

NEWSLETTER

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Herb Wilton, Santa, and a bobcat Herb owns - who's putting up with them while they enjoy their Christmas cheer!

Happy Holidayze to You and your Critters



L. I. O. C.

Endangered Species Conservation Federation Inc.

This Newsletter is published bi-monthly by the LIOC Endangered Species Conservation Federation, Inc. We are a non-profit (Federal I.D. 59-2048618) non-commercial organization with international 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 reflects the point of view of the author but does not necessarily represent the point of view of the organization. LIOC ESCF Inc.'s statement of intent is contained in our by-laws, a copy of which can be requested from the Secretary. Reproduction of the material in this newsletter may not be made without the written permission of the original copyright owners and/or copyright owner LIOC ESCF Inc. Persons interested in joining LIOC should contact the Term Director in charge of Member Services.

Since the Newsletter consists primarily of articles, photographs and artwork contributed by our members, we encourage all members to submit material whenever possible. Articles concerning exotic felines are preferred and gladly accepted. Articles involving other related subjects will also be considered. Letters and responses to articles may be included in the Readers Write Column. Please submit all newsletter material to the Managing Editor.

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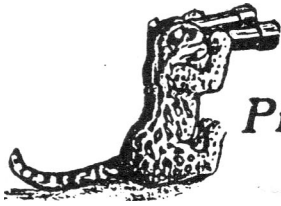
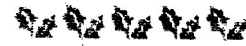
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President's Perspective

It's been an active and eventful four years. I look forward to semi-retirement a life director. Over the last four years, we've distributed Membership Handbooks, revised the information pamphlets and application forms, increased the size of the Newsletter significantly, and seen the addition of two branches and interest in forming others.

This couldn't have been done without the help of all the officers who have served on the Board with me. I want to thank you because your efforts made it all happen.

I look forward to working with the new members of the Executive Board. There is a greater turnover this year than I can remember at any time in the past. With all the new energy, we can expect further progress. The need for work toward conservation was brought home by a presentation Roger Karras, president of the American Humane Society, made at the University of Minnesota Vet School. He stated that the rain forests were vanishing at the rate of 50 acres per minute. The Amazon rain forest will be gone within 10 years! The issues driving the destruction are economic survival on the local level, and conservation is considered unimportant compared with feeding one's family.

There are three main directions I see for growth of the LIOC. First, efforts should be put into development of educational and informational material for those attempting to breed and generally preserve the exotic feline in private compounds. It is important to serve as a clearing house, since, individually, we have limited resources. Sharing of information is the way to multiply it. Second, we should support research and conservation efforts to obtain scientific information and preserve the cats in their habitat. Finally, there should be political effort directed at preserving the privilege of being able to keep and breed the exotic felines. Political activity requires walking a tightrope taking care that we don't become a totally political organization, splinter on the basis of disagreeing views, or expend all our resources in ways that produce little return.

My thrust has been promotion of the educational aspects. The material we had were dated and keepers need accurate, up-to-date information. I hope, as life director, to continue efforts in this direction.

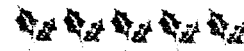
Thank you all for supporting the organization and helping it grow. I have great expectations for the future.

John Perry



Holidays can be dangerous

Remember, most of our holiday plants and decorations are toxic to cats. Poinsettias, mistletoe and holly are bad news if ingested by a cat. As is antifreeze - a commonly encountered poison to all animals. And no cat can survive the heavy metals in just a few slivers of ingested garland, tinsel, or the foil wrappers of candies. Be extra careful during the holidays!



Legal Updates

ESA Supported by Senate Vote: Challenges Remain

In early August, Senator Slade Gorton (R-WA) proposed an amendment to the Interior Department's appropriations bill that would have seriously weakened the Endangered Species Act. By a margin of 60-35, the Senate defeated the amendment. HSUS Congressional Relations staff reports that phone calls to Senate offices from members made a critical difference in defeating the amendment.

A separate bill sponsored by Senator Gorton, S.2762, would also overturn the Endangered Species Act and remains alive in the Senate. WWF will continue efforts to defeat S.2762 and supports a strong reauthorization of the Endangered Species Act. Members can help the WWF effort by sending a message to your representatives in Congress.

More challenges to the ESA remain, however. The Gorton and Smith bills would bypass twenty years of environmental legislation and doom the spotted owl to extinction, according to the HSUS. Also, S2953, is a pending bill which will override the recent supreme court ruling and enable citizens to continue to challenge government attempts to ignore the ESA.

compiled from WWF and HSUS action notices

Hearing Held On Exhibition Animals Under USDA APHIS

On July 8 the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Department Operations, Research and Foreign Agriculture held a hearing on the treatment of animals in exhibition, such as in zoos, aquaria, and circuses, and on the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act (AWA).

John W. Grandy, Ph.D., HSUS vice president, Wildlife and Habitat Protection,

presented strong evidence documenting the USDA's inability to enforce effectively the regulations of the AWA in zoos, circuses, and traveling acts. The evidence included specific cases in which exhibition animals suffered and, in some instances, died due to inadequate care.

The HSUS recommended establishment of a blue-ribbon advisory committee, including representatives from the animal-protection community, to review and recommend improvements in relevant regulations; establishment of more stringent licensing standards for animal exhibitors; development of more specific space requirements for exhibition animals; and development of more stringent guidelines for the humane handling and care of exhibition animals.

On July 30 The HSUS and other organizations met with USDA Assistant Secretary for Marketing and Inspection Services Jo Ann Smith and other USDA staff to discuss further the need for stricter enforcement of the AWA regarding exhibition animals.

USDA Admits APHIS Failure

The federal watchdog agency charged with looking out for animals is not enforcing the nation's key animal protection law, the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) according to a USDA report obtained by the HSUS. The audit, inspired by HSUS puppy mill investigations, validates what the HSUS has known: that the USDA is completely unable or unwilling to perform required monitoring of animal facilities.

The report issues a stinging indictment of the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service's (APHIS) ability to enforce the AWA. The report summary concluded, "...APHIS cannot ensure the humane care and treatment at all dealer facilities as required by the Act."

The audit, obtained by the HSUS through the Freedom of Information Act, covered facilities in Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, and



Wisconsin during 1990 and 1991. Of the 284 facilities reviewed, 16.2 % were given no annual inspection at all. Eighty-seven percent of the facilities visited by the audit were found in violation of the act. And 23% of those facilities had repeat violations, including inadequate veterinary care and insufficient living space.

The USDA audit said that APHIS does not have an effective monitoring system, nor does it have formal procedures that set the frequency of inspections. The report also said that APHIS regulations about inventorying animals were not being followed. Further of the 284 facility inspections, 49 licenses were renewed although the facilities had outstanding AWA violations. The report concluded that APHIS's 68 inspectors were not completing even the one-inspection-per-day average that would provide the minimum required for oversight of the nation's animal facilities.

The HSUS is calling for a congressional oversight hearing. The USDA should be called to account for its slipshod methods and the resulting suffering of animals.

ESA Takes Hits

The Endangered Species Act (ESA) took two hard blows this spring from the Bush administration and the US Supreme Court.

On May 14 the Endangered Species Committee -unofficially known as the 'God Squad'- voted to overrule the ESA and allow logging on 1700 acres of publically owned old growth forest critical to the survival of the threatened northern spotted owl. This decision alone is expected to little impact on the specie's survival. However at the same time the God Squad decision was announced, Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan, Jr released a deceptively titled "Owl Preservation Plan" that if implemented would give the owl only a 50-50 chance of surviving into the next century. Because the ESA mandates *recovery* of endangered and threatened

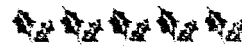
species, Secretary Lujan's new plan would be illegal, but legislation to legalize and implement this dangerous plan has already been introduced in the Senate (S2762) by Sen. Slade Gorton and in the house (HR5256) by Rep. Bob Smith (R-OR).

Citizen group efforts to enforce the ESA also suffered a stunning setback from the US Supreme Court: in a June 12 decision, the Court rejected a lawsuit filed by several animal protection groups that would have required federal agencies acting outside the United States to ensure that their actions do not jeopardize endangered species. In spite of 'citizen suit' provisions in the ESA that allow private citizens and groups to sue to enforce the law, the Court ruled that such groups did not have the right to sue because no concrete interests were immediately threatened. This ruling will make it much more difficult for organizations and individuals to sue to enforce the ESA as well as other environmental laws.

However, Sen. Howard Metzenbaum (D-OH) has risen to defend the ESA by introducing a bill (S2953) that would require the government to apply the ESA to its activities overseas and would restore the right of citizens to sue to enforce the ESA.

State Referendums to Protect Animals Held

Arizona and Colorado voters had a good chance to help animals during the November election. In Arizona, a referendum was on the ballot to ban the use of steel leg-hold traps on public lands throughout the state. In Colorado two important initiatives were on the ballot: one to protect bears by banning spring black bear hunting seasons and the use of bait and hounds to hunt black bears, and one to ban all animal killing contests, such as the annual prairie dog shoot held in Nucla, Colorado during which thousands of prairie dogs are slaughtered in the name of competition and entertainment.



GIARDIASIS (Giardia): CLINICAL DIAGNOSIS AND SIGNIFICANCE

by Ronald S. Eldridge, B.V. SC, R.V.T.
Member, NAVTA, VECCS, AAZA
Roger Williams Park Zoo (AAZPA)
Member, LIOC ESCF, Inc.

General. Giardia are small flagellated protozoal parasites. These parasites differ from helminths in that they multiply within the gastrointestinal tract.

Characteristics. Giardia are bilateral, pear-shaped protozoa with four pairs of flagella (figure 1). The life cycle of Giardia is direct. The protozoan produces cysts that are found in the feces. Cysts can live in the feces for two (2) to three (3) weeks.

When flagellates proliferate beyond control, they produce acute enteric disease. Possibly in response to: bacterial flora, host stress, and change in diet. Giardia has been associated with a high carbohydrate diet that forms favorable conditions for their growth.

These patterns probably results in latent carrier states in infected felines. They may then appear as primary pathogens. Giardia spp occur in man and animal. Zoonotic implications of infections in household pets are still unknown.

Clinical Signs. Physical signs include, watery tan-colored stool. The feces may contain large amounts of fat and appear greasy. Diarrhea can be continuous, but usually it's intermittent.

In advance stages of the disease, weight loss and fevers may be present.

In neonatal care, Giardia can be overwhelming. Diarrhea usually is severe. Feces are usually watery and blood-tinged. Kittens (cubs) do not have the tolerance or reserves of the adult feline and become moribund rapidly. If the kitten becomes dehydrated, start treatment immediately.

In the adult feline, there is usually no dehydration or hemorrhage, but poor digestion and loss of condition is prevalent.

Diagnosis. Clinical signs and fecal (stool) sample. Microscopic examination (figure 2).

Prevention and Treatment. Since the parasite is transmitted by ingestion of the cysts, sanitation is the best way to prevent the disease. Treat for dehydration. Usually, Flagyl (Metronidazole) is the drug of choice. Early treatment minimizes intestinal damage.

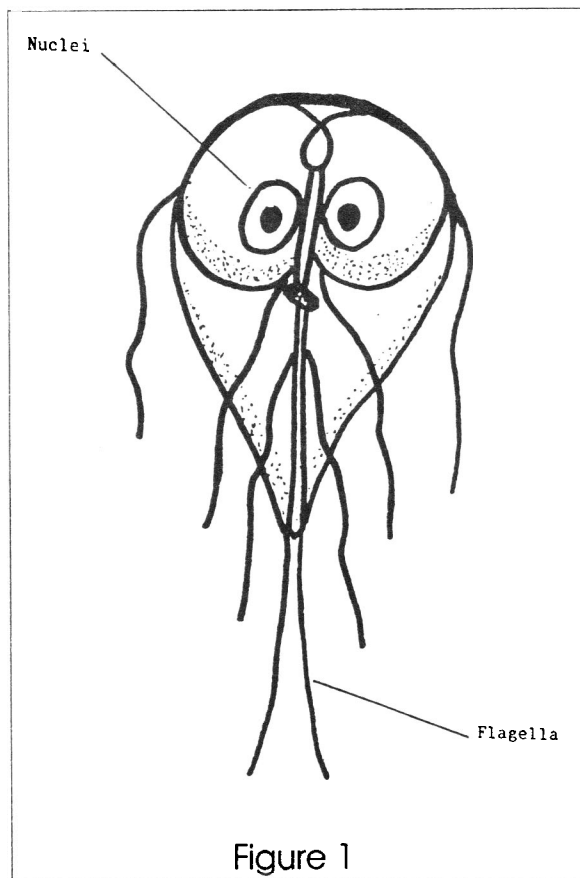


Figure 1

Microscopic Examination

1. Giardia cati (trophozoites)
2. Mix small amount of stool with saline on a slide.
3. Examine high and dry power.
4. Action of flagella gives them a "jerky" motion. This only lasts for a few hours.

less if the sample was refrigerated.

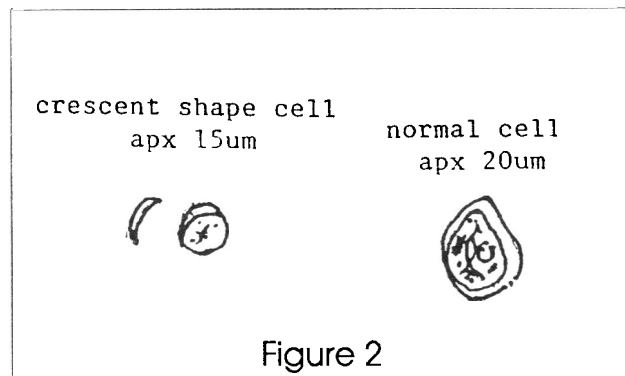


5. Fresh cysts of giardia show thin with a smooth cyst wall.
6. Focus up and down, you should see the internal structure of the cyst.
7. Length of the organisms is 10 - 20 μ m.
8. Saline can distort the cells. They may have a crescent shape.
9. Try using a direct smear:
 - a) Stain the slide with Wrights stain. (Giesma can also be used.)
 - b) Use undiluted Wrights stain: Place on slide for 5-20 minutes, rinse, dry, and read.
10. For the best results, always use a fresh sample.

References:

ADAM, K.M.G., Paul, J. and Zaman, V. (1971), "Medical and Veterinary Protozoology, Publ. Churchill Livingstone, London.

The Academy of Health Sciences, United States Army, Parasitology for the Animal Care Specialist Course 787, Jul 86.



Genetic Erosion A Global Dilemma

The Ngorongoro lions are isolated geographically, but they are not alone in their genetic impasse.

Around the world, wildlife populations are sinking into fragmented islands amid a sea of human expansion. Only 30 to 50 Florida panthers cling to survival. Before a captive breeding program began, the black-footed ferret was down to 17 animals. In India fewer than 250 Asiatic lions remain.

Before conducting genetic studies for Craig Packer's lion project, I examined the genetic history of the cheetah, whose range once spanned the globe. I was amazed to find that every one of today's 20,000 cheetahs is genetically almost identical. They descend from survivors of a near-extinction catastrophe that resulted in generations of close inbreeding 10,000 years ago.

These and other species share something important with the Ngorongoro lions - a population bottleneck. It creates a shrinking gene pool that leaves fewer and fewer mating partners. What are the genetic implications?

The animals become part of a high-stakes poker game - with a crooked dealer. After beginning with a 52 card deck, the players wind up with, say, five cards that they are dealt over and over.

As they begin to inbreed, congenital defects appear, both physical and reproductive. Often abnormal sperm increase, infertility rises; the birthrate falls. Most perilous in the long run, each animal's immune defense system is weakened.

Thus even if an endangered species in a bottleneck can withstand whatever human development may be eating away at its habitat, it still faces the threat of an epidemic that could well be fatal to the entire population.

by Stephen J. O'Brien, Chief, Laboratory of Viral Carcinogenesis, Natl Cancer Inst., reprinted





A Christmas Gift

A Fictional Short Story by James Godsmark

The holidays were never an easy time for Greg Tanner. Not only did he have to deal with extra pressures at his job, he also had all of the assorted family Christmas nonsense to deal with. He was as yet unmarried and had no children, a fact for which he was profoundly grateful. Greg worked at a large advertising company where it was his job to think of new slogans that would make the public want to buy new items which they didn't want anyway. Greg literally thought up slogans for everything from soup to nuts. And everything in between.

His job paid fairly well and, as a result, his brother and his sister expected him to give them -and their children- expensive gifts for Christmas and for their birthdays. "Greg, I would like this..." "Uncle Greg could you please get me this?" Greg usually bowed to the wishes of his nephews and nieces, simply because he had a soft heart. He was everyone's favorite Uncle.

December 12th was a day like any other for Greg. At five P.M., after a day spent thinking up a slogan for a new brand of cigarettes, and another for deodorant, he punched out his time-card, and began to put on his coat, and shoes. His mind felt as if it might be made out of swiss cheese. At a certain point during the day, he had seriously felt like designing the cigarette advertisement to say; "ZEPHYR MENTHOL CIGARETTES... For people with a taste for Black lungs, deformed babies, and cancer!" He wasn't too crazy about the idea that he was, for all intents and purposes, trying to sell the public a disease.

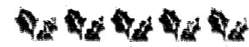
Greg trudged out of the building, mumbling goodbyes to the various secretaries that he had to pass on his way to the front door. He had a forty minute drive ahead of him to go home. You see, he worked in the City, but he sure did not want to live

there, so several years before, he had bought a twenty-five acre piece of property that he liked. It was perfect for his needs: It was quiet, secluded, and it had a forested area, and a small creek running through it. The only drawback was the forty minute drive to, and from work.

This evening, Greg got into his car: A battered 1983 Chevette, and began the drive home. As he drove along the super-highway, a heavy snow began to fall, and all three eastbound lanes began to slow down, until they had reached a crawl. Cursing, Greg leaned back in his seat, and crawled along with the traffic, waiting out the bottleneck. Finally, after a full hour, he took the turnoff for his road. Greg sighed with relief as he began to drive the last ten minutes to his home. He was less than five minutes from his house, when suddenly a large, brown cat ran in front of his car. Greg slammed on the brakes, but with the two centimeters of snow on the road, the Chevette merely slid along with no sign of stopping. There was a sickening thump underneath the car.

Finally, it slid to a stop, and Greg ran back to where the cat lay, roughly fifty meters behind the car. When he reached the car, he noticed two things: It was definitely dead, and this was no ordinary cat. It had a very short tail, and it was a dull, spotted brown, tinged with gray. This was a bobcat. Feeling terrible, Greg turned the unfortunate victim over, and noticed that it was female, and that it had swollen, pink nipples. It had kittens.

Greg tenderly picked up the dead bobcat, and placed her at the side of the road. He decided at this point that he had to find the kittens. He had already killed one cat, he did not want to be responsible for the deaths of any others. He had heard all of the warnings about taking wild animals out of the wild, but at this point, he was more concerned with the baby cat's survival. It was obvious that the kittens were still nursing, so they would probably not be able to survive on their own.



He knew that it would be difficult to find the kittens, but at least he would try. He went back to this car, and got his flashlight out of the glove compartment. When he flicked it on, he realized that his search would be aided by the recent snow: He would simply follow her tracks backward, and hope that they led back to the nest.

His luck was with him, and after fifteen minutes of walking through the brush, and under pine tree branches, he finally came to a small den underneath a fallen spruce tree.

Greg crouched down, and shone his flashlight underneath the tree, and he was rewarded with the sight of a tiny, mewling bundle. He removed the kitten, and placed it in his jacket, next to his chest. As he walked back to the car, he could feel tiny claws pulling against his shirt, and tiny mews came from inside his jacket.

When Greg reached his car, he decided to take a better look at the kitten. When he got inside the car, he stared the engine, and turned on the dome-light. He then removed the kitten from his jacket, and looked at it.

The kitten was very tiny, and its eyes had not yet opened. It was now obvious that it would never have survived on its own. Turning it over, he tried to see if it was male, or female; but it was squirming around so much that he put it back inside his jacket. He decided at this point that he should take the kitten to a Veterinarian to make sure that it was alright, and to ask what exactly he should feed it. The local Vet was located in Sprucedale; a small village about three kilometers back. Greg glanced at this watch, and noticed that it was 7:35. The Veterinarian's office was open until 8 P.M., so he still had time.

Before he left, he opened the hatchback, and lifted the floorboard. He removed the emergency blanket that he kept on top of

the spare tire, and wrapped the mother bobcat into it. He would take her home, and bury her in the morning. He couldn't bear the thought of the road crew picking her up, and disposing of her.

Greg spun his car around in the snow, and began to head back towards Sprucedale.

Five minutes later, he pulled into the parking lot of the Sprucedale Animal Hospital. Greg walked up to the reception desk, and said, "I know I don't have an appointment, but is there any way I can see Dr. Miller? It's kind of important: I found a bobcat kitten, it's orphaned (Greg sighed) I ran over it's Mother, and I need advice on how to raise it.

The teenaged receptionist stopped chewing her gum, and said: "A bobcat kitten? Oh wow! Let me see it!" Greg gently removed the kitten from his jacket, showed it to the receptionist.

"I just want to get it home, and feed it as soon as possible.

I really don't want to cause it too much stress."

"Well, I think Dr. Miller can see you in about five minutes. Could you let me see it again when it gets a little bigger? Maybe when you bring your dog in again for shots in February?"

"Sure. Thanks for reminding me about my next appointment. I'd almost forgotten that Oscar had to come in again in February." With that, Greg entered the waiting room, and sat down. Only three minutes had passed, when a lady leading a large newfoundland dog entered the waiting room from the examination room. She was followed by Dr. Miller, "Now, remember what I told you, Mrs. Black. If Rupert has any more problems, feel free to call me."

As Mrs. Black, and Rupert left the waiting room, she said "Thank you, Dr. Miller, I'll tell you if anything happens."





"Fine, I'll mail you your bill", said Dr. Miller. Then he addressed Greg: "Well, Mr. Tanner, how can I help you? Oscar isn't due for his shots until February."

"Well Dr. Miller, I found an orphaned bobcat, and I want to raise it. Can you tell me what to feed it? I also want you to have a look at it, and tell me if it is alright. Could you do that?"

"Well, come on in to the examination room, and I'll see what we can do." As they walked down the hall, Dr. Miller said, "How did you find it?"

"Well, I ran over it's mother with my car. I looked at her, and I know that she was nursing kittens. I know that you are not supposed to take wild animals out of the wild, and all that, but I really felt bad about killing the mother, and I could not bear the thought of being responsible for the kitten's death. So, I followed her tracks back to the nest, and got the kitten."

"Well, I hope you're ready for the responsibility. I've bottle raised kittens before, and they're harder than human babies. You have to get up at all hours of the night, and all day, to feed it whenever it is hungry. You've also got to help it relieve itself. When they're that little, they can't do it themselves, so their mother has to lick their behinds to get them to go. She eats their waste to keep the nest clean."

"Yuck", said Greg.

"You'll have to rub it with a paper towel to get it to eliminate. It's a big responsibility to raise a kitten. Do you think you can handle it?"

"I guess I'll have to learn how to. I don't want it to die. I owe the mother at least that much."

At this point they had reached the examination room, and Dr. Miller said, "Can I see the kitten?" Greg once again removed the kitten from his jacket, and tenderly placed the mewling bundle on the examination table.

"Tiny little sucker, isn't it," said Dr.

Miller. Turning the kitten over, he said: "Well, it's definitely a little male. He's still too small to see if anything is really wrong with him, but he seems pretty healthy. I have some pre-mixed formulas for kitten, and some bottles that I can sell you; the pre-mixed formula should be alright for a bobcat kitten, but I think that we should add a calcium supplement to it. I have read that wild kittens need more calcium than domestic kittens. Anyway, I'll get you what you need out of our Supply Room, and you can pay Mary for it when you leave. I'd get him home as soon as possible, and let him sleep. He's had a lot of stress already. You should make him up a basket, and line it with towel to keep him warm. He should be alright. As he gets a little bit older, you should try, and get him to eat meat. But not for a few weeks yet."

"Thank you, Dr. Miller. I'll read up on it too. I can get some cat books tomorrow."

"Call me every week, or so to see how he's doing, and bring him back in about two weeks so I can have a look at him again to see if he's doing alright."

"I certainly will. I should get going."

After Dr. Miller got him the supplies he needed, he put them in a bag, and walked out to the waiting room to pay Mary. It was obvious that raising a baby bobcat was not going to be a very cheap, or easy task. But he would try his best.

Greg got into his car, and began the short drive home.

Several minutes later, he finally pulled into his driveway, and got out of his car. His german shepherd "Oscar" met him halfway to the front door, giving Greg an offended look.

Greg patted Oscar's head, and said: "Sorry, old buddy, but I had to do a few things after work. I'll feed you in a minute." Oscar's nose then began to edge towards Greg's jacket. "Hey, don't do that!", said Greg, pushing Oscar's nose away, "You leave him alone."

After Greg had gone inside, he quickly



filled Oscar's bowl, and fed him in the garage. He then set about the business of feeding the kitten. He quickly prepared the bottle, put a hole in the nipple, and filled it with the pre-mixed formula, and then added the required amount of calcium supplement powder.

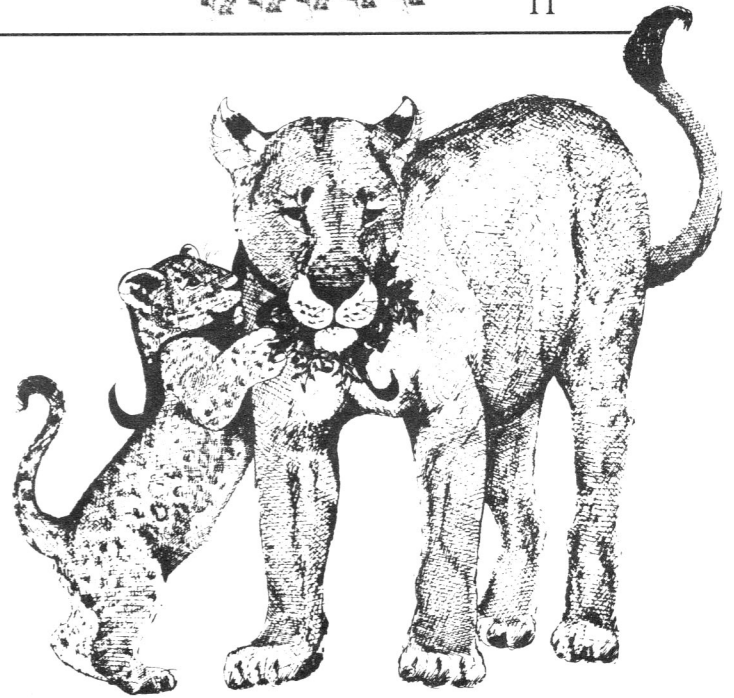
Greg put the nipple to the kitten's mouth. At first the kitten refused to accept it, pushing it away, and mewling. The kitten began to squirm even more, and Greg kept trying to get him to drink from the bottle. Finally, after about fifteen minutes, the kitten began to drink, sucking greedily at the nipple. Greg wondered how many hours had passed since he had last eaten.

After the kitten drained the bottle, Greg quickly refilled it, and warmed it up in the microwave. This time the kitten drank a little less eagerly, and only drank about one-quarter of the little bottle's contents before refusing to take any more, filled.

Greg then grabbed a paper towel, and took the kitten into the bathroom to help it relieve itself. Greg rubbed the kitten's behind with the paper towel, and he quickly soiled it. Greg grabbed another, and did this several more times until the kitten was finished relieving itself. "You're sure a messy little guy!", Greg said.

Afterwards, Greg got a basket, lined it with towels, and placed the kitten in the basket. After a few minutes the kitten fell asleep, and Greg stood looking at him.

"I think I'll call you Silver, little guy", Greg whispered softly. At this point, he decided that he should soon go to bed himself. So, he quickly washed up, had a drink of water, and took the basket into the bedroom. He would let Oscar sleep in the garage tonight, Oscar didn't mind. He didn't want to take any chances until Silver was a little older. Before going to sleep, he set his alarm to wake him in two hours time. He knew that he would have to wake up several times during the night,



SNOWFLAKE

Just a cat?
Just a cat,
Just an animal I took from the pound.
A fun pet to play with;
Not too bothersome or bold,
Just a little ball of snow.
Never thought that he would leave us;
Never thought he would grow *old* .
The chair is still covered with his snow-
white hair;
there is a worn spot on the wall
I keep looking in the "well" in the bed
where he used to get so snug
for this loving little creature who was
always there to hug
In our small family life did he play so
great a part?
Did he win his way with patience, gently
loving from the start?
He will live here forever in a corner of my
heart-

by Ron Eldridge

continued on page 22



Cheetah Problems Studied in the Wilds of African Park

Cheetah cubs have only a six percent chance of reaching independence at the age of 18 months in areas dominated by lions, according to the findings of Karen Laurenson, Tim Caro and Markus Borner (1992) in a long term study of cheetah on the Serengeti.

Lions kill cheetah cubs, often locating them by spotting the mother sitting up in the marsh or bush where she has her cubs. Cheetah mothers sometimes abandon their litters when prey is scarce. Earlier research showed that almost half the male cheetah cubs that left their mothers died before reaching adulthood, almost certainly from fighting with other male cheetahs. But lions too suffer heavy cub losses: two thirds die between emerging from the den and one year of age on the Serengeti, and one third in the nearby Ngorongoro Crater.

The team believes that low cub survival explains the low population density of cheetah on the Serengeti. Although adult cheetah probably replace themselves, they cannot do more than this. After independence, a further 50% of male cheetah are lost primarily through territorial competition. Data are lacking on female mortality, making it impossible to assess whether cub or adult mortality is numerically more important in limiting numbers of cheetah in the wild.

Noting that increasing human population pressure and agriculture are already restricting large predators to protected areas, the team remarks on the paradox that cheetahs may fare better in areas that are not protected, provided that the area is not given over to agriculture and that cheetahs are tolerated by pastoralists.

Although there are heavy cub losses, female cheetahs readily conceive after losing a litter, generally within three weeks. Dealing with the problem of cheetah breeding in captivity the team says that the limited data indicate that inability to conceive is the result of cap-

tivity. Poor mothering in captivity is often related to excessive human interference or loud noise, while in the wild it is related to food intake. Laurenson suggests that solutions to cub mortality in captivity should be sought within the husbandry system and not from the natural situation.

Cheetah and Leopard Cat Cubs Born from AI

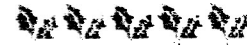
The first cheetah *acinonyx jubatus* cub resulting from artificial insemination (AI) was born at Caldwell Zoo, Tyler, Texas, on 1 September 1991. The eight year old mother carried to full term and began to nurse the cub. But about 24 hours later, a violent thunderstorm upset her and she killed the cub.

The AI technique was developed at the National Zoo's New Opportunities in Animal Health Sciences (NOAHS) Centre. Dr. JoGayle Howard, head of the zoo's Mobile Laboratory research Team performed the AI at Caldwell Zoo, using freshly collected sperm from a male at the Fossil Rim Wildlife Center. The sperm was deposited into the uterus with a laparoscope (a fiberoptic telescope) of the type used in human infertility clinics.

Howard also collaborated with scientists at the Bronx Zoo in New York in artificially inseminating a leopard cat *felis bengalensis*, which subsequently gave birth to two young. This was the first time a non-domestic cat had been successfully impregnated with semen that had been frozen and thawed immediately prior to the insemination.

It has taken 10-15 years of research to perfect AI of non-domestic cats because their sperm die extremely fast and the semen cannot be frozen by the same technique used for cattle.

Howard said that the ability to use frozen sperm meant that other rare cats could be inseminated with sperm from animals at different zoos or even from cats living in the wild.



Lynx Reintroduced in New York State

The lynx was extirpated in the Adirondack region of New York state in the late 1800's. This region was heavily logged during the past century and forest disturbance created ideal conditions for white-tailed deer, and bobcat, which rely on the deer as winter food. We hypothesize that the expanding bobcat population competed with the Adirondack lynx in the last century, contributing to their decline. Other factors included trapping and incidental killing by humans. Today, deer and bobcat populations are returning to near-climax conditions.

A 1982 study found that lynx restoration was feasible in the Adirondack Park's northeast sector, which is relatively free of deer and bobcats and which harbors a good population of snowshoe hares, principal prey of the lynx. We estimated that hare densities (170 hares/km²) would support a lynx population of 70 animals.

Our team from the State University of New York, College of Environmental Science and Forestry, released 83 animals during the three winters of 1988-1990. These were translocated from the Yukon Territory in Canada. All were fitted with radio collars and held for two to four weeks prior to release. The lynx were carried in groups of up to five animals to the release sites, and held at the release site (slow release) for two to five days. Each cage had enough food (frozen domestic rabbit) for the acclimation period. Release sites were chosen using computer-generated maps integrating topographic features, conifer cover, prey density, and potential human interference.

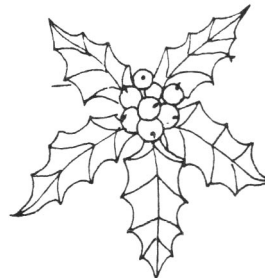
Animals were radio-tracked from a fixed wing aircraft whenever weather permitted, usually at intervals of one to two weeks. Out of the 83 releases (48 females, 35 males), there have been 32 known mortalities. Twelve were killed by vehicles, the largest single source of known mortality. Five died out of state, by accidental shooting. Generally, shooting

mortality in state has been low because of a good publicity program; three lynx were raiding livestock pens. We lost six animals to miscellaneous causes. In one case, a young lynx was apparently killed by a large male lynx. There have been 334 reported sightings by the public; perhaps only one third of these are valid.

No further lynx were released the past winter of 1991-1992. Rather we concentrated on tracking released animals. Transmitted animals utilized large areas (average 421 km² for females and 1760 km² for males). There is some evidence that breeding may have occurred as a male and female were in close telemetric association in several instances. However, we have no direct evidence of breeding. There have been unverified sightings of kittens.

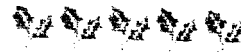
A feature of this restoration project has been good publicity and public education. Throughout the restoration friendly press releases have built up goodwill for the project and have even generated unsolicited donations of substantial public funding. We feel that this good publicity and support from the diverse public interest in the state have contributed positively to the re-introduction.

by Rainer H. Brocke and Kent A. Gustafson,
from *Cat News* No. 17



In Memoriam

During October, Gayle Schaecher lost one of the members of her original stock. Danger, a bobcat-lynx cross came to Gayle as an adult at the age of 7 years. He was 23 1/2 years old when he died. Our sympathies go out to Gayle.



Asian Rare Cat Updates

First Record of Fishing Cat in Malaysia

A small spotted cat captured by aborigines in Bahau Negeri Sembila in continental Malaysia has been identified as a fishing cat *Felis viverrina*. This is the first known record of the species in the country, according to P.J.H. van Bree and Mohd Khan bin Momin Khan (1992).

The cat was given to Melaca Zoo, where it died. The mounted specimen was sent to the Wildlife Training Centre at Bukit Rengit, Lancang, Pahang, where it still exists.

The specimen has a rather coarse earthy-grey fur with body markings consisting of a series of elongate spots arranged in more or less longitudinal rows. The tail was less than 50% of the head and body length (280 mm compared with 770 mm in the mounted specimen).

Van Bree and Mohd Khan pose the question whether the fishing cat represents a new faunal element in Malaysia or whether it was an escaped pet. They described the rather unusual distribution with isolated populations in southern India and Sri Lanka, with the major distribution from Nepal through western India and Burma to the northern half of Thailand and Indo-China, as well as northern and western Java. It is also said to occur in Sumatra but no museum specimens are known from there. The Leiden Museum in the Netherlands has a mounted specimen collected in Singapore in 1819, while the Zoological Reference Collection in Singapore has one said to have been collected Pontianak in Borneo in 1880.

Van Bree, P.J.H. and Mohd Khan bin Momin Kahn. 1992, On a Fishing cat from continental Malaysia. *Z. Säugetierkunde* 57, pp. 179-180. Paul Parey, Hamburg and Berlin, Germany.

More Rusty-spotted Cats Caught in South India

More rust-spotted cats *Felis rubinosa* have recently been found in settled areas of Kerala, South India, where they were first reported late last year.

Two kittens were caught on 26 February in the attic of a house in Thakazi village reports James Zacharias, a Research Range Officer in the nearby Periyar Tiger Reserve.

The householder heard noises in the roof and climbed up to find a cat devouring a hen. He and friends managed to catch two kittens but another kitten and the presumed mother escaped. Zacharias, who followed up a press report of a strange leopard-like animal, said there had been losses of about a dozen chickens and ducks in the previous three or four weeks.

The local people were quite ignorant of wild cats, Zacharius says. But one elderly man said wildcats, which he did not identify, had been common in the past.

Unfortunately, the local authorities were slow to take charge of the cats, which died and their skins and skulls were not recovered.

A male rusty-spotted cat was caught on 11 April in another attic, in Tiruvalla. Although slightly injured it was recovering when Zacharius sent his report in May. Five rusty spotted cats are now in captivity in Kerala.

The species, which is also found in Sri Lanka, has been considered very rare in India and had seldom been sighted until two years ago when specimens were found unexpectedly in the Gir Lion Sanctuary. Their appearance in settled areas distant from wild habitat in Kerala has been a surprise.



Readers Write



Dear Editor,

Perhaps you can be of assistance.

I am a US citizen but I've been in the Phillipines these past two years. Altho, my wife, is a veterinarian.

When I left the states, I brought my two cougars (mother and daughter), male bobcat and female snow leopard. The snow is now three years old and despite initial fears has made a good adjustment to life in the tropics. All are happy and healthy.

Although in no hurry, I am looking for a breeder male snow leopard, breeder male cougar and breeder female bobcat.

It may not sound like it in light of the above statement but I'm not really in the animal business, although I do have *legal* access to most Asian exotics (not just felines). I'm not interested in commercially developing this but on an occasional basis I would be willing to help out a fellow enthusiast.

We have a factory about 20 miles outside of Manila that makes fiberglass aquarium products for the export market. The area is largely agricultural with numerous deep and heavily vegetated ravines running through the countryside. There is a surprising amount of wildlife in these ravines.

Although seldom aggressive, there are many cobras and I personally saw two 15 foot sawas (pythons) taken out. About two months ago some locals caught a leopard cat and a musang (Phil. civet). Somewhat confused in their thinking, they thought I might want the musang, so they ate the leopard cat (which I might have taken).

Upon being informed that I couldn't take the musang, they ate it too.

Life is pretty hard for these poor farmers so I don't really blame them; I just relay this story to show a rather typical Asian attitude toward wildlife. The pythons were eaten also.

David Baskin

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Enclave of Cat Species in Thai Refuge

The eerie glow of predatory eyes shines by moonlight from a Thai forest, home to a remarkable community of cats. A thousand square mile sanctuary, Huai Kha Khaeng, shelters at least 21 kinds of carnivores. There are six cat species, including the fishing cat, tigers, both Asiatic and clouded leopards. Two bear species live here, as do seven species of civets.

The enclave suffers from poaching and encroachment by villagers, according to Alan Rabinowitz, a field research zoologist [author of *Jaguar* and champion of the Belize jaguar preserve -Ed.]. But he also reports that the government has dropped plans for dams, mining, and timbering projects in Huai Kha Khaeng and instead may declare it Thailand's first tiger preserve.

by John L. Eliot, reprinted



Last Refuge for the Texas Ocelot

Caesar-Kleberg and Laguna Atascosa continue to protect ocelots

The Texas ocelot *Felis pardalis albescens* once roamed over much of Texas, Louisiana, and Arkansas. Today, however, the range of this endangered subspecies in the United States is limited to extreme South Texas, where fewer than 100 individuals are thought to remain. For the last 10 years, a research project developed cooperatively by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute has studied the ecology of the ocelot and determined threats to this population. More than 40 ocelots have been radio-collared and monitored at or near the Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge as part of this project.

Research has shown that ocelots have a social system similar to that of most other solitary felids. Their home range sizes vary from 3-15 square kilometers, with male territories overlapping the home ranges of 1 to 3 adult females. Ocelots can breed year-round and produce litters of 1 or 2 young. The female alone cares for the young, which stay with her for about one year. The subadults usually remain in their mothers home range even after gaining independence, but they typically do disperse between 1 and 3 years of age. It may take months for young ocelots to find suitable unoccupied habitat to establish a territory in, but once they do so, they generally remain there for the rest of their lives.

As with most endangered animals, loss of habitat is the major reason for the Texas ocelot's decline. Ocelots utilize the extremely dense thorn forest communities found in South Texas. Thorn forests occur on the same fertile soils prized by agriculturalists, and most of this habitat has been cleared for farm land or urban development. Furthermore, much of the ocelot habitat still remaining is fragmented, making travel between areas difficult and dangerous for the cats. The leading cause of ocelot mortality documented during the study was from collision with vehicles while crossing roads between tracts of habitat.

Habitat protection is essential to the recovery of the Texas ocelot. Most of the remaining ocelots exist on private land and landowner education about ocelots and their habitat is an ongoing project. Habitat protection by means of acquisition and easements is also being pursued by both the Laguna Atascosa and the Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuges. These two refuges are also revegetating former agricultural fields within their boundaries back into native vegetation, which will eventually become ocelot habitat.

Cooperative efforts with the Texas Highway Department have resulted in the construction of one highway underpass in a location where several ocelots have previously been road-killed. The Highway Department has agreed to put in another underpass in an area known to be a travel corridor for the cats, in an attempt to reduce road mortality.

Additional research is another essential item in the recovery of this species. Continued monitoring at and near the Laguna Atascosa Refuge by refuge staff members is providing longterm ecological data on a fairly stable population of about 30 ocelots. The Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute is working on a distribution study throughout South Texas, looking for additional subpopulations. Ocelot blood samples collected from both studies are being used to monitor disease and determine the genetics of this small and fragmented population.

Loss of habitat has already taken its toll on another spotted cat of Texas, the jaguar, which disappeared from the area in the early 1950's. The ocelot requires less land than the jaguar and should stand a better chance of survival, but its future is also tenuous as human pressures for land intensify. Only continuous effort and adequate funding to support recovery projects will keep the ocelot a part of the Texas landscape.

by Linda Laack, contributed by Jean Hamil



A Review: The Maneaters of the Sundarbans

In a small boat on a tidal creek in the Sundarbans region of West Bengal, a young fisher man named Sanyasi Mandal awoke with horror one night to feel the warm putrid breath of a tiger on his face and to see its eyes glowing in the flickering light of the kerosene lamp beneath the boat's bamboo canopy.

As he lay paralysed and speechless with fear, he saw the tiger hesitate for a moment among the boat's four huddled occupants. Then it seized a 40-year-old man in its jaws and disappeared over the side, swimming to the shore with its victim as silently as it had come.

This was not an isolated incident. Over the past 20 years more than 800 people have been killed by man-eating tigers in the swampy Sundarbans, where the three great rivers of the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna meet to create a delta of 80,000 km², the largest tract of mangroves in the world.

In *Man-eating Tigers*, Kalyan Chakrabarti, Deputy Director of Wildlife Preservation in India's Eastern Region, recounts numerous incidents of man-eating in the Sundarbans, compares them with cases in other parts of India, and provides an analysis of possible causes. With nine years of field study in the Sundarbans behind him, including several as Director of the Sundarbans Tiger Reserve, he is uniquely qualified to present this survey. No one lives in the Sundarbans. But every year some 35,000 people obtain permits to enter the dense mangroves and winding tidal creeks to fish, to cut timber and firewood, to chop leaves from the mipa palm for thatch, or to collect honey from the nests of wild bees. Every year 36 of them are taken by tiger - Chakrabarti says the unofficial figure is as high as 100. Despite the danger, they are driven to risk their lives



because their dire poverty leaves them no alternative.

While tigers in other parts of India appear to have become man-eaters through rare individual casuses, such as old bullet wounds, injuries received in a fight with another tiger or the festering stabe of a porcupine quill, in the Sundarbans apparently healthy tigers show an astonishing ferocity and stealthy cunning in ambushing, tracking, pursuing and even swimming to seize human prey. This lead Charkrabarti to conclude that they are impelled by the cumulative action of physical and chemical elements in the local environment. From his researche he concludes that the salinity of the water is probably the most important factor in the case of 25% of the man-eaters. He backs this up by showing that the highest percentage of human casualties occur in the *Ceriops* forest habitat, where soil salinity reaches its highest level of 1.2 %. Salinity and the salt tolerance of the tigers - their osmo-regulatory mechanism, if any, their adaptation to constant fluctuations in salinity levels, the effects of brackish water on the kidney, liver and the entire physiological system are believed to be the factors responsible for producing aggressiveness in the tigers, he says.

In this he agrees with the tentative theory of German biologist Hubert Hendrichs (1975), who suggested that drinking saline water could be a factor in the aberrant behaviour of the Sundarbans tigers.



At the same time, Chakrabarti points out that by no means all of the 269 tigers (according to the 1989 census) in the Indian section of the Sundarbans are man eaters, but only a small proportion. He also makes some other observations, which together with the effects of salinity are the subject of further research:

- man-eating does not seem to be affected by the absence or abundance of prey. The Sundarbans offer plenty of prey species, chital, wild pig and rhesus monkey, and the tigers also eat crabs and monitor lizards.
- tigers never enter villages on the periphery of the forest in search of human prey, but take only those who enter the forest.
- 80% of the human victims in the forest are killed between 7 am and 8 am when workers are just reaching their work sites, and between 3 pm and 5 pm when they are preparing to leave for their camps. Attacks on fishermen usually occur at 11 pm when the boatmen are fast asleep.
- the most likely victims are men aged between 35 and 45, possibly because people in this age group have become more daring about their safety.
- the man-eaters show a healthy respect for fire-arms and never attack the boats of the forest guards, where the men are armed.

People who enter the Sundarbans to earn a meagre living go defenceless, except for ritual prayers to the tiger deity on stepping ashore, or fortified by the presence of the local pujari (priest) who goes ahead reciting mantras and often falls victim himself. Various protective measures have been tried out, including electric fencing round anchored boats more recently face masks worn on the back of the head to deter tigers which invariably attack from the rear.

What is most striking about the people of the Sundarbans is the courage with which

they not only penetrate these awesome jungles but will also brave the lurking tiger to bring back the mangled body of one of their comrades who has been seized.

Though men die, people lose their dear ones to tigers and swear never to come back - yet they eventually return, says Chakrabarti. The Sundarbans, it seems breed tough lifeforms. And man is no exception.

Chakrabarti is not concerned only with the Sundarbans tigers. He stresses the importance of the mangrove forests themselves, their enormous biological productivity which supports not only the people of the area but markets far away. And he also stresses another vital importance of the forests: The forests have to be conserved, not for the tiger alone, but for acting as natural barriers against the severe cyclonic storms and for breaking the massive tidal waves from the Bay of Bengal, which could, otherwise, destroy thousands of lives and properties worth million of rupees in adjacent villages. Project Tiger is essentially a conservation project for millions of poor men and it will directly or indirectly save the entire flora and faunal populations of the terrain.

Man-Eating Tigers by Kalyan Chakrabarti, published by Darbari Prokashan, Calcutta, ISBN 81-85169-28-4, price rupees 150.

Reference: Hendrichs, H. 1975. *The status of The tiger in the Sundarbans mangrove forest (Bay of Bengal)*. Sonderdruck aus Saugtierkundliche Mitteilungen, 23. Jhg., Heft 3, Seite 161-199.

by Adrienne Farrel in Cat News No. 17





Give A New Year's Present that Says You Care

Ensuring your cat's future in your will

If you own any animal, especially an animal that requires special care -such as an exotic cat!- I bet you've thought at pensive times during your ownership about just what would happen to the animal if you were killed or incapacitated. This article is a summary of the presentation I gave at our annual Convention this year concerning why you should and how you should include your cat (and any other critters you own and care about) in your will. If you don't have a will, this should also stimulate you to make one!

Although I've hosted several discussions concerning the fact that ownership of wildlife is a privilege granted by the government under defined circumstances, the animals that you are privileged (and permitted) to own are indeed your personal property. As personal property they occupy a legal category referred to as 'chattel.' (You've heard the term, from Elizabethan days -it means property of no particular value and with no particular qualities, like your quaint blue cat-scratched sofa.) I know it makes your skin crawl to hear that, but it's true.

As such, your animals will be treated as any other piece of property in your estate upon your demise: they will become wards of the court or its appointees until your probate -or your will and its wishes are made clear. They are not the same as children in this case!

So think for just a moment of what a probate court will know to ensure the proper continued care and permanent placement of your animals. Unless the relative who would acquire your property based on your state's inheritance law is involved on a regular basis with your animals, has the resources required, and knows *everything* necessary about their care, what would happen in case of your

demise would be a matter of dumb luck.

I have been personally involved in the frantic coordination required to guarantee minimum care to cats that belonged to people who died in an accident. I found it scary, frustrating, and was ready to get in the truck and drive (with however much food and care items would be immediately necessary) to help the cats.

But since neither I nor anyone else with the resources and the expertise was designated to take charge of the animals in a readily accessible will, my assistance became a matter of phone coordination. And cats died. Or were placed with people I wouldn't give a rat to.

So now its time for each of you - whether you own a cougar, a bengal cat, a batch of beautiful special-care domestics, an assorted breeding colony, or three dozen tigers! - to think about what you want to happen to your animals if you become unable to care for them. And to make sure you do what it takes to ensure their continued well-being.

First, if you don't have a will, make arrangements to write one. This can be done in any number of ways, but the approach you take and the amount of legal assistance you require will depend on the other circumstances -family, property, businesses - in your life.

Insofar as your animals are concerned, you need to include in your will some additional paragraphs designating a) who you wish to have them, b) any stipulations you wish -such as certain types of veterinary care, who must stay together, or euthanasia for a particular animal, c) definitions of what animals you're talking about (not names or you'll have to change the will every time you get a new animal), and d) designate an amount of money to go to the person or organization for the



care of your animals. Many people choose to add a power of attorney specifically for the situation when someone needs immediate access to your funds to care for the animals.

Notice that I have used the word "wish." You cannot *make* anything happen once you are gone and the "property" is transferred to someone else. You must, therefore, choose someone that you trust to carry out your wishes.

By all means, choose the person or organization carefully and, besides telling them that they are designated for whatever animals in your will, make sure that they are aware at all times of what to do and where to find things -like food, vitamins, medicines, locks and keys- and how to get more, in case of an emergency.

Those of you who are lucky enough to have your immediate relatives (not just a spouse) highly involved with your animals won't have to think about this too much. But the many of us who have a hard time digging up the right people to care for our critters while we are on vacation need to think this through. I often recommend that a trusted non-profit animal organization be considered as the will's designee.

Generally, the organization really won't want the animals permanently, but they will certainly know how to care for the animals, where to find the resources required, and what responsible permanent places there are available for your animals. My organization is designated by many of our former students, and even though we are not in the same city -or even state, sometimes- they feel comfortable that we have the resources and knowledge to ensure both immediate care and proper permanent care of their animals. You may wish to consider such an arrangement with an organization that you are familiar with. Another advantage of designating an organization is that they will always be there, and are constrained if they should dissolve to dispose of the animals they own to a simi-

lar non-profit organization. As with anyone who you designate, however, talk it over with them first.

Let me mention money again: It is only fair to include a reasonable amount of cash from your estate to go with the animals (enough for initial care, transfer and a cage is a good minimum -you don't *have to* plan for lifelong expenses of the animals). If nothing else, it will help greatly to ensure that serious compromises do not have to be made when the animals are put in a new home.

Now for the details. The ExotiCare attorney has drawn up a sample of the paragraphs you need to include in your will to designate care of your cats (for which we thank her profusely). To properly address all possibilities, stipulations and legal definitions of the cats you may own, it takes a page or so. This is available by request from me (see inside front cover, Director of Legal Affairs).

We suggest that you have an attorney -or paralegal- draw up a will appropriate to the concerns in the rest of your life, using the language required in your state. Take a copy of the recommended language addressing your animals to the person who draws up your will and ask that it be included.

For anyone who requests the suggested will language, I will also include several pages of my attorney's explanation and the power of attorney forms as well as directions for their filing. The total is seven pages of information - the reason we have not included it in the newsletter.

With all due respect, I hope that this article rattles your cage enough to get you to do whatever it takes to ensure that your cats do not suffer more than necessary in case of your sudden departure. Your children, your spouse, your parents will be taken care of - but your animals will not unless you take action. So give your critter "kids" a New Year's present that says you care.

Ulati K-M





Q.I.D.

(Latin: quater in die, four times a day)

Part One

The three clouded leopards *neofelis nebulosa* at Wegforth Bowl were acquired seven years ago as kittens. They were designated to be part of the educational show collection and to help develop a new approach to the breeding of clouded leopards. The two males, Rimau and Dahan, and the female, Asia, constituted a bonded trio of unrelated cats. Over the years, they have brought a great deal of respect to the San Diego Zoo's clouded leopard breeding record, and they have simultaneously enhanced the impact of the animal shows. The incredible tractability of all three cats has allowed trainers to be more aware of and involved in their well-being at critical times in their lives (see Zoonooz August 1988).

In the spring of 1991, Rimau's left eye began to take on a different shape. His pupil, normally anywhere from a clean closed slit to a large circle, now appeared to have abnormal pigment "threads" dispersing from the outline. A veterinary ophthalmologist was called upon to take a closer look. It was discovered that not only was Rimau's pupil "being lazy" but he also had bilateral, diffuse, immature cataracts, with one eye worse than the other. Due to Rimau's tractable nature, the doctor felt that he was an excellent candidate for an operation that could correct the cataracts.

Phacoemulsification surgery -phaco, meaning lens in Latin- is a relatively quick and simple operation when performed by an expert. Post-operative care, however is not quick or simple but long and arduous. It involves medication administered to each eye four times a day for several weeks. This was absolutely crucial to the success of the surgery. The operation would not even be considered unless we convinced the veterinarians and ourselves that we could give the postoperative care. At this point, the apparent risk

did not seem warranted, and Rimau's behavior remained fairly normal for a while.

The individual personalities of the cats and their respective routines are so well established and predictable that it is easy for us to perceive "off" moods. Rimau gradually started looking different as the cataracts progressed and both pupils continued dispersing. Asia, especially, noticed the difference and would run away from Rimau as he approached her.

Because of the size disparity between the males and female - with Asia at 28 pounds and both of the males at 50 pounds - it is probably customary for the males to avoid eye contact as they approach a female. They vocalize - called a prusten response - and swagger sideways but lower their heads and look away. This assures the female that the contact is not aggressively motivated. Rimau's inability to see well forced him to open his eyes wide and stare, no doubt sending confusing signals to an apprehensive Asia.

Rimau is also referred to as Garfield Junior, and, just like the cartoon character, he is always hungry, complains a lot, and always tries to find easier ways to do things. So, initially Rimau's recalcitrance to complete specific jumping routines on stage was viewed as his way of attempting to reduce his workload. We pursued alternate training methods, hoping to correct the deterioration, but it became obvious that he was not being stubborn on principle but rather out of bewilderment. By September, we eliminated the jump sequences, kept his performance on ground level, and endeavored to be his eyes, using the leash and our voices to guide him. We introduced him to Asia daily in darker areas so that his eyes could relax and he could resume acting naturally. His demeanor calmed appreciably as this new routine settled in. But the disruption of a very compatible relationship and the cessation of an otherwise enjoyable stage performance was enough for us to consult an expert and consider the surgery.

To be continued in the next *Newsletter*



Christmas Gift, continued from page 11

and he accepted that fact. He really wanted to do his best with Silver.

Greg ended up waking three times during the night to feed, and help relieve Silver; and at seven A.M., when his regular morning alarm went off, he awoke feeling a little tired.

He was just starting to dress for work, when he realized: he hadn't thought of what to do with Silver when he had to work. He thought for a minute, and decided that he could take Silver to work with him. He knew that his Boss, Mr. Anderson, had a soft heart when it came to animals. He would just have to hope that Mr. Anderson wouldn't mind.

For almost the entire length of the forty minute drive, Greg tenderly stroked Silver's head with his finger. He was almost at his workplace, when he suddenly felt the tiny rumblings of purring underneath his little finger. A broad smile spread across Greg's face, and he said: "Yes, I love you, Silver."

When Greg finally walked into his office fifteen minutes early, he first laid his briefcase on the desk, and then put Silver's basket on the floor next to his chair, and then put the bag containing all of the bottles, and extra formula, and paper towels on the table in the corner. He then took one of the small bottles out of the bag, and decided to quickly feed Silver before he started his work. Silver had almost drained the bottle, when Mr. Anderson walked into the office.

"Hi, Greg, I have this new account that I need you to do a slogan for. It's a new kind of kiddie breakfast cereal." At this point, Mr. Anderson saw that Greg was feeding Silver. "What on earth are you doing, Greg?"

"Oh, this? This is Silver. He's an orphaned kitten, so I have to feed him every once in



a while. I have no other way to take care of him. Don't worry, it won't interfere with my work."

"Can I see him?"

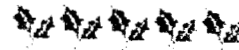
"Sure, just be very gentle. He's very young." With that, Mr. Anderson came over, and gently stroked Silver as Greg held him.

"What kind of cat is he?"

"He's a bobcat. His mother was killed, so I'm raising him. He would not have lived otherwise."

"A bobcat? That's interesting. Well, I have no problem with it, as long as it doesn't interfere with your work."

"Don't worry, it won't. I only have to do this every two hours, or so." With that, he placed Silver back in his basket. Mr.



Anderson then proceeded to tell him what he wished him to do that day, and when he left, Greg began his day's work, stopping occasionally to care for Silver.

For the next week, he took Silver to work with him every day, on the weekend staying home to care for his new friend. On December 20th, Silver's eyes opened, and he could now begin to see his surrogate Father, and the world around him. It was this very morning that his sister called him.

"Hi, Greg, it's Ellen. I'm just wondering if you would like to come over for Christmas morning, and bring our gifts? You spent last year with Donald, so this year's our turn to host you."

"I appreciate your offer, Ellen but I have a big responsibility now, and I plan to spend this Christmas at home. I have a lot of thing I have to do. You, and the children are welcome to come over for a few hours Christmas eve, though. I will give you your presents then, and I will explain more about my commitments then. Thank you, goodbye."

After he hung up the phone, he checked Silver, who was asleep, and put on his shoes, and coat. He went out to the garage, and let out Oscar, and began to pat his head.

"I know I haven't spent much time with you lately, old boy, and I'm sorry. You will understand why soon." Greg didn't really believe that Oscar could understand him, but his ears had perked up when Greg spoke, and he had seemed more at ease afterwards.

With Oscar following him, Greg began to walk toward the large oak tree behind his house. When he reached the oak tree, he looked down at the freshly turned earth where he had laid the Mother bobcat to rest.

"I'm sorry for what happened, old girl, but I'm taking the best care of your baby I can. I hope that wherever you are, you can find it in your heart to forgive me."

As he looked down, he felt at peace with himself. In giving her life, the Mother bobcat had given Greg a special gift; one which he would nurture, and love to the best of his ability.

He had received the greatest Christmas wish of all: love.

The love of a feline friend is worth more than all the money and material things in the World.

by James Godsmark , LIOC member, Ontario





Happy New Year



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