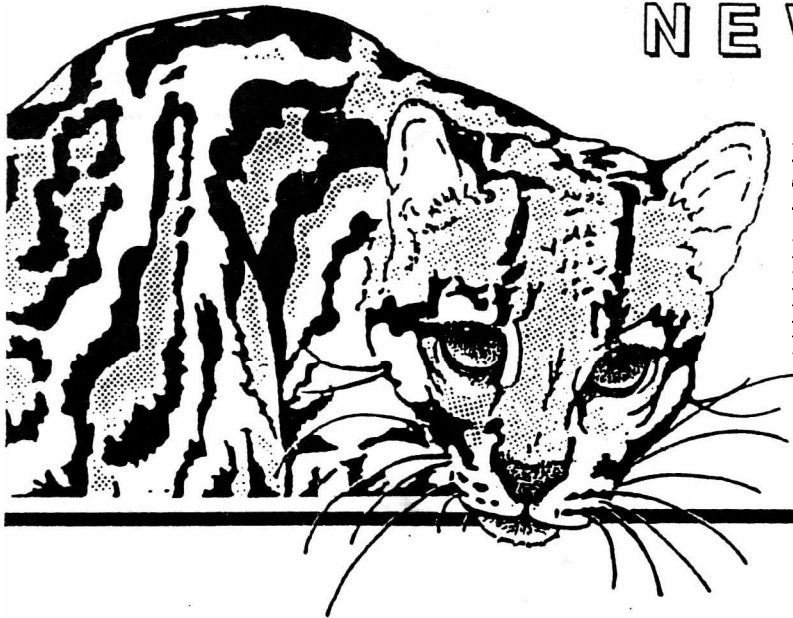
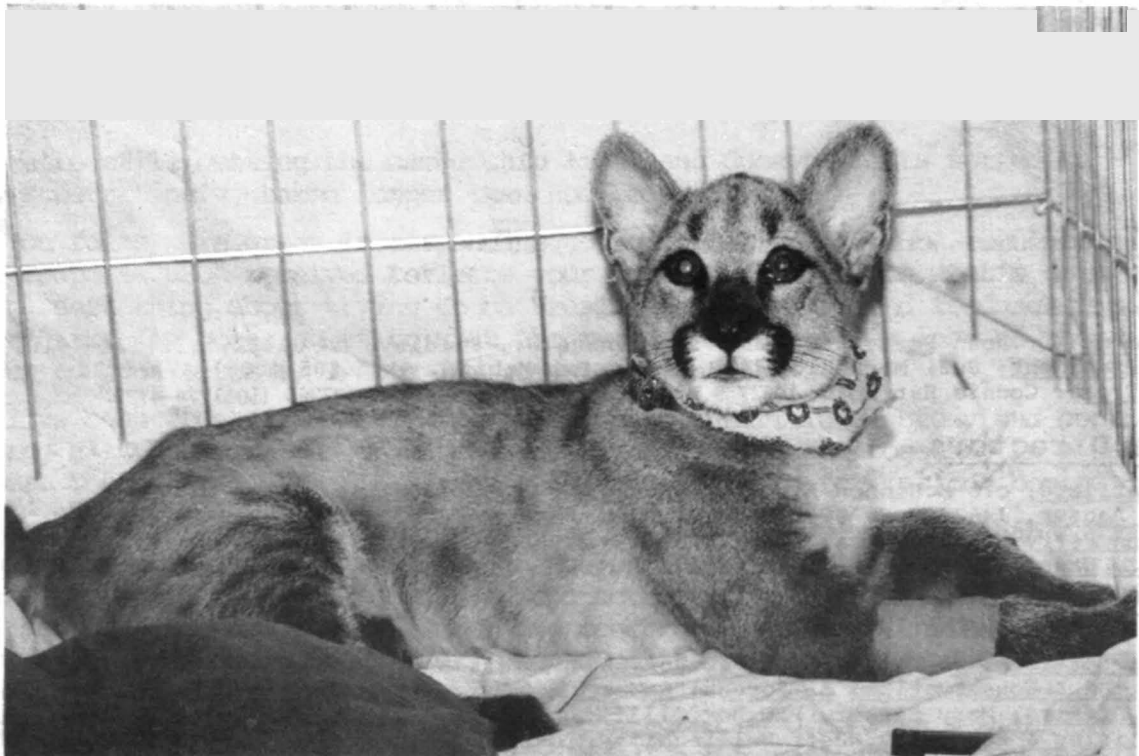


# NEWSLETTER

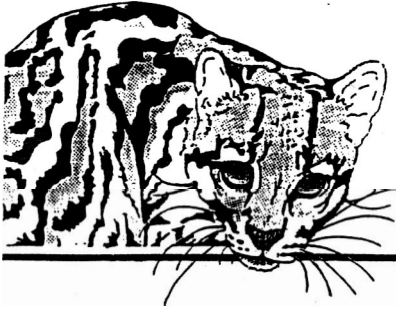


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TASHA appears to be a bright, happy little cougar - she didn't always  
Her story begins on page 5



## L.I.O.C. Endangered Species Conservation Federation Inc.

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This newsletter is published bi-monthly by the LIOC Endangered Species Conservation Federation, Inc. We are a non-profit (Federal I.D.# 58-9100616), non-commercial organization, international in membership, devoted to the welfare of exotic felines. The purpose of this newsletter is to present information about exotic feline conservation, management, and ownership to our members. The material printed in this newsletter is contributed by our members and in many cases, reflects the point of view of the person whose name appears on the article, rather than the point of view of the organization. The organization's statement of intent is contained in our by-laws; a copy of which can be requested from the Secretary/Treasurer. Reproduction of the material in this newsletter may not be made without written permission of the authors and/or copyright owner LIOC.

Since the newsletter consists of articles, photos and artwork contributed by our members, we depend on you for our material. We can only publish what you send us. Articles of all types concerning exotic felines are gladly accepted. We also have a Reader's Write column for letters or responses to articles. Please send all materials for contribution to the Newsletter editor.

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## *President's Perspective*

This is my last article, I expect, before convention, and I'd like to share my perspective on the past year. I feel it is important to share with you the sorts of things the Board and I have been involved in as they relate to LIOC.

A major thrust has been in publication. We've printed and are in the process of distributing the Membership Handbook to all members. It's looseleaf so that pages can be changed if we amend things later. **EXOTICA has been re-printed** and is available to members. It is being offered to others at a higher price. We are advertising it in "Animal Finders' Guide". A Feline Booklist has been compiled of book, both fiction and non-fiction, of interest to feline enthusiasts. It too is available to non-members at an increased price. We hope to begin the pamphlets on particular species soon and could use volunteers to work on them. The other activity that is in progress is the greeting cards. Al Porges is working on these.

We've been trying to get the Newsletter back on schedule. Thank you for all the material you've been sending in. It makes for a better Newsletter with many contributors.

We're still getting the membership lists and dues payments sorted out. This has, frustratingly, taken longer than had been expected.

You folks were great in responding to my letter on the USDA regulations. The high response USDA received reflects your interest concerning what's going on. The hardest thing about trying to be President is the limited feedback I get. I feel like I'm guessing as to what the membership wants. As long as there aren't concerted loud screams, I hope I'm guessing right.

I've been frustrated as to finishing up the nutritional study and continue getting all the forms and other published information put together in a useable manner. You sent in over FIFTY responses! I apologize for falling behind.

Several incidents occurred during the year that made me feel that having our organization does serve a real purpose beyond our own animals. First, an animal control officer on Long Island, N.Y. contacted me about an escaped exotic cat that had been seen in the area. Her big concern was to keep the animal safe and to capture it before some "hunter" protected the neighborhood. I was able to put her in touch with some members who gave her help and the animal was caught. Secondly, though less successful, I was contacted by U.S. Fish & Wildlife. They had seized an adult Siberian tiger (declawed) and were looking for a place to take it. Although we didn't find a home for it, at least we have them contacting us when they have a problem. That is important!

As I see it, the priorities for the next year should be in improving member communications and member records. I would hope that by the end of the year, our record-related complaints (membership, dues, Newsletter, etc.) should be minimal. The other is to get the membership to be involved with supporting and identifying the projects we are working on. The responses to questionnaires show you will put out an effort, we just need to make the best use of those efforts.

Continued on page

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PRESIDENT'S PERSPECTIVE - cont.

Finally, I would like to encourage those of you who haven't been to a national convention to attend. This is the primary place to get to know the membership and to provide your input. (In addition, it's a great time to relax and get to see another part of the country) I look forward to seeing many of you in Boston.

John Perry.

## IT'S TIGERS 5, LIONS ZILCH IN SUWANNEE

Reprinted from the Florida Times-Union

In Suwannee County, Florida, tigers are in, but lions are out.

A Suwannee lion tamer exhausted his last appeal with county commissioners yesterday when they voted 3-2 to deny a special exception he needed to house his 14 lions on his 40 acre property near McAlpin.

Last week, county zoning officials approved a tiger owner's request for a similar exception for housing five animals.

"I don't know of any differences (between tigers & lions), but then again I'm not a biologist," said Blair Payne, attorney for lion owner Julius Von Uhl.

Von Uhl was traveling and couldn't be reached for comment, but Payne said his client would likely file a new lawsuit against the county. Von Uhl filed a lawsuit last year against the county and was ordered by a circuit judge to seek the special exception.

Von Uhl has said he will sue commissioners for discrimination, move his lions out of the county and turn the land into a hog and goat farm in response to neighbors complaints about his roaring lions.

Contributed by BeeJay Lester



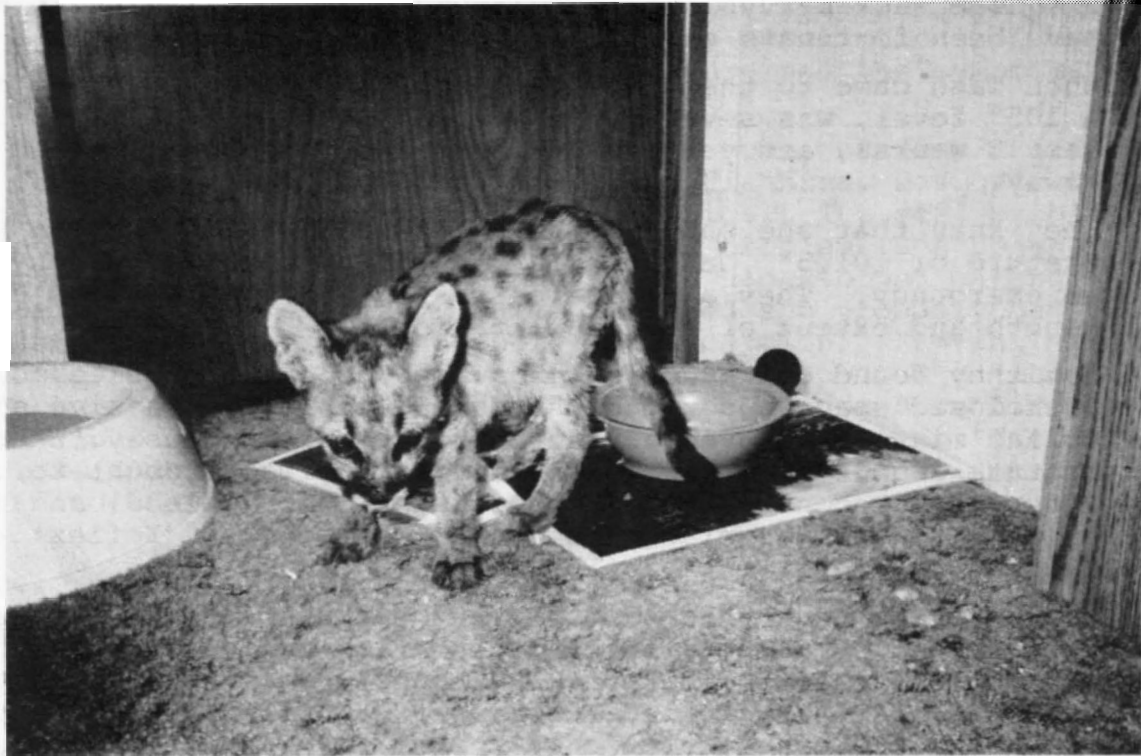
## LOS ANGELES ZOO ORDERED TO CEASE DEALINGS WITH ANIMAL TRADERS

As a result of a segment on CBS-TV's "60 Minutes" the Los Angeles Zoo has been ordered by Mayor Tom Bradley to cease dealing with the two traders Earl Tatum and Jim Fouts. Tatum and Fouts have been accused of in turn selling the animals at auction to a ranch that charges hunters a fee to hunt exotic wildlife. An investigation is underway by AAZPA into the allegations.

L.A. Zoo Director Warren Thomas noted that all sales or trade agreements by the zoo include guarantees that the animals will not be sold or traded for the purpose of game or sport hunting or for disposal at animal auctions.



## MEMBERS SAVE ABUSED CAT & LEARN VOLUMES



### BEFORE

LIOC members Katie Knight-Monteiro and Ed Monteiro-Knight began a business called ExotiCare early last year, providing information and services for owners and potential owners of exotics. In the course of their business, they became aware of a young cougar that was being advertised for sale in the local classified. **The owner** was contacted and proper basics of care and housing were discussed. The cougar was 9 weeks old, eating Science Diet, and living on the porch of the owner's city apartment. Katie immediately offered to board the cat free of charge while attempting to help the owner place it with a new owner. **The man was distrustful and refused.**

After a few more discussions over the next several weeks, it seemed that there wasn't much more that Ed and Katie could do with the situation. Then, six weeks after the initial contact, the owner called and asked if they would still board the cat. They agreed to immediately pick up the cat and feared the worst.

The worst was indeed what they found. Tasha, then three months old, was near death from apparent starvation. Of course she was also terrified and as vicious as her little skeleton could be. Ed and Katie took her to their facilities and Tash's rehabilitation began.

The good news first: Tash survived and is relatively happy and healthy today. This is the result of many blessings from the god of Cats, Tash's tremendous will to live, and more time, love and

TASHA - continued

energy than can be described. The other good news - again, relatively - is that Ed and Katie learned great amounts about how to care for and diagnose sick kittys and are glad to pass it on to those of you who have been fortunate enough not to have a sick kitty.

When Tash came to them, she weighed five pounds at three months, had a 105° fever, was severely dehydrated, had severe diarrhea (for the last 8 weeks), and you could hear her stomach rumble from five feet away.

They knew that she should have been 15-20 pounds, have a normal temperature of 101.5° , and that at that age you consider any diarrhea an emergency. They also suspected secondary infections due to the length and extent of her debilitation.

But they found out a lot more. Tash was given a quiet, comfortable, enclosed space and fed crushed chicken necks, massive amounts of Esbilac mixture and Pedialyte. She dug in ferociously. When her temperature didn't come down in 24 hours, she was brought to the vet. She indeed had secondary infections: asepticemia (blood) and spirochetes (stools) and was placed on both wide-spectrum (Keflex) and local-acting (Flagyl) antibiotics.

Although her owner had said she had her vaccinations, the vet records (he had used their vet at their recommendation) showed that she hadn't. She was deemed too weak, however, to have any now. Three of the vet's assistants cried to see her condition.

Ed and Katie learned how to pinch the loose skin at the shoulder to test hydration. If the animal is well hydrated, the skin snaps back with much elasticity. As dehydration progresses, the skin returns slowly or not at all. (Try it on your cat to see what healthy looks like).

Katie spent hours hitting the books, researching all the collected references for clues on how to care for Tash's conditions and what to watch for. Tash was on feedings every four hours and monitoring twice as often. She could barely walk five feet and had no idea that she was designed to jump, being afraid to remove a pair of paws from the ground lest she fall over.

Within five days, Tash had contracted rhinotracheitis, probably due to the fact that another cub in the house had been vaccinated with a modified live virus the day before Tash arrived and was therefore "shedding" the virus and was contagious to the unprotected cougar. They all fought their way through that.

Having noted the symptoms - runny nose and eyes, sometimes sneezing - very early, the treatment was made easier by immediately vaccinating Tash. Ed and Katie gave thanks that they kept all the animals vaccinated and didn't have to pull the others through too.

Tash kept eating and drinking huge amounts though. Her fever subsided due to the antibiotics, and she had been given a shot of anticholinergic (an intestinal sedative) to dry up her diarrhea. Her caretakers knew that the medication would also harden stools (all antibiotics do), but had no idea what symptoms were being masked by that fact.

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TASHA - continued

Tash's "house" had been a carpet-covered cat hideaway of the type that you'd find at the local discount store. Katie had noticed chewed portions and knew that carpet pieces are dangerous to an exotic cat digestive systems, often causing either blockages or toxicity. What she didn't find in all the references was descriptions of symptoms to watch for, but that didn't matter much since the symptoms were masked by the antibiotics.

Two weeks after Tash came to her new home, she was looking good, had doubled her weight, had not had any diahhrea, was over the rhinotracheitis, and had finished her antibiotics. The real problem then showed up: indeed she had an intestinal problem. She began straining to move her bowels. Within 24 hours, she had stopped eating and began to vomit. Several emergency calls revealed she probably had pushed one intestinal loop over another (intussusception). Pushing hard bowels when she had been in such a weak state was suspected as the cause. Since the condition can be fatal within one day and requires surgery if the loop cannot be manipulated out, Tash was given "field" antibiotics (Combiotic) and kapectate to calm her intestinal tract and rushed to the vet, then five hours away.

Upon palpitation of the abdomen by the vet, it appeared that the problem was not intussusception, but rather a hard impaction in the upper intestine. Tash was started on an IV, with massive fluid input to counteract the toxins that would be released when her blocked intestines were manipulated, and sedated. The team proceeded to hold her vertically and give her a gravity-fed enema of four liters of ringers lactate. The impaction slowly washed out until palpitation showed no more hard areas at all. A collection of carpet fibers and string was first, then came many bits of bone from the crushed necks. By the time the procedure was over, Tasha's intestines were cleansed to a reasonable degree of confidence and she was again a debilitated sick kitty. The buildup of toxins in her system from the rotting food above the blockage had taken their toll, but there didn't appear to be any permanent damage.

Now, as Katie and Ed put Tash onto a special ground neck diet given each hour around the clock, the hindsight diagnosis was quite clear: Tash had had that blockage all along. The extended diahhrea at her former owners was the result of food being unable to pass properly. Stools that consist of an initial well-formed portion followed by diahhrea are a standard indicator of an upper intestine blockage. The presence of mucus in the stool also indicates that the upper intestine is trying to move some strange object out. Once the diahhrea had been forcibly stopped, the otherwise safe neckbone chips had caught on the carpet mass and formed a solid blockage. Thus, Tash had strained to move her bowels when she couldn't and had vomitted when there was no where else for the food to go. If not acted upon immediately at this point, the toxins would rapidly have killed her or caused significant permanent, soft tissue damage. Once again, extreme attention to the cat's behavior and quick action had saved a life.

With lavish amounts of care, Tash came back rapidly. Soon, she learned how to pick up two feet at a time, flash her tail about,

## CAESAR KELBERG RESEARCH INSTITUTE UPDATE

The Feline Research Program at the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute is publishing a newsletter to keep supporters apprised of their research and management programs. Mike Tewes (Vol 31, #3) is editing this effort. Ocelots, bobcat and jaguarundi are the primary focus, but margays, jaguar and cougar may be included.

Current research began in 1981, and the first ocelot, a female was radio-collared in 1982 and since then over 40 different ocelots have been captured at least 135 times. Automobile/ocelot collisions are the most common form of mortality that afflicts ocelots in the Rio Grande Valley - over 60% of the numerous deaths that have been investigated occurred as road-kills.

Mike reports in his first issue that a theory has been developed that less than 5% of the native vegetation remains in the Rio Grande Valley. Most of the aboriginal plant communities were converted to agricultural purposes or succumbed to urbanization over the past 60 years. As a result, remaining ocelot habitat is sparse and widely fragmented. Ocelots often must travel considerable distances to secure enough habitat to survive.

Because of the extensive road network in the Valley, these ocelots must inevitably cross a road, and often several roads to survive. Thus they are at high risk of becoming the next road-kill victim.

If you would be interested in receiving this newsletter contact Mike Tewes, Feline Research Program, Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, Texas A & I University, Campus Box 218, Kingsville, Texas 78363



### TASHA - continued

and even played for the first time in her life. She will probably never be able to be handled or fed the same as a normal cat, but she certainly is a happy one. In the mean time, Ed and Katie had learned massive amounts about what to watch for and how to identify and treat intestinal problems. They have now been able to diagnose and assist three other cats with versions of the same problem and do so without medical care.

Every symptom and treatment mentioned in this article is applicable for all exotic cat-. So now you too can benefit from the experience of saving Tasha.

You can contact Katie at (713) 585-4144

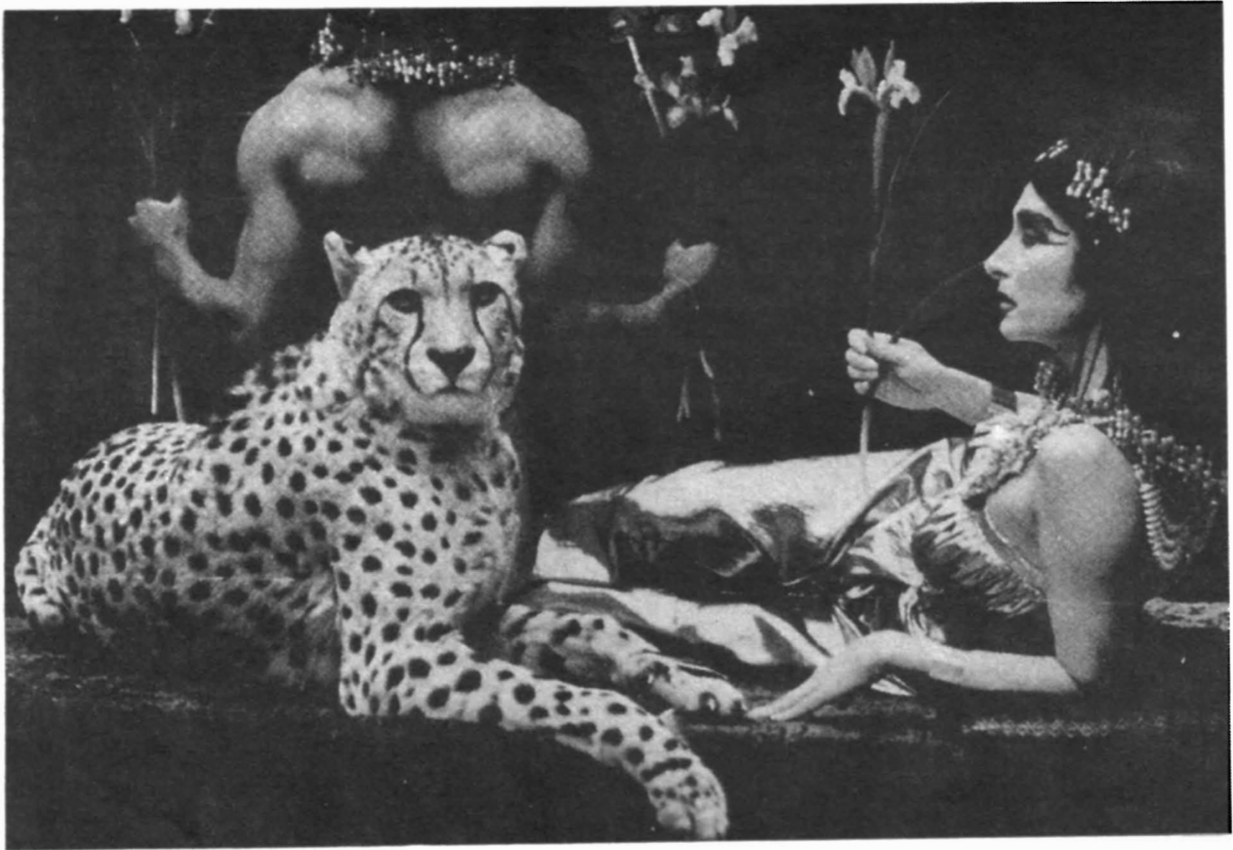


### UTAH TIGHTENS HUNTING REQUIREMENTS

Major changes have been adopted by Utah's wildlife board. Citing dramatic increases in the sales of cougar and bear permits in the past few years, Utah Department of Wildlife Resources non-game biologists requested and were granted a new statewide limited-entry permit system to protect remaining populations of bears and cougars from over exploitation. A limited number of permits will be issued for all areas within the state.

From OUTDOOR LIFE - contributed by Ethel Hauser





## Vavra's Cats

By Phil Maggitti  
Condensed from CATS Magazine

The sky is a pugnacious, two-fisted bully over Philadelphia: rain in one fist, wind in the other. Nevertheless, on a bench outside the Four Seasons Hotel a gentleman in a business suit is reading a newspaper. "Bloody fool" I mutter on the first pass in front of the hotel in search of a parking place. Two or three passes later the fool is still there. And a parking place still isn't. Neither the gentleman nor the cars on 18th Street have moved a muscle.

Suddenly with belated realization I see that the gentleman in a business suit is a work of art - a sculpture. How clever. How fitting, too. For encamped at the Four Seasons this soggy December morning is photographer Robert Vavra, something of an illusionist with a wry sense of humor himself, who published Vavra's Cats and is bound to elicit more than a few double takes of its own.

Vavra has described his book as "a brew of reality mixed with feline fantasy" The reality, in truth, is held in tenant with many other cat book: photos of exotic and domestic kittens, including bengal tigers, clouded leopards, cheetahs, oncillas, servals, and pumas. Egyptian Maus, barn cats, Siamese, Persians, Abyssinians, and Sphinx. But it's the fantasy component which sets Vavra's Cats apart from your basic run-of-the-ruff feline photography. It isn't every day that you see a tabby wearing violet mascara, a beaded necklace and tiny, silver bells. Or a bobcat with strands of blue coral around its neck. Or a clouded leopard draped over the bare shoulders of its mocha-skinned handler, who is

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 VAVRA'S CATS - cont.

wearing a jumble of red orchids on his head. Yet as Timoth Leary told the bell-bottom generation, set and setting are the basic elements of a good trip; and set and setting make Vavra's Cats an arrestingly good trip: a neo-Victorian, faintly psychedelic excursion that manages to transport a precious cargo of cats over a rich sea of jewelry, beads, brocade, tapestry and flowers without once submerging the subjects' equally rich dignity.

At the registration desk of the climate-controlled Four Seasons Hotel - down the hall from another lifelike sculpture - a live literary escort provided by a Philadelphia agency is saying to the desk clerk, "If anyone is looking for Robert Vavra...."

It is the escort's job to guide Vavra through the day's schedule: lunch with the writer from CATS, who has just arrived at the registration desk, from twelve to one-thirty, an interview at the Philadelphia Inquirer at two, and after that a late afternoon flight to Cleveland.

"Robert will be ready in just a few minutes," the escort explains. "They were late getting in from New York last night, and he's a little bit tired this morning." They, she adds, includes Vavra Tut (a trained Abyssinian who will perform on TV in various cities along Vavra's book promotion tour), and Ron Henriques (Tut's handler) who is on loan from the Wild Animal Park of the San Diego Zoo, where he and Tut are normally employed).

In the elevator I recall James A. Michener's description of Robert Vavra: "a quiet young fellow with well-fitted suits and conservative haircut." Michener made this observation nearly twenty years ago in his 1968 best-seller *IBERIA*, for which Vavra provided the photography. When Vavra opens the door to welcome us to his room, it is somewhat surprising to note how Michener's characterization of him still fits him like a well-tailored suit. But although his appearance seems virtually unchanged since he first went to Spain, his circumstances have improved immensely.

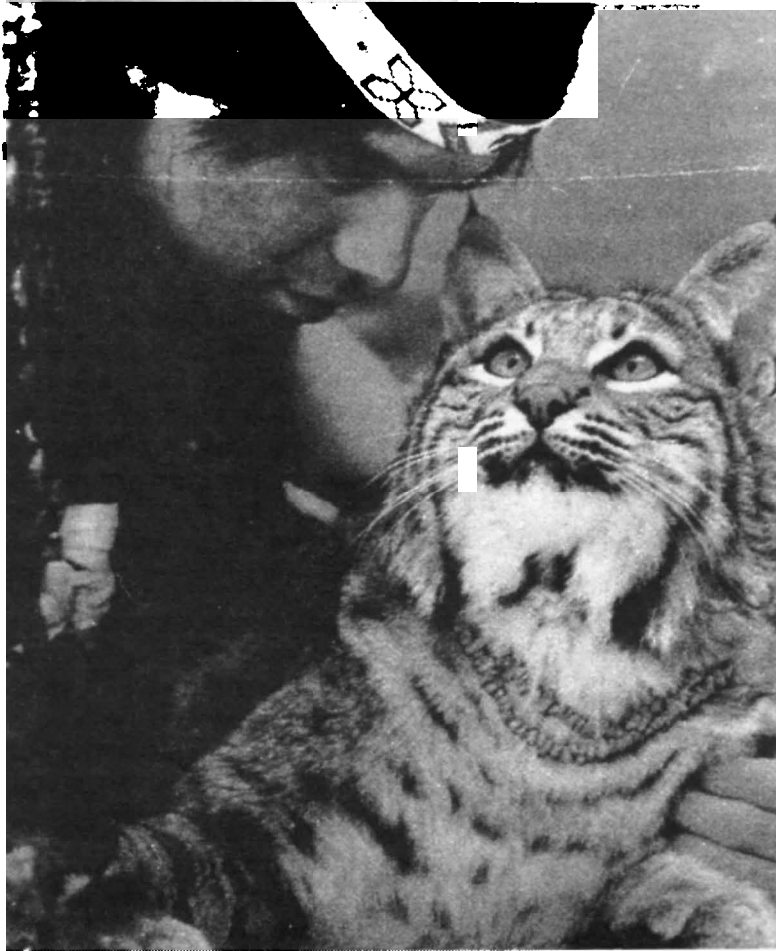
"I went to Spain at the age of twenty-three with a one-way ticket and \$300 in my pocket," explains Vavra, settling into a chair near the only window in his fifth-floor room. "It was the most fantastic place. Like being dropped on the back lot of the old Twentieth Century Fox in the middle of the Blood and Sand set.

An English major at the University of Southern California, Vavra had gone to Spain "as a writer, not a photographer," to do a behavioral study on bulls. He traveled without escort in those days. In fact, he reveals, "I spent most of my first four years in Spain sleeping under the stars."

When he couldn't get the kind of photographs he wanted for his book, he decided to take them himself. He got so good at it that after he met Michener, he asked to help with Iberia; and consequently Vavra became better known as a photographer than a writer, even though his slim, Tiger Flower was published the same year as Michener's work.

Vavra's talent as a photographer wasn't the only facet of his personality to develop in Spain. "I never really had," he admits, "any great appreciation for domestic cats until then. But one evening in Malaga I was having a drink with Ernest Hemingway in a cafe along the bay. I asked him why, if he was such a hunter, I always saw him photographed with cats instead of dogs. He said 'Robert, don't you realize that the fireside tabby is merely a shrunken lion without a mane?'

## VAVRA'S CATS - cont.



This bobcat is one of Bill & Penny Andrew's cats which appear in Vavra's Cats. Others are listed at the end of this article.

"There was a cat stalking a moth nearby, and Hemingway said, 'Watch that. It perfectly mirrors the behavior of the lion on the Serengeti.' He was right, It was then I became fascinated with domestic cats."

Had Robert Vavra begun working on a book of cat photography at that time, chances are it would little resemble the glittering, idiosyncratic statement he has fashioned today. The images in Iberia are tightly framed, sparsely composed, essentially high-contrast black-and-white affairs: photojournalism in the Steichen, Stieglitz, Carrier-Bresson genre. But Vavra's Cats with its dense almost decadent textures, its opulent, colorful settings, resembles the work of Iberia about as much as the prose of Fitzgerald resembles the work of Hemingway.

"I've swung around from being a documentary photographer to a creative one, which I feel is where it is," says Vavra as the escort reminds us that it is almost time to go downstairs for lunch. "For example, on the cover of Equus, one of my horse books, there is a white stallion in a field of red poppies. Now anyone could go down the road and see that and say, 'Oh, what a beautiful photo' and then jump out and take a picture. But I had that shot in my mind a year before I actually took it. I had to find the horse and the field and bring them together. I know some people will say, 'that's phoney because you arranged it'; but to me the creative aspect is doing just that. Besides, anyone who thinks photography is not an art is back in the Stone Age."

VAVRA'S CATS - cont.

Aha! The green light of realization blinks on again. Then how much of Vavra's Cats was preconceived?

"All of it. Every photograph in the book." The rest of his answer has to wait for lunch. And after passing yet another life-size sculpture on the way to the dining room - this one of a man and woman in earnest conversation - Vavra explains: "I wanted to do something different because I couldn't expect a book to sell if it looked like everything else. I had read that cats had worn jewelry and makeup during various eras, and this seemed like a good way to do something different and artistic at the same time. I tried to be as faithful as possible to history. So I went out and bought items which could actually have been worn in certain civilizations associated with the cats in my book. Then I had to locate models who would look right with the animals."

It is a tribute to Vavra's imagination and his ability to weave a spell that the models who appear in his book - who look as if they just come out of the rain forest - were actually recruited from a number of "California colleges, and Safeway markets." The lone exception being Bo Derek - another Vavra friend - the like of whom is never seen in supermarkets, at least not on the East coast.

"Some of the people I worked with," Vavra continues over an artfully arranged swordfish, "were turned off in the beginning. They said 'Oh, you're going to put jewelry on cats.' And I said, 'Well, if a painter did it it would be fine.'"

One of the early skeptics about cats in jewelry was Penny Andrews. She and her husband Bill, have worked with and bred exotic cats, some of them members of endangered species, for fifteen years. Penny and Bill own nine of the more exotic of Vavra's Cats. And Penny wound up contributing to the supplementary text at the end of the book. But when Vavra first called Penny for help, she turned him down.

"I told him we don't use our cats for commercial purposes," Penny recalls. "He asked if he could send me some of his books. I said I wasn't interested. He called a few days later, and I told him again that I wasn't interested. Next thing I knew a big box of books arrived from Morrow (Vavra's publisher). We looked at them and realized Robert wasn't just some schlocky photographer. So when he called again, I said, 'OK. If you'll do it on our terms and not stress the cats, we'll give it a try.'"

As Penny found out, it wasn't the cats who would be stressed. Michener's quiet friend with the conservative haircut turned out to have some disquieting work habits. "We kid Robert about it now," laughs Penny, "because he would call and say he was just going to be here for three days and bring a few models along. Then he would show up with six models and all this equipment and stay for a week. Within two seconds my house would be demolished. I'd be cooking for his models and working my cats. He'd have leashes and jewelry all over, and I'd be sewing costumes together."

"But he's fun to work with because he has such an eye. He sees things completely differently than you or I would. He did things with these cats which most people wouldn't even think to attempt. A lot of times I'd say, 'Oh Robert, that will never work.' But it would. And just at the point where I'd be thinking 'I can't believe I got involved in this' it would fall into place beautifully. And the strangest part of all was that our cats were intrigued. The jewelry didn't bother them in the least. In fact, they were quite pushed out of shape when we would finish a shoot and go on to something else."

VAVRA'S CATS - cont.

This sense of calm that Vavra was able to inspire in his feline subjects is quite palpable in the finished product. Kerry Kosky, a Persian breeder from Connecticut, saw Vavra's Cats at a recent TICA show in Maryland. She had been given the book by a friend who asked her opinion of it. "You know," said Kosky, returning the book later in the day, "a person is anything but calm setting up for a cat show in the morning. But this book is so beautiful, looking through it really put me in a peaceful frame of mind."

In the Four Seasons' dining room Vavra explains that "shooting the big cats was actually the easiest part of the project." In fact, during the nine months he spent on the book, the only time he felt any sense of danger was in a taxicab in San Francisco. He was on his way back to his hotel after a session with a Cornish Rex that wouldn't keep its eyes open. Exasperated—as only a person can be who has spent the last few hours squinting through a zoom lens at a cat—Vavra said to his assistant Kitty Whitward, "I am so tired of shooting cats. Could you just line up some kittens for me? I'd really enjoy shooting kittens for a change."

Uncertain what kind of monster he had for a fare, but certain he wanted no part of him, the cab driver slammed on the brakes, swung around toward the back seat with his nostrils flaring, and bellowed "Get out of this cab! **It's bad** enough to shoot a cat. But anyone who would even consider shooting a kitten..."

"He was so enraged," laughs Vavra, "Even in the darkness I could see his knuckles turning white."

Changing his expression and his tone suddenly, Vavra says, "Listen, I've gotta ask you this. You've seen a lot of cat books, right? You must. But you've never seen anything like this before have you?"

There is something in Vavra's voice which tells you he would be very disappointed to year that you had. But the question, for sure, is rhetorical. As long as pussycat's had a tail no one has thought to gussy him up to the outrageously wonderful extent that Robert Vavra has gone. Vavra, the artist, knows this. But Vavra the businessman who also travels with Vavra the artist has his eye on the bottom line. By his own reckoning, Vavra is the only photographer in the world who makes a living solely from doing picture books. He has a townhouse in Seville and a 150 acre ranch about 45 minutes out of town.

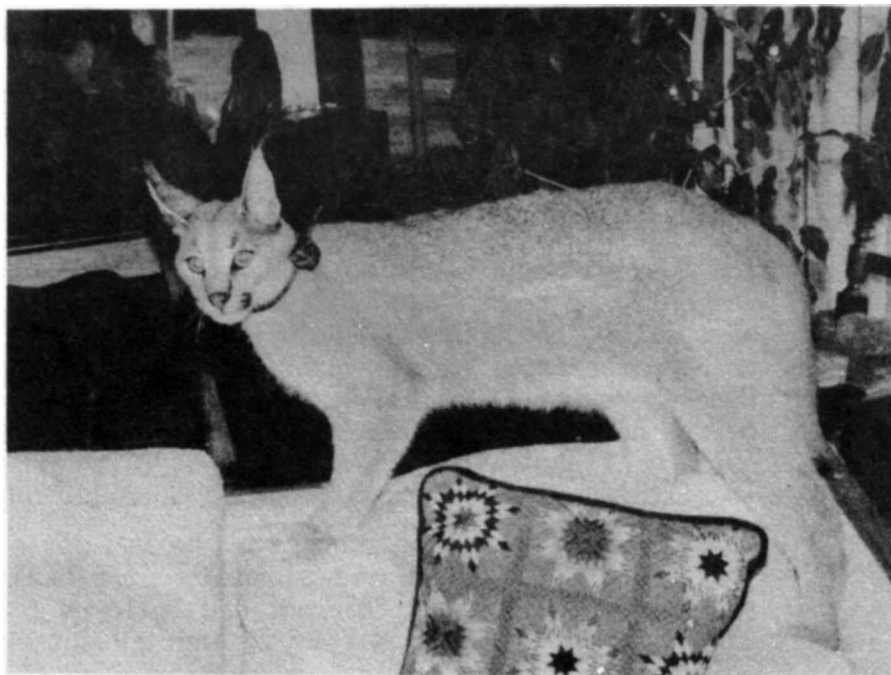
But for now - as the escort reminds him - there is a newspaper waiting for an interview and afterwards a plane. So the well-tailored fellow with the conservative haircut climbs into a gray Jeep on a gray Philadelphia afternoon. The rain is still coming down, and the businessman reading the paper on the bench still hasn't moved. From inside his carrier, Tut gives the gentleman an inquisitive look. Interesting, isn't it, how cats can fall victim to illusions too.

We wrote long-time LIOC friend Penny Andrews to find out which of the gorgeous animals in Vavra's Cats were theirs and she responded:

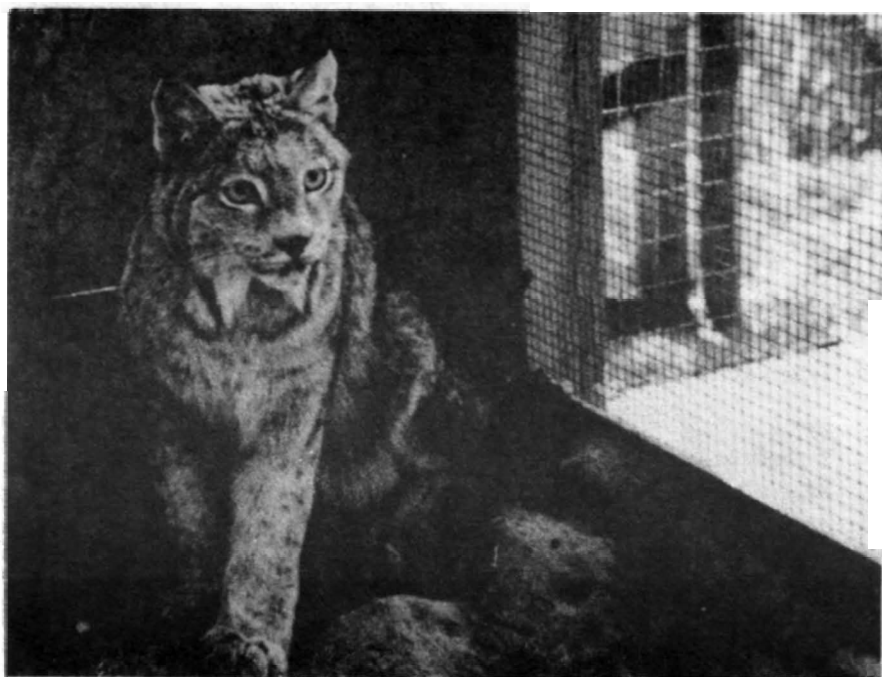
We were approached by him after he was given our name at the San Diego Zoo. The cats we have which are shown are: Morgan, Canadian lynx (page 30) Puffin, Canadian Lynx (page 31) Golden Boy, Temmincks Golden Cat (page 53), Moushi, Clouded Leopard (page 64), serval offspring (pages 68 & 69), MacDuff, Scottish Wildcat (page 78), Dawn, Caracal (page 96), Kola and Scruffy (our first bob) bobcats (pages 108 & 109), the litter of serval babies on page 112 and Chirpa, our female cougar and the second cat we obtained (page 121). **Continued on p. 16**



These are all more of the lovely cats sharing their homes with the Andrews.

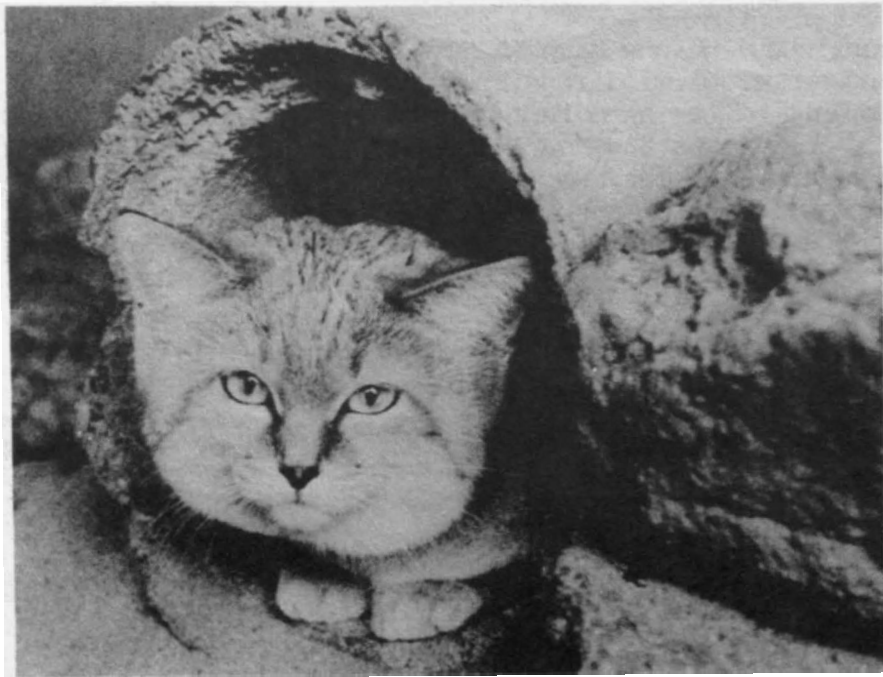


Caracal

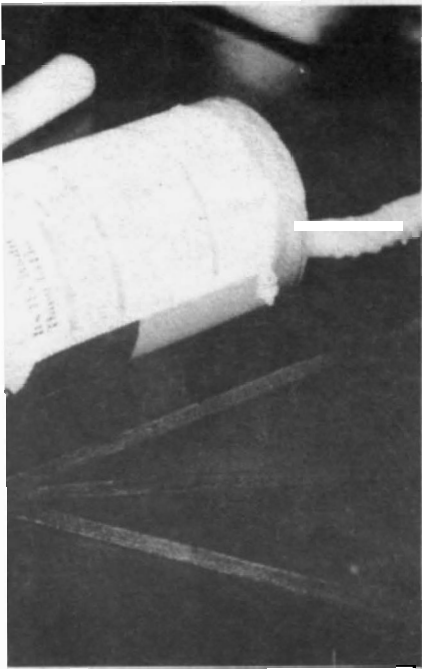


Siberian Lynx

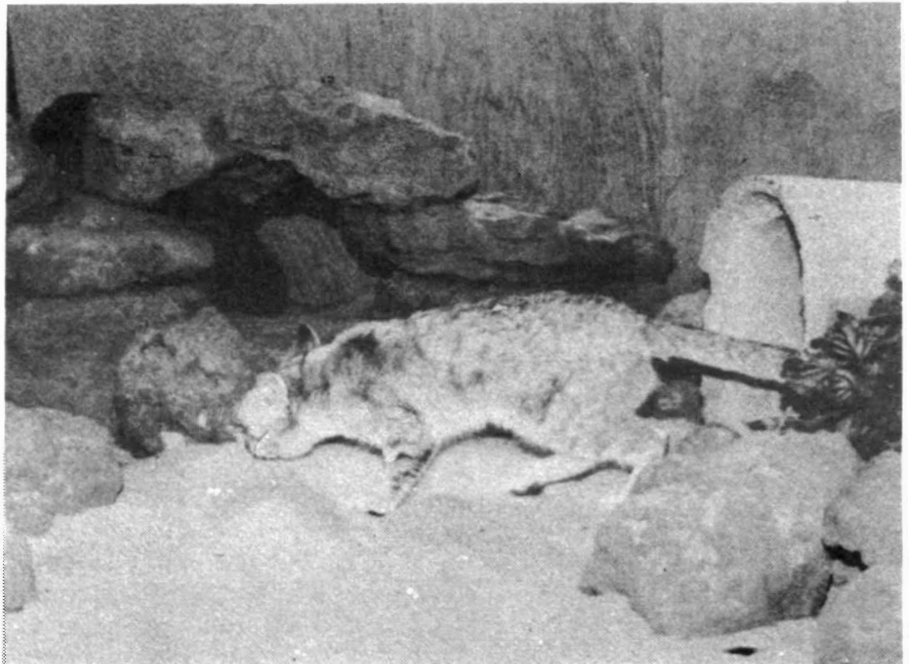




Sand cat (above & lower right)



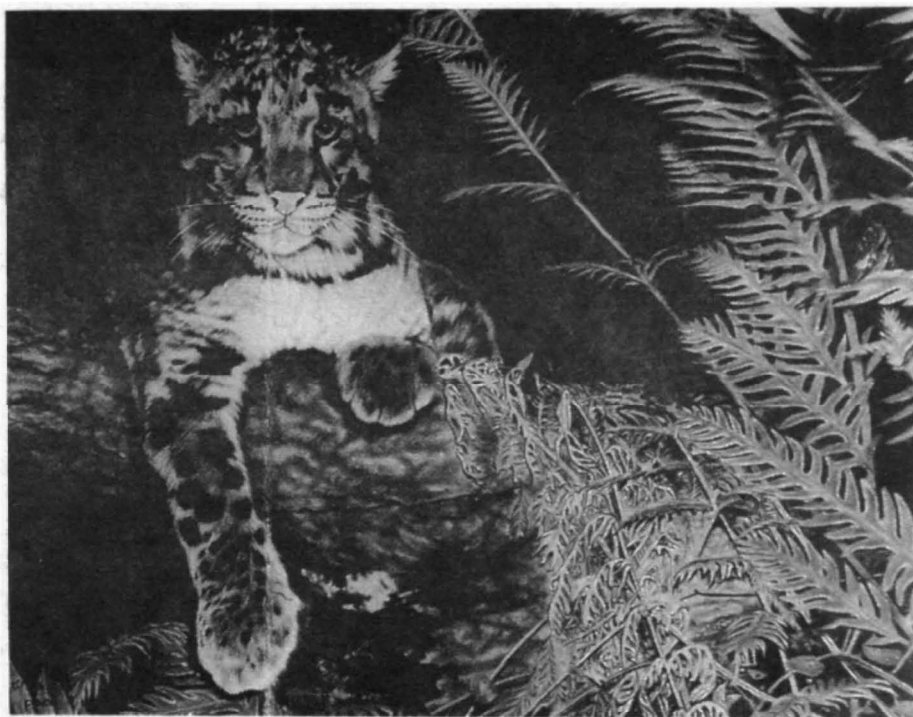
Baby clouded (above)



VAVRA'S CATS / Penny - cont.

Penny continues: We now have 40 cats representing 14 species. We have a great variety and number of wildlife artists visit, resulting in many wonderful originals and prints of our animals. Alan Hunt, a fabulous English wildlife artist has visited many times and has a print of our male snow leopard, Khber at six months of age, coming out soon . I'm still trying to get Charles Frace' to do a good caracal, as he always fusses over them here, but he doesn't think they're well known enough to be a big seller. I can't seem to convince him that someone with his name should be acquainting the public with some of the other species.

A nother local artis has just done a pastel of our clouded leopard.



"FROM A SAFE PLACE"

by

Lesley Harrison

Image size 18x25 inches, Edition of 490 with 50 Artist's proofs. Signed and numbered. Regular edition- \$145. Artist's proofs - \$195 - Three Swans, Inc. Gallery, 713 Broadway, Santa Monica, CA 90401 800-448-7084

Lesley Harrison has also captured in pastels mountain lions, snow leopards, bobcats and a host of other wildlife. She is best known as one of the nation's leading equine artists.

"Clouded leopards are very rare and unique among the cat family, normally living in Nepal and S.E. Asia. This one belongs to some dear friends of mine so I have the privelege of spending lots of time with him. One of the things that amazes me is their ability to clim- down a vertical trunk of a tree head first or to traverse horizontal branches while hanging beneath them. As I sit and watch Sabre and his mate play, I am facinated by their antics but also by their beauty, and I feel esoepecially thrilled when one of them comes over to have their tummy rubbed or to chew on my sketch pad." See LIOC Gallery for more!



## A FAREWELL TO SHERE KHAN

Shere Kahn was probably the last surviving jungle-born Geoffries cat in the U.S.\* She died in early June of 1989. She was imported from Paraguay, by Bob Roth into New York in March, 1971. Her first owner was Mickey De Paulo of Lake Ronkokoma, Long Island. We received her in June of 1972, as his family situation had changed and he was going to Europe for the summer. We took her with the understanding that if my allergies - asthma were affected, we could still keep her until a good home could be found.

My desensitization shots for margays worked. Shere Kahn did not increase my breathing problems. These shots did not reduce sensitivity to either ocelots or oncillas. Even in these closely related species, there is an allergent difference in the saliva and dander. I have shown reaction to some of the larger, non-jungle Geoffries.

Shere Kahn took over the household, ran it, and pushed around the domestic cats, whom she considered lower class animals. She tried to make friends with Lucky, our tiger alleycat who spoke siamese. Shere Kahn had been raised with a siamese, she considered her one of her own kittens. Lucky never wanted friendship with any other cats. After a few months of trying, Shere Kahn gave up and changed to playfully harassing Lucky, for the next 17 years. Shere Kahn never bit nor scratched Lucky, but would jump and land within an inch of where Lucky was sleeping or would walk by in a deliberate path that would rub her tail against Lucky's nose.

Shere Kahn was never possessive about her food. If another cat wanted it, she would leave. To her food was to be present in abundant quantities and she would never beg for it. Climbing into the refrigerator was to tell us her food bowl was empty, even if she had just eaten and was absolutely full. She would never touch food until it was sitting for an hour or more. With age, she demanded more expensive meats and chicken breasts. She drank some milk and ate some canned cat food, that was present for the domestics. She weighed only 5½ pounds so the cost of better foods for her was acceptable. The cost problem grew when our very dumb, longhaired Persian developed a taste for raw meats. We kept changing the location of the bowl with the fresh meat. Shere Kahn would accept this and remember after one showing of the new location. It took the Persian up to a month to follow her and find it.

At about 16 years, Shere Kahn started to slow down and didn't show up for attention as often. After a while, she was hardly eating. When this became noticeable, she was taken to the veterinarian for a good physical. She hated the vet's and always became very upset after more than 15 minutes in his building. Extensive bloodtests, physical examination and some x-rays found nothing wrong with her from a physical standpoint. Dr. Mark Meadow, of White Plains, N.J. had had exotics of his own and had been the vet for Pat Warren and Reg Reidel's exotics.

He said Shere Kahn was exhibiting mental depression - boredom, that happens to many exotics and some domestics when they get into their senior years. He suggested a combination of another exotic as a playmate and extreme amounts of attention. He gave her a vitamin shot combined with a stimulant. He said she would be very active for the next 12-14 hours and then sleep from exhaustion, instead of boredom.

SHERE KAHN - continued

We couldn't consider another exotic as Shere Kahn was extremely territorial and would never permit another exotic to share "her house". She even pushed our original margay who lived in the sun porch and was more than three times her weight.

Returning home, she ran and played like a kitten for more than 12 hours, then slept for more than ten. When she woke, we hand fed her and brought the water bowl to her, placing a wet finger against her nose as a reminder to drink. She got the idea, and in a few weeks was back to normal eating habits. We continued with extra attention, refusing to allow her to hide out of sight for more than a few hours. She was kept with us, on our laps or close by, and eventually came to us all the time rather than hiding out of sight. At this point she changed from considering us just equals, to our being true members of her family. Previously she had her own domain that included us, only when she wanted it. She started sleeping with us, even under the covers in colder weather. She was not jumping as high or as often, but still doing a single leap to the top of the refrigerator on occasion. The vet considered this normal, and due to all aging factors including arthritis. Things continued very positive in a closer relationship than ever before until fall of 1988.

One evening while watching television, the Persian cat was next to me, when Shere Kahn jumped up and accidentally landed on it. A slight scuffle occurred as the Persian was frightened. She swatted Shere Kahn several times with claws out. This had only happened a few times in the previous ten years, always without any complications. This time Shere Kahn's face swelled enormously around the left eye. A trip to the vet's resulted in an antibiotic shot followed by liquid antibiotics at home. These were of children's Keflex type, from a regular drug store.

Shere Kahn responded very slowly. Dr. Meadow had been afraid to lance the infection because of her nervous disposition, age and the fact that this infection had hit too quickly and too severely. He felt there were other health problems. He had noticed a very rapid breathing and excessive pulse rate, **without any fever.** A follow-up visit, after recovery, discovered an enlarged heart, sounds of a defective heart valve, and fluid in the lungs. The enlarged heart occurred due to the muscle working harder to pump blood without a fully closing valve. The rapid heartbeat and respiratory rate were due to both the heart problems and the fluid in the lungs. She nearly died after going into shock from the extensive stress of being at the vet's office.

Lasix, a diuretic was prescribed to reduce the fluid in the lungs and it worked. When the respiratory and heart rate dropped back to acceptable levels Dr Meadow felt a trip to another clinic for more elaborate tests including an echocardiogram would be needed to determine which type of blood pressure medication, if any, might help. Considering her going into shock during the last visit, we agreed that the stress might kill her while trying to find a way to delay the inevitable.

The Lasix was reduced to what was necessary to keep her lungs clear. She recovered almost the same strength and activity level she had prior to the infection. There was a slow reduction in her overall activity but she was an absolute close participant in all household events. Her eating had increased as her heart muscle used a lot of energy to keep sufficient blood pumped to her system. She had another six months of reasonable health after her last vet's visit.

From her earliest days in our household, she always liked to play and make a nuisance of herself, while the sheets were being change she would get under a

SHERE KAHN - continued

fresh loose sheet and run and mock attack any attempt at straightening it out. She would bite and scratch through the sheet, in an aggressive fashion. When she came out the play stopped. It was as if she were saying it was another "wild" animal under the covers, not her. At the beginning of June, 1989, she did this very aggressively and with longer duration than in several years. She then went into hiding for almost 24 hours without eating or drinking. When she finally reappeared she ate and drank normally, but was very weak and had a changed personality. She was aggressive towards the domestics and although she came to me, she did not want me to touch her. This continued several days with decreasing energy and then she started dragging her hindquarters.

On the following Saturday morning she plopped out on the edge of the kitchen table where she could stare down on the domestics and be sure of attention. She drank, but would not eat and was extremely weak. Saturday night she dragged herself up the stairs, crawled into the bathroom and fell asleep on the rug. Both of these locations where she never before stayed. We found her dead on the rug early Sunday. Best guesses are that the excessive play caused either a stroke or heart attack. One thing is certain - she made sure of giving us a long farewell with her deliberate 8 hour stay on the kitchen table.

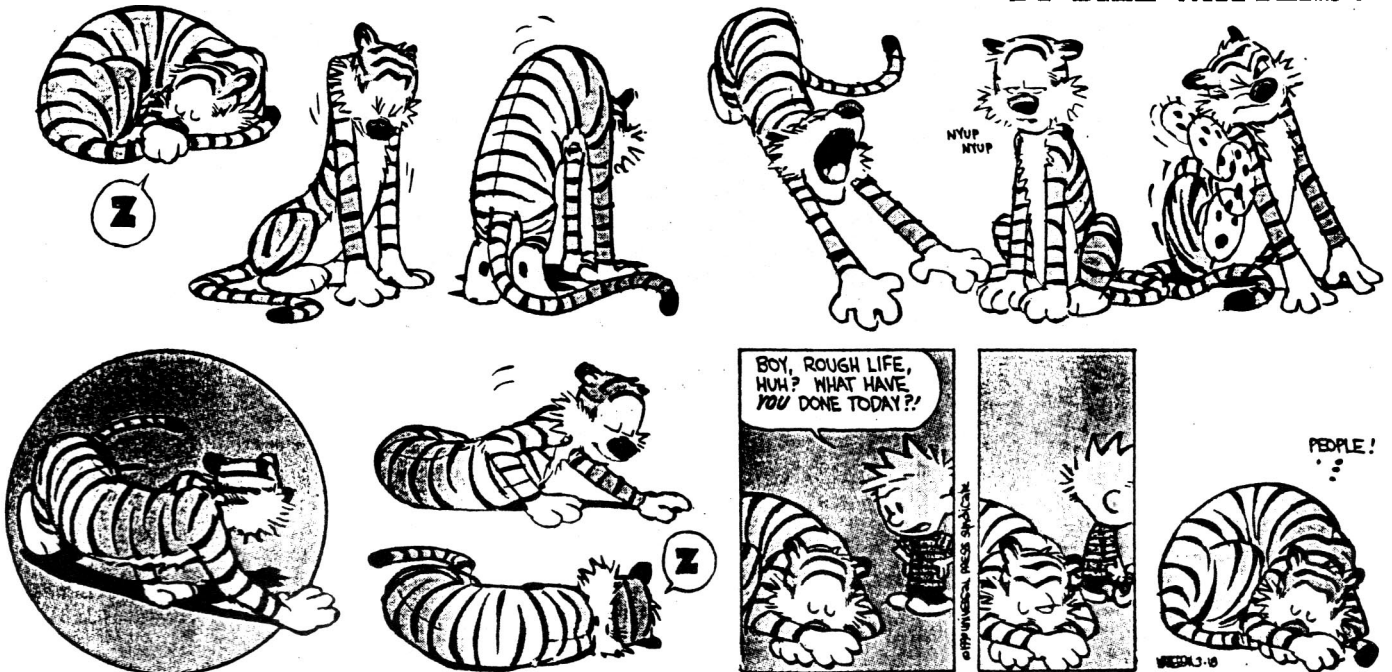
Arthur Human  
Norwalk, Conn.

\* Ed Note: John Perry advises his Sheba, a jungle born Geoffroy's is still with us. Any other jungle-born out there?



**CALVIN AND HOBBS**

**BY BILL WATTERSON**



## LIOC SPOTLIGHT: Justin Tanner

I've been selectively breeding bobcats for fifteen years. My original male came from south Texas and the female from Idaho. My male, named Tigre, was sold to me as a kitten and a very sick one at that. Evidently he had a bad case of hookworms. An interesting thing about Tigre, he was sold as a cross between an ocelot and a bobcat. This, of course, was not the case. He does however have rich coloration with rosettes for spotting, short legs and small feet. Tigre weighs between thirty and thirty-five pounds as does the son of his I kept.

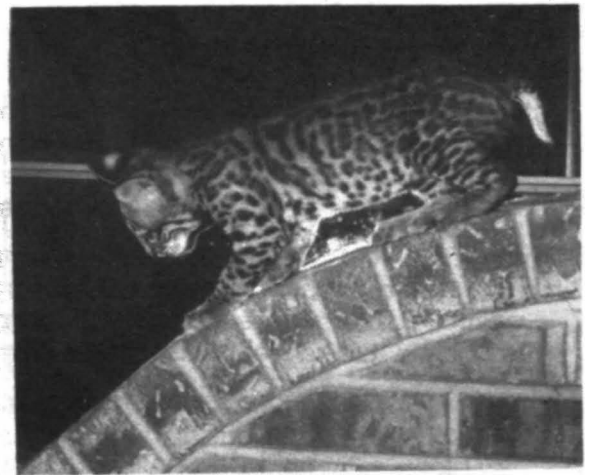
By breeding three generations back to Tigre, I've pulled an extremely beautiful ocelot/leopard-marked cat, as you can see from the pictures. The spotting is not subtle!

I'm looking for cats that would compliment what I've done. To date I haven't found any. If any members have vividly spotted bobcats who is interested in their selective breeding, I would be interested in hearing from them. I am very interested in the red color phase or cats that have Russian lynx in them.

Justin Tanner  
2120 North 520 West  
West Bountiful, UT 84087



LIOC SPOTLIGHT - Cont.



Justin's son Tyson  
with a handful of  
spots



shots. Again, Tara was used since it was time for hers. We also gave boosters to LLdean's cougar and bobcat/lynx. All the cats did very well.

Next we showed the four day old kitten from Marlene Trudeson's cat that had to have a C-section. This was her first litter at five years old.

The rest of the day was spent visiting with friends and cats.



We had our June Meeting at the home of Ray & Patty Radcliff in Hillsboro. What a group we had, the house and deck was bursting at the seams with people and cats. The first order of business was, of course, to play with all the kittens. We had folks from as far north as Everett, Washington and as far South as Sacramento California - what a turnout!

Guest speaker was Rick Brickner on the different pet food he manufactures. The most well known is Kustum Mix for cats and dogs. He has developed an Exotic Mix which he talked about. We were impressed with the ingredients he uses.

Gayle passed around some information she received from Robert Baudy as to what he has available.

The rest of the meeting was devoted to playing with kittens and visiting with our friends.

Present were hosts Patty and Ray with their two bobcat kittens who will be going to new homes in a week. We also enjoyed seeing their parents and the other cats that live with them. Marlene & Swede had their 3 bobcat/lynx kittens (one is still available), Glen Davis had his 2 cougar cubs, both females and available. Jackie Vanderwall had her 4 chaus kittens, they're also looking for new homes. New Members from the Everett area brought their 3 week old serval. What a day - we had 12 kittens along with our hosts' 6 adults and Jerry brought his Tara.

Submitted by Gayle Schaecher.

# PANTHER RECOVERY

## - THE OTHER SIDE OF THE STORY

Excerpts of the Biomedical Investigation by Melody Roelke, D.V.M.  
Edited by Lynn Culver

### FIELD CAPTURE TECHNIQUE

The main 1988-89 Florida capture season spanned 4½ months, January 1, through May 12, 1989, and entailed a total of 78 days in southwestern Florida and 50 days in the Everglades National Park.

The primary objective of veterinary involvement on the capture team was to ensure safe handling and proper medical management of panthers during capture efforts. The decision to immobilize a given panther following treeing by dogs was made only after carefully assessing the health status, physical condition, and level of stress experienced by that individual coupled with an evaluation of the ambient temperature, humidity, and other physical conditions that might affect the panther. Tranquilized panthers were removed from the trees by hand, lowered by a rope, or allowed to fall into a catch-net and cushioned "crash-bag".

After stabilization, each panther was given a thorough physical examination which included an evaluation of physical condition (muscling, fat and hair coat) and reproductive status. Additionally, each animal was weighed, measured, tattooed, and radio-collared. Biological samples were taken and included blood, feces, urine, hair, skin biopsies, ectoparasites, and swabs from pharynx, rectum, and vagina.

### FIELD CAPTURE OF FREE-LIVING PANTHERS

During the 1988-89 season, 18 panthers were captured 26 times. Fifteen of these captures culminated in successful field mobilization. These resulted in radio-collaring of 6 new panthers; one subadult male in the Fort Meyers/Corkscrew Swamp region (#28 originally hit by a car and rehabilitated), 2 juvenile offspring (#29M & #30M) of 2 radio-collared females (#11 & #19) respectively) in the Bear Island Unit of the BCNP, 2 adult females (#31F & #32F) west of SR 29 on the Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge, both of which were pregnant, and 1 young adult male in the Stair Steeps Unit of the BCNP (#33M).

As of 30 June 1988, 18 Florida Panthers were involved in this study. Three animals were being held in captivity and 15 radio-instrumented, free-ranging panthers were being monitored; 10 in Southwestern Florida and 5 in the Everglades National Park. During the past year, 3 wild (#20, #24M, #25M) and one captive (08F) radio-collared panthers died, 1 was removed from the wild due to injuries (#21), 1 has been lost to the study (#22-either dead or radio failure), and 1 who was in captivity was returned to the wild (#23F). Therefore, with the addition of the 6 new panthers captured and radio-collared as of June 30th, 1989, we currently have 19 panthers in the study, 2 in captivity, 13 in southwestern Florida and 4 in the Everglades National Park.

Panther Biomedical Investigation - cont.RESCUE, REHABILITATION AND RELEASE OF INJURED WILD PANTHERS

Four panthers were rescued from the wild this year. Rehabilitation was attempted on all, and thus far 2 have been returned to the wild. Florida panther #23F was most recently captured and removed from the wild June 22, 1988 after becoming stranded on an island in the Shark River Slough in the ENP due to high water. She was held at the White Oak Plantation, and fed whole, dead deer, until the following spring, when she was released since the capture team was working and could respond to an emergency if necessary.

Florida panther #28M was struck by a vehicle in late November, 1988 near the Ft. Meyers International Airport and suffered a severely fractured scapula and head trauma. He was transported to the Veterinary Medical College in Gainesville for treatment. His fractures healed rapidly due to his young age (estimated 18 months). He was released back to the wild on March 16, 1989 and to date appears to be behaving and travelling normally.

Two additional panthers were rescued this year after being hit by cars. One still is under medical treatment, and the other died from severe trauma. The first, #21F, was struck by a car on Palm Drive east of Florida City on July 23, 1988. Initially evacuated to Metro Miami Zoo for treatment and stabilization, she was transported by air to the College of Veterinary Medicine at Gainesville for surgical repair of a fractured femur. Her initial fixation plate was removed June 7, 1989 and it is expected that she will be able to move to White Oak Plantation by late summer to start rehabilitation of muscle mass and bone strength. She could potentially be returned to the wild by early winter.

One additional young adult male, not collared was struck by a vehicle on January 25, 1989 on SR 850 north of Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary northwest of Immokalee and incurred severe chest trauma with pneumothorax. After initial stabilization and treatment for shock, he was transported via helicopter to Gainesville for treatment. After an initial encouraging response, he went into acute respiratory and cardiac collapse and died to a "shock lung" approximately 12 hours after his initial capture.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE RESEARCH

Antibodies to feline panleukopenia virus, or a closely related parvovirus, were detected in the serum from 27 (65%) of 41 different panthers. Eighteen (44%) of the 41 panthers had antibodies to feline calicivirus.

REPRODUCTION AND GENETICS RESEARCH

Preliminary results indicate that all the males were similar to those previously examined and exhibit an exceedingly high proportion of abnormal sperm forms (more than 90%), with major defect involving the acrosome or head of the spermatozoa. In addition to the seminal defects the Florida panther exhibits, the males also suffer from a high rate of cryptorchidism where one testicle does not descend properly into the scrotum.

Given the very small breeding population of the Florida panther, every opportunity should be made to retain as much genetic material as possible. One way to augment this is to bank (freeze) gametes and embryos for future artificial breeding research. This year we were able to freeze semen from 2 of the free-ranging males, #33 a sub-adult (est. 2 - 2.5 years), and VMTH 65185 a three-year old male (testicles collected at necropsy).





Unfortunately, it seems that many of the males do not survive until their re-collaring date, and valuable genetic material is lost with each dead panther. The mean survival time post-collaring is 22.9 months, and our current re-capture interval is 24 months. Of the last 10 adult males instrumented, 6 have died prior to their re-collaring date and before any semen could be archived. We should move to a 12 month recapture interval for all new males in order to adequately bank their sperm should they not survive the "normal" re-collar interval.

#### RADIO-COLLARING OF PANTHERS

A total of 34 individual panthers have been captured and collared in the past seven years; 19 of these are still alive today. These panthers have been captured and immobilized a total of 69 times, one of which resulted in death (1.4% loss per capture). Every measure of caution is taken with each immobilization, and, as a result, our safety record is the highest in the country. The argument that many of the panthers die associated with the capture event can be refuted by examining how long they survive following their most recent anesthesia. Regardless of the cause of death, they have lived an average of 12.4 months post-collaring.

The question of whether or not the collar, in some subtle way, is responsible for mortality can be examined. Thirty-two of the panthers (#23 and Big Guy excluded) have accumulated 715 months of collar life and 63 captures, an average of 22.3 months per panther from the initial capture and 1.97 captures per cat. If we split this into two samples, those that have died and those panthers (including two seriously injured by cars) lived an average of 21.7 months and experienced 2.06 captures each, and those still living have averaged 22.0 months and 1.8 captures. Without an equal number of panthers "invisibly" marked that could be "magically" monitored and followed throughout life, we will never be able to completely rule out any subtle effect the collar may have, but we have no evidence to suggest that it does.

The notion that collars interfere with the normal breeding behavior of panthers and prevent the females from conceiving can also be refuted. The concern is based on the premise that the male must bite the back of the female's neck for ovulation to occur. The collar band is only 2 inches wide, so there should be ample exposed skin if this bite is truly necessary.

### Panther Biomedical Investigation - cont.

By 1988, eight documented pregnancies and seven litters had been conceived by five females wearing collars at the time they conceived (one female aborted at 45 days). Seven of the eight documented pregnancies were sired by five different males—all wearing collars at the time. Further, the radio-instrumented female, #11, conceived two weeks following her initial collaring and was impregnated by a male who one week before had also undergone immobilization and collaring (#12). One of the three kittens from this litter, #19, was captured and collared at 9 months of age. At 18 months she was recaptured to change her collar. She conceived her first litter within the following few weeks and is now raising four kittens. The success of a second generation of radio-collared panthers strongly suggests that collaring does not interfere with breeding.

### PANTHER MORTALITY

Since 1972, a total of 30 panthers have died and another 4 survived serious injuries only because they received medical attention. The fate of one additional uncollared panther after being struck by a vehicle could not be determined. Of those 35 panthers, 16 wore radio-collars and 19 didn't. Panther deaths/injuries can be divided into 5 main categories: road-killed/injured (54.3%), illegally killed (14.3%), intraspecific aggression with or without associated septicemia (11.4%), unknown (12.4%), and other (8.4%). By far the most important cause of panther mortality responsible for 68.6% of the documented deaths are those caused by human beings. These are primarily road kills and injuries and illegal shootings.

### CONCLUSIONS

As habitat loss throughout Florida continues to threaten all wildlife species, especially the already beleaguered panther, wildlife biologists and administrators will be forced to manage the remaining individuals in ways quite different from the classic management style. In otherwise abundant wildlife species, the population as a whole is managed, not the individual. However, if we hope to rescue the Florida panther from extinction, some rather intensive management strategies aimed at the individual will be necessary. From the biomedical standpoint the immediate management measures must include:

1. enhancement of the probability of survival of all panthers by protecting them from identified pathogens (i.e. feline panleukopenia, feline calicivirus, rabies and hookworms) via the use of vaccines and anthelmintics;
2. Treatment of medical problems aimed at long-term survival of the individual (i.e. fractures, abscesses, and other medical problems)
3. preservation of the maximum amount of genetic diversity possible, which should include collecting and freezing gametes from every individual handled for use in future artificial breeding efforts and as insurance against the catastrophic or demographic loss of the wild population.

### DISCUSSION - by Lynn Culver

(Ed. Note: Lynn Culver has done extensive research into the Florida panther programs and offers the following .)

Melody's annual biomedical report refutes the assertion that the capture and collaring techniques affect the health and reproductive behavior of panthers. The Florida panther team is proud of their safety record. The capture crew's veterinary and safety supplies weigh a massive 450 pounds. There is no doubt that much information has been gathered by the Florida panther research program.

PANTHER DISCUSSION - cont.

Alligator ALley is being fenced, and strategically placed animal underpasses are being constructed based on the travel activities of radio-collared panthers. At least 12 panther deaths since 1979 have been the result of being struck by vehicles and this accounts for the largest single known cause of death. This effort cost the taxpayers \$13 million. With this serious death threat removed, the chances of panthers living longer, more productive lives will greatly increase the long-term outlook for the coryi subspecies.

But where does the panther team go from here? No plans to collar new panthers are expected for next year. Instead, continued monitoring of the currently collared cats and replacement of their collars when necessary is planned. The backlog of data waiting to be processed is mounting from the years of study.

Future management of the panthers is potentially more invasive and risky than past. Do they start moving individual panthers to increase genetic variability? Do they remove prime, core breeders into captivity, to start a captive nucleus, a precaution against a catastrophic natural disaster? Or, do they remove young panthers to raise them for captive breeding programs? Each option has serious risks and questionable benefits.

And what of the seemingly less risky practice of electro-ejaculating the male panthers while they are sedated, saving this semen for further invitro-fertilization? This highly abnormal sperm, of questionable potency, might prove to be worthless. Could it be that male panthers, like the females, are also cyclical, having potent, normal sperm when in the presence of an estrus female, during days of continuous copulation? How else can the apparent regularity of Florida panther pregnancies and births be explained?

As we destroy and degrade more natural areas of our planet, we come face-to-face with the staggering costs of replacing nature. The Florida panthers ARE currently in a captive breeding program. These collared panthers have nowhere to go, hemmed in by expanding retirement communities and the enormous, citrus growing industry. To actually remove them from this setting, and place them in a "natural" habitat of our making would increase their stress, our financial costs and playing God in this case, most likely won't work.

It seems our best bet is to leave the panthers where they seem to be surviving. In spite of their low numbers, in spite of their low sperm, in spite of degraded natural surroundings, they are a subspecies that refuse to die. We need them to be in the Everglades, to refresh our spirit and remind us that wild wastelands, are NOT wild, trashlands.

Florida panthers will face their most serious environmental threat in the coming years. The cost for decades of environmental disregard is about to be paid. Canal channeling and the increased human use of Florida's water resources have resulted in the Everglades experiencing serious droughts, stressing the eco-system and all the wildlife dependent upon it. A more deadly threat is looming on the horizon. Pesticide and fertilizer runoff, originating hundreds of miles to the north is ending up in the Everglades. Cattails, fond of fertile water, are replacing the native species evolved for a nutrient deficient environment. And, even more ominous, the heavy metal mercury is being detected in the water of the Everglades. For too long, the Everglades was treated like one big water filter for the citrus farms and mining industries of the north. The Florida Panther, as a top predator to the food chain will surely feel these effects. This new threat to the panther will not be so easily cured with vaccinations or fences, or increased deer herds. Our abuse of nature, a result of increasing human population, may be the final demise of the Florida panther.



