

NEWSLETTER

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LONG ISLAND OCELOT CLUB
 1454 Fleetwood Drive E.
 Mobile, Alabama 36605

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LONG ISLAND OCELOT CLUB



MORGAN and MANCHITA, margays belonging to Dr. Michael Petersen author of "Behavior of the Margay" - see page 3



**LONG ISLAND OCELOT CLUB
NEWSLETTER**

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Submitting Material for Publication

Material for publication in the Long Island Ocelot Club Newsletter should be submitted by the 10th of the month preceding Newsletter publication, i.e. by the 10th of the even numbered months.

Local groups are advised that, if convenient, the holding of meetings during the odd numbered months will ensure the earliest publication time of their meeting reports due to the above deadline.

PLEASE SHARE

Happy times

Sad Times

Helpful hints

Questions

photos

POETRY ART

or just your

random

thoughts

MOVING?

To avoid missing any Newsletters if you should move, send your change of address as soon as you know the details to our Membership Secretary:

Shelley Starns
P.O. Box 99542
Tacoma, WA 98499

Please send all applications and membership renewals directly to Shelley for fast service.

Send all Newsletter and related material to the Editor, Thanks!

BEHAVIOR OF THE MARGAY

PART 1

By: Michael K. Petersen

INTRODUCTION

The following article describes some behavioral observations made by the author on two captive margays over a period of five years. Dr. Petersen is an LIOC member and has a Ph.D in mammalogy, with additional training in animal behavior and wildlife biology. This article is a condensed version of the technical paper referred to below. In order to conserve space, some of the behavioral observations and most of the literature references have been omitted. For the person interested in more complete and technical details on this subject, the reader is referred to this following reference:

Petersen, Michael K. 1976 Behavior of the Margay. In: R.L.Eaton (ed.) The World's Cats - Contributions to Biology, Ecology Behavior and Evolution, Vol. 3, No. 2: pp 39-59, Carnivore Research Institute, Burke Museum, University of Washington Seattle, WA 98195

METHODS

Daily observations of two hours each, over a period of five years were made on one male & one female margay. Observation times were irregular but included both day and nighttime hours. Generally, observations were made from within the cats' room, but some were made from a side view. The male was captive born (1/9/70) to a female from western Mexico and a male from Umbia. It had been hand raised from birth and was obtained by the author at 2½ months of age. The female was wild-caught near Ayutla, Guerrero in Southern Mexico, while still a suckling. Estimated birth date is May, 1969. The trapper housed this cat in a small cage, but the animal was not frequently handled, although quite tame. Two days after her purchase, she jumped from a bed down to the floor and broke her left forelimb. A veterinarian indicated that she had rickets at that time. The limb healed crookedly, causing the cat to have a slight, but permanent limp. Subsequently, a good diet resulted in recovery from rickets within two or three months. Both cats readily accept the author's presence and were tame within four days. Movie and still photography were used to film most behavior.

The cats' adult weights were 11 and 7 pounds for the male and female respectively. Both animals were housed together in a dry basement room of the authors home. Room dimensions were 35 feet long by 12 feet wide by 8 feet high. Numerous furnace ducts (warm & cold) shelves and ledges were available for climbing to various heights. The room also contained a freezer, washer & dryer. A large window was situated at the south end of the room. Two smaller windows near the ceiling were located on the west wall. One quarter inch mesh hardware cloth was placed over the large window. Two large, upright logs were provided as scratching posts. A 12 foot long clothesline (horizontal) rope was available for the cats to jump and swing on. The floor was tiled. Several cat pans with kitty litter sheet metal spray shields were placed in various corners of the room. They were emptied

daily. The floor was rinsed with mild detergent and rinsed with hot water. Air temperature ranged from about 66°F in the winter to 77°F in summer.

Because of differences in food preferences, each cat had a separate diet. The male was fed two meals per day (approx. 4 oz each) of the commercially prepared diet, Feline Zu/Preem. The female was given 2-3.25 ounce meals of Friskies giblets & turkey parts each day. To her food was added .5 tsp. of powdered Squibb's "Vet Nutri" (vitamin supplement) and 12 drops of liquid vitamin ("ABDEC" by Parke-Davis) every day. One 10 grain calcium gluconate tablet was given crushed and placed in her food three times weekly. Chicken bones were given once or twice a week for added calcium and to aid in tooth cleaning. Fresh water was available ad libitum. Lettuce, celery, or carrots were frequently provided to aid the cats in passing hair efficiently through the alimentary canal. Neither cat was declawed, defanged or neutered.

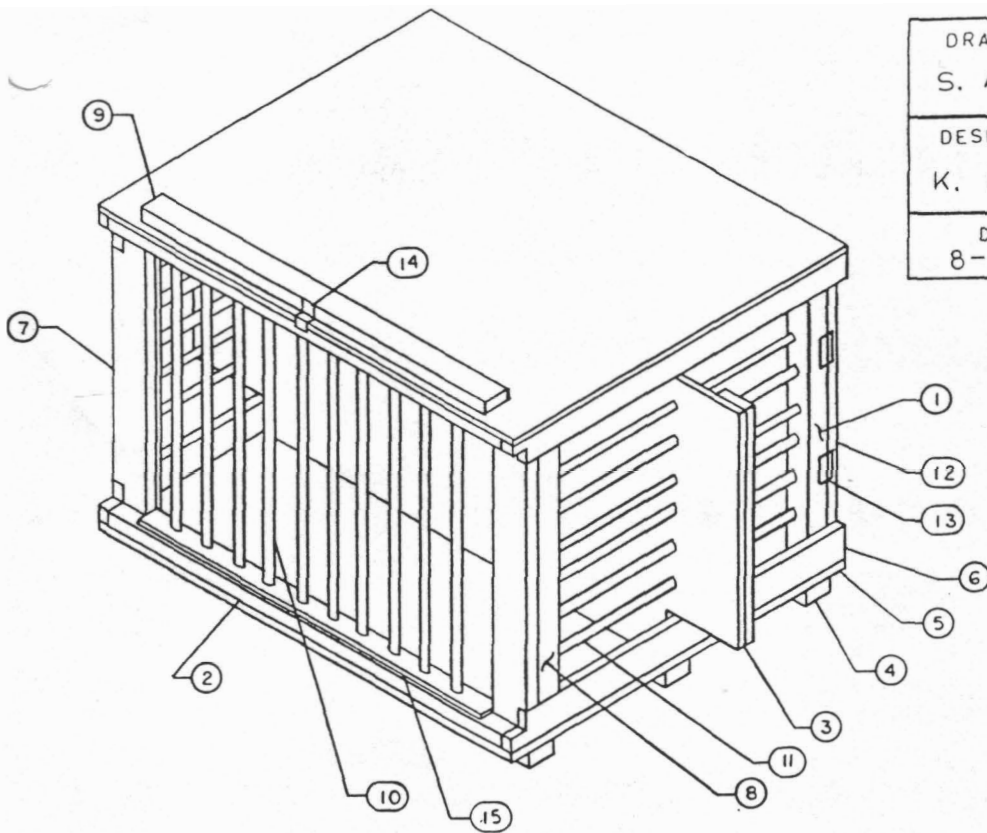


INDIVIDUAL BEHAVIOUR

VISION: Vision was well-developed. The cats could easily see small birds at a distance of 75 feet in the back yard. Birds were intentionally observed. Cattle could be seen at approximately 150 yards. No part of the cat's body would move except the tip of the tail. When a bird flew, the cat would suddenly leap against the window in the bird's direction. If a strange person came into the room, the cats stared constantly at this person; if the author entered the room, only brief initial stares were given. They also reacted differently to varying facial expressions made by the author. If an object such as a pheasant feather were moved slowly across the floor in front of a cat, the cat was less prone to grab the object than if the object were moved rapidly. The feather would be grasped with extreme rapidity by either one or both paws. Both cats were adept at discerning between partial and total moves of the feather between them. No more energy than necessary was expended toward obtaining the feather.

Continued - page 6.





DRAWN BY S. A. MERYO	SQUEEZE CAGE L. I. O. C. (LONG ISLAND OCELOT CLUB)
DESIGNED BY K. HATFIELD	
DATE 8-12-76	

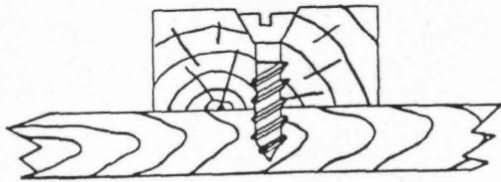
ITEMS

1. SEE DETAIL ON DRAWING
4 REQUIRED
2. SEE DETAIL ON DRAWING
2 REQUIRED
3. SEE DETAIL ON DRAWING
1 REQUIRED
4. $\frac{3}{4}$ " x $1\frac{3}{4}$ " x 30" 3 REQUIRED
5. $\frac{1}{2}$ " PLYWOOD 24" x 30" 2 REQUIRED
6. $\frac{3}{4}$ " x $1\frac{3}{4}$ " x 24" 4 REQUIRED
NOTCH ONE END 1" x 1" AS SHOWN
7. $\frac{3}{4}$ " x $2\frac{1}{4}$ " x $17\frac{1}{2}$ " 2 REQUIRED
NOTCH BOTH ENDS $\frac{3}{4}$ " x 1" AS SHOWN
8. $\frac{3}{4}$ " x $1\frac{1}{2}$ " x $15\frac{1}{2}$ " 2 REQUIRED
9. $\frac{3}{4}$ " x $1\frac{3}{4}$ " x 25" 1 REQUIRED
10. $\frac{1}{2}$ " DIA. x 19" ELECTRICAL TUBING
10 REQUIRED

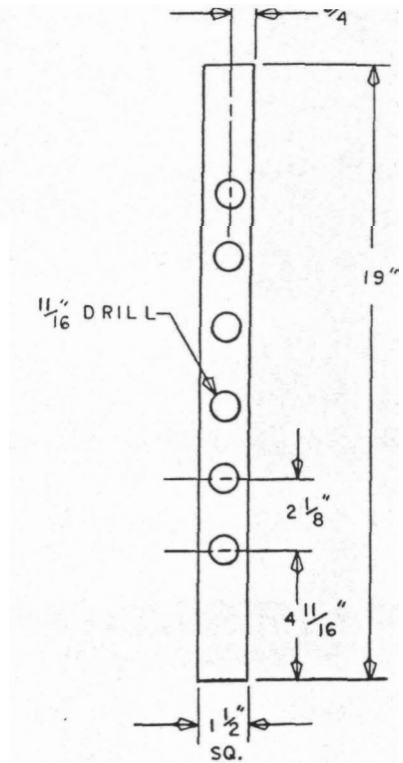
11. $\frac{1}{2}$ " DIA. x $21\frac{1}{2}$ " ELECTRICAL TUBING
12 REQUIRED
12. $\frac{3}{4}$ " x $1\frac{1}{2}$ " x 19" 2 REQUIRED
13. HINGES 6 REQUIRED
14. LATCHES 3 REQUIRED
15. $\frac{1}{8}$ " THK, 2'- $1\frac{1}{2}$ " LG ALUMINUM ANGLE
2" x $1\frac{1}{2}$ " 1 REQUIRED

NOTES

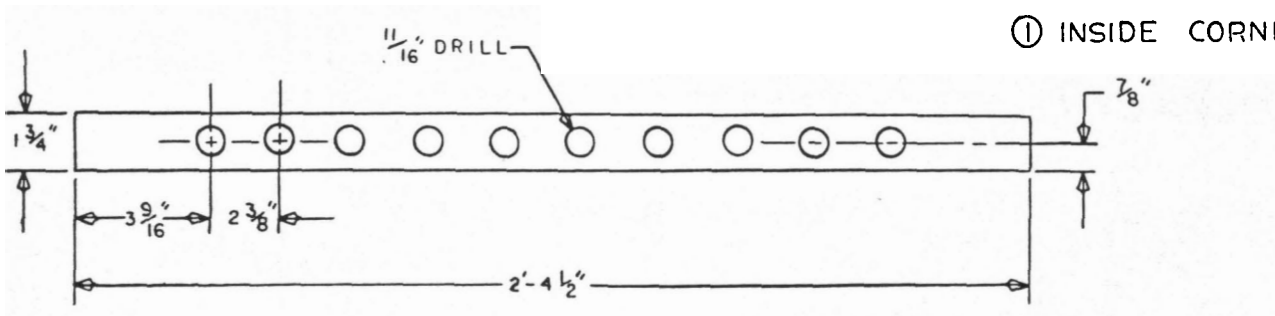
1. ITEMS 9 AND 12 HINGE OPEN FOR INSTALLING AND REMOVAL OF PIPE.
2. IN TOP PLYWOOD SHEET, DRILL $\frac{1}{16}$ " HOLES FOR PIPE REMOVAL.
3. ITEM 3 SHOULD SLIDE FREELY
4. USE VARATHANE OR EQUIVALENT FOR A NONPOISONOUS FINISH



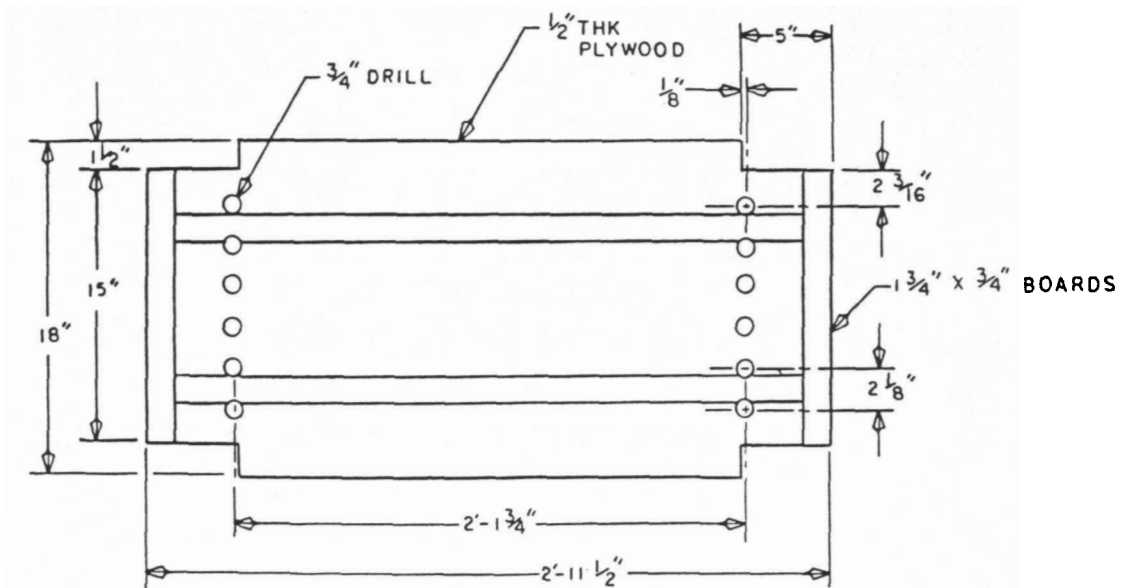
GLUE AND USE WOODSCREWS FOR ASSEMBLING AS NEEDED. COUNTERSINK AS SHOWN.



① INSIDE CORNER POST



② FRONT HORIZONTAL SUPPORT



③ SLIDE BOARD

OLFACTORY: Odors played an important part in the cat's lives. They reacted characteristically to certain odors. For example, the odor of food caused meowing, growling and licking of the chops. I was able to condition the male to "beg" (meow) and lick her chops before she was given food. If the cats were subjected to the odor of chocolate, catnip, or some other pungent smell, they exhibited the "catnip" response of cheetahs as described by Eaton & Craig (1973). This consisted of rubbing the sides of the head, neck and shoulders on the odiferous object. In addition, the cats would "skate" the hind feet in alternate movements antero-posteriorly. They frequently slid their anogenital area forward over the substrate while "skating". The skating reaction to an odiferous substance was not, to my knowledge, previously described in cats. Both cats were attracted very strongly to the smell of human perspiration.

An odor particularly obnoxious to the cats (such as the lemon scent of an aerosol air freshener) caused squinting of the eyes and subsequent avoidance. Both cats became rapidly conditioned to this odor and exhibited the same response to the sound of the cat top being removed as they did to the actual odor.

The sniffing of urine (either fresh or old) caused a Flehmen response. Flehmen responses were only rarely observed on other novel objects. Feces, when inspected olfactorily, were sniffed with accompanying rapid contractions and expansions of the nostrils for about 5 to 10 seconds. The ears were tilted slightly backwards. If feces were placed near the female's nose while she was eating a gagging response resulted. Gagging consisted of allowing food to fall out of the open mouth while the tongue extended outward. Infrequently, the abdomen "heaved" and gagging response could not be elicited from the male at any time, or in the female when she was not feeding.

Two of the above mentioned behavioral responses could be exhibited under differing conditions. In addition to rubbing the chin, cheeks, etc. on certain odors, the male in particular, also rubbed these body parts on my head, shoulders, feet, etc. he purred loudly while rubbing on the author, where as while rubbing an odiferous, inanimate object, purring was not evident. He obviously was affected by the presence of an animate object causing him to purr while stimulated by the odor of my hair, etc. Both cats "skated" at times, when a strange person entered the room. This reaction was accompanied by intense staring at the person, and several glances over their own shoulders as potential preparation for rapid escape. The "skating" was done in a sitting position (nearly). It is possible that "skating" in this latter instance is an abivalent reaction.

AUDITORY: Margays seem to have the same well-developed sense of hearing that all cats possess. Their ears were generally in constant movement to the slightest sounds (or to sounds inaudible to the human ear). They became conditioned to the sound of the author's footsteps on the basement stairs and waited by the door. However, if a stranger walked down the steps without making other sounds, the cats became wary (I assume for several reasons that odor was not involved). Apparently, they were able to distinguish between familiar and unfamiliar footsteps. A strange noise frequently caused a cat to "freeze" in a certain position (irrespective of position or activity) until the noise source was detected. If one cat panicked and exhibited flight behaviour from a sound, even though the other cat had been less attentive to this stimulus, the second cat would immediately follow suit and take flight.

FEEDING: The reader should refer to "Methods" for particulars on diet, frequency of feeding, etc. If the cats were hungry, meowing occurred until food was brought to their room. Growling and salivating would follow up to the time the food was actually placed before them. At this time an animal would generally sniff the food two or three times and then proceed to eat. Both animals were constantly aware of their surroundings during the feeding period. They frequently ceased food intake while glancing around the room. The ears constantly responded to noises. If a feeding cat were closely approached it would growl while chewing food.

The female generally consumed her meal in five minutes, whereas the male would tend to consume his meal in small feedings spaced over two to three hours. Drinking was generally done at night after a meal. Water was swallowed after every three or four laps of the tongue. Averaged daily intake by each cat amounted to approximately 3.38 oz by the male and 2.03 oz by the female.

If both cats were simultaneously given equal portions of a treat that they both preferred (e.g. hard boiled egg), they each attempted to steal from the other. The stealing behavior was accompanied by growling and half-hearted fighting. The food was rapidly consumed on these occasions. If one cat was crunching on a food item (particularly a treat), the other seemed to be stimulated by this sound and subsequently investigated the situation.

Infrequently a cat vomited a freshly consumed meal. This occurred if an animal was startled, or occasionally for no apparent reason. Generally, the vomitus was immediately consumed. In eutherian carnivores such as dogs & cats, vomiting commonly involves complete disgorging the stomach contents out of the mouth. These animals later re-consume selected bits of the vomit. The margays on the other hand, did not consume the vomitus if it had remained on the floor for more than five minutes. The male had one vomiting seige that lasted several days. Daily feedings of lettuce prevented recurrence of vomiting (Petersen, 1971, LIOC Newsletter 15 (6):13)

ELIMINATIVE BEHAVIOR: Defecation by both cats occurred on an average of twice daily, usually within four to six hours after a meal. The cats were quite habitual in regard to localities (each one had a favorite place). Very rarely would they choose other defecation stations. Generally, defecation was accomplished in a sink or on a counter top; however, if it occurred in a pan with litter, the male made a half-hearted attempt to cover the feces using his forelimbs. The female never attempted to cover hers.

Urination occurred approximately three times a day (spaced at irregular times) also in habitual places. The female generally would urinate in a squatting position. The male almost always slowly raised his rear quarters, spraying an intermittent jet of urine about two feet in the air. Urination in pans occurred about 65% of the time; the remainder was done on the floor, generally near a pan. This was particularly evident if a pan already contained a previous urination. The male was prone to spray if the author was interacting with the female. The male's emotional state at this time could be described as a mixture of frustration, mild anger and jealousy.

ACTIVITY PERIODS: Both animals could be active at any time of the day; however most activity occurred between 1 and 2 AM and again from 4 to 5 AM. Although they were subjected to a normal photoperiod, the peak activity periods

remained the same hours throughout the year. Activity at night was most pronounced when the cats were jumping from shelf to shelf while chasing each other. When the author entered the cats' room during the day, the animals were less playful, at least initially, than at night.

Schaller's (1972) observations that lions are only active for about 3-4 hours each day can be applied equally well to the margays.



Due to its length (even in condensed form) this article will be continued next issue.

An English Tale

By Jeannette Travers

"I've got a young puma." called my husband Tony from the front door late one night. He had been all day away at a distant zoo.

"Don't bring any animals back with you." I had said jokingly that morning as he climbed into the van. Now he was saying "I had to bring her, she was going to be shot." "Why?" I asked ignoring the domestic cat box by his feet. "There are too many pumas around. She's not wanted." he said closing the front door quietly.

"Well, we'll have to find a good home for her" I said, "there's no room here." All the enclosures in the garden were full and every room in the house had an animal in it.

As readers of my book, "Starting from Scratch" (Published by Taplinger Publishing Company, New York) will know, London Zoo let Tony have their female ocelot Cleo, for breeding. She had been happy for a long time in the garden, first with male, Snoopy until he tried to kill her, and then with gentle Pacha. But, after a time, he tried to tear her throat as well. Fortunately, both attempts happened during the day and Tony was able to rush in and pry open Snoopy's jaws and then he had to do the same with Pacha. "That's probably Nature's way of killing off the old ones" I remember him saying at the time. So geriatric Cleo was taken permanently into the house and given her own room.

A week before the puma arrived, Stinky fox's earth had been flooded when the river Thames at the bottom of the garden over-flowed and he was temporarily occupying the bathroom. Another room was a mini-hospital for an ocelot with a stomach complaint and Willy, our domestic black cat, still stalked in and out of the house and around the garden, taking no notice of the other animals.

"There's no more room" I repeated watching Tony bend down and unhook the catch and open the door of the cat box. Out peered a small grey head with white fur shaped like a bow tie at the bottom of her nose. She looked around, immediately rushed over to me, crying loudly and rubbed her head against my legs. I had to pick her up and she licked my face, purring hard.

"We'll have to find a really good home for her." I said rubbing my face against hers, "what's her name?" "I don't know" said Tony over his

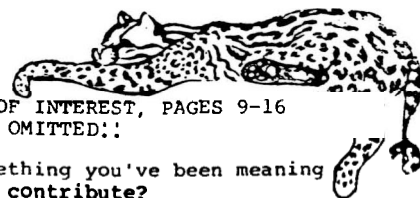
shoulder as he went into the kitchen to find food and milk for her. For the next hour the little puma purred continuously, so she was called Purr-Purr. And by moving the animals around, I found room for her.

As the days went by, Purr-Purr became more and more affectionate, delighting in rubbing her face against ours, making tiny squeaking noises at the same time. Her only failing was she would not be toilet trained. A toilet tray was a toy to her, to be knocked and pushed all over the room. Whereas old Cleo, after living as a zoo animal for 10 years used a toilet tray expertly at once. After many mishaps, I managed to get Purr-Purr to squat on newspaper, but occasionally she forgets and leaves puddles on the settee.



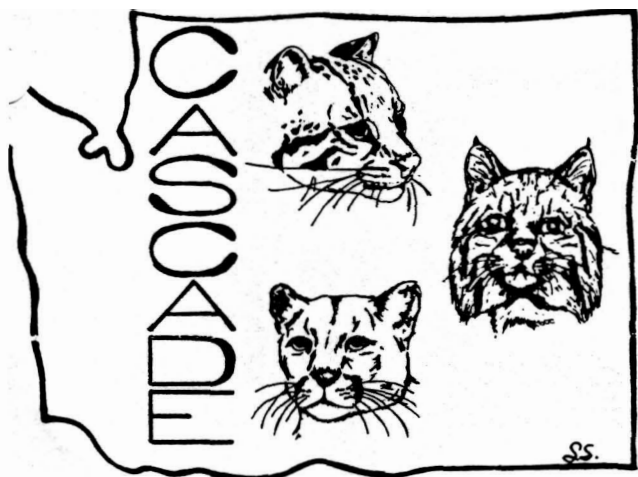
When she was still small, friends came to see her "Is she any relation to the cougar?" asked one. "She is a cougar" said Tony, "and also a mountain lion." I wondered why there should be three different names and after a little research in Lloyd's Natural History, published in London in 1896, and found that cougar was an American Indian name. Later in the same chapter, the author, Richard Lydekker quotes from the "Description of the New Netherlands" written by Van der Donck and published in 1656 that "Although the New Netherlands lay in a fine climate and although the country in winter seemed rather cold, nevertheless lions are found there, but not by Christians, who have travelled the land wide and broad and have not seen one. It is only known to us by the skins of the females, which are sometimes brought in by the Indians for sale who on enquiry say that the lions are found far to the Southwest, distant fifteen or twenty days' journey, in very high mountains, and that the males are too active and fierce to be taken."

Today, after eighteen months, Purr-Purr is still with us and now we love her too much to find another home for her.



DUE TO LACK OF INTEREST, PAGES 9-16
HAVE BEEN OMITTED!:

Is there something you've been meaning
to contribute?



MEETING REPORT - ANNUAL CAT-TAIL PICNIC

June 24th & 25th, 1978

The setting is logging country, near Tacoma Washington. The road leading to Cougar Mountain offers diversified scenes of dense evergreen woods, gently rolling meadows and a magnificent view of snow-capped Mt. Rainier. As we drove up, a sign, complete with paw prints, announces that we have arrived at our destination. We follow a natural road to a small clearing in the woods, where we are greeted by Shelley & Terry Starns, our host and hostess for the weekend. The air is crisp with an overcast sky as we all make our way past the small trailer that serves as the Starns' living quarters (cages for the animals come first) to visit with the feline members of the compound. Bobcats abound, in three of the well built chain link cages. Introductions are in order and we are received with various chirps, spits and inquiring looks. To one side of the bobcats are more cages housing a pair of Asian golden cats and an exceptionally large male caracal. Two lovely little margays came next on the tour. They, like all the cats, have large tree trunks to climb on or hide behind. Four cougars are housed in the next cages visited. One of which had given birth to two kits just two weeks previously, but the kits were being hand raised by Shelley. Another of the cougars was inside her den, with four, three day old cubs just barely visible. Here, a sign was posted which read "Nursery - please quiet". It was also interesting to note, that all the cages had labels telling the species of the cat and its country of origin. After the cougars, came the jungle cat or chaus, as many call this reddish Asian wild cat that very much resembles the domestic Abyssinian.

Passing down the line of cages you can't help but notice a very large enclosure in the background. A closer look reveals a magnificent African lion. "Aurora" belongs to Ed Smith who lives on the property. Ed also has a white ferret which is enclosed in a small cage nearby and the scene brings to mind a rather surrealistic portrait of the cat and mouse.

Our tour ends at a separate group of cages where we are met by two ocelots and a Geoffrey's cat. Last, we're introduced to the two public relations cats for the compound - "Cassandra" a year old leopard and "Poppy" an eight month old cougar. These two share a cage and have an interesting relationship. Growing up together, they play as kittens do, but Poppy is a character when it comes to food - racing around the cage screeching, with mouth clenched on a piece of chicken, and Cassandra in hot pursuit. Poppy cougar was born prematurely and is small for her age. She also has an unusual coat that resembles lambs wool instead of the short, slick fur of a normal cougar. Thus the name Popcorn - shortened to Poppy.

Saturday morning people began arriving - some for a quick visit, others to spend the weekend. Californians Bill & Penny Andrews flew up for the day and Walter Billings found his way, without a map, from Arcata, California. Many others arrived throughout the day and stayed for the evenings Bar-B-Q of mouth-watering chicken. There was also a keg of beer, and wine was provided for those who cared to indulge and indulge we did! After dark, Terry touched off a very spectacular bonfire and many of us toasted our backsides while enjoying the clean, pine-scented air and pleasant conversation of our companions. As the fire dwindled, so did the people, to crawl into their sleeping bags for the nite.

The next day, as some of us were still rubbing the sleep from our eyes, more cars began to arrive. A surprise-guest and the one who travelled the greatest distance to attend was Ken Hatfield from Florida. The Oregon Educational Exotic Feline Club members came in costume-matching vests for all. More chicken was put on the fire and tours of the compound continued throughout the day. Many people expressed a desire to take a very friendly little imp of a bobcat home. Her antics and playfulness won the hearts of all. The only animal that was brought to the picnic was a raccoon named Tabasco who accompanied its owners from Canada. She let the little raccoon run loose while there, and it was extremely busy peering into cars, campers, sleeping bags, pockets and even down the stack atop the Port-A-Potty!.....which startled a few of the occupants!

By sunset, most all had headed home by their various routes having spent a thoroughly enjoyable weekend among and talking about cats - what else?

Thank you Shelley & Terry, we look forward to next year's picnic.

By: Jean Townes.

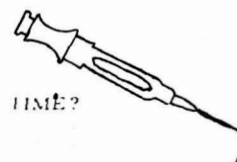
INFORMATION ON HYBRIDS IS CURRENTLY BEING COMPILED. IF YOU HAVE KNOWLEDGE OR EXPERIENCE WITH HYBRIDS (EXOTIC DOMESTIC CROSSES OR SPECIES/SPECIES CROSSES) PLEASE CONTACT ME.

THIS INFORMATION MAY BE PUBLISHED, BUT NAMES WILL BE WITHHELD. YOUR HELP WILL BE APPRECIATED.

Shelley Starns
Rt. 1, Box 162B
Lonsmire Rd.
Yelm, WA 98597

(206) 894-2694

HELPFUL HINT: Anyone feeding meat to their animals in an outdoor enclosure, knows the problems of flies. To keep flies off food, coat it with a liquid cooking oil before feeding. This covers the scent of the meat and flies don't swarm. It's also good for your pet's coat. Also, during warm weather, consider feeding in the evening when temperatures are cooler.



BOOSTER TIME?