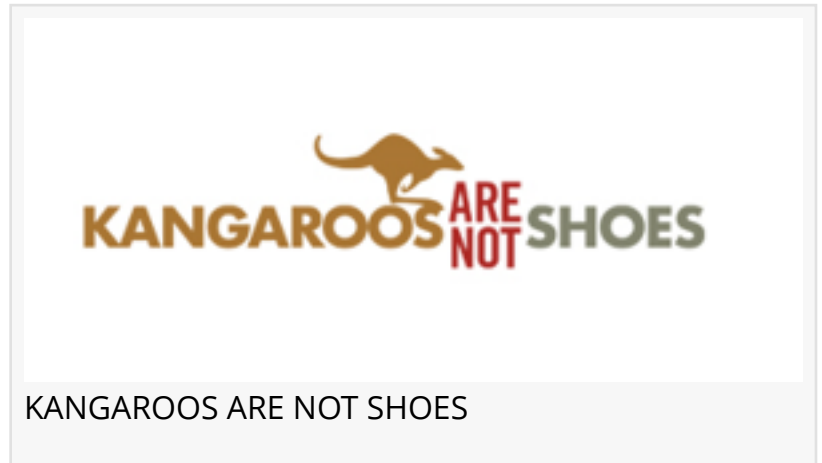


Nike, Dick's Sporting Goods, other retailers violating CA ban on selling kangaroos skins, new investigation finds

Olympians Heather Mitts (soccer) and David Verberg (track and field), urge Nike to stop fueling annual slaughter of 2 million kangaroos

LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA, USA, July 22, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- More than one hundred California stores and online retailers – including Nike, Dick's Sporting Goods, Puma, and Amazon-owned Zappos – are illegally selling athletic shoes made of [kangaroo](#) skin, according to an exhaustive, months-long investigation released today by the Center for a Humane Economy, a national non-profit organization that promotes animal welfare in the business sector.



“

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Dotsie Bausch, an Olympic cycling silver medalist (2012)

The Center found widespread criminal violations of California Penal Code § 6530 banning the sale or import of kangaroo skin soccer shoes, making plain that the nation's largest soccer market is still a driving force behind the annual killing of two million wild kangaroos in Australia – the largest land-based commercial slaughter in the world, precisely the kind of activity that state lawmakers worked to stop. The California law has been in effect since 2016, but the Center's investigation reveals that the California

Department of Fish and Wildlife and other law enforcement agencies have made no discernible effort to stop the sale of tens of thousands of finished products made from kangaroos.

“Australia's catastrophic wildfires that raged six months ago killed a billion animals in Australia, including uncounted kangaroos,” said Wayne Pacelle, president of the Center for a Humane Economy. “Despite this crisis, commercial shooters are still massacring kangaroos, and their skins are still being sold in California despite a law that makes it a crime to trade in their parts.” Other retailers among those the Center documented offering illegal sales are found in every

major California market and include Niky's, Soccer Warehouse, Soccerkrazee, Xtreme Soccer, eBay, New Balance and more.

Here are key findings of the investigation:

□ Two-thirds of the 117 California soccer specialty retailers selling soccer "cleats" are violating the ban, according to the Center investigators.

□ Of the 76 dominant online retailers, some 93 percent are illegally allowing shipment into California.

□ Among the top nine shoe manufacturers, Diadora, Lotto, New Balance, Pantofola d'Oro, Puma, and Umbro were found to be shipping illegally to California addresses (only Muzuno and adidas followed the law). Nike, the biggest name in athletic footwear, temporarily took steps to come into compliance after notified of violations by the Center but resumed illegal sales this month.

□ All nine manufacturers, including adidas, violate the statute by wholesaling soccer cleats to retailers in California.

"We don't treat sports as a cordoned-off enterprise set apart from the rest of world and its swirl of social concerns," said Dotsie Bausch, an Olympic cycling silver medalist (2012) speaking on behalf of herself, soccer gold medalist Heather Mitts, track-and-field gold medalist David Verberg, and two other elite athletes. "That means we care about the things we wear, the supply chain that allows them to be fabricated, and the precious world that we all inhabit with animals." Their letter to Nike is available [here](#).

Nike fulfilled multiple orders for kangaroo-skin shoes to Robert Ferber, the former Los Angeles City prosecutor in charge of animal cruelty crimes for more than a decade. "I've ordered pairs of Tiempo Legend 8 Elite to see if Nike was following the law. Except for a brief period this spring, the shoes I ordered through Nike.com appeared promptly and illegally on my doorstep," noted the long-time prosecutor. Other Center investigators ordered numerous illegal shoes from several manufacturers. "I'd expect more controls, and more serious-minded compliance from one of the biggest corporations in the world and one that touts its commitment to sustainability

animal wellness action



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and ethics.” Ferber noted that the law provides a penalty of up to \$5,000 fine and six months in jail for each act.

Nike is one of nine major athletic shoe companies to make soccer cleats from kangaroos. The Center also developed the first of its kind list identifying kangaroo skin soccer cleats, listing 72 models of shoes from nine companies made from kangaroos. The list of shoes is available [here](#).

“Scores of kangaroos and their baby joeys rescued this year from Australia’s wildfires are now being released back into their native habitat only to risk being shot and killed for soccer shoes,” said Cienwen Hickey, Australian wildlife advocate for the Center for a Humane Economy. “This is the world’s quietest

massacre of wildlife, and I am deeply distressed that Nike and other major companies are defying the law and contributing to this bloodletting and butchery in the Outback.”

“We’re not making hats from herons and egrets, we don’t decorate our living rooms with ivory trinkets, and we shouldn’t wear athletic shoes made from the skins of kangaroos,” said Pacelle. “There’s just no need for it. Every one of these companies already sells soccer cleats made from fabrics not stripped from the backs of wildlife.”

The Center is collaborating with Animal Wellness Action, SPCA International, and a raft of other groups on a global campaign to urge every major athletic shoe company to rid its supply chain of kangaroo parts.

IMPORTANT LINKS:

For a copy of the full CHE study, [click here](#). For images and video of illegal sales, [click here](#).

To find out why modern soccer shoes are scoring higher marks by using synthetics and fabrics instead of old-fashioned kangaroo skin, watch this video from a global expert.

To find the letter from the Olympic athletes, [click here](#).

The Center for a Humane Economy is a nonprofit organization that urges corporations to



Wayne Pacelle

embrace animal welfare principles in their operations, supply chains, and R&D practices.

More information about the campaign: "Kangaroos Are Not Shoes."

WAYNE PACELLE

ANIMAL WELLNESS ACTION

+1 202-420-0446

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