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Man Who Tortured and Killed 10 Cats Sentenced to 8 Years in State Prison

San Diego Humane Society's Humane Law Enforcement investigated gruesome case in Escondido

ESCONDIDO, CA — A man who pled guilty to torturing and killing at least 10 cats in Escondido was sentenced in North County Superior Court on Friday, March 1, 2024. Joshua Tyler Boyer, the defendant, was sentenced to 8 years in state prison after pleading guilty to 10 felony counts of crimes against animals. After hearing victim impact statements in a packed courtroom, Judge Robert J. Kearney denied the defendant's request for probation and cited Boyer's sadistic nature and pronounced him a serious danger to society before delivering the sentence.

San Diego Humane Society's Humane Law Enforcement opened an investigation into Boyer on May 24, 2019, after a GPS tracker on a cat named Leonard who was reported missing led to the discovery of ten deceased animals, and other partial remains, on his property. Humane Officers seized more than 125 pieces of evidence, including firearms and tools used to inflict harm, that linked Boyer's finger prints and DNA to the feline victims. One of the victims had a microchip that came back to San Diego Humane Society, further linking Boyer to the case.

This case included collaboration between multiple law enforcement agencies, including Escondido Police, San Diego County Sheriff's Department and the FBI. "While we can never erase the suffering endured by these helpless animals, we take solace in this investigation coming to a conclusion with the judge sentencing Boyer to 8 years in state prison," said San Diego Humane Society Humane Law Enforcement Lt. Regina Price. "We want this case to serve as a stark reminder that we will relentlessly pursue justice for those who cannot speak for themselves."

During the investigation, Humane Officers discovered Boyer was using social media under false pretenses to obtain some of his victims. Boyer also adopted two cats from San Diego Humane Society. Interviews with people who rehomed their cat to Boyer through Craigslist revealed that Boyer would claim to be a military veteran to gain trust of pet owners looking to find new homes for their cats. San Diego Humane Society encourages community members not to use unverified online platforms if they need to give up their pets, and to visit sdhumane.org/rehome for vetted rehoming resources instead.

If you suspect animal cruelty or neglect in your neighborhood, please report it to San Diego Humane Society by calling 619-299-7012 (press 1 to report animal abuse).

[Photos/b-roll and sound from today's sentencing can be downloaded here:](https://spaces.hightail.com/space/2q2HwcjUp7)
<https://spaces.hightail.com/space/2q2HwcjUp7>

[Photos/b-roll of San Diego Humane Society's investigation, including body camera footage from the arrest, for media use can be downloaded here:](https://spaces.hightail.com/space/2oKezVhygb) **<https://spaces.hightail.com/space/2oKezVhygb>**
Photo/video credit: San Diego Humane Society

About San Diego Humane Society

San Diego Humane Society's scope of social responsibility goes beyond adopting animals. We offer programs that strengthen the human-animal bond, prevent cruelty and neglect, provide medical care, educate the community and serve as a safety net for all pet families. Serving San Diego County since 1880, San Diego Humane Society has campuses in El Cajon, Escondido, Oceanside, Ramona and San Diego. For more information, please visit sdhumane.org.

