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**Catia Faria**. *Animal Ethics in the Wild: Wild Animal Suffering and Intervention in Nature*. Cambridge University Press 2023. 222 pp. $99.99 USD (Hardcover ISBN 9781009119948).

There is plenty of scholarly focus on the harms of industrialized animal agriculture, including and especially the harms that non-human animals suffer. A common argument against industrialized animal agriculture is that it causes massive amounts of suffering and death to sentient animals. Since very few people need to eat animal products to live a flourishing life, their suffering and death is morally indefensible and we should refrain from raising and killing them for food. A strength of this argument is that it does not rely on a contentious ethical theory or on debatable empirical claims; instead, underlying this argument is the plausible supposition that the ability to experience pleasure and pain matters morally and the empirical observation that industrialized animal agriculture causes lots of unnecessary suffering to animals. This argument is sometimes referred to as 'the basic argument for vegetarianism' or 'vegetarianism from a broad basis.'

Catia Faria's book extends the insights of the basic argument for vegetarianism to wild animals. Her argument applies two straightforward assumptions— (1) suffering and death are bad, and (2) if you can mitigate suffering without incurring an excessive cost, you should do so—to wild animals. To motivate her argument, she appeals to Peter Singer's drowning child scenario: you are on your way to an important work meeting and see a child struggling to stay afloat in a pond. Singer thinks, and most would agree, that it is clear that you should stop what you are doing to rescue the child, and this is so even if intervening to help will ruin your clothes and make you late to the important meeting. Faria argues, and most would agree, that you are equally obligated to stop what you are doing to rescue a chimpanzee who is struggling to stay afloat in a pond. The chimpanzee's suffering and potential death morally outweigh making it to your meeting in dry clothes. But if this is so, and many wild animals experience mitigatable suffering and death like the hypothetical chimpanzee, then we have a moral responsibility to mitigate wild animal suffering and death: 'I provisionally claim that there are decisive reasons to aid animals in nature… [This book] presents a very broad and minimal case for reducing wild animal suffering' (8). Given the general dearth of writing on the ethics of wild animal suffering, this book is most welcome. It is a must-read for anyone interested in animal ethics.

The book's structure is elegant. In the first three chapters, Faria builds the positive case for intervening in nature to help wild animals. Chapter 1 defends the moral considerability of wild animals by defending the moral considerability of sentience and the harmfulness of death. This chapter does not wed Faria to a particular view of well-being or death, although she is critical of some accounts of death; rather, she shows that wild animals have their own well-being according to hedonistic, desire-based, and objective accounts of well-being. Chapter 2 defends the equal consideration of all sentient creatures, wild animals included: the same interests should carry the same moral weight. Applied to animals, what matters is the ability to experience pleasure and pain, not so much how that pleasure and pain is cognized. Readers will benefit from Faria's nuanced discussion of speciesism, anthropocentrism, and personism. Chapters 1 and 2 show that wild animals are morally considerable. Chapter 3 examines the immense amount of pain, suffering, and premature

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death that wild animals experience: ‘as we shall see, probably what lies in store for the majority of wild animals that come into existence is a life of intense suffering and premature death’ (60). Contrary to idealist assumptions about life in the wild, Faria explains the many ways animals suffer and die prematurely, from hunger and physical injury to stress and predation. In sum, ‘if human and nonhuman suffering is to be equally considered,’ she concludes, we ‘ought to act so as to alleviate the suffering of other individuals’ (86-87). This is the basic argument for intervention.

With the conclusion established that we have a decisive reason to intervene in nature to mitigate wild animal suffering and death, Faria devotes the rest of the book to responding to objections. In chapter 4, she responds to the perversity objection, which posits that intervening in nature will make things worse, and the futility objection, which posits that intervening in nature is bound to fail. A cornerstone of her responses to these and other objections is to appeal to Nick Bostrom and Toby Ord’s ‘Reversal Test’ to show that would-be objectors are subject to status quo bias, or the irrational preference for the current state of affairs. To show that they are not subject to status quo bias, would-be objectors ‘will have to provide an alternative, more plausible explanation for their preference for the status quo over other outcomes’ (94). Faria argues that the excessive amount of wild animal suffering and death—the status quo—offers a strong reason in favor of deliberate intervention. In chapter 5, she responds to the concerns that intervention will undermine competing values—biocentrism, holism, and ‘wild nature’— by appeal to wild animal interests in the elimination of their suffering: many of these objections assume a morally problematic human-centered approach and lead to problematic results. In chapter 6, she addresses to the position that moral obligations supervene on relationships, and since we generally lack relationships with wild animals, we have no duty to intervene to mitigate wild animal suffering and death. She argues that some human-to-human moral obligations go beyond relationships, which suggests that this position is problematic. In chapter 7, she responds to the concern that we should prioritize human well-being over wild animal well-being. If the priority is cognitive—humans have ‘higher’ cognitive capacities than animals—then this overgeneralizes to differently-abled humans, which is problematic; but if the priority is grounded in the amount of suffering, then wild animals should also be attended to. In chapter 8, she responds to the concern of tractability, or the concern that intervening in nature will not solve wild animal suffering, by highlighting that we still should seek to mitigate suffering and death.

Faria is to be commended for this wonderful, engaging discussion of what it means to take the sentience of wild animals seriously. In my view, the book is accessible for undergraduate students and important for scholars from a variety of animal-related fields. It will be of interest to scholars working in animal ethics, environmental ethics, ecology, conservation, and animal law, among other disciplinary areas. As with any good book, the reader is left with more questions than answers, and Faria notes some of them in the conclusion. I close by mentioning two areas of further work. First, further work on what each and every one of us should do in response to wild animal suffering and death is needed. In brief, the conclusion that we should intervene in nature to mitigate wild animal suffering is demanding and readers are left wanting insight into what practically this demands of us. For instance, what is morally required of those who live in urban areas far removed from wilderness areas? Second, and relatedly, while Faria does not mention zoos, a reader might wonder whether she

is committed to their ethical defense on the following grounds: life in zoos, while not ideal, promises a significantly lower amount of pain than life in the wild. The best way to intervene would be to remove wild animals from nature. For instance, deer in zoos are not killed by hunters or mountain lions, nor do they starve. However, there are ethical concerns with the captivity of sentient animals, so navigating the ethical trade-off is worth exploring further.

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