

NEWS

Animals were well looked after: Ad man Dabholkar

Wildlife dept raids Worli flat, finds protected animals.

[Express News Service](#)

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Mumbai, July 14: THE Worli residence of famous theatre personality and ad-man Bharat Dabholkar was raided by the wildlife authorities for keeping protected animals as pets on Wednesday.

Two animal rights groups, along with Wildlife (Western India region) Department officials, recovered several star tortoises, an African grey parrot and two marmoset monkeys.

A mounted buffalo trophy and zebra and snake skins were also found.

Dabholkar reportedly had no legal documents for keeping them.

A member of the Bombay Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals alleged that the animals were kept in a "poor condition".

The tortoises have been taken into custody by the Forest Department.

People For Animals, another animal rights' group which took part in the raid, said they had received information about the illegal pets.

A member of the group, A Shah, said that Dabholkar was charged under the Wildlife Act and Cruelty Against Animals Act.

Dabholkar told Newline: "Everyone knows I'm an animal lover. It's not a crime to take care of wildlife. I bred the tortoises myself over the last 15 years after an old Parsi lady was unable to take care of one such pair. They were kept in very good condition."

He further added that the alleged wild buffalo trophy is actually a Spanish bull trophy, which does not constitute wildlife.

"The African gray parrot was found abandoned and it was being hurt by crows, which is why I brought it to my house," he said.