

# Taylhis' Most Wanted

During visits to the zoo, most kids will fantasize about which animal they would like to take home and have as a pet. There are many reasons why exotic and wild animals should not be kept as pets, but being an animal lover, I guess I never grew out of the mindset of a kid at the zoo – I still think about which ones I would like as pets. Well, actually, I'd like **all** of them as pets, but here are the top 10. Since this is purely fantasy, of course I did not take rational things into consideration like cost or cleaning up after or housing the animals, where's the fun in that? While you're at it, try putting your top few fantasy pets in the comments box below...

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## Taylhis Most Wanted:

**African Grey parrot** – Ugh, another large bird? Do I really want more bird screaming to rile up the kids? But this is a fantasy list, so I'm going to build a huge tropical aviary with a little river for my birds, no problem. Members of this particular breed of parrot are incredibly smart, and their ability for exact mimicry is hilarious! I once posted a video of a little African Grey character named Silvia who did an awesome impression of Desi Arnaz (*Lucy, you got some 'splainin to do!*) as well as sarcastically (and hilariously) delivering the line, "*Well loddy-frickin'-dah!*"

**Manatee** – My favorite animal; manatees are gentle and intelligent. I find the manatee's graceful movements relaxing and therapeutic. Watching my manatee swim would be a great way to unwind after a stressful day!

**Gorilla** – Humans have much in common with these intelligent primates. It'd be incredible to get to know one on a personal basis.

**Sea Horse** – Well, these guys mate for life, so I'd like a pair

of seahorses, which would then turn into hundreds ☐ But many of their behaviors are truly fascinating to watch!



Sea Lion – Like an aquatic dog, sea lions are intelligent, trainable, and beautiful swimmers. And so cute!

Goat – I’ve always loved goats; now that we live nearby many farms, this might be a possibility some day!

**Huge Dog** – Dogs are the greatest, and sometimes it seems like the larger the dog, the friendlier. So for a dog-lover without limitations on house size, wouldn’t it be great to have a beautiful 150lb+ lap dog? I was thinking St. Bernard, Great Dane or Mastiff type dogs.

**Octopus** – A somewhat mysterious animal, though to be intelligent based in part upon its ability to manipulate items like jars and toys for food rewards.

**Alligator** – Huge reptiles with a bad rap; I would love the time to hand-raise and train a gator.

**Tortoise** – I really like tortoises, and it’d be really neat to create an exhibit to house one of those super-huge tortoises.

*Honorable mention:*

Marmoset – a cute furry little primate. Cute as he is, smaller primates are known for being temperamental, so this guy is a runner-up.



So there you have it. My husband commented on my list's lack of felines. True, I always blog about how much I would like a cat, but in the real world, all that's stopping me from getting a cat or two or ten is my cat allergy, so that's not really the point of the list – it's more about forbidden animals. Big cats would be too scary to play with – I had a little cat who passed away, but after watching how suddenly and completely her moods could change, I gained a whole new respect for big cats, so no thanks!

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## Supressing My Whim For Another Parrot...

Believe me, I am definitely not expressing that parrots are pets to get on a whim, not that any pets should be obtained on a whim. But I wouldn't really even recommend parrots, the loud and moody (however beautiful and insanely smart) creatures as pets, except to the perfect parrot owner – which might just be as rare as the gorgeous birds themselves. Due

to a set of circumstances that transcribed long ago, we've found ourselves adapting to a be a parrot family. Years ago we adopted Squawky, as a needy unwanted baby, a Scarlet Macaw, who is now somewhere just older than 8 years old. He is finally starting to calm down just a tad, but he still makes me think of putting him in a more unused room of the house on an almost daily basis. That being said, it's time to share with you the video of a bird who re-kindled my childhood desire (not that I ever really lost it, but 4 kids and little sleep will certainly give one pause about adding any new pet to the family) to raise an African Grey Parrot – the type of parrot known more for their uncanny impressions and ability to reason than for their beautiful feathers. As a kid, I read a book that made me want the parrot in the first place. It is called *Harry's Mad* by Dick King-Smith (this author also wrote the story that the movie [The Water Horse](#)'s screenplay (good movie!!) is based upon), and it's a great read for young adults (and maybe regular adults too? Might be basic, but fun – haven't tried it as an adult). And as for the video that made me again want an African Grey, despite the daily blows to my eardrums from the Scarlet Macaw? See for yourself; her name is Sylvia, and I especially love her Rhett Butler and Desi Arnaz impressions!