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Opinion:

Protecting a Strong Animal

by John Coates

1 The honey badger is a small animal. It lives in parts of Africa, the Middle East, and India. It is famous for being tough. However, in some areas honey badgers are disappearing. They are disappearing because humans hunt and trap them. Biologists need to protect the animals they study. They should do whatever they can to keep the honey badger safe.

2 The honey badger is an amazing animal. It eats almost any food that it finds—even bees and snakes. There is a famous video on the internet that shows a fight between a honey badger and a puff adder, a kind of poisonous snake. In this video, the puff adder bites the honey badger. The honey badger then falls to the ground and looks like it might not live. However, after only two hours, the honey badger wakes up and eats the puff adder!



Honey Badger
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3 So, why do humans hunt honey badgers? One reason is that honey badgers like to eat bees and farm animals. Beekeepers and farmers need to protect their bees and animals. They use traps and even poison to kill the honey badger. Because of this, in some areas the honey badger has completely disappeared. However, beekeepers and farmers don't really need to hurt the honey badger. There are safe and cheap ways to protect bees and farm animals. For example, fences can be built around the farms to keep the honey badgers out. Beehives can also be raised off the ground so the honey badger can't reach them. Simple solutions such as these save the lives of honey badgers.

4 In addition, some people hunt honey badgers to make traditional medicines. The honey badger is strong and brave, so some people think that eating it can make them strong and brave, too. However, there is no scientific evidence that this is true. Nobody has ever studied whether or not eating the honey badger can improve our health. Nevertheless, people continue to hunt the honey badger to make medicine.

5 It is time for biologists to protect honey badgers. There is no good reason for people to kill them. Biologists should teach beekeepers and farmers to use simple, cheap methods to protect their animals. They should also teach people that eating the honey badger cannot make them strong and brave. If biologists do not protect the honey badger soon, one day it may become extinct.

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Opinion:

Does the Honey Badger Really Need Protection? A Reply to John Coates

by Monique Thomas

1 Recently, the honey badger has received a lot of attention. John Coates wrote an article about this wonderful animal. He is right that biologists can do more to protect honey badgers. Many animals need protection. But honey badgers are not in danger of disappearing. Other animals need our protection much more than the honey badger.

2 One example is the Philippine eagle, a large bird that lives only in the Philippines. The International Union for Conservation of Nature considers the Philippine eagle critically endangered. It estimates that there are less than five hundred of these birds alive today. In contrast, there are over one million honey badgers living in more than 80 countries.

**Philippine Eagle**

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3 Biologists have limited time and limited money. They should focus on protecting the animals that need the most help. Honey badgers will survive without help from biologists. Some other animals may not.