# Animal rights campaigners demand removal of King George V's stuffed Bengal tiger from Bristol Museum



Animal rights campaigners are raising serious concerns regarding a prominently displayed stuffed Bengal tiger at the Bristol Museum, which was shot during a notorious big-game hunting expedition in 1911 by King George V, the great-grandfather of King Charles. The call for action follows a long-standing opposition to the glorification of trophy hunting, which many view as a relic of a bygone era that continues to have detrimental effects on wildlife populations.

The tiger, which measures an imposing eight feet, is part of a museum display that features the majestic feline crouching in grass before a mural depicting King George V in safari attire, complete with an elephant and a shotgun. This display not only reflects the disturbing practices associated with colonial hunting but also serves as a reminder of a time when such activities were seen as a symbol of power and prestige. According to historical records, during that ten-day hunting trip in Nepal, George V boasted about killing 21 tigers, among other animals, and labelled it a 'record' that would be hard to beat.

Elisa Allen, from People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), argues that it is imperative to confront this 'shameful past,' stating, "Bury the dead respectfully...just as we are returning human remains and artefacts to their countries of origin." Allen’s comments underscore a growing sentiment that the context surrounding such trophies should be starkly acknowledged and that the lives lost were not mere statistics in a hunting ledger.

Dr. Mark Jones of the Born Free Foundation echoed these sentiments, asserting that trophy hunting has had a devastating impact on wildlife populations globally. The tiger, now a central figure in this debate, has become emblematic of colonial attitudes towards wildlife that many believe should be challenged and reconsidered in modern society. Campaigners have demanded either the removal of the tiger from display to be buried respectfully in its homeland or at the very least, that the plaque accompanying the exhibit should accurately detail the 'horrific dispatch' of the animal.

Historical context adds weight to the current discussion. King George V's hunting expedition has been recognised as one of the largest royal hunts in history, leading to the deaths of 39 tigers, among other species. Photographs from the expedition depict a hunting party that was not just shooting for sport but engaging in a brutal practice facilitated by their position of power. This hunt was organised by the then Prime Minister of Nepal, Chandra Shumsher Jang Bahadur Rana, who arranged for elephants to corral the game for the hunters, illustrating the stark disparity between the royal hunters and the animals they pursued.

As public consciousness shifts towards animal welfare and conservation, the memories of such episodes are increasingly viewed not with nostalgia but with critical reflection. Many activists and conservationists urge museums to rethink their displays to better represent the brutal realities of past practices rather than romanticise them.

In light of these allegations and pressures from activists, the Bristol Museum faces a critical decision regarding the future of the Bengal tiger exhibit. The matter seems to encapsulate a larger conversation about how society remembers its history and addresses the consequences of past actions on present-day wildlife conservation efforts. As this debate continues, it stands as a stark reminder of the need for ethical considerations in how humans interact with and depict the natural world.

### Reference Map

1. [[1]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-14705011/EDEN-CONFIDENTIAL-Animal-rights-campaigners-roaring-rage-royal-exhibit-stuffed-8ft-Bengal-tiger.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490), [[2]](https://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-14705011/EDEN-CONFIDENTIAL-Animal-rights-campaigners-roaring-rage-royal-exhibit-stuffed-8ft-Bengal-tiger.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490)
2. [[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_V%27s_1911_hunting_trip_in_Nepal), [[4]](https://www.oldindianphotos.in/2008/12/king-george-vs-hunting-in-nepal-in.html), [[5]](https://www.academia.edu/30127083/The_royal_hunt_of_tiger_and_rhinoceros_in_the_Nepalese_terai_in_191_1)
3. [[6]](https://www.navrangindia.in/2024/10/king-george-vs-tiger-hunting-spree.html), [[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tiger_hunting)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-14705011/EDEN-CONFIDENTIAL-Animal-rights-campaigners-roaring-rage-royal-exhibit-stuffed-8ft-Bengal-tiger.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/tvshowbiz/article-14705011/EDEN-CONFIDENTIAL-Animal-rights-campaigners-roaring-rage-royal-exhibit-stuffed-8ft-Bengal-tiger.html?ns_mchannel=rss&ns_campaign=1490&ito=1490> - Animal rights activists are calling for the removal of a stuffed 8ft Bengal tiger from the Bristol Museum. The tiger was killed by King George V during a 1911 hunting trip in Nepal, where he reportedly killed 21 tigers, eight rhinos, and a bear. The museum display features the tiger crouching in grass in front of a mural depicting George V in safari attire riding an elephant. Activists suggest returning the tiger to Nepal for a respectful burial or ensuring the museum plaque acknowledges the 'horrific dispatch' of the animal.
3. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_V%27s_1911_hunting_trip_in_Nepal> - In December 1911, King George V participated in a large-scale hunting expedition in Nepal's Terai region. Over ten days, the hunting party killed 39 tigers, 18 rhinoceroses, 4 bears, and several other animals. The event was organized by Nepal's Prime Minister, Chandra Shumsher Jang Bahadur Rana, and was documented through photographs preserved in various archives. The hunt is considered one of the most extensive royal hunting expeditions in history.
4. <https://www.oldindianphotos.in/2008/12/king-george-vs-hunting-in-nepal-in.html> - This article provides historical photographs and details of King George V's 1911 hunting trip in Nepal. The images depict the hunting party, including George V, on elephants, inspecting slain animals like tigers and rhinoceroses. The narrative describes the hunting methods used, such as the 'ring' technique involving elephants to encircle and drive game toward the hunters. The expedition resulted in the killing of numerous tigers and other wildlife, reflecting the scale of royal hunting during that era.
5. <https://www.academia.edu/30127083/The_royal_hunt_of_tiger_and_rhinoceros_in_the_Nepalese_terai_in_191_1> - This academic paper examines King George V's 1911 hunting expedition in Nepal's Terai region. The study details the number and types of animals killed, including 39 tigers, 18 rhinoceroses, and 4 bears. It also discusses the presentation of a live rhinoceros to the king, which was later transported to the London Zoo. The paper includes references to photographs documenting the event, preserved in archives at the University of Cambridge and the Australian National University.
6. <https://www.navrangindia.in/2024/10/king-george-vs-tiger-hunting-spree.html> - This article discusses the context and implications of King George V's 1911 tiger hunting expedition in India. It highlights the scale of the hunt, where the king killed 39 tigers in ten days, and reflects on the colonial attitudes toward wildlife during that period. The piece also touches upon the broader impact of such hunting practices on tiger populations and the environment, providing a critical perspective on the event.
7. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tiger_hunting> - This Wikipedia article provides an overview of tiger hunting practices, including historical instances involving British officials. It mentions that in 1878, British officials killed 1,579 tigers, and in 1882, they paid £4,800 in rewards for killing 1,726 tigers. The article also notes that King George V killed 39 tigers during his 1911 visit to Colonial India. The piece discusses the cultural and historical context of tiger hunting and its impact on tiger populations.