



Primate Incidents

January 1995 - June 2006

This list represents a sample of known incidents involving captive primates in the United States. An incident is defined as a human injury caused by a captive primate, the death of a captive primate, the escape of a captive primate, or the confiscation or displacement of a captive primate (for example, an animal confiscated for reasons of neglect, or transferred to a facility following an attack or escape).

January 1, 1995 Kansas City, MO	Pet incident A chimpanzee bit a 7-year-old girl, who underwent rabies treatment. The chimp reportedly had a history of escapes and bites.
June 1, 1995 Hollidaysburg, PA	Pet incident A woman found a monkey loose and took it home; the following day, the monkey went on a rampage, biting her and another woman; it was captured by animal control, but died of an apparent heart attack shortly after capture. A neighbor identified the monkey as his pet.
June 20, 1995 Denver, CO	Pet incident A monkey was confiscated for medical testing after a neighbor reported that it may be infected with herpes B.
January 1, 1996 Metairie, LA	Pet incident In January of 1996, a vervet's owner and owner's 2-year-old son were scratched, and later an animal control officer was bitten. The vervet was quarantined, then sent to Animal House Zoological Park in Alabama. Exact date of injuries unclear.
February 1, 1996 Bridgton, ME	Pet incident A child was bitten by a monkey during a demonstration at school.
March 22, 1996 Gainesville, FL	Research facility incident A monkey infected with herpes B escaped from a research facility and remained at large.
April 14, 1996 Alice, TX	Quarantine facility incident An Ebola outbreak infected two monkeys at a quarantine facility, killing one of them.
May 17, 1996 Staten Island, NY	Unknown owner incident Police officers were unable to capture a loose monkey of unknown origin.

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July 1, 1996 Islip, NY	Pet incident In July 1996, two rhesus monkeys escaped from their home, one of which bit an animal control officer. It is illegal to own pet monkeys in Islip. Exact date of escape unclear.
November 19, 1996 Penacook State, NH	Pet incident On separate occasions, a monkey bit five people including one child. The owner subsequently had the monkey's canine teeth removed.
February 28, 1997 Fort Myer, FL	Exhibitor incident A 6-year-old child was mildly injured after ducking under a barrier to approach a baboon enclosure.
March 1, 1997 Houston, TX	Pet incident A capuchin monkey attacked its owner, severing her thumb and part of her index finger.
June 29, 1997 Crystal Lake, IL	Exhibitor incident A 3-year-old was bitten on the face by a vervet or marmoset at the Bourbonnais Friendship Festival.
July 7, 1997 Bridgton, ME	Pet incident A monkey, which had previously bitten a child in 1996, bit a woman at a supermarket; this monkey and a second monkey (a squirrel monkey) were confiscated and sent to a Florida sanctuary.
July 12, 1997 Pasadena, MD	Pet incident A 6-year-old girl was bitten by a pet monkey.
August 6, 1997 Plainville, CT	Pet incident A macaque jumped out of its owner's arms and bit a neighbor; it was taken to local animal shelter for a 14-day quarantine.
August 15, 1997 Batavia, IL	Pet incident A man was scratched by a baboon at a parade route. The owner was instructed to restrain the animal.
September 27, 1997 Palm Beach, FL	Pet incident A man was charged with 5 misdemeanors after his macaque monkey bit a girl. One charge included trying to sell the monkey illegally after the incident. The monkey harbors the herpes B virus.
October 6, 1997 South Barrington, IL	Exhibitor incident A 4-year-old girl was bitten by a baboon at a petting zoo at Goebbert's Pumpkin Farm.

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January 9, 1998 San Angelo, TX	Pet incident A capuchin monkey bit its owner's neighbor. The disabled owner kept the monkey as a service animal.
May 22, 1998 Wichita, KS	Pet incident A macaque monkey bit a teenager at a store promotional event.
July 6, 1998 Sprague, WV	Pet incident A chimpanzee named Herbie escaped, entered a mail carrier's truck, and chased the mail carrier; the mail truck rolled into a parked pickup truck. The chimp was later found at the home of a neighbor.
August 18, 1998 West Covina, CA	Pet incident Moe the chimp bit three people after escaping; he was tranquilized and returned to his enclosure.
October 4, 1998 Slidell, LA	Pet incident A vervet escaped its carrier and attacked its owner, who took refuge in a bathroom. A police officer was able to subdue the monkey, which was confiscated and euthanized.
November 28, 1998 Dallas, TX	Zoo incident A keeper was bitten after a 340-pound gorilla escaped, before the ape was tranquilized and recaptured.
January 13, 1999 Tampa, FL	Pet incident A capuchin's owner was bitten 50 times after trying to return the monkey to its cage. Speculation was that the monkey was volatile because it was entering puberty.
February 27, 1999 Salt Lake City, UT	Zoo incident Two keepers were injured, with one (28-year-old Jamie Bradley) in critical condition, after 2 chimps attacked; the chimps were shot, then euthanized.
April 2, 1999 Glen Burnie, MD	Pet incident A Bonnett macaque, Jamie, bit woman on her lip at a local tavern. Jamie had been involved in 7 biting incidents and its owners had been given 3 written warnings and fined twice previously. Prior to this incident, animal control officers had labelled Jamie dangerous and ordered him restricted from public contact. Jamie was removed to Frisky's Wildlife and Primate Refuge.

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April 15, 1999 Punta Gorda, FL	Unknown owner incident A small monkey roaming loose was shot by police after it became aggressive toward area residents. Its origin is unclear.
May 9, 1999 Idaho Falls, ID	Pet incident A woman was bitten after reaching into a monkey's cage. The owner was unsure if the monkey had its vaccinations or if it was even supposed to be vaccinated.
June 2, 1999 Mesa, AZ	Pet incident One of the owner's five monkeys escaped from the yard and chased two neighbors. The owner's monkeys have a history of escapes.
July 30, 1999 Kissimmee, FL	Pet incident A capuchin opened its enclosure; during the escape, it scratched a 13-year-old boy and bit a police officer before being captured and quarantined.
August 3, 1999 Omaha, NE	Pet incident A macaque with a history of biting bit a police officer and was confiscated by the Humane Society.
September 2, 1999 West Covina, CA	Pet incident Moe the chimp bit a woman's finger off when she placed her hand in his enclosure. He had previously bitten a police officer in August of 1998. Moe was moved to Animal Haven Ranch in Caliente.
October 4, 1999 Evansville, IN	Zoo incident A child was bitten on the finger by a macaque at Mesker Park Zoo.
November 1, 1999 Euless, TX	Pet incident In November 1999, a monkey bit an elderly woman. Exact date unknown.
November 23, 1999 Des Moines, IA	Pet incident A rhesus monkey was found loose; its owner is unknown. The monkey bit an animal control officer before being captured.
December 12, 1999 Rancho Bernardo, CA	Pet incident A spider monkey bit an officer before being captured by Animal Control. Owning a monkey as a pet is illegal in this area.
January 14, 2000 Palm Harbor, FL	Pet incident A spider monkey escaped and severely injured a neighbor's dog, biting the neighbor as well; the monkey had escaped on previous occasions.

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February 15, 2000 Lansing, IL	Pet incident A macaque was euthanized to test for rabies after biting its owner. The owner spent 8 days in the hospital.
May 30, 2000 Midway, FL	Exhibitor incident An orangutan escaped and bit a trainer who tried to lead it back into its cage; it was later recaptured.
May 31, 2000 Columbia, MD	Pet incident A spider monkey was found loose, its owner unknown. It bit a woman who offered it bread.
June 1, 2000 Unknown city, WI	Pet incident In June 2000, a capuchin monkey bit its owner, becoming increasingly violent following that attack. The date of the initial attack is unclear. The monkey was later moved to a Texas sanctuary.
July 1, 2000 Anne Arundel County, MD	Pet incident In July 2000, authorities confiscated a monkey which bit a patron after its owner took it to a bar. Exact date unclear.
July 1, 2000 Louisville, KY	Pet incident In July 2000, a vervet bit its owner on the neck, leaving puncture wounds. Exact date unclear.
July 12, 2000 Kansas City, MO	Pet incident A chimpanzee bit one child and threw another before being confiscated by Jackson County Animal Control.
July 18, 2000 Platte County, MO	Pet incident A rhesus monkey bit a young boy, who was a neighbor of the owner.
July 24, 2000 Dallas, TX	Zoo incident An orangutan was electrocuted and died after escaping at Dallas Zoo and climbing a telephone pole.
August 1, 2000 Kansasville, WI	Pet incident A macaque was euthanized after escaping from a porch and injuring two adults before being captured.
August 3, 2000 Southwest Ranches, FL	Pet incident A spider monkey bit a 19-year-old woman and a 15-year-old girl during a two-day escape. Another monkey which escaped was recaptured without further incident.

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August 4, 2000 Carlsbad, TX	Pet incident A capuchin monkey's owner shot and killed it after being bitten; the "service" monkey had previously bitten a man in San Angelo.
August 12, 2000 Sprague, WV	Pet incident The chimpanzee named Herbie escaped for a second time, biting two people before being recaptured.
September 28, 2000 Tulsa, OK	Pet incident A monkey either bit or scratched a 4-year-old girl at a motel. The monkey's owner was staying in an adjacent room; it is unclear if monkey had escaped or not.
October 17, 2000 Southside, VA	Unknown owner incident Three monkeys were seen loose, throwing things at cars.
November 29, 2000 Independence Township, PA	Pet incident A monkey was seen loose after escaping its home.
December 6, 2000 Oklahoma City, OK	Pet incident A child was bitten by a capuchin monkey at a Home Depot. The monkey was confiscated on December 4, 2000 and returned to its owner after testing for disease.
January 19, 2001 Festus, MO	Exhibitor incident Three chimpanzees escaped; one was shot and killed by a neighbor.
January 28, 2001 Las Vegas, NV	Exhibitor incident Xotic Stars of Las Vegas was cited after a chimpanzee bit a person's finger during an exhibition.
February 5, 2001 Santa Clara, CA	Pet incident The owner of a vervet monkey was bitten while feeding him. She had been bitten previously.
May 12, 2001 Lakeland, FL	Pet incident A man was bitten at a fair by a woman's monkey, likely a spider or rhesus; the woman left the fair and could not be located.
June 9, 2001 Omaha, NE	Zoo incident A woman was bitten after offering a squirrel monkey a cookie at Henry Doorly Zoo.

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June 12, 2001 Ridgeland, MS	Pet incident A vervet bit and scratched a child. The monkey had reportedly bitten another child before.
June 13, 2001 Seattle, WA	Zoo incident Woodland Park Zoo euthanized a macaque after it tested positive for herpes B.
July 27, 2001 Martinsburg, WV	Pet incident A loose monkey bit three children before being captured; its owner is unknown.
August 18, 2001 London, KY	Pet incident A 6-year-old girl was bitten by a monkey during a county festival.
September 27, 2001 Danville, NH	Unknown owner incident A loose humboldt's wooly monkey was sighted four times in two weeks, and remained at large.
October 16, 2001 Johnson County, MO	Pet incident A monkey escaped its home and remained loose.
November 23, 2001 Cleveland, OH	Pet incident A monkey bit a woman at a bar on both hands, inflicting 16 puncture wounds.
January 9, 2002 Corryton, TN	Pet incident A Japanese snow monkey escaped, attacked a man, and was confiscated by animal control.
March 4, 2002 Fort Bend County, TX	Unknown owner incident A rare white-crowned Mangaby monkey was found living with a pack of dogs.
March 13, 2002 Thorntown, IN	Pet incident A spider monkey remained loose after escaping from its home.
March 27, 2002 Boynton Beach, FL	Pet incident A capuchin escaped its home and was recaptured one mile away in a tree house.
April 2, 2002 Honolulu, HI	Zoo incident A keeper was attacked and severely injured by a siamang monkey.

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April 11, 2002 The Redlands, FL	Pet incident A monkey escaped and remained loose.
May 13, 2002 Frankfort, IN	Exhibitor incident An employee was scratched by a lemur while cleaning an enclosure at TPA park.
June 23, 2002 Magnolia, TX	Pet incident A macaque severely injured a 9-year-old boy and mildly injured both its owner and a responding firefighter before being captured and quarantined.
August 4, 2002 Davenport, IA	Exhibitor incident A woman was scratched by a performing monkey at the Mississippi Valley Fair.
August 4, 2002 Racine, MN	Exhibitor incident A volunteer at BEARCAT Hollow animal park was bitten while inside a macaque's enclosure.
August 5, 2002 Whitefish, MT	Pet incident A macaque was quarantined after biting 3 or 4 people in separate incidents; the date of the bites is unclear.
September 6, 2002 Hillsboro, OR	Research facility incident A rhesus monkey was recaptured after escaping during a transfer at Oregon National Primate Research Center.
September 16, 2002 Alamogordo, NM	Research facility incident The district attorney charged Charles River Laboratories with animal cruelty following the earlier deaths of two chimpanzees.
September 26, 2002 Alexandria, AL	Pet incident A black-cap monkey escaped from its home while its owner was in the hospital.
December 1, 2002 Oak Cliff, TX	Pet incident In December 2002, an escaped monkey was recaptured. Exact date unclear.
January 15, 2003 Raceland, LA	Pet incident A capuchin monkey escaped and remained loose for two days.

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March 12, 2003 Covington, LA	Research facility incident Two dozen rhesus monkeys escaped from a fenced area at Tulane research lab; 16 were recovered.
April 19, 2003 Green Bay, WI	Pet incident A monkey owner took the monkey to a bar, where it escaped and remained loose for three days.
April 27, 2003 Fountain Hills, AZ	Pet incident A capuchin escaped from his cage and house and remained loose for three days.
May 1, 2003 Tucson, AZ	Pet incident A monkey escaped and remained loose for several days; after capture, it was relocated to a Texas sanctuary.
June 10, 2003 Asheboro, NC	Zoo incident A newly acquired chimpanzee was beaten to death by a group of female chimps at the North Carolina Zoo.
July 5, 2003 Buckhannon, WV	Pet incident A lemur whose owner was out of town escaped. The pet sitter reported the escape and the lemur was recaptured.
August 6, 2003 Antelope, CA	Unknown owner incident A woman found a macaque in a cage on the side of a road near a gas station.
August 8, 2003 Chicago, IL	Pet incident A monkey was loose for approximately ten hours before being caught and returned to its owner.
September 1, 2003 Topeka, KS	Zoo incident An orangutan died of tularemia after handling a dead rabbit that was found in its enclosure.
September 29, 2003 Boston, MA	Zoo incident A gorilla escaped at Franklin Park Zoo, injuring a 2-year-old and an 18-year-old before being captured outside a football stadium near the zoo.
October 19, 2003 Jacksboro, TN	Unknown owner incident A large primate, possibly an orangutan, was sighted several times around town but remained loose.

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October 20, 2003 Stamford, CT	Pet incident Two officers and a chimpanzee's owner were mildly injured after the chimp escaped from a vehicle. The chimp roamed loose in the streets for two hours before being recaptured.
October 27, 2003 Kansas City, KS	Pet incident A chimpanzee was confiscated by officers after being left alone in the cab of a big rig truck. The owner was charged with animal neglect.
November 4, 2003 Alvin, TX	Pet incident A macaque was confiscated from "terrible living conditions" at the home of a person who intended to start a petting zoo.
December 27, 2003 Calvert County, MD	Pet incident A macaque monkey bit a man's left thumb.
December 31, 2003 Milton, NY	Pet incident Seven monkeys were among 39 animals confiscated from a woman's home after the collection had grown too large for her to care for.
January 19, 2004 Los Angeles, CA	Zoo incident Gracie the chimp escaped from her enclosure at the Los Angeles Zoo for the fifth time in six years. The zoo was evacuated and the chimp recaptured.
February 12, 2004 Hamilton, MT	Research facility incident Thirteen monkeys died after a heater malfunctioned overnight at Rocky Mountain Laboratories.
March 4, 2004 Washington Township, NJ	Pet incident A capuchin monkey died after being sedated for a routine veterinary visit. The monkey had been exhibited as a condition of obtaining a permit after originally being acquired as a pet.
March 9, 2004 New York, NY	Pet incident Two marmosets, two capuchin monkeys, and two squirrel monkeys were confiscated for being owned illegally.
March 18, 2004 Dallas, TX	Zoo incident Jabari, a 13-year-old gorilla, injured two adults and two children during an escape at the Dallas Zoo. Jabari was shot and killed by police.
April 13, 2004 Dunlap, IN	Pet incident The owner of twelve capuchins was given one year to move out of town or get rid of the monkeys.

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May 1, 2004 North Fort Myer, FL	Exhibitor incident The Octagon Wildlife Sanctuary, an exhibitor, lost its lease following the escape of 2 ring-tailed lemurs during a robbery attempt, and the death of three lemurs earlier in the year.
May 3, 2004 Las Vegas, NV	Dealer incident A spider monkey and a squirrel monkey were stolen by a pet store employee, but later recovered.
May 21, 2004 Cincinnati, OH	Zoo incident An eight-year old girl was struck by a rock thrown by a gorilla at the Cincinnati Zoo.
May 26, 2004 Rochester, NY	Zoo incident An Anubis baboon was found outside its enclosure by an employee prior to the daily opening of the Seneca Park Zoo. It was returned to its enclosure two hours later.
July 1, 2004 Temecula, CA	Pet incident In July 2004, a Nevada resident visiting friends in Temecula lost his 8-year-old spider monkey when the monkey jumped out of the car outside a restaurant. Exact date unclear.
July 5, 2004 Macomb County, IL	Unknown owner incident A long-tailed macaque was found scampering through a neighborhood backyard.
July 7, 2004 St. Charles, MN	Exhibitor incident Six monkeys escaped after a boy opened their cages at the Winona County Fairgrounds. One capuchin injured two adults before all of the monkeys were eventually recaptured.
July 29, 2004 Osage County, OK	Unknown owner incident A motorist spotted one adult and two small monkeys alongside Oklahoma Route 123.
August 1, 2004 New York, NY	Pet incident A "service monkey" bit a 2-year-old boy on the arm at a grocery store.
September 16, 2004 Kendalia, TX	Research facility incident 41 monkeys were transferred from Coulston Laboratory to the Center for Captive Chimpanzee Care. Coulston Labs has been accused of animal cruelty.

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October 7, 2004 Honolulu, HI	Pet incident A squirrel monkey originally owned by Blue Tropix nightclub before being sold to a man who did not have a permit was confiscated and rehomed at the Panaewa Zoo in Hilo.
October 27, 2004 Coeymans, NY	Pet incident A monkey was one of over 200 animals confiscated from Cherokee Ridge Animal Rescue Facility, an unlicensed facility, after an investigation resulting in multiple cruelty and neglect charges against the facility's owner.
November 6, 2004 Girard, OH	Pet incident A monkey was recovered after escaping and being spotted on the roof of a nearby restaurant.
November 10, 2004 Houston, TX	Zoo incident A pregnant baboon briefly escaped at Houston International Airport while being transferred to San Francisco Zoo from another facility.
November 12, 2004 Palm Springs, CA	Sanctuary incident Jeeter, a 16-year-old chimp, escaped from Casa de Cheeta after his owner failed to latch a security gate. The owners were able to coax the chimp back to his enclosure.
December 7, 2004 Akron, OH	Pet incident Two macaques were among 90 animals seized for animal cruelty and neglect. A judge ruled they should be placed with an accredited facility chosen by the Animal Rescue League.
December 25, 2004 San Diego, CA	Zoo incident An endangered Francois' langur that escaped at the San Diego Zoo was found and recaptured later that day.
February 2, 2005 Glen Burnie, MD	Pet incident An 8-month old capuchin was stolen during a home break-in.
February 8, 2005 Asheboro, NC	Zoo incident A 29-year-old chimpanzee died of heart failure after being given an anaesthetic at the North Carolina Zoo.
March 3, 2005 Caliente, CA	Exhibitor incident A man was gravely injured and his wife bitten after being attacked by two male chimpanzees which had escaped their cages. Two female chimpanzees also escaped. The male chimps were shot and killed; the females were recaptured five hours later.

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March 18, 2005 Wichita, KS	Zoo incident A Colobus monkey escaped from its enclosure at the Sedgwick County Zoo. She was captured two hours later.
April 30, 2005 Morgan Island, SC	Research facility incident A 20-pound rhesus macaque escaped from a facility on Morgan Island. The only barrier keeping the monkey on the island was the surrounding water. The monkey was recaptured after a week on the loose.
May 7, 2005 Huntington, WV	Pet incident A 13-year-old girl was bitten by a monkey being led on a leash at the Eastern Heights Shopping Center. The monkey's owner told the victim's father she would follow them to the hospital, but drove away instead.
July 12, 2005 Caldwell, OH	Pet incident Two monkeys weighing approximated 18 pounds each escaped from a backyard cage; one was quickly captured, the other bit a 20-year-old man before running away.
July 30, 2005 Washington, DC	Zoo incident A 14-year-old female Sulawesi macaque was found dead in her enclosure at the National Zoo. Officials were awaiting test results of a necropsy.
August 1, 2005 Elgin, IL	Unknown private owner incident Two adults and two children have reported seeing a loose monkey near an apartment complex. The animal's origin is unknown and it remains at large.
August 10, 2005 Knoxville, TN	Private owner incident A man with a middle-aged monkey named Ernie believes the monkey was stolen when he left him tied to a tree at his campsite in Cherokee National Forest. A monkey believed to be Ernie was spotted in Knoxville.
August 24, 2005 Asheboro, NC	Zoo incident An 11-year-old female chimpanzee died at the North Carolina Zoo. The animal suffered cardiac arrest while under anesthesia for a medical procedure.
August 28, 2005 Springdale, OH	Circus incident A capuchin monkey escaped from the Hendricks Brothers Circus and remained loose for five days before being captured and returned to its owner.

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September 2005 North Scranton, PA	Private owner incident An 11-month-old Rhesus macaque was confiscated and rehomed at Genesis Wildlife Center. Monkeys are not legal pets in Pennsylvania.
September 10, 2005 Royal, NE	Exhibitor incident Three chimpanzees escaped from their enclosure at Zoo Nebraska. All three animals were shot and killed after tranquilizers failed to subdue them.
October 6, 2005 Eureka, CA	Zoo incident A 59-year-old chimpanzee, Bill, was let out of his enclosure at Sequoia Park Zoo by vandals. He was found a block and a half from the zoo and coaxed back to his enclosure by a zoo employee.
November 12, 2005 Atlanta, GA	Zoo incident A five-day-old gorilla baby died at Zoo Atlanta; a necropsy was planned.
November 14, 2005 Unknown city in AZ	Pet incident A monkey escaped from a home and bit two children attending a birthday party at a neighboring house. The monkey was returned to the owner.
November 20, 2005 Covington, OH	Pet incident A monkey was confiscated from its owner after having been seen loose in the neighborhood. The monkey was not owned legally.
February 3, 2006 Columbus, OH	Zoo incident A zookeeper lost part of a finger when she was bitten by a bonobo at the Columbus Zoo.
February 9, 2006 Temperance, MI	Exhibitor incident Seven monkeys were among over 100 animals killed in a fire at Nature's Creek Zoo, and unaccredited zoo.
February 9, 2006 Chatanooga, TN	Zoo incident A teenage chimpanzee named Jake died while under anesthesia. He was undergoing surgery for injuries to his hands and feet, sustained in a fight with two female chimpanzees.
March 2, 2006 Columbus, OH	Research facility incident A male chimpanzee named Kermit apparently suffocated to death, after being sedating in preparation for a move from Ohio State University's defunct primate research center to Primarily Primates in San Antonio, Texas.

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March 8, 2006 Nolanville, TX	Pet incident A pet monkey was euthanized after biting someone at a house on Cathy Drive. Officials said the monkey did not violate local exotic animal laws.
April 8, 2006 Lake County, FL	Exhibitor incident According to witnesses, the child was bitten on the ear by a small monkey being exhibited for tips at a county fair.
April 20, 2006 San Antonio, TX	Sanctuary incident A 16-year-old male chimpanzee named Bobby was found dead in his enclosure at Primarily Primates. Bobby was one of nine chimpanzees moved from Ohio State University after the school's primate research center closed. He was the second chimp from Ohio State to die during or since the move.
May 24, 2006 San Francisco, CA	Zoo incident A 48-year-old female gorilla named Pogo was found dead in her enclosure at the San Francisco Zoo. She had been suffering from arthritis, heart disease and lower-back disc disease.
June 28, 2006 East Palo Alto, CA	Pet incident A tufter-ear marmoset of unknown origin was spotted and captured in a residential yard. The animal was taken to Peninsula Humane Society in San Mateo.