in an aquatic setting Mediators: Guided Engagement mode: Interactive State of animal: Trained vs robot
Higher order learning	Analyze essential elements of an idea, experience, or theory, such as examining a particular case or situation in depth and considering its components	The two different swim-with scenarios represent a case study designed to test students' beliefs, attitudes, and ultimate behaviour.
	Synthesize and organise ideas, information, or experiences into new, more complex interpretations and relationships	Expose students to existing knowledge of swim-with programmes. Expose students to films (Lolita: Slave to entertainment) and new animatronic technologies.
	Make judgments about the value of information, arguments, or methods, such as examining how others gathered and interpreted data and assessing the soundness of their conclusions.	Encourage students to personally judge the moral rightness or wrongness of existing swim-with programmes and how these compare with animatronic options.
	Apply theories or concepts to practical problems or in new situations	Investigate how theories apply (e.g. animal welfare, animal rights, ecocentrism, posthumanism). Include empathy, suffering, and sentience
Integrative learning	Work on a paper or project that required integrating ideas or information from various sources	Have students engage in individual and group projects that integrate the knowledge and ideas from higher-order learning.
	Include diverse perspectives (different races, religions, genders, political beliefs, etc.) in class discussions or writing assignments	Diverse perspectives include dolphins as stakeholders or holders of intrinsic value. How different cultures, genders, etc., view the options.
	Put together ideas or concepts from different courses when completing assignments or during class discussions.	Take an interdisciplinary approach to address the problem through studies on geography, anthropology, biology, and so on.
	Discuss ideas from your readings or classes with faculty members during and outside of class	Establish group chats or share information from the news as conduits to help sustain the discussion on the issue.
	Discuss ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.)	Students often report talking about these issues with friends and family. Test how new knowledge disrupts the current thinking of these others
Reflective learning	Examine the strengths and weaknesses of your views on a topic or issue	Have individuals and the class reflect on changing attitudes and behaviours from new knowledge. Discuss changes as a new norm.
	Try to better understand someone else's views by imagining how an issue looks from his or her perspective.	Come to appreciate how socialisation can dictate attitudes and behaviour. Unsettle these entrenched views through reflection
	Learn something that changed the way you understand an issue or concept	Understand that the world is complex and diverse. Discuss, for example, the social costs of participating in conventional swim-with programmes.

Fennell (2022a) reflects on education and animal ethics as having a central role in replacing live animals (i.e. dolphins) with animatronic dolphins in close tourism encounters (see Table 1).

Engagement modes

Each touranimalscape typically considers the human as the consumer of animal experiences (Fennell, 2021). Cohen (2009) and Fennell (2012a) divide these experiences into interactive, non-interactive, and relational. However, there are no obvious defined boundaries between interactive and non-interactive encounters. Traditionally such encounters can be defined as those involving physical contact and those that do not; however, once any party to the encounter engages, even via observation, the encounter may be considered 'interactive.' For example, activities such as those occurring at zoos, aquaria, animal holding centres (e.g. butterfly enclosures, crocodile farms, wildlife sanctuaries, conservation 'centers') or during observational activities such as jeep or photo safari, hiking, or birdwatching (see Fennell, 2012b) may at first seem 'non-interactional.' However, as Larsen and Urry (2011, p. 1122) argue, even 'gazing' involves 'sensuous' bodily activity as the participants move through 'landscapes, cities and sights, aesthetic sensibility, connecting signs and their referents … and embodied practices.' Such sensory contact creates interactivity among participants and their environment (Crouch & Desforges, 2003). There is also a 'consumptive' aspect to gazing, as Yudina and Grimwood (2016) illustrate; photographing polar bears in wild settings enables tourists to satisfy experiential desires, reinforcing hierarchical power relationships that position human subjects over animal 'objects.'

Alternatively, Beardsworth and Bryman (2001) refer to any shared physical presence with live animals as an 'encounter,' regardless of whether there is interaction or physical contact. Beardsworth and Bryman refer to encounters that preclude physical contact (such as observation) and render the animal participant captive or otherwise restrained as 'presentation' events. When these encounters include observation of free-living wild animals, Saloña Bordas (2004) argues that to practice ethical tourism, we should avoid 'disturbing' animals in any way. Such disturbances would certainly include being pursued to exhaustion (Malchrowicz-Mośko et al., 2020), followed too closely (Baral, 2013; Ranaweerage et al., 2015), visually, olfactorily, or otherwise disturbed in ways that create a sense of 'perceived predation risk' (Beale & Monaghan, 2004, p. 335), or interrupted in the performance of daily activities (rearing young, eating, mating, etc.) (Buckley, 2011; Kline et al., 2022).

Of course, even if animals remain 'undisturbed,' they may fall prey to Foucauldian (Foucault, 2004/2008) control via 'zooveillance' (Braverman, 2012), or suffer consequences, such as objectification, from the onlooker gaze (Beardsworth & Bryman, 2001; Holland et al., 2017). This is a growing concern in virtual animal tourism, which may be offered both as an alternative to physical tourism and as complements, such as through livestreams offered by zoos and national parks of animals for digital viewers (Rooks, 2016; Verma et al., 2016). While championed as a less intrusive way of viewing animals, the intimate capture of nest- and den cameras, GoPros glued to animal bodies, drones tracking their movement and animatronics infiltrating packs raise both welfare concerns and nascent concerns about animal privacy and biopower (Paci et al., 2022; Von Essen et al., 2021). Likewise, the very presence of humans in animal habitats could be considered a disturbance (Orams, 2002) as it may alter the ability of animals to escape encounters and may result in habituation to human-animal activity, which renders them susceptible to poaching, relocation, or predation (Curry et al., 2001; Geffroy et al., 2015; Subedi, 1999).

Interactive encounters may involve physical or sensory contact with humans or human-derived artefacts (Hill et al., 2013). Such encounters require considering whether animals have agency (and space) to disengage or resist (Acampora, 2005; Fennell, 2012b). Even virtual animal tourism now offers (mediated) interaction, such as remotely petting feral dogs in the Chernobyl exclusion zone and providing screen prompts that trigger real-life interventions (Turnbull, 2020). Consideration is also required as to whether consent to physical contact is offered. Unfortunately, animal consent to the encounter is often not considered in research and practice (Fennell, 2022b;

Fenton, 2014; Ferdowsian et al., 2020). While beyond the scope of this brief section, we must note that while animals may seemingly choose to interact, this may be to relieve sensory deprivation (Aitken, 2008). They may also have developed maladaptive passivity (Peterson & Seligman, 1983) regarding their surroundings and tourist interactions. Such passivity stems from a lack of control over one's environment and may lead to illness or death (Rizzolo & Bradshaw, 2018; Szydlowski, 2024). However, there seems to be a wide range of motivations for interaction (or the avoidance thereof) that can only be explored if free will, agency and the ability to judge human intentions are assumed for the other. Tourism researchers and practitioners should therefore critically examine what the animal, especially wildlife roaming free, seems to get out of his or her voluntary interaction with human beings, and how this might affect the individual in the long term. For example, animal initiated practices and agency have been reported in touranimalscapes like coral reefs visited by scuba divers. SeaLegacy, who carry out research for the ocean (sealegacy.org), refers to the Goliath Grouper as 'not just a fish, but an intelligent animal', or as 'underwater puppies' that seeks connection and actively uses interactive encounters with human beings for assistance in hunting, entertainment and satisfaction of her curiosity. In communicating encounters with wildlife to other human beings, anthropomorphism seems almost unavoidable.

Regarding consent, understanding how to communicate human intentions in animal-human encounters is fraught (see de Waal, 2011), and misunderstanding assent or dissent in such situations could result in harm to all participants (Coulter, 2016; Fennell, 2022b; Szydlowski, 2022b). Likewise, using desirable provisioned foods (treats) to encourage interactions with humans may lead to habituation or 'adapted preferences', which alter the behaviours and lives of animals (Fenton, 2014; Fung, 2018; Van Patter & Blattner, 2020).

Some interactive encounters intentionally result in animal death or injury, such as sports fishing or hunting safaris (Lovelock, 2007), meat or food tourism (Kline, 2018), and sex tourism (Carr, 2016b) (see also Rizzolo, 2021). Furthermore, non-consensual interactions may lead to injury or death, no matter how seemingly benign. For example, the online release of geotagged photos by tourists that reveal their locations may put in peril unconsenting (dissenting) animals at the hands of hunters or collectors (Fennell, 2022b; Szydlowski, In press). Another consideration of interactive encounters is zoonotic disease, such as rabies, psittacosis, salmonella, etc. (CDC, 2021; Szydlowski, 2022a). Likewise, zooanthroponosis can cause harm as tourists transfer pathogens to animals (Messenger et al., 2014); for example, tuberculosis passed between humans and elephants throughout SE Asia for centuries (Paudel & Sreevatsan, 2020) and SARS-CoV-2 (Clayton et al., 2022).

The third mode of engagement is termed 'relational' (Cohen, 2009; Fennell, 2012a) and referred to by Beardsworth and Bryman (2001) as 'representational' engagement. From the earliest known representations of animals in Neanderthal cave paintings dating to 64.8 thousand years ago (Hoffmann et al., 2018) to contemporary representations, animals have been used as mirrors (Mullin, 1999) to help humans think about their cultural, social, and historical place in the world. Whether the representation as symbols or totems that are 'good to think with about ourselves' is on screen (George & Schatz, 2016), on our bodies (Hill, 2020), in literature (Sax, 2013; Szydlowski, 2018), politically, or religiously, representations help humans navigate our understanding and existential peace. This use of animals as tools to think about ourselves has been called into question by several scholars, including Birke (2009), who asks, 'What's in it for the animals?'. This question also requires consideration of the representation of animals within tourism.

Animals are furthermore used as symbols or totems within culture and rituals, for example, to represent political authority, domestic animals as symbols in Christian iconography, or marine animals as symbols of freedom (Lopes, 2015; Mäenpää, 2020; Škrobonja et al., 2001). Today, animals are used as symbols in many areas, from sports to logos for cars. In tourism, animals are used as flagship species to represent countries, such as the gorilla representing Rwanda, or to support the conservation of biodiversity, such as the World Wildlife Fund's panda (Smith & Sutton, 2008; Thompson & Rog, 2019; Veríssimo et al., 2009). Combined with interactive tourism, animal parts are also used as symbols or trophies from hunting and fishing tourism (Petroman et al., 2015). Furthermore, body

parts, shells, coral parts, or other artefacts are often sold to tourists as souvenirs legally and illegally (D'Cruze et al., 2017; Nijman, 2019).

Each engagement mode raises ethical considerations about their impact on animal welfare. Relational interactions may comprise symbols ranging from drawings, sculptures, photographs, videos, or artefacts such as horns, furs, skulls, or other body parts. However, all touranimalscapes must be assumed to be interactive, engaging one or more of the tourist's senses. Furthermore, as touranimalscapes include captive and non-captive animals, the ethics, mutual consent, and rippling magnitude of the effects stemming from these interactions may differ.

States of animals

Wild animal populations represent authentic living through natural ways and environments. For tourists, observing wild animals is a sought-after experience to counter the contemporary human disassociation with nature (Cohen, 2009). However, such seeking typically applies only to a portion of charismatic wild-living animals in wilderness areas like jungles, savannas, or oceans. More mundane wild animals, such as the commensal species who share spaces like cities with people (e.g. coyotes, foxes, rats, spiders, cockroaches), are less likely to find favour among tourists and may even be actively avoided ('mysothery' as described by Fennell, 2012a). Finding the most sought-after wild animal experiences is difficult and inconvenient for tourists, as going deep into a jungle in search of a tiger, for instance, takes resources of time, money, expertise, and fitness and has accessibility challenges (e.g. environmental consequences [Dawson et al., 2011]) and danger issues (e.g. animal attacks [Patel, 2016]). Therefore, tourism operations look to provide easier access to wild animals. As we will see in this section, tourism uses of species can alter the state of individual wild animals.

Encounters with wild animals can be encouraged by provisioning (i.e. feeding) to draw them into accessible tourism spaces (Fung, 2018; Knight, 2010; Mann et al., 2018). Given that many wild animals see humans as predators to avoid (Knight, 2009), these activities risk altering the state of a wild animal to that of a tamed one. Understanding tameness is tricky because it can affect every animal differently. Tameness results from a process of habituation that can be simply about how one person interacts with one animal with lasting consequences for the duration of that single animal's life (Russell, 2002). Hence, those individual wild animals who can be maneuvered into a state of tameness for closer human contact can benefit tourism, but this may not benefit the animal or species in question.

The top tourism-associated way of changing a wild animal's state comes via captivity, epitomised by the zoo. Such establishments are a worldwide tourism attraction due to the packaging of animals, who are often thousands of miles from any natural habitat and way of life, into an idea that matches human perceptions, and thus tourist ideals, about the wild attractiveness of species (Beardsworth & Bryman, 2001). This packaging impacts animals' tameness but also places them on the tourism stage to be unnaturally gazed at by humans irrespective of actions the animal species living in the wild would like to undertake (Bekoff & Pierce, 2017). Similar to taming animals, captivity does not alter the wild animal characteristics at the population level but affects those individuals captured and those subsequently born into captivity, such as through species-dependent health, behaviour, lifespan, and psychological aspects (Clauss et al., 2007; Clubb et al., 2008). Here individual wild animals transform into a captive state, which means a life controlled and influenced entirely by human (tourism-influenced) decisions, or a hybrid state as re-engineered transbiological beings (Szczygielska, 2013).

The dominant human aims of tourism, which are the quest for tourist pleasures and operator profits, are problematic for captive animals. Take, for example, elephants in Thailand. Kontogeorgopoulos (2009; see also Rizzolo, 2021) details that establishments, when focused on the anthropocentric outcomes of tourism, require elephants to perform for tourist desires (such as by offering rides or playing games). These unnatural performances require specialist skills, and, as we know

as humans, to perform with specialism takes training. Consequently, elephants are subjected to cruel training and control methods to prepare them for entertaining tourist crowds. Such includes the 'breaking' of young elephants, as noted above, the use of spiked chains, and control via a sharp bull-hook (Daly, 2019). Such practices typically happen out of sight of tourists, who enjoy, without concern, riding on their backs and watching the elephant's skill at sitting on a stool, playing with a football, and, along with other unnatural acts (Cohen, 2015).

In contrast, the biological state of being domesticated arises from the selection of traits that renders a species better adapted to living within human societies (Price, 2003). It results from a multi-generational process in which humans assume varying degrees of control over the animals' movement, feeding, protection, distribution, and reproduction (Clutton-Brock, 1999; Diamond, 2002; Ingold, 2000). The 'dominance' model casts the domesticated species as productive capital and explains how they became integrated into the social fabric of human society as commodities (Ingold, 2000; Szydlowski et al., 2022). While integral to societies, these animals could be considered mundane compared to the attractive wild animal mentioned above (Young & Carr, 2018). However, animals in varying states of domestication, including working animals, companion species, livestock, and those feral living, are an inseparable part of multifarious experiences in tourism.

Wild species tend to be 'employed' as performers, whereas domesticated species serve a more utilitarian role. For example, sniffer and security dogs are commonplace at airports, and more recently, 'meet and greet' dogs have been providing stress relief to weary travellers (Carr, 2014). These animals are in a trained-to-work state. Dogs can also be companion animals, considered by many to be part of the family (Irvine & Cilia, 2017). It is unsurprising that companion animals, especially dogs, are becoming increasingly common guests or visitors in tourism (Carr, 2014, 2017; Hung et al., 2016). As such, tourism destinations need to consider accommodations for accompanying non-human guests and travelling may pose a new set of welfare risks for companion animals (Rickly et al., 2022). Hence, whilst domesticated animals are trained to work to serve in tourism, the sector is increasingly required to serve the needs of animals in a state of companionship.

Livestock animals provide consumable products such as milk, cheese, and meat, and the culinary experience of tasting the foods of different cultures is a popular aspect of tourism (Stanley & Stanley, 2014). However, this can cause unease and even outrage when cultural differences regarding the consumption of horse meat, for example, are encountered (Carr, 2014; Hoarau-Heemstra & Kline, 2022; Oh & Jackson, 2011; Yudina & Fennell, 2013). Other domesticated animals, such as pigs and sheep, hold less ambiguous positions in human societies. These farmed animals are considered essential elements of an agritourism offering (Jęczmyk et al., 2021) and animals like cows, sheep, alpacas, and llamas appear in activities such as rides, selfie-taking opportunities, stage shows, and petting zoos (Tully & Carr, 2021).

Domesticated species who live wild-like threaten to disrupt tourism experiences. These are members of domestic animal species that live apart from humans, or animals that exist beyond human control and are often viewed as transgressive (Hill et al., 2022; Wilson et al., 2018). They are animals labelled in a feral state. Hill et al. (2022) described how the 'feral' prefix is used to 'other' any animal population that has defied or averted human control. In many cases, 'feral' denotes animals deemed problematic or whose presence is undesirable to humans, regardless of whether they are wild or domesticated (Nagy & Johnson, 2013). These animals are often removed from pristine tourism spaces (Carr & Broom, 2018). In tourist destinations, city officials consider pigeons and rats undesirable due to their perceived over-boldness or association with filth (Blechman, 2013; Schuurman & Dirke, 2020). Feral pigs and goats are 'problematic' for tourists and residents (Koichi et al., 2013; Moskwa, 2015). Free-living cats and dogs can also be deemed a nuisance (Narayanan, 2017), although these companion-associated species retain certain appeal. For example, free-living cats living on the Japanese islands of Tashirojima and Ainoshima, and rabbits inhabiting the island of Ōkunoshima have become popular tourist attractions (Usui, 2022; Vitale, 2022). It can be said, therefore, that animals in a state of ferality are seen to contribute

to tourism experiences often negatively but sometimes positively under certain, narrow circumstances.

Theories of animal ethics

The theoretical lenses applied to the study of human-animal relationships are numerous and span several scholarly disciplines. To date, meta-analyses of theory within the animal tourism literature have been conducted by Fennell (2012a, 2015) and Winter (2020); please see these works for in-depth analyses of contractarianism, utilitarianism, animal rights, animal welfare, and other foundational theories. The scales of justice framework by Fennell and Sheppard (2021) is a composite measure to assess animal wellbeing in tourism using many of these theoretical perspectives, and how these theories contrast against care and virtue ethics. Rastegar (2022) argues for a move toward multispecies justice in research, policy, and practice, while Fennell and Thomsen (2021) connect the science of animal suffering with policy and detail a theoretical model to end animal suffering based on care and empathy. Additionally, Kline et al. (2022) suggest wildlife equity theory as a foundation to shift principles and policies that reinforce the continued injustices that drive the decline of livelihoods for all sentient beings.

There has been a sustained focus on ecofeminism in tourism and animal ethics tethered to environmental ethics and consisting of multiple and nuanced theories, principles, and practices to foster moral change (Cuomo, 2002; Yudina & Fennell, 2013). Emphasising connection, care, and liberation within meaningful human-animal relationships, ecofeminism is committed to disrupting power relations inscribed by binaries (e.g. human/animal, superior/inferior, etc.), as well as to illuminate and challenge the oppression and historical marginalisation of non-human natures (Fox, 1994; Plumwood, 1991). In tourism and animal ethics literature, ecofeminism has been used to engage with the morally situated and relational obligations that humans must care for animals (Taylor et al., 2020) and to attend to ethical issues relating to animals and nature that are at once 'personal, contextual, affective, and political' (Yudina & Grimwood, 2016, p. 717; see also Bertella, 2018).

Others have taken up posthumanism, a largely indeterminate, diverse, and even contested interdisciplinary domain aiming to radically reframe Enlightenment humanism's ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions. For example, in tourism, posthumanism has questioned the distinctions between humans and animals – challenging taken-for-granted hierarchical relationships in tourist-animal interactions, disrupting anthropocentrism (Monterrubio & Pérez, 2021), and reframing understandings from that of species that can be talked about in the abstract (Thomsen et al., 2021) to animals as active, consenting agents in tourism encounters (Fennell, 2022b). As there is no single meaning of posthumanism – and therefore of a posthumanist ethic – it is possible to identify that its multiple conceptualizations have been built as a difference or in opposition to humanism and can range from the attempt to unravel a new human identity of the digital age to reflect on its future, through a position of equality between humans and animals (Chavarría, 2015).

Disciplinary connections

Many have written about the varying ways that animals are treated across cultural and national boundaries – and how this makes issuing an absolute ethical stance untenable (Malchrowicz-Mośko et al., 2020). To this end, Kline and Fischer (2021) propose a new approach (based on the work of Susan Wolf) for engaging the public in ethical behaviours by considering their non-moral values, particularly regarding animals encountered in travel. Other approaches using a psychological lens include co-creation frameworks (Bertella, 2014; Bertella et al., 2019; Campos et al., 2017), as well as Orams (1996) who led from a psychological foundation to propose ways of persuading tourists' behaviour to be more animal friendly. Psychological theories have been applied to the visitor and tour providers alike. For example, using sensemaking theory, Hoarau-Heemstra and Kline (2022)

examined the co-creation phenomena among animals, guides, and tourists. Moreover, psychological wellbeing as an outcome of our connection with animals has only begun to be explored within the tourism literature (Curtin, 2009; Danby & Grajfoner, 2022).

Mkono and Holder (2019) propose a socio-psychological approach to examining online reflections of tourists in their work on collective moral reflexivity. Cultural approaches have addressed the othering of animals, particularly as food (Kline, 2018; Mkono, 2011) and have highlighted the abiding differences between Western and African views of wildlife (Chimuka, 2019; Mkono, 2019). Sociological approaches have questioned the power relations inherent in relationships between humans and animals in tourism work (Dashper, 2020b) and recreational tourism practices (Dashper, 2020a). Social movement theory (Mkono, 2018; Mkono & Holder, 2019) and institutional theory (Font et al., 2019) provide ways of understanding how both formal and informal groups approach the topic of animal welfare in tourism.

Anthrozoology, the study of human-animal relationships, stems from anthropological theory and praxis (Hurn, 2012). Anthrozoological methods include ethnographic investigation, qualitative analysis, and reflexivity to understand the significance of animals within culture, the roles animals play within societies, and the meanings of these relationships to individuals and collectives. Increased academic interest in animals in society, dubbed the 'animal turn' (Ritvo, 2007), has seen the 'Other' brought into more explicit focus (Kohn, 2007). Multi-species and post-human scholarship serve as methodological examples (Haraway, 2008; Kirksey & Helmreich, 2010) that attempt to investigate the 'contact zones' between humans and animals (Haraway, 2003), focusing on the relational entanglements between species that occur in different tourism spaces and contexts (e.g. Äijälä, 2021; Dashper, 2020a). Human-animal studies, thus, also includes disciplines such as critical animal studies, which roots itself in animal rights theory (ART) and liberationist discourses (Singer, 1973), as well as politics and animal law (Offor, 2020; Reddy, 2019). Through a theoretical citizenship framework of sovereignty, citizenship and denizenship, Donaldson and Kymlicka (2011) move beyond ART to address the political and practical complexities of the human-animal relationship presented in wild, domestic, and liminal settings. Here too, tourism academia could benefit as animals are integrated within tourism in ways more than simply through their captive management.

Animal geographers focus on the spatial aspects of human-animal encounters, whether material, mediated, or textual, and how animals are understood and appreciated (Gray, 2014; Nyman & Schuurman, 2016). Thus, animal geography investigates where, when, why, and how animals entangle human societies and transgress the material and conceptual boundaries created for them. By relying on concepts including space, place, and landscape; categories of analysis including cultural, economic, and political; and methodologies including archival and ethnography, animal geographers explore the complex entanglings of human-animal relations in all locations and attempt to bring in the animals as subjective selves instead of mere signifiers of human endeavour and meaning (Buller, 2014; Philo & Wilbert, 2000; Urbanik, 2012). Following Buller (2014), tourism academia could benefit theoretically and methodologically from better understanding human-animal encounters in tourism as spatially situated, which makes a difference to the very constitution of the encounters.

Despite the growing academic literature around animal work and ethics in tourism (e.g. Fennell, 2012a; Markwell, 2015; Rickly & Kline, 2021), little consideration has been given to nonhuman lives in business ethics research. Furthermore, although business ethics scholarship in tourism has intensely engaged with environmental and social responsibility (Köseoglu et al., 2016), animals are only mentioned occasionally concerning these themes. The lack of animal inclusivity in business ethics is problematic as it contributes to reifying tourism and hospitality practices that position humans above other beings, thus reproducing an anthropocentric worldview in which animals are considered only insofar as they have a direct instrumental value to humans (cf. Heikkurinen et al., 2021; Tallberg et al., 2022).

Given the increasing pressure for tourism companies and destinations to demonstrate social responsibility and adhere to ethical standards, there is a need to expand the field of business

ethics in tourism and hospitality to include the ethical consideration of animals in new ways. To do this, we need to critically examine and reformulate the prevailing anthropocentric ontological line of thinking in business ethics as a field engaging with various theories, concepts, and frameworks (see Thomas, 2022). Some scholars have taken up this task by discussing corporate social responsibility and integrative social contract theory, which addresses the thorny issue of how the principles of large global players (NGOs, certification, etc.) often work against the practices of local people that are culturally, philosophically, politically and religiously distinctive (Fennell, 2022c). Others are re-evaluating the tenets of stakeholder theory to consider animals as stakeholders (García-Rosell & Tallberg, 2021; Sheppard & Fennell, 2019; Tallberg et al., 2022).

Setting an agenda

As the preceding discussion shows, there is an abundance of research on animal ethics in tourism. Indeed, articles from 100 journals and from several fields of enquiry (biology, conservation science, anthropology, environmental studies, philosophy, sociology, and so on) were used to write this paper. The asymmetry between the breadth of scholarship within this niche and its (under)representation in university curricula is apparent but perhaps not altogether surprising. The dominant anthropocentric worldview in most societies, including within the academic habitat, perpetuates this status quo. Discussions of animal rights and animal welfare can often be seen as representing 'extreme' views that can make people uncomfortable and psychologically dissonant. And then there are the cultural nuances and sensitivities that can complicate matters even more. The vacant niche needs to be filled. From this standpoint, rather than the conventional call to conduct more studies, we urge action in transforming the teaching curriculum in tourism programmes wherever they are taught. Partnering with others in education (e.g. Educators for Animals; https://www.educatorsforanimalsconference.ca/) may hold promise.

As educators, we must actively question our role as pedagogical designers, how we can facilitate change through sharing embodied and authentic lived experiences, and how we integrate transformative and intersectional approaches to learning to radically further the expanding consciousness platform regarding animals in tourism. We acknowledge that the contested nature of animal ethics presents some challenges for programme designers regarding how to approach such a task. However, in advocating greater integration of animal ethics in tourism studies curricula (Fennell et al., 2022), it must be clear that we are not favouring any one ethical stance. Instead, the goal is cultivating critical thinkers in the next generation of scholars and industry practitioners who are bold enough to question and challenge the status quo where necessary via a range of different strategies that involve being student-centred, flexible, interactive, engaging, imaginative, creative, and in matching real life with theory (Boluk et al., 2019; Branstrator et al., 2022; Hanlon et al., 2007; Reiss, 2005). Such means exposing them to different ways of conceptualising ethics and the complexity and dilemmas that this entails.

To fill this vacant niche, we need to move from a status quo where animal ethics issues are addressed in passing, typically within broader 'wildlife tourism' or 'ethical tourism' discussions. As tourism scholars look to embrace the expanding consciousness platform and reflect it in tourism academic programmes, more core courses and electives on animal ethics seem logical. There is a caveat here, however. As Hanlon et al. (2007) note, animal ethics is a philosophically based subject, requiring a different set of pedagogical approaches and learning skills – different from those we may deploy to teach, for instance, front office operations or the tourism system. Hanlon et al. further argue that the didactic approach centred around knowledge transfer will not work well, as it does not engage students meaningfully in the exercise of reflective ethical inquiry. Instead, there is an opportunity to adopt critical pedagogical approaches which, as Peggs and Smart (2017) assert, are central to destabilising animal assumptions. Moreover, embracing critical pedagogy in teaching animal ethics in our field will enable us to nurture critical, self-reflexive, and ethically conscious future

leaders, those that are trained to engage their values and competencies in the construction of better (i.e. more just, and responsible) tourism worlds (Tribe, 2002).

The preceding discussion on values, maturity of fields, critical thinking, knowledge transfer, and ethics provides scope for an emerging agenda within the expanding consciousness platform discussed above. Cooper (2002), citing the work of Weggeman (1997), argued that a knowledge value chain dictates the course of commercial and policy decisions in tourism as the industry continues to mature. Knowledge management, Cooper (2002) adds, is used to make the tourism industry 'act as intelligently as possible' (pp. 375–376) in engaging with the broader world for 'deep, long-term sustainability and even the survival of tourism' (Tribe, 2008, p. 245). The four stages of knowledge management are (1) determine the strategic need for knowledge; (2) determine the knowledge gap between the knowledge needed and the knowledge available; (3) narrow the knowledge gap by developing new knowledge; and (4) diffuse and apply available knowledge to stakeholders through commercialisation process (Cooper, 2002, p. 376).

We argue in the context of the present study that it is the last of the four stages of the knowledge value chain that is profoundly lacking, i.e. 'the diffusion of knowledge to stakeholders', under the belief that student learners must be key stakeholders in effecting change. If we want 'deep, long-term sustainability' for the 'survival of tourism', as Tribe (2008) notes, what we do, and how we do it in the classroom sets the stage for ethical practices. Although the task of developing a course syllabus for animal welfare has recently been undertaken in tourism studies (Fennell et al., 2022), we wish to add more weight to the argument for the evolution of global tourism pedagogy, primarily in the undergraduate curriculum where we find most students (but also in graduate studies), through the work of Nelson Laird et al. (2008, p. 479) on deep approaches to student learning based on the integration of higher-order, integrative, and reflective forms (Table 1). The table illustrates how the characteristics of these three forms of learning can be amplified through the example of whether a live captive swim-with-dolphin experience is preferable to an animatronic swim-with-dolphin experience, according to the many categories we discuss throughout the paper (Figure 1). The evolution of changing beliefs, attitudes and behaviours can be seen as the reader moves down through the table.

Conclusion

We are mindful of the broad systemic forces that must be addressed to enable greater uptake of tourism animal ethics curricula in academic programmes. The neoliberalization of post-secondary education (Hill & Kumar, 2012) has entrenched expectations among students, families, governments, and society at large that higher learning is a means to an end (e.g. a salary, a career path) rather than an end in itself. To make space for animal ethics in post-secondary tourism education, researchers must learn to communicate the educational and social value of animal ethics training to students and administrators and take on curriculum leadership roles within their institutions. Addressing head-on the complexities around, for example, how global principles often work against local traditional cultural practices in the use of animals, must be standard in our classrooms. Additionally, and at the risk of complying with the neoliberal order, researchers must identify and advocate the 'real world' job prospects for those students graduating with animal ethics understanding and skills. Coming to terms with these complexities represents a call to action for curriculum committees, programme administrators, and educators to recognise and act on this critical moral domain in tourism education.

However, just as societal shifts have grappled with many types of injustices and eventually informed greater awareness on how to – albeit messily – begin to change individual behaviours, societal norms, and local and national policies, we must work within our institutions to do these same things regarding the unsustainable practices relative to all species non-human. We have demonstrated here the breath of coverage to date – which only 'scratches the surface' – within the research realm. Shamefully, the pedagogical realm and policy realm of our institutions and

academic habitat are even farther behind. Many of the concepts and pedagogical practices within Table 1 are taken from the body of knowledge we've gained about animals in tourism within the last ten years. Research fuels our thinking, teaching, practices, and policies. The purpose of this paper therefore is to issue the call for bridging our knowledge gained through research and our knowledge dissemination in the classroom.

In conclusion, it is not enough to argue that curricula only have so much space to accommodate new classes like the one proposed in this paper. There is an argument that redundancy currently exists in the curriculum, especially regarding the focus on impacts. The senior scholars who are authors of the present paper can attest to this redundancy in their home institutions. What is currently missing, however, is expertise on animal ethics. We liken this to the inclusion of tourism ethics in the tourism curriculum over the last 10–15 years. Where once there was little expertise on tourism ethics (and the will to include such a topic), now there is considerable will and expertise. However, expertise *does* currently exist in tourism and animals ethics, as evident in the number of young graduate scholars who are authors on this paper. These young scholars stand poised to fill the vacant niche in tourism.

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