

Animals put down in World War Two

[Clip from BBC FOUR Timeshift: A Day at the Zoo]

[Richard Bacon]

The war brought tough times for zoos. Rationing meant food was scarce, money was tight and no one wanted dangerous animals escaping from their enclosures.

[Andy Flack]

If a bomb hits, these animals are going to get out. Polar bears at Bristol were shot and the Polar bear enclosure which was quite new at that time was turned into an air raid shelter. This was a very difficult time for animals – if they weren't shot then many of them starved. They didn't have the kind of food they had before so there's not just a human tragedy here in terms of war – there's an animal one as well.