

Animals in Conflict: A Timeline

Conflict	Impact on Animals
WWI: 1914-18	More than 16 million animals were made to serve on all sides, with nine million killed (including eight million horses, mules and donkeys).
WWII: 1939-45	An estimated 400,000 to 750,000 domestic pets were killed in Britain in one week at the beginning of the war following a government campaign focusing on pet safety/suffering and expected food shortages. The German Army lost 179,000 horses in 2 months on the Eastern Front.
Vietnam: 1955-75	The use of defoliants destroyed the habitats of tigers, Asian elephants, gibbons, civets, leopards and other species. At least 40,000 animals were killed by unexploded landmines in the 20 years following the war.
Mozambique Civil War: 1977-92	Giraffe and elephant herds in the Gorongosa National Park shrank by 90% .
Iran-Iraq War: 1980-88	Wild goats, wolves, otters, pelicans, striped hyenas, river dolphins and other wildlife were wiped out or rendered almost extinct.
Sudanese Civil War: 1983-2005	South Sudan's elephant population fell 95% from 100,000 to 5,000.
Afghan War: 1990s	Over 75,000 animals were lost due to mines, about half of the livestock population.
Gulf War 1990-91	Over 80% of livestock and 85% of zoo animals in Kuwait died, including 790,000 sheep, 12,500 cows and 2,500 horses. A deliberate oil leak into the Persian Gulf by Iraqi troops caused the deaths of up to 230,000 aquatic animals and birds.
Russia-Ukraine War 2022-	<p>According to Ukraine's Ministry of Agrarian Policy and Food, as of 16 June 2022, an estimated 42,000 sheep, 92,000 cattle, 258,000 pigs, and more than 5.7 million poultry had been killed since Russia's invasion began on 24 February. There is a lack of feed and veterinary care for many animals. Approximately 300 dogs died of hunger and thirst in an animal shelter in Borodyanka during the occupation. Politico reported that hundreds of animals died in their cages at a zoo in Russian-occupied Ukraine when explosions destroyed the nearby Nova Kakhovka dam. Kyiv's Environment Ministry stated that the war had taken a heavy toll on Ukraine's natural resources and wildlife – with the deaths of animals being "not just a result of the war" but one of its "aims."</p> <p>The Ukrainian (Feb 2024) examined various harms to ecosystems and animals in an article "How Russia's war against Ukraine affects animals and the environment." Since the start of the full-scale war in 2022, about 25% of Ukraine's protected areas have been occupied. Many animals in war zones are disoriented and frightened by explosions, shooting, machinery and night flashes. This leads to changes in behaviour and migration patterns. Aquatic ecosystems also suffer from the environmental effects of Russia's military invasion. The Ukrainian War Environmental Consequences Work Group reported increased dolphin strandings in the Black Sea.</p>
Israel-Gaza War: October 2023-	<p>Gaza's animals have been victims of the conflict, as recorded by Al-Monitor. Animals on farms, in shelters and in homes, have been killed, wounded or displaced. According to a UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) report, 149 sheep, 5 cattle and 172 broiler farms have been destroyed. Fish farms on the coast were wiped out when the coastline was bulldozed.</p> <p>In February 2024, the Times of Israel reported that hundreds of feral dogs had entered Israel from the Gaza Strip since the start of the war, raising concerns about their impact on wildlife and human health. Another side effect of the war in Gaza is animal starvation in zoos. The Palestinian Chronicle reported that the zoo at Jabalya, home to around 100 species, had lost 90% of its animals. Four Paws has been seeking to coordinate a zoo rescue in Gaza.</p>