

# Deer Haven Mini Zoo

12312 Detour Rd., Keymar, MD 21757

**Deer Haven Mini Zoo, owned by Bradley and Lurine Gerwig, has failed to meet minimum standards for the care of animals used in exhibition as established in the federal Animal Welfare Act (AWA). The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) has cited Deer Haven for failing to provide animals with veterinary care, failing to have a current program of veterinary care for any animals, failing to handle animals properly, failing to have sufficient barriers, failing to maintain safe enclosures, failing to provide animals with shelter from inclement weather, failing to clean enclosures, failing to have an effective “pest”-control program, failing to have a sufficient number of trained employees, failing to maintain records for animals, refusing to provide USDA officials with information regarding the disposition of several animals, failing to have a written plan of environmental enhancement for primates, failing to store food properly, and failing to have an adult available in order for an inspection to be performed.**

**Documentation is available upon request.**

**January 30, 2018:** The USDA issued Deer Haven repeat citations for failing to cover openings in the floor of an enclosure housing rabbits, which could allow their feet to pass through and become injured; failing to remove a buildup of feces from an enclosure housing a rabbit; failing to remove a buildup of brown material and hair from a resting perch in a primate enclosure; failing to secure the gate in the enclosure housing goats; failing to repair a gap between the fence and gate in the enclosure housing a cow and zebu; failing to have effective “pest”-control (as evidenced by fresh rat holes in several areas); and failing to have a sufficient number of trained employees to carry out husbandry duties and maintain enclosures and facilities. The facility was also cited for having a pan with excessive wear and moderate rust in an enclosure housing a lemur.

**October 26, 2017:** The USDA issued Deer Haven repeat citations for failing to adequately cover openings in the floor of an enclosure housing a rabbit to protect the animal’s feet and legs from injury; failing to remove a buildup of dark yellow material, feces, hair, and debris in enclosures housing rabbits; failing

to properly secure a gate in two different enclosures housing animals; failing to have effective “pest”-control (as evidenced by fresh rat holes in several areas); failing to replace a damaged feeding trough with jagged edges that could injure the animals in an enclosure housing deer; failing to maintain a shelter for sheep in good repair; failing to have a sufficient number of trained employees to carry out husbandry duties and maintain enclosures and facilities; and failing to have records of birth for a guinea pig and a cow.

**July 27, 2017:** The USDA issued Deer Haven repeat citations for failing to maintain records of disposition for several animals, refusing to disclose information regarding the disposition of a Patagonian cavy and two brown-nosed coati mundis, failing to remove an accumulation of fecal matter and a dark yellow material from two enclosures housing rabbits, failing to adequately cover openings in the floor of an enclosure housing a rabbit to protect the animal’s feet and legs from injury, failing to remove an excessive amount of feces from an enclosure housing a rabbit, failing to sanitize rabbit enclosures every 30 days, failing to have effective “pest”-control (as evidenced by fresh rat holes in several areas), failing to replace a damaged feeding trough with jagged edges in an enclosure housing deer, failing to trim overgrown weeds and brush in an enclosure housing a cow and zebu, failing to repair an 18-inch hole in a shelter for sheep, failing to have a sufficient number of trained employees to carry out husbandry duties and maintain enclosures and facilities, and failing to keep entrances to the zoo closed or locked. The zoo owner claimed that the zoo was closed to the public, but the gate at the main entrance was unlocked, the back gate was missing and the adjacent fencing was bent down to the ground, and the entrance from the private home was left open. Leaving gates open or broken can allow members of the public free access to the property. Deer Haven was also cited for failing to provide a mother rabbit with a nest box for her litter.

Deer Haven was also issued repeat citations for failing to maintain areas of the facility in good repair, including the following: The chain-link fencing in an enclosure housing sheep was curled upward and could injure the animals; multiple areas of fencing in an enclosure housing goats were curled upward, creating a point of escape for the goats; the bottom fence line in an enclosure housing deer had a gap large enough to allow entry of outside animals; a gate in an enclosure housing goats was loosely secured and had a pointed edge that could injure the animals; and an enclosure housing a cow and zebu had a poorly secured gate that leaned forward and a gap between the fence and the gate.

**June 12, 2017:** The USDA issued Deer Haven a

repeat citation for failing to provide a potbellied pig who had excessively overgrown hooves with adequate veterinary care. The pig had overgrown hooves on all four feet, and each hoof had an extra 2 to 4 inches of growth, causing the animal to abnormally bear extra weight on the heels when walking.

Deer Haven was cited for again failing to have written documentation of the disposition of a Patagonian cavy and two brown-nosed coatimundis. It also received a critical citation for refusing to disclose the disposition of all three. The facility was also issued repeat citations for failing to have birth records for six fox kits, failing to repair rough edges on a board in an enclosure housing rabbits, failing to remove an accumulation of feces and dark yellow material in an enclosure housing four rabbits, failing to remove an excessive accumulation of feces underneath the rabbit cages, failing to remove a buildup of yellow material and hair along the back legs of two enclosures housing rabbits, and failing to cover openings in the floor of an enclosure housing rabbits, which could allow their feet to pass through and become injured.

Deer Haven was issued a repeat citation for failing to feed rabbits in a manner to prevent contamination of the food. The wooden floorboards of the enclosures had a buildup of material that appeared to be old feces and debris. Receptacles with food were placed on top of these boards, and in one case, fresh grapes were placed directly on the soiled boards.

The facility was also issued additional repeat citations for failing to repair a fence surrounding sheep that was in disrepair and could cause injury to animals; failing to repair fencing in an enclosure housing goats that was bent upward and created a gap that allowed a goat to push through and escape; failing to repair a loosely secured gate with a pointed edge that could injure the animals in an enclosure housing goats; failing to repair a hole in the mesh enclosure housing squirrels that was large enough to allow a squirrel to escape; failing to properly secure gates in enclosures housing sheep, a cow, and a zebu; failing to repair a gap in fencing in an enclosure housing a cow and zebu; failing to repair a gap in fencing that could allow an animal to escape from an enclosure housing sheep and donkeys; failing to properly store food; failing to clean a water trough in an enclosure housing deer; failing to remove an excessive amount of fecal matter and food debris from an enclosure housing squirrels; failing to remove a buildup of feces, urine, and debris from a shelter for four Patagonian cavy; failing to replace a damaged food trough with jagged edges in an enclosure housing deer; failing to remove a poisonous plant from an enclosure housing a cow and zebu that could cause gastrointestinal upset;

failing to repair a 18-inch hole in a shelter for sheep; failing to have effective "pest"-control (as evidenced by fresh rat holes in several areas); and failing to have a sufficient number of trained employees to carry out husbandry duties and maintain enclosures and facilities.

The facility was also cited for failing to remove uneaten food debris from an enclosure housing guinea pigs, failing to remove a buildup of grayish-brown material and white and gray fecal pellets from an enclosure housing rabbits, failing to sanitize enclosures housing rabbits every 30 days, failing to remove a buildup of fecal matter and other debris from an enclosure housing a lemur, failing to spot clean an enclosure housing a lemur to prevent an accumulation of feces that was attracting flies, and failing to keep entrances to the zoo properly secured. The gate at the main entrance was broken, the back gate was missing, and the entrance from the private home on the property was left open.

**May 10, 2017:** The USDA issued Deer Haven repeat citations for failing to have written documentation of and refusing to disclose the disposition of a Patagonian cavy and two brown-nosed coatimundis; failing to repair a board with irregular edges in an enclosure housing rabbits; failing to remove an accumulation of fecal matter and a dark yellow material from enclosures housing rabbits; failing to have a sufficient number of trained employees to carry out husbandry duties and maintain enclosures and facilities; failing to remove an excessive amount of feces and food waste from an enclosure housing squirrels; failing to repair fencing that was curled upward, risking injury to animals, in enclosures housing sheep and goats; failing to repair a gap between the ground and fence, risking injury or escape, in an enclosure housing deer; and failing to cover openings in the floor of an enclosure housing rabbits, which could allow their feet to pass through and become injured.

**March 6, 2017:** The USDA cited Deer Haven for again failing to provide two animals, who were first noted as needing care on October 12, 2016, with adequate veterinary care. An arctic fox who had displayed signs that may be indicative of disease had still not been assessed by a veterinarian experienced with the species, and a bobcat who'd displayed abnormal behavior patterns had not been evaluated by the attending veterinarian.

Deer Haven was cited for again failing to have written documentation of the disposition of a Patagonian cavy and two brown-nosed coatimundis. It also received a critical citation for refusing to disclose the disposition of all three, failing to have a written plan for environmental enhancement for primates, failing to

have effective “pest”-control (as evidenced by fresh rat holes in several areas), and failing to provide animals with safe housing. A cage that was used to secure squirrels had sharp points and gaps between the wire mesh and the top portion of the enclosure, an enclosure holding 10 sheep had a gate secured on one side with twine and a caved-in tin roof on one of the shelters, and an enclosure holding four mouflon sheep had a gate with unraveled chain links and wire that had sharp points. Finally, Deer Haven was cited for failing to have a sufficient number of trained employees to carry out husbandry duties and maintain enclosures and facilities.

**January 30, 2017:** The USDA cited Deer Haven for again failing to provide two animals, who were first noted as needing care on October 12, 2016, with adequate veterinary care. An arctic fox who had displayed signs that may be indicative of disease had not been assessed by a veterinarian experienced with the species, and a bobcat who had displayed abnormal behavior patterns had not been evaluated by the attending veterinarian. Two brown-nosed coatimundis cited in the January 19, 2017, inspection report weren’t present for this inspection—they hadn’t been evaluated by the attending veterinarian and were being housed at an undisclosed location. The roadside zoo was cited for failing to have written documentation of the disposition of a Patagonian cavy and the two brown-nosed coatimundis, and the owner declined to provide inspectors with disposition information for them.

Deer Haven was also cited for failing to have a written plan for environmental enhancement for primates, failing to provide alpacas with sufficient shelter from inclement weather, failing to clean the cage holding squirrels (which had an excessive amount of food waste in the bottom), and failing to remove a moderate amount of feces from an enclosure holding five Patagonian caviés. Deer Haven was also cited for failing to provide several animals with safe enclosures: The prairie dogs had a mesh floor that put them at risk of getting their feet caught; the goats were kept in an enclosure that had a gate loosely attached on one side with metal clips and a metal feed trough that had rusted through, leaving a hole with jagged edges; the cage holding squirrels had sharp points and gaps between the mesh sides and top; a gate in the enclosure holding zebus and Highland cows had a bent post and was secured at the open end with only twine; an enclosure holding seven sheep had a gate that was loosely tied to the support pole and a shelter with a caved-in tin roof; and wood in an enclosure holding a bobcat had sharp, jagged edges. Deer Haven was also cited for failing to have an effective rodent-control program (as evidenced by the fresh rat holes around an enclosure holding pigs) and failing to have a sufficient number of

trained employees to carry out husbandry duties and maintain enclosures and facilities.

**January 19, 2017:** The USDA cited Deer Haven for again failing to provide four animals, who were mentioned in the October 12, 2016, inspection report, with adequate veterinary care: a brown-nosed coatimundi who had still not been evaluated by a veterinarian experienced with the species and now had a red and scabby tip on his tail, an arctic fox who hadn’t been evaluated by a veterinarian experienced with the species, a bobcat who displayed abnormal behavior patterns and hadn’t been evaluated by the attending veterinarian, and another brown-nosed coatimundi who also hadn’t been examined by the attending veterinarian. Deer Haven was also cited for failing to provide a deer with veterinary care—the zoo had already been cited on October 12, 2016, for not providing the animal with veterinary care following a serious injury. Without consulting the attending veterinarian for guidance regarding care, the owner used an unacceptable method for euthanasia, shooting and killing the deer.

Deer Haven was cited for failing to provide a number of animals with safe enclosures: The prairie dogs had a mesh floor that put them at risk of getting their feet caught, the goats were kept in an enclosure that had a gate loosely attached on one side with twine and metal clips, the cage holding squirrels had sharp points and gaps between the mesh sides and top, a gate in the enclosure holding zebus and Highland cows had a bent post and was secured at the open end with only twine, an enclosure holding seven sheep had loose fencing held together by twine, the enclosure holding a brown-nosed coatimundi had an uneven floor and sharp metal ends on the diamond fencing, and wood in an enclosure holding a bobcat had sharp, jagged edges.

The facility was also cited for failing to store food properly, failing to clean the cage holding squirrels (which had an excessive amount of food waste in the bottom), failing to provide alpacas with sufficient shelter from inclement weather, failing to remove a large accumulation of feces from several enclosures, failing to have an effective rodent-control program (as evidenced by numerous rat holes around the facility and rat feces in the food-storage building), and failing to have a sufficient number of trained employees to carry out husbandry duties and maintain enclosures and facilities.

**January 18, 2017:** The USDA cited Deer Haven for failing to have a responsible person available to conduct an animal-welfare inspection.

**October 12, 2016:** The USDA cited Deer Haven for failing to provide several animals with adequate

veterinary care: an arctic fox who appeared significantly thin and had what appeared to be fecal staining on the fur of his hindquarters, a cougar who appeared underweight and had a stiff gait, and a brown-nosed coatimundi who'd been mentioned in the June 2016 inspection report for appearing lethargic. On the second day of the inspection, an associate veterinarian at the attending vet's clinic visited to look at the aforementioned animals but stated that he was primarily a practitioner of large-animal medicine and had little interest in zoological species. He recommended that the licensee work with a veterinarian with experience with these species. Deer Haven was also cited for failing to provide the following animals, who had not been evaluated by a veterinarian, with adequate veterinary care: an overweight Asiatic black bear who was observed pacing in an abnormal behavior pattern and had a marked angular deformity of her foot, a bobcat who exhibited abnormal pacing behavior, and a coatimundi who exhibited abnormal pacing behavior. The licensee also informed the inspectors that a fallow deer doe had been gored by a buck, and he "described an abdominal wound with evisceration." He hadn't sought veterinary attention and said that the wound appeared to close over but that approximately five days later, the doe was found dead. The inspector wrote, "This doe likely suffered extreme pain and distress over the five day period before [her] death."

Deer Haven was also cited for failing to handle animals properly. The licensee was injured on October 6, 2016, by the Asiatic black bear when attempting to feed her, requiring a hospital visit. The inspectors observed the licensee feeding the cougar by standing approximately 1 foot from the primary enclosure, dropping the meat into a 6- to 8-inch gap between the flooring and fencing, and then pushing the meat into the enclosure by hand. The cougar lunged at the meat and took it before the licensee could move out of the way. Although the licensee wasn't injured this time, the inspector noted that this was "an extremely dangerous practice and demonstrates insufficient knowledge of the behavior, speed, and strength of cougars."

The facility was also cited for failing to have a current program of veterinary care for any of the animals, failing to have complete records of animals on hand, failing to have a written plan for environmental enhancement for primates, failing to provide a porcupine with an enclosure that would prevent unwanted people and animals from entering, and failing to remove wet bedding from the enclosure holding guinea pigs. It was also cited for failing to provide rabbits with safe and clean enclosures, including failing to keep in good repair the particle-board flooring (which appeared to have been

chewed), failing to remove an accumulation of fecal material from the enclosure, and failing to provide safe flooring—the 1-inch-by-1-inch opening could allow their feet to fall through, risking injury.

Additionally, Deer Haven received citations for failing to store monkey biscuits properly for the ring-tailed lemurs (the container had numerous red ants on the inside of it), failing to remove an excessive amount of food waste from the cage holding squirrels, and failing to store dog food properly. An open bag was stored in the licensee's SUV. Another open bag was stored by the meat freezer, and the kibble was damp and deteriorated.

The USDA also cited Deer Haven for failing to maintain several enclosures in good repair: In the enclosure holding a bear, a latch on the gate allowed unwanted people to enter and the bear to escape, a fence surrounding the den was held together by twine and in need of repair, the metal den was excessively rusty with holes present, and the perimeter fence had been damaged by a fallen tree and needed to be restored. In addition, the enclosure fencing holding goats had sharp points and loose fence posts, the cage holding squirrels had sharp points and gaps between the mesh sides and top, the fencing in the separate enclosures holding deer and zebus had large gaps at the bottom, the fencing for an enclosure holding sheep was loose and held together with twine, and the prairie dogs had a mesh floor that put them at risk for getting their feet caught.

Deer Haven was further cited for failing to provide several animals with shelter from inclement weather: The bear was locked out of her den, three sheep were given only one calf hutch (which wasn't large enough to accommodate all of them at the same time), two arctic foxes were provided with only one shelter (which wasn't large enough to house both at the same time), the enclosures holding fallow deer and mouflon sheep contained only two-sided shelters that were in need of repair and couldn't adequately protect them from wind or precipitation, and the raccoon and cougar didn't have bedding in their respective dens. Deer Haven was also cited for failing to meet space requirements for animals, including Patagonian cavies (who were unable to remove themselves from unwanted contact with other cavies in the enclosure), arctic foxes (who paced continually on the concrete slab and were unable to remove themselves from view), and a bear (who was kept in a corn crib on a concrete slab and displayed behavioral and orthopedic abnormalities). Other violations included failing to feed veterinarian-approved, nutritionally complete diets to the cougars, bear, and Patagonian cavies; putting food for potbellied pigs directly on the enclosure floor; failing to fill the water receptacle in the enclosure for the bear (there was only about an inch of water

available); failing to have adequate “pest” control (as evidenced by numerous rat holes around several enclosures); failing to remove pokeweed around the facility (pokeweed is poisonous to livestock); and housing sheep adjacent to an enclosure that had metal bent upwards, exposing a sharp edge.

Deer Haven was also cited for failing to clean many enclosures properly, and investigators noted the following: Several piles of fecal waste and puddles of urine were in the enclosure holding the bear, numerous fecal pellets were in the enclosure holding Patagonian cavy, the potbellied pigs had damp straw mixed with feces and urine, the bathing receptacle given to the cougars had greenish water filled with debris, and damp, dirty straw bedding was in the Cape porcupine’s enclosure. Finally, the facility was cited for not having a sufficient number of trained employees.

**August 29, 2016:** The USDA cited Deer Haven for failing to give adequate veterinary care to a cavy who had a large wound along the spine—which had been sustained during a fight with a cagemate—and hadn’t been seen by the veterinarian or received any treatment for the wound. The roadside zoo was also cited for failing to have complete records of animals on hand, failing to have an effective barrier fence in front of the African crested porcupine, failing to have locks on the cavy enclosure and on the cages containing rabbits, and failing to provide both the guinea pigs and the rabbits with safe enclosures—both enclosures had flooring with large enough openings to allow the animals’ feet to fall through, risking injury. Deer Haven was also cited for failing to provide animals with food free from contamination (one enclosure holding two brown satin rabbits had slices of apples covered with fire ants, and the wooden feed trough was excessively worn in the enclosure holding squirrels); failing to clean the cages holding rabbits (which had a buildup of fur, urine, and feces); and failing to maintain several enclosures, including the enclosure holding a bear (which had a latch on the gate that allowed unwanted people to enter and the bear to escape, a fence surrounding the den that was held together by twine and in need of repair, a metal den that was excessively rusty with holes present, and a perimeter fence that had been damaged by a fallen tree and needed to be restored—there was also a 3-inch gap that allowed a member of the public to stick her arm through to the catch area of the bear pen). The cage holding squirrels had sharp points and gaps between the mesh sides and top, fencing for the enclosure holding goats had gaps at the bottom, an enclosure holding white-tailed deer had a section of fence damaged by a fallen tree, creating a large gap and preventing the gate from closing properly around the support pole.

Deer Haven was also cited for failing to remove an excessive amount of feces and fruit around the outside of the cages holding coatimundis, carrots and an old bag of grapes on the ground outside the enclosure holding a lemur, an excessive amount of feces under the cages holding rabbits, and an excessive amount of food waste under the cage holding squirrels and failing to provide sheep with adequate shelter from inclement weather—the shelter in their enclosure leaned inward on one side, and its roof, which was bowed, appeared to be loosely attached. Citations were also issued for failing to clean the admission booth (which also held ferrets and guinea pigs)—items were stored on the shelves haphazardly, the building was cluttered with spilled food, and rat feces was noted—failing to remove unnecessary items from an enclosure holding a lemur and a cart from the enclosure holding sheep, and failing to provide sheep with a safe enclosure (metal was bent upwards, exposing a sharp edge that was in reach of the sheep). The facility was further cited for failing to have adequate “pest” control (as evidenced by a number of rat holes around several enclosures and rat feces present in a few locations) and not having a sufficient number of trained employees.

**August 8, 2016:** The USDA cited Deer Haven for failing to handle the Himalayan bear properly—the gate to the secondary containment area was left open during cleaning, and a member of the public entered the area and reached her hand into the enclosure to pet the bear, who reacted by grabbing her arm and causing non-life threatening injuries.

**June 28, 2016:** The USDA cited Deer Haven for failing to seek adequate veterinary care for at least three weeks after first noticing that the tip of a coatimundi’s tail was hairless and swollen, failing to provide both the guinea pigs and the rabbits with safe enclosures (both enclosures had flooring with large enough openings to allow the animals’ feet to fall through, risking injury), and failing to clean the enclosure holding rabbits (which had a buildup of fur, urine, and feces), surfaces of the wooden climbing structures in the enclosure holding coatimundis (which had a buildup of dark-brown material), the enclosure for the bear (which had an excessive amount of fecal material), and the cage holding a white guinea pig (which had a buildup of dirt and debris). Additional citations were issued for failing to keep enclosures in good repair. In the enclosure holding a bear, the gate lacked an appropriate lock, one side of the fence surrounding the den was held together with twine, the other side wasn’t attached to any support pole, the metal den was excessively rusty and contained holes, and the perimeter fence had been damaged by a fallen tree. In an enclosure holding white-tailed deer, a section of fence had been damaged by a fallen tree, creating a large gap and

preventing the gate from closing properly around the support pole, and the barrier fence in front of the African crested porcupine and the fences in the areas holding goats were also in need of repair.

Finally, the USDA cited Deer Haven for failing to have an effective “pest”-control program, which was evidenced by rodent feces on the floor and shelves of the admission booth, rat holes around the lemur and Himalayan bear enclosures, and a rat observed in an empty enclosure.

**April 26, 2016:** The USDA cited Deer Haven for failing to maintain the perimeter fence, which had been damaged by a fallen tree, around the enclosure holding a bear and failing to keep in good repair a shelter, which had a large hole in one side, in an enclosure holding sheep.

**June 20, 2013:** The USDA cited Deer Haven for failing to provide the deer with sufficient shelter from inclement weather (giving them only a two-sided structure that couldn’t adequately protect them) and failing to maintain enclosures in good repair for lemurs (leaving the damaged wooden board that made up the back wall of the indoor housing unrepaired) and muntjacs (failing to repair the damaged roof on one of the shelter structures).

**November 8, 2012:** The USDA cited Deer Haven for failing to have a responsible person available to conduct an animal-welfare inspection.

**June 15, 2011:** The USDA cited Deer Haven for failing to have animal records available for review, failing to have an effective barrier around the enclosure holding capybaras, and failing to provide rabbits with a safe enclosure—the wire flooring had a 1-inch-by-2-inch opening, which was large enough to allow a foot or leg to fall through, risking injury.

**June 14, 2011:** The USDA cited Deer Haven for failing to have a responsible person available to conduct an animal-welfare inspection.

**July 6, 2010:** The USDA cited Deer Haven for failing to have a public barrier in front of the sheltered area of an enclosure holding a muntjac (the public could walk up to the door of the shelter and touch the animal) and failing to keep the enclosure holding zebus, bison, sheep, and llamas in good repair (the board fencing was excessively worn and damaged). The inspection also noted that this was a focused inspection in response to an animal bite incident involving a lemur and that the incident was still under review.

**June 4, 2010:** The USDA cited Deer Haven for failing to maintain housing facilities in good repair: An

enclosure holding zebu, bison, sheep, and llama had board fencing that was excessively worn and damaged, and an enclosure holding a coatimundi had a floor that had sunken inward and couldn’t adequately support the weight of the animal.