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Feline Conservation Federation



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CHECK OUT OUR NEW FCF WEB ADDRESS!

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online at www.theFCF.org

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e-mail list discussions on-line at:

The_FCF@yahoogroups.com.

To sign up, contact Donna Verba,
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COVER: Iberian lynx are being
bred in captivity to save the
species from extinction.

Read more starting on page 4

Photo by Gary Roberts ©

BELOW: Pallas Cats at the Topeka Zoological Park, Topeka, KS.
Mother Alexis had five kittens! Photo by Jason T. Moore. © Read about
Pallas and other small cats in the Felid TAG Report on page 26





Feline Conservation Federation

This magazine is published bi-monthly by the LIOC Endangered Species Conservation Federation, Inc. d/b/a as the Feline Conservation Federation. We are a non-profit (Federal ID# 59-2048618) non-commercial organization with international membership, devoted to the welfare of exotic felines. The purpose of this publication is to present information about exotic feline conservation, management and ownership to our members. The material printed 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. FCF's Statement of Intent is contained in our bylaws, a copy of which can be requested from the Secretary. Reproduction of the material in this magazine may not be made without the written permission of the original copyright owners and/or copyright owner FCF. We encourage all members to contribute articles. 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. Submission deadline for the next issue is the tenth of odd numbered months. Please submit all photos and articles to the Editor. Persons interested in joining FCF should contact the Term Director in Charge of Member Services.

In This Issue: *Iberian Lynx born - a cause for celebration!*

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Iberian Lynx, the most endangered feline in the world

the forgotten species

Annette Lundberg

We know the Sumatran tiger is almost extinct, the African cheetah are endangered and we worry deeply about the beautiful snow leopard! Since these cats all live in the third world, most of us find these facts sad but understandable. With economic development there is education and with knowledge you protect nature, so we assume this could never happen here in Europe. Actually we could not be more wrong!

Many are under the impression there are two species of wild cats in Europe, the Eurasian lynx and the European wildcat. There is a third species of wild feline in Europe, and this is the most endangered wild cat on earth, the Iberian lynx. This cat is not only endangered to the brink of total extinction but also unknown to the majority of us. It is getting wiped out in silence.

The Iberian lynx is known by experts and by EU representatives but not to the common European. Since it is unknown, there is little public pressure to save the few individuals left. The Iberian lynx is very vulnerable to traffic, hunters, loss of prey and habitat, but also suffers from regional, national and EU politics.

The other day a telegram announcing the birth of three Iberian lynxes was on the Swedish national news every thirty minutes most of the day. In the afternoon one of the major newspapers had it as well. Fine, one would think, but what is so special about that?

I happen to know first hand only **chance** made this wonderful and important news reach the press.

Early that morning I had e-mail from SOS-Lynx telling me about the cubs born the day before and I already had some pictures sent to me including a baby picture of the mother to the three newborns.

I happened to work with the early morning news and I asked the editor if he would be interested in using the pictures and make a telegram about it. Luckily it was one of the nice editors so he agreed to do so.

Normally at that time of the day (4 am) most international stories are taken from various news bureaus. There was nothing on AP, nothing at the Swedish TT and nothing at EVN or any of the other channels most of the international news comes from. Not a word about the three newborn cubs. The world and Europe was just not interested, or just didn't know how big this news was.

If I had not been at the news bureaus, no newspapers, or TV news stations, apart from the Spanish and Portuguese ones, would have covered this birth event!



Saliega gave birth to three kittens this spring

The impact of all this came as a shock to me. It would never have made it to the news, if it weren't for chance and a series of events. **How is mankind to care, if he does not know?**

There is a captive breeding program, co-coordinated between the Spanish and Andalusian Governments. For the first time ever, Iberian lynx cubs have been born in captivity. Three cubs were born on Monday March 30 to two adults, Saliega and Garfio, both of whom had been found in the Sierra Morena mountains as young animals and recovered by vets working for the Spanish national and regional governments. The birth of the cubs is a ray of hope in the fight to save the Iberian Lynx, the world's rarest wild cat, from extinction. Latest government estimates put the total confirmed wild population of adults between 100 to 120 individuals.

The success of the breeding program is testimony to the dedication and skill of those involved, including the staff at the El Acebuche breeding centre in the Doñana National Park, the Zoo Jerez veterinary team that recovered the animals, and the members of the Iberian breeding committee, including representatives of the Spanish government's Environment Ministry and the Junta de Andalusia regional government.

There are now 13 lynx (8 females and 5 males) in captivity, in two centers in Andalusia, and a new larger center is being built in Jaer, also in Andalusia.

The plan is to build up a founder population to help secure the survival of the species, and eventually to start reintroducing animals back into the wild. At present, there are two known breeding groups in the wild. One is in the Andujar Mountains,

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Letter from the President

Greetings Fellow Members

Finally spring is here along with the feline kittens. FCF Life Director, Tracy Wilson had four serval kittens born mid March at her facility and they are nice presents to her husband Keith who just arrived into the US from Iraq. Thanks Keith for fighting for our right to remain free. Tracy proudly said three of the kittens would be going to zoos to be educational ambassadors.

Many of us live in the areas that have tornadoes during the spring and early summer. It is time for us that live in these areas to up-date our severe weather emergency plan. Do not wait until you are hit with severe weather to come up with the emergency plan. Post your written emergency plan to where it can be readily viewed.

On March 16-20-2005, the American Zoo & Aquarium Association held their annual Felid Tag Conference in St. Louis, Missouri to promote the preservation of the wild felines. This year focus was on the African cats.

For the past few years, FCF has sent one or more of their Officers or Directors to attend this conference. This year, FCF had five of their officers and Directors attend this conference. They were Directors J.B. Anderson, Lynn Culver, Leann Montgomery and Officers Kevin Chambers and myself.

Wednesday and Thursday, Kevin, Lynn, and Leann attended the Clouded Leopard, Ocelot, Fishing Cat, Pallas Cat, Black-Footed Cat, Cheetah, and Lion Single Species Population (SSP) meetings.

Friday and Saturday, all five of us attended the guest speaker sessions that were very interesting and informative. After the speaker session ended 2:30 pm Saturday, the conference attendees traveled over to the St. Louis Zoo for the rest of the day. After 5:00 PM, the zoo was closed to the public, so the conference attendees had the zoo to themselves. Saturday night we were served a very good banquet meal.

Lynn Culver was one of the Saturday morning speakers giving up-date on the FCF main projects. Lynn did an excellent presentation on the FCF projects. She is a pro at speaking and it was evident when the background music to her video portion of her presentation did not function and she carried on just like a trooper. Most of us would have melted to floor if that would have happen to us.

Want to give a special "Thank You" to AZA Felid Tag program Co-Chair, Dr. Bill Swanson of the Cincinnati Zoo for arranging at the last moment a spot for Lynn to talk about FCF projects. Bill was a guest speaker at the FCF National Convention that was held in Wichita, Kansas three years ago. Bill's main work at the Cincinnati Zoo is with the small wild felines and is one of the best small wild feline researchers in the country. Dr. Swanson gave a talk about the plight of the small felines and

asked the zoos that do not currently have small felines at their facilities, to get serious about small felines before it is too late. He states it is necessary for broader zoo involvement. I have great respect for Dr. Swanson on his work and concern for the small felines.

The AZA Felid Tag Conference event host Steve Bircher, the St. Louis Zoo curator of Mammals/Carnivores, graciously arranged for J.B. and myself to have a behind-the-scenes tour of the cat compounds two hours before the rest of the conference attendees arrived at the zoo. What a pleasure it was for J.B. and myself to have an up-close visit with the Snow Leopards and Cheetahs. J.B. is the Snow Leopard man and I'm very interested in the cheetah. J.B. and I meet Steve at the USDA Big Cat Symposium that was held in St. Louis last fall. Steve is a wonderful person and very knowledgeable cat keeper for the zoo.

During the Saturday night banquet, I got the opportunity to meet and talk to Dr. Jeffrey Bonner who is the President and CEO of the St. Louis Zoo about FCF and our Ecuadorian Rain Forest project and the Husbandry Course. It was good to get the opportunity to meet and talk to Dr. Bonner about FCF and hope to develop better understanding between FCF and the AZA community. During the conference, the AZA conference delegates treated all of us five FCF Representatives at the conference with courtesy.

The FCF branch, Alliance for the Conservation of Exotic Felines (ACEF) elected to not to continue to be a branch of FCF. ACEF President, Jeanne Hall tendered a letter of resignation of the ACEF as a branch of FCF effective February 28, 2005. The reason given was that ACEF at this time did not meet the requirements for FCF branch status and chose to become an independent entity. Jeanne said that if in the future they can meet the FCF requirements for branch status, they could apply to FCF to reinstate ACEF as a branch of FCF. FCF Board will welcome the chance to reinstate ACEF as a branch of FCF. ACEF has a very active membership and look forward to the day ACEF is again a branch of FCF.

I encourage all FCF members – pet owners to exhibitors to apply for the high standard FCF Exotic Feline Accreditation. The FCF Exotic Feline Facility Accreditation provides a "Seal of Approval" that the owner meets or exceeds the high standards and is qualified to provide a safe and productive environment for exotic felines.

Don't forget; get your articles to the FCF Editor for the newsletter.

Sincerely,

Robert Turner

Kitten Feeding and Care

Tracy Wilson

Spring will be here soon, and that means kitten season is fast approaching. I thought this would be a good time to go over some basics about kitten care and feeding to get us all prepared for those little bundles of fur soon to arrive. Here is a milk formula recipe that I have had great success raising serval kittens and other small cat species on, along with some kitten feeding and care tips for small wild feline species.

3/4 cup distilled water or unflavored Pedialyte
1/2 cup PLAIN UNFLAVORED yogurt, fat free (helps thicken the formula to help prevent aspiration, and provides good bacteria to balance the digestive system. Do not use vanilla or other flavored or sweetened yogurts as it could cause diarrhea.)
1/4 cup Zoologics Milk Matrix 33/40 milk powder
1 teaspoon Osteo Form Calcium powder (available from Revival Animal Health
<http://www.revivalanimal.com> Item #83-224
OSTEOFORM POWDER 1 Lb.)
1/2 teaspoon Taurine powder (available from Revival Animal Health
<http://www.revivalanimal.com> Item 73-151 16 oz powder)
1 ml squirt of Poli Vi Sol liquid baby vitamins (human baby vitamins available at pharmacies)

At about 4 weeks, you can add plain pureed chicken baby food to the formula gradually. Start with a very small amount and gradually increase it so as not to cause diarrhea.

Blend ingredients together in blender until smooth. Allow bubbles to settle out of formula before feeding to prevent gas. Formula is only good for 24 hours; throw out any remaining after 24 hours. Must be refrigerated. Any formula that is heated up for the kitten and not used must be thrown away if not used within half hour, do not re-refrigerate heated formula. Formula should not be heated up directly in microwave as hot spots could occur in the formula that could burn the kitten internally. Instead, heat up a coffee cup of water in the microwave for about 1 minute. After heating water, place bottle (already filled with formula and nipple in place on the bottle), into the cup of hot water and let it sit for about 1 minute. Check formula temperature by squirting a small amount on your wrist to ensure it is not too hot to feed the kitten. It should be warm feeling, but not uncomfortably hot to your wrist. Feeding overheated formula can cause severe internal burns to a kitten, as most kittens typically drink so fast they will be scalded before they realize the milk was too hot. My servals and other small cat species have preferred a bottle nipple made by Four Paws called a "Vet Nipple" N-30 the best. It is small and has a tapered end,



not a round end. (available through KV Vet Supply <http://www.kvvet.com> Item#: 80412)

Always feed a kitten laying on it's stomach or sitting / standing upright. Never flip a kitten over on it's back and allow it to drink in the manner that human babies are held, as milk could enter the kittens lungs and cause aspiration, which can cause the kitten to develop pneumonia and die. Note that any time a kitten is started on a new formula, or switched to a different formula recipe or brand, that the new formula should be diluted and introduced slowly. You can start by diluting the formula down to just 1/4 part formula to water (or Pedialyte). It is a good idea when a kitten is first pulled from it's mother to start with unflavored pedialyte for the first 24 hours that it accepts a bottle to allow the mother's milk to get out of it's system. It might take several weeks to get up to full strength formula. However, each kitten responds differently. Exercise patience and increase formula strength very slowly. If at any time you increase the amount of formula and diarrhea follows within a day, decrease the strength of the formula back down to the strength where stools were fine and take things slower before increasing the strength again.

It's a good idea to always stimulate a kitten up to around 4 weeks of age to go to the bathroom before feeding to empty it's bladder or intestines. Kittens under 4 weeks of age should be stimulated to potty at least 3-4 times a day. Kittens produce a huge amount of urine, so expect a lot of urine, and small bowel movements maybe just once or twice a day. Gently dab, (do not rub) their ano-genital areas with a soft tissue, warm baby wipe, or wet warm cloth to stimulate them to potty both urine and feces. If you irritate the kitten's bottom, it will feel raw and burning to the kitten when they try to potty, which may make it reluctant to go at all. Be very careful not to rub their bottoms raw. If the kitten's bottom is obviously red and raw, you can apply a small amount triple antibiotic ointment to the area. Once the kitten can potty on it's own, which is usually upwards of 3 to 4 weeks of age, then you no longer have to practice potty stimulation.

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Kitten Feeding and Care *continued from page 6*

It is a good idea to keep a feeding journal on the kitten, to record the strength of formula you are feeding and the status of stools so that you know if diarrhea is directly related to a increase in formula strength. It is also wise to keep track of how much the kitten is eating at each feeding to ensure that it continues to increase in amount eaten, and not decrease at any time. Rule of thumb for the amount to feed, kittens should be eating about 5% of their body weight on a daily basis until they are adults. It's also important to weigh young kittens daily with a small kitchen scale. If the kitten's weight starts to go down or the amount of milk consumed starts to decrease from normal, then this is a signal that something is wrong with the kitten, before it gets severely ill, and you should pay very close attention. Sometimes the only notice that a young kitten gives before it gets severely ill, is just skipping one feeding. If it refuses it's bottle at the normal feeding time when it is normally hungry, try to stimulate it to go to the bathroom, as it may have a full bladder. If a young kitten refuses to eat anything at all in 24 hours, take it to the vet, something is wrong. (not including



when first pulled from it's mother and trying to start on a bottle, this sometimes might take up to 48 hours before a bottle is accepted for the first time.)

Typically diarrhea caused from too strong formula will be yellow and runny, looking like yellow mustard. If a kitten has severe diarrhea for more than 24 hours, and it is a strange color or smell, seek veterinarian treatment asap. If your kitten has diarrhea that has mucous, undigested particles, blood, is green, or anything abnormal looking, seek a veterinarian treatment immediately, as kittens can die from dehydration and diarrhea very quickly if left untreated. Note that is it common for exotic kittens to develop illnesses called Giardia and Coccidia. Most all animals are exposed to these bacteria's, but not all animals develop illness symptoms. Under normal circumstances a healthy animal with a fully developed immune system will be

immune to exposure to Giardia and Coccidia. These illnesses are often brought on in exotic kittens with immature immune systems by stress such as moving to a new home, being shipped or transported, change in diet, or any combination of stressful events, etc. These illnesses are not deadly in themselves; however, the symptoms of diarrhea and dehydration can kill a kitten quickly. So do not be alarmed if you kitten does develop one of these illnesses, but do seek medical help immediately so that your kitten does not die from the symptoms.

It is very easy to overfeed young kittens too much milk formula. Rule of thumb: It is better to feed smaller amounts more frequently, than to feed large amounts less often. Overfeeding can cause gas, bloating, and diarrhea. Here's a general guideline for feeding intervals:

0-2 weeks of age - Every 2 to 3 hours around the clock, diluted formula.

3-4 weeks of age - Every 3 to 4 hours, around the clock, increasing formula strength gradually.

4-6 weeks of age - Every 4 to 5 hours, sleep through the night. Can gradually add plain pureed chicken baby food gradually to formula.

6-12 weeks of age - Morning, Noon, and Night. Start introducing solids foods such as ground turkey or chicken, with supplements in small gradual amounts. Can put milk on solid food to encourage kitten to eat it. Around 12 weeks of age, you can also introduce small pieces of meat on the bone, such as a chicken wing drum.

The kitten will not be able to eat the bone for a while, but it is good to start letting it try at this age. Eventually as the kitten does start to eat the bone, you can move up to a larger piece of meat and bone, such as a chicken drumstick.

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Kitten Feeding and Care

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After 12 weeks, it is ok to wean the kitten off the bottle entirely if it is eating solid food well, and some will wean themselves off sometimes even earlier than that. If after 6-8 weeks your kitten is fighting the bottle more than it wants to suck it, and is eating solids well, then quit fighting to give it a bottle, and just let it move on to solids. At this point, you should feed kittens solid food in small portions 3 times a day. Decrease the frequency of feedings as the kitten gets closer to adulthood, with one feeding per day as an adult. It is also ok to let a kitten remain on a bottle for as long as it will take a bottle. I have adult servals several years old that will still suck a bottle any time it is offered. I like to keep servals on the bottle until at least 18 months of age, with at least one bottle a day from 12 weeks and older to help ensure they are getting enough calcium. It is also a good daily bonding routine between owner and cat to continue bottle feeding into their adulthood.



Hunt, chase and even a little bit of fetch the plastic face soap container are her favorite games. Pixie doesn't walk well on a leash, but we can get her to and from the truck for rides that she loves.
Andy and Kodi Cooley



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There are several levels of membership - Associate, Professional Zooculturist, Public Facility, Non-public Facility and Commerical. Membership fees vary and some levels require sponsorship.

Visit the ZAOA web site for more information at:
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Or write Zoological Association of America,
HC1, Box 747
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e-mail: iszn@c2i2.com

Hi everyone. Determination and constant work and you can keep a bobcat tame to be a great pet. Pixie is almost two now and lives in the house with us and her best friend Pilcher, a normal house cat.

We had her declawed and spayed when she was almost 4 months. Lucky we found a very experienced vet that had declawed many bobcat and lynx with a new laser technology. Two days later off came the bandages with not one drop of blood on the wraps and she was off racing around, up and down like normal. Now when she finds a piece of wood or door edge she sharpens her paws resulting in a lot less destruction.

FCF EXOTIC FELINE FACILITY ACCREDITATION- DO YOU QUALIFY?

The Accreditation committee has received several inquiries about the requirements for FCF Accreditation from people interested in participating. In this article, we hope to give a better understanding of what is expected from facilities in order to become accredited. For the most part, we have intentionally avoided absolutes and detailed specifics because it is understood that each facility is different. For example, a myriad of materials are used to build enclosures and it is nearly impossible to make a list without leaving out something that is entirely adequate, yet if a list were made and that material were left out, it would not be acceptable. Instead, we chose to make the requirement only that the material be sufficiently strong for that species. Accreditation relies on the decades worth of experience of the accreditation panel in dealing with hundreds of cats from almost every species.

OUTDOOR FACILITIES- The enclosures should be constructed to insure that they are adequate to contain the species of cat held. The minimum requirements are that the gauge and opening size of fencing and construction be in good condition and are strong enough to contain the cats under all circumstances. Common walls with other cat enclosures should be constructed so that injury cannot be caused by the cat in the adjacent enclosure. The enclosures should be well braced and securely anchored at ground level to prevent escape by digging or erosion. The fasteners and fittings used in construction should be of equivalent strength to the material used for construction. Open top exercise areas or enclosures are acceptable, as long there is also a covered lock down area. The exercise area should have vertical walls at least 8-12 feet high, topped with either a) an inward angled overhang which is at least 2 feet in length and of equal strength as the enclosure walls, or b) at least 2 strands of electrified wire with 1 strand located on the inside of the enclosure wall approximately 1 foot below the top of the vertical wall and the other at the top.

Enclosure size must be at least enough to provide sufficient space to allow each animal to make normal postural and social adjustments with adequate freedom of movement. Larger is preferred.

Each enclosure and/or building must have a safety door system. This is a system of two doors where the caretaker can enter one, shut it, and then open the second, without providing an avenue of escape for the cat.

There should also be a perimeter fence around the enclosures to prevent escape should a cat get out of an enclosure and to prevent unwanted animals or people from being able to get close to the cats. The perimeter fence should be at least 6 feet tall, preferably 8 feet or taller, and should be at

least 3 feet away from the primary enclosure if they are constructed of fencing or other such material that has openings that would allow objects to be passed through. If the cats are kept in an enclosed building or house, no perimeter fence is necessary as long as the building has a safety entrance and any windows or openings are covered with a mesh sufficient to prevent accidental escape. Gates into the perimeter fence should be kept closed at all times and secured with a lock when no one is present.

The enclosures should have a way to feed, water, or provide basic cleaning without having to enter the enclosure with the cats. This can be done by providing another cage where the cats can be shifted while performing these tasks or by having a design that allows these things to be done from outside the cage.

The enclosure must provide shelter for the cats from the sun and rain and the floor of the cage must be well drained and allow for regular cleaning to avoid the build up of waste and debris.

INDOOR FACILITIES- Indoor facilities, whether a specific building for holding cats or a home where cats are kept, must have adequate ventilation to prevent build up of ammonia and other noxious odors. The cats must have exposure to sufficient natural or artificial sunlight.

If the cats are kept in a residence, the area where the cats are allowed unsupervised access should be free from hazards such as exposed electrical cords, toxic plants, chemicals or cleaning agents, etc. If the cats are allowed to roam in an area where there a door that opens to the outside, a double door system must be devised to prevent the cat from bolting outside. Windows in the area where the cats are allowed to roam must also be protected in such a way that the cat is not able to exit if they are left open or if the cat challenges the window. If this is impractical, the house should be surrounded by a perimeter fence to prevent accidental escapes.

NUTRITION- The emphasis is to make sure that the cats are receiving a good diet in proper amounts to maintain them in good condition. The committee realizes that there many different diets fed to exotic cats which are adequate. More than anything, the condition of the cats themselves will demonstrate this. Cats in poor condition are a possible sign that there is a problem with nutrition. Obviously, a cat in good condition is receiving an adequate diet.

We also want to make sure that storage and handling of the feed is done in a manner that insures its freshness and that possible contamination from vermin, or other sources, is prevented.

VETERINARY CARE- The facility should have a veterinarian that is capable of handling any emergency medical situations and either provides, or can be consulted with, to provide a program of veterinary care. A schedule for vaccinations, deworming, or other preventative veterinary care is asked for, whether the care is provided by the facility or the vet. These schedules may be on a regular time interval or on an “as needed” basis.

HUSBANDRY- The experience of primary caretakers/ owners is important to insure that they have adequate background knowledge of wild cats. A minimum of 100 hours of documented practical experience caring for similar species of cats as those kept, obtained over a period of not less than one year, is required. For people with less than five years of experience, they should have a list of three mentors. These mentors are people with considerable experience (6+ years) who can be contacted for advice and ideas.

If employees or volunteers are involved with the animal husbandry, they should have a training program that is used to insure that they are adequately knowledgeable for the safety of the cats and themselves. Safety protocols and rules for employees/volunteers should be in place to provide for the safety of the cats and employees/volunteers such as when they can enter an enclosure with cats in it, when or if they are allowed direct contact, etc.

The cats should have some sort of enrichment. The enrichment provided should physically or mentally stimulate the cats. Such enrichment should be non-injurious and may include, but is not limited to, boxes, bones, balls, barrels, rawhide, pools, scratch posts, use of olfactory scents, etc.

EMERGENCY PLANS- Every facility should have emergency plans in place to contend with situations that might possibly arise. Situations such as animal medical emergencies, animal escape, tornado or other natural disasters, fire, sickness/ death of the owner, and injury to public/self should be given forethought so that should an emergency situation arise, it can be dealt with confidently and effectively. Some of the items to consider when making out these emergency plans are listed below for the situations. Your plans should address these questions on how you can make sure you are prepared.

Animal medical emergencies- Do you have a veterinarian within reasonable distance that you can contact 24 hours a

day? Is a backup vet available? Has the vet worked with your animal before? Will the vet come to you or will you have to take the cat to him? Do you have a means to restrain the animal or a way to transport it?

Animal escape- Have all precautions been taken to prevent an escape? Who, when, and how will you notify should an escape occur? What capture equipment do you have? Do you have a list of people who can aid you or bring additional capture equipment? Do you have a weapon available should the animal need to be destroyed to protect the public? How are you going to deal with the press?

Tornado or other natural disasters- Do you have safe lockdown areas or other spots available where the cats can be put to provide protection? Do you have alternative facilities where you can place the animals should your facility be damaged? Do you have a means to safely capture and transport the cats?

Fire- Do you have the number for your local fire department? Should the fire possibly endanger the cats, do you have a means to capture them and move them to safety, remembering that they may be quite excited?

Sickness/ death of the owner- Do you have someone willing and able to care for your animals if you are unable to? Do they have the knowledge to care for the animals and know where everything is kept, such as all animals and food? Do they know where your emergency plans are and how to implement them? Do you have a will? Does it provide for the disposition of your animals?

Injury to public/self- What will you do if an attack is taking place? Do you have equipment such as fire extinguishers or a high-pressure hose to back the animal down? Do you have a means of destroying the animal should it be necessary to reach the victim? Do you have numbers for the hospital/ ambulance service? What are the laws pertaining to rabies vaccinations or bites from an unvaccinated cat? Will your insurance cover such injuries? How will you deal with the press?

RECORDS- Facilities should keep permanent records of all animal transactions. The information kept on all animal acquisitions or dispositions should include the animal's origin/destination complete with address, dates, date of birth, etc. Ideally, a pedigree of the animal's ancestry should also be included, especially if the animal is intended to be used for breeding.

If medical records for all animals aren't kept, a method for doing so should be implemented. Data should include vaccination type and dates, deworming dates, results of any routine health checks, and any other medication or medical procedures that have been performed on the animal.

continued on page 19

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Bill Swanson Invites FCF Breeders to Participate in Cat Urine Pregnancy Test Research

The Cincinnati Zoo is testing a protocol for urine collection to test a cat urine pregnancy test. If private breeders in FCF are interested in participating, I can mail urine storage tubes and bulb pipettes for collection. After the female(s) has her kittens, the frozen urine samples should be shipped to me. Because the frozen samples must be shipped via overnight carriers (Fedex, DHL, etc.) and that can get expensive, I would prefer that only breeders that have multiple cats or multiple non-domestic species participate to maximize the number of samples from each location while minimizing the number of shipments that he needs to fund.

One urine sample a week from each pregnant female would be ideal (through the time of birth) but even a single sample from a pregnant female would be of value. Note that even if the females do not become pregnant after observed breeding, the urine samples still are of value since we want to show that the assay can differentiate between non-pregnant luteal phases (pseudopregnancy) and true pregnancy.

Also note that I am just trying to validate the assay for as many cat species as possible right now and I will not be able to diagnose pregnancy (in real time) for any of the participating breeders. However, if the assay works well across species, there are plans to offer it for a nominal fee with a reasonable turn-around time in the future.

Please let me know if you are interested in participating. Thanks.

William F. Swanson, DVM, PhD
Director, Animal Research
Center for Conservation and Research of Endangered
Wildlife (CREW)
Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden
3400 Vine Street
Cincinnati OH 45220
ph. (513) 961-2739
fax (513) 569-8213
e-mail: william.swanson@cincinnati-zoo.org

Urine Collection for Pregnancy Testing

- 1) Urine (1-2 mls) is needed from non-pregnant and pregnant female cats to validate a new pregnancy test for felids.
- 2) **If possible, collect urine samples once per week from females that are in a breeding situation and likely to become pregnant. Samples should be collected through parturition (up to one week post-partum if possible).**
- 3) For small cats, urine may be collected by using plastic litter beads in a litter pan (put ~1/8 inch of litter in the pan – it's expensive and can't be re-used!) or by aspirating urine off of the exhibit floor using a syringe or bulb pipette (this latter method should be used for large cat species).
- 4) **Transfer urine into a storage tube, label with the cat's ID# (either ISIS or SB), species name and the DATE.**
- 6) **Store urine samples in the freezer until pick-up**

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Long Time Exotic Owner shares his Views

I just wanted to voice my opinions. I have mixed feelings on owners and seller of exotics. I am for ownership and for the sellers; I just feel we need to be more responsible on both sides.

I have owned exotics for about 20 years and I have loved every minutes of it. I have worked at two sanctuaries also. When I lived in Kansas, a Dodge City girl got a tiger, (their first cat); it was about one and a half years old. She kept it on a motel in town, she was letting kids 8, 9 and 10- year olds play with it; it was an accident waiting to happen. She finally lost the cat - it's in a sanctuary in Tennessee. The place where she got the cat, sold it to her cheap, cause he had no room for it.

At an auction in Kansas, two baby tigers sold for \$50.00 a piece. He told me had to get rid of them because he had "no room for them." The people who got these cats lived in the city limits, but the sellers told them it was alright.

Exotic cats are a long commitment - 15 to 20 years. Here in Ohio, I could tell you some more. A guy was walking his baby tiger on a leash, in town, and went into a pet shop; he wanted to buy a muzzle for the tiger. Well they took it from him.

I live in Ohio now, and we are under the gun right now, as many states are. The laws are getting tougher. We need to keep in touch with the laws and our legislators, don't wait till a bill passes, cause then its too late, we can't own them. People in Ohio, we need to unite. One voice can't do much, but a lot voices can make a difference. Ohio is a big state. People wake up. We don't need to be banned, just need to be regulated. We do have a voice, so lets use it. All the animal activists are using theirs to get us, so lets use ours to fight back.

I feel we as owners and sellers have a responsibility to the animal and to ourselves. Don't sell because you need the room or money, sooner or later it will cause a problem down the road. People tell me I used to own a cat or wolf. I always ask them if they still have it - 95% of them say no, cause . . . reasons were, 'it got to big,' 'it scared me', 'my apartment did not have room', 'I had a baby', 'I was moving', 'they made me get rid of it cause of an ordinance'.

Also people in Ohio and other places step back and look at your cages and operations. Are they up to standards? There is a right way and a wrong way to build a cage. Don't cut corners. Is it big enough? Tall enough? Strong enough? Do you have locks? Is there a lock out area for when you clean cages? Do you have perimeter fence? Do you have a good food supplier? Do you supplement with vitamins? Do you have a vet? Do you have a plan if an animal gets out? How will you handle it?



When you raise a big cat, like a tiger, always remember, when he grows up he still is a tiger. There is a special bond, when you raise a cub and give him all the love. You will always have a special bond, you just have to know how to read them, and they let you know. There are a lot of people who want us not to own our animals; they will do anything to cause us trouble. Lets not give them any ammunition. They will even stoop to releasing our animals.

Lets all act together. Also try to join a branch, or start one. FCF is a very good organization; they do a lot of good things. They educate, support, keep on top of things, and most of all, they love their animals.

My animals are my family. I love them very much. They are all rescued. I have kept them all. When you love something, it's worth standing up for. Remember we don't need any accidents, when there is an accident, it's always our fault, and so be careful and think first. Like I said, wake up, talk to your local representative, be polite and positive, not cocky or negative. We need friends, not enemies,

P.S. We can control our destiny. Lets be responsible as owners and sellers

Thank you and give your critters a hug and kiss for me if you can.
Rick Armstrong



*Above: Rick with Precious, 2 year old bengal tigress.
Photos page 14
Top: Rowdy
Bottom: Shawnee*



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EXOTIC FELINE RESCUE AND PLACEMENT: A NEW PERSPECTIVE

Jessi Clark-White

Easing the burden I have a gentle suggestion to the sanctuary community. When things get too hard to handle, when you become crushed by the load of responsibility, look outside your own walls.

What we can learn from domestic animal rescue We have something to learn about rescue work from the domestic animal community. In the domestic system, sanctuaries very similar to ours exist, providing lifetime care to formerly unwanted animals. But there is a key difference; in the domestic animal world, these sanctuaries house truly un-adoptable animals; those whose temperament, age, or health conditions make them completely undesirable to potential owners.

It is unimaginable to consider housing every displaced domestic animal permanently in a sanctuary, when even temporary animal shelters are so overburdened that they often lack the capacity to house each homeless animal for the span of a mere week. What keeps these animals alive? Finding good homes for them.

In the exotic system, if an animal needs placement, it goes to a “shelter,” the sanctuary or zoo, and remains there for the rest of its life regardless of temperament, age, or health. To us, “adoption,” means getting someone to send money regularly to support a cat in a sanctuary. But as we all know, sanctuaries and zoos have finite capacity and resources. Why then, have so few established true adoption programs, where private homes are actively sought for displaced animals?

I imagine partly because we are used to considering exotic cats “un-adoptable,” and also because we tend to want to handle things privately, without calling attention to ourselves. There’s also the feeling that only we, the experienced owners, are qualified to handle these animals.

In the past, domestic animal shelters had a very strict view of what an “adoptable” animal was. It was young, healthy, friendly, and attractive, with no obvious behavior problems. However, as the no-kill shelter movement has grown, many modern shelters have learned to re-evaluate what “adoptable” is. Shelters are now finding loving homes for animals that previously would have been killed; aggressive dogs with bite histories, elderly animals, animals with ongoing health problems requiring expensive lifetime medication, etc. Some people now visit shelters with the specific intention of adopting what are now termed “special needs” animals.

Broadening the pool of homes At the core of my suggestions is the concept that we should carefully open our minds to adoptions to the public, and give people access to information on adoptable animals. Before anyone panics at my use of the word “public,” please read on. I am not proposing that we simply allow random people to adopt unwanted tigers!

Since caring, responsible people are often willing to take in animals which would be considered by most people as un-adoptable, I believe we should recognize the fact that some of those people could be both capable and willing to take in an unwanted exotic cat. Are they a very small portion of the population? Yes. Are we doing what we can to reach those homes? No. Most people don’t even know that it is possible to own an exotic cat, let alone know that they could rescue one.

Although many potential pet owners want the perfect animal, there are other dedicated people out there who are willing and able to bend over backwards to provide a loving home for these “special needs” animals. Wouldn’t an exotic feline fit this definition? Yes, they have increased care and housing requirements. Yes, they require licensing. Yes, some of them may be potentially aggressive. Yes, the screening process for potential owners would have to be intensive. But how does that differ from what we do now?

Whether it is a breeder selling a kitten or someone choosing the right facility to place an adult, we already know that one needs to establish that the new owner has the proper permits, facility, knowledge, and resources to care for the animal properly. But we all started somewhere, with little to no experience, and we consider ourselves to be qualified guardians of our cats. Isn’t it a little elitist to assume that the current members of our little community, the current owners, are the only ones capable of learning how to provide for an exotic cat?

Tim Stark of Wildlife In Need comments “Adoptions of exotic cats fall back on the self righteous sanctuary owners. They try to make everyone believe they are the only ones that can take care of such an animal. So if they were to put animals under their care up for adoption, it would make them feel less superior and out of control.”

None of the supposedly flooded sanctuaries I contacted when I was first looking for a serval were the least bit interested in adopting out a cat; they just wanted my donations. Any sanctuary that claims to be “flooded” with exotic cats but somehow isn’t desperate to find good homes for any of them needs to get a serious reality check. Spend a few months volunteering at a domestic animal shelter during kitten season and you’ll find out what it really means to be overwhelmed with homeless animals.

Should every first-time owner take on the challenges of adopting a “second-hand” feline? Of course not. However, there are some people out there who could do it if we find them and give them the information and resources they need. People love to “rescue” animals and are often willing to expend a great deal of time, energy, money, and patience to do so.

The statistical tracking logs for my websites www.AfricanServal.com and www.ExoticCatz.com show that a high percentage of visitors searched for phrases such as “adopt unwanted serval,” “caracals up for adoption,” and “rescued bobcat for adoption.” We have the cats, they want to adopt them.

Would you rather see that cougar or that serval you’re trying to place killed for lack of a place to go, or face the challenges of finding the right owner? They are out there. Believe me, I’ve met them while doing domestic animal rescue. The only thing is, we have to have a certain amount of public exposure in order to attract them.

There will always be a place for the sanctuary as we know it, providing stable and caring refuge for un-adoptable cats. Donna Verba of Walk on the Wild Side says that once cats are placed in her sanctuary, she commits to caring for them for the rest of their lives. She says “This is a promise I made to them, they will live out their life, in peace and security until they pass from this earth of natural causes. They will never be uprooted or moved again, they are home now.”

However, there is a place for an adoption network to place animals that don’t need to be placed in a sanctuary or that sanctuaries are unable to take in. Verba recently spearheaded efforts to find new homes for 7 displaced cougars. She herself took in 2 of them permanently, while 2 went to private owners, 2 went to a private zoo, and one went to a large reputable sanctuary.

Private owner or Sanctuary? FCF placement director Tracy Wilson believes that placing a cat in a large sanctuary is *more* of a risk than placing it with the private owner of a small number of cats. She says that “Large sanctuaries which depend on donations are more at risk of not being able to provide everything the animals need and possibly going out of business because of lack of public support, causing a large number of animals to be displaced all at once.” I am personally aware of several sanctuaries failing in just the past couple of years.

Wilson has successfully placed a number of displaced exotics into private homes, and notes “If time is taken to best match the cats needs to a new home, I generally never have to place that cat into another home later.” If a cat is a pet, she tries to place it into a private home that can best match its former home rather than relegate it to a sanctuary. She points out that “Overcrowded sanctuaries will never be able to provide the quality of life to the exotic cats that a pet owner of one cat could.”

While she’s only placed one animal in a private home, Conservator’s Center’s Mindy Stinner says “If the right home came along, I’d consider placing any animal in it if it was legal and the care and husbandry and housing would be excellent.”

Going public with rescue and placement; the pros and cons Not calling attention to ourselves hasn’t worked. The result of our quietly owning these cats without

intruding on other people’s lives has been a flood of negative press and laws banning us out of existence. The only way we can hope to survive this tidal wave of discrimination is for the responsible owners to make themselves known.

Calling attention to rescue efforts that work and that present realistic facts to the public might seem like airing our dirty laundry in public, but I think it’s desperately needed in order to counter the messages spewed by anti-ownership sanctuaries like Shambala. The public already knows that exotic cats sometimes need to be placed. Why not let them get involved in a way that fosters knowledge of the actual facts?

Can you imagine being able to quote actual statistics about the number of animals that needed placing, the origin of these animals, and the fact that every single one was placed? We could contrast those figures with the number of domestic animals that need rescuing and that die in shelters every year, showing people just how relatively insignificant the “exotic pet problem” is and how vastly superior our adoption rates are to domestic animals.

Implementing a placement network So how can we implement an adoption system within the exotic feline community? By using the same type of networking that we’re already familiar with, but simply adding some new elements and perhaps becoming a little better organized. Some possibilities, many borrowed from the world of domestic animal placement:

A central website where information about any exotic feline up for adoption could be posted, and people (including sanctuaries and experienced owners), could apply to be on a waiting list for future placements. The domestic equivalent to this is Petfinder.com, which accepts listings from shelters, rescue groups, and pet owners. The person running the website would not screen homes; that would be left up to the person placing the cat. However, the site could have an initial adoption application people could fill out to get on a central waiting list. If there was interest in doing this, I might volunteer to design and host the site, at least while it got started.

A network of trusted people throughout the country who can do “home visits” to the facilities or homes of those applying to adopt. Such a network would allow for an inspection by a knowledgeable individual, even if the cat being placed is coming from another part of the country.

A network of foster homes for displaced felines. This is another practice common with domestic animals. When a shelter runs out of room to house incoming animals, often some will be sent home with foster parents until homes can be found or there is space in the shelter. There are many cases where a feline needs to be placed quickly or risk euthanasia, and situations where an otherwise loving owner may be separated from a cat due to changing laws or perhaps a housing crisis. If there is a network of foster homes, cats could be placed quickly in a safe facility while the more

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EXOTIC FELINE RESCUE AND PLACEMENT *continued from page 17*

lengthily process of finding a new home or reuniting the cat with its owner takes place. Perhaps we can develop a network of sanctuaries and private parties who agree to leave a space open for fostering even one cat at a time on short notice, with the knowledge that they do not have to commit to caring for that cat for a lifetime.

One serval owner emailed a sanctuary saying she needed to place her serval because she was losing her house. Since the sanctuary was full, the owner forwarded the email to me to see if I might be able to adopt the cat. I contacted the owner, and one of the options I mentioned was fostering the cat until another home could be found.

To my surprise the owner jumped on the possibility of a foster home, and the chance of keeping her beloved cat. She said I given her hope, and to make a long story short we agreed that she would keep her cat while looking for housing. If an emergency comes up (i.e. she's evicted before finding serval-friendly housing), I'll foster the cat for her. I don't yet know if this story will have a happy ending, but if this kind of safety net can keep a serval in its loving home....well, there's nothing better than a rescue or placement that never has to happen.

A code of ethics should be established. These would require the input of a number of people, but here are some initial suggestions:

- Parties should represent the situations surrounding each placement truthfully (i.e. the adoptive parents shall not claim that their animal was abused if that was not the case).

- Foster homes should not charge unreasonably high "boarding" fees as a condition of an owner's getting his or her cat back.
- Use the website only for the purpose of finding new homes for exotic felines in need, not for selling animals or as a venue to raise funds, nor for owners to try to recoup the cost of an animal they purchased and now wish to place elsewhere.
- The person or organization placing the cat is solely responsible for screening potential homes.

The Servals.org placement network Sara Comstock and a group of other dedicated serval lovers have started a placement network very similar to what I am suggesting. When they are notified of a serval in need of placement, they find a suitable new home and help coordinate the transfer. They have an adoption application and screen potential homes carefully. The differences? Information about available animals is not made public; the network typically only works with servals; and the network is not large enough to allow home checks in most cases.

However, the group has been very successful. As of December 2004, Comstock's network had placed 22 servals in private homes. Comstock says, "If a serval comes from a home environment, we feel it best for the serval to be placed with the same. The "family pet" serval has bonded with humans, used to family life, and is in physical contact with its human, interaction."

Having a broader network and opening our mind to a wider variety of placement options will not only ease the burden on sanctuaries; it will also allow animals to be placed in environments more similar to what they are accustomed to.

FCF EXOTIC FELINE FACILITY ACCREDITATION, *continued from page 11*

Though not mandatory, it is a good idea to have a record of permanent identification for each cat such as pictures, tattoos, microchip implants, etc. This is important to prove ownership if there is a theft or escape, as well as for individual identification.

LICENSES AND PERMITS- All accredited facilities must be in compliance with all federal, state or local laws in regards to the possession of wild felines. A USDA license is not required, unless required by state or local laws or if the facility engages in covered activities such as breeding, brokering, or exhibiting.

MISCELLANEOUS- A facility may be denied accreditation if the applicant has been convicted of any violation of captive wildlife regulations, illegal commercialization of wildlife, or offenses involving cruelty to animals.

BREEDING- Facilities that breed cats should have protocols in place that they use for rearing the kittens either by hand, or with their mother to insure the safety and health of the kittens.

SALES- For those that do sell, they should have a protocol for screening potential buyers, checking on the buyer's state's requirements, having them provide a copy of their permit, personal interview, etc., to ensure that everything is legal and that the cat will be going to a good home.

Information should also be given to the buyer concerning the care and medical history of the cat to help smooth the transition.

EXHIBITING- Facilities engaged in commercial exhibiting as well as those who do allow people other than family or employees to view or interact with their cats, should have a written set of rules and protocols to be used when doing presentations or allowing viewing to insure the safety of the cats and of the public.

RESCUE CENTERS AND SANCTUARIES- Facilities that act as rescue centers or sanctuaries should have policies for accepting animals and for placing the animals to other facilities.

If you still have any questions, the Accreditation committee will be more than happy to help you and answer your questions. You can contact Kevin Chambers, chairman, at 812-397-2303 or by e-mail at ZooARC@worldnet.att.net. He can provide you with the necessary forms, or they can be downloaded from the internet on the FCF web site. After you have your inspection completed by a licensed veterinarian, scan all photos, requested documents, and this completed application form onto a CD-ROM and mail 5 copies of the CD-ROM, along with the original signed inspection form, and processing fee to either Kevin Chambers, 7816 N. County Road 75W, Shelburn, IN 47879 or Harold Epperson, 3310 Remington Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46227.

The Great One

*Oh great one who steps with fine stealth.
He has the whole world in wonder
under each paw step.
With fiery bright eyes, he rules the night.
He hunches down low to take his prey by surprise
and quickly then he goes into flight.
No one knows where he the hunter lay.
It is best this way, for there's no time to pray.
He slithers through the tall dew laden grass.
He knows that real soon, the darkness will come to pass.
And what moves yonder in a single bound?
He has taken down another without a single sound.
Oh great hunter, do we know thy name?
His name is Tiger.
The great one who the hunt is his game!*

Rhonda Kiker



photo by Mindy Stinner

2005 FCF Annual Convention heats up in Miami!

Make your plans to attend July 28-30.

The FCF Wild Feline Husbandry Course will be offered on Wednesday, July 27.

This year's event is hosted at the **Hilton Doubletree Grand** (www.doubletreegrand.com) located in the heart of beautiful downtown Miami. Registration and check-in begins at noon on Thursday in our comfortable hospitality room and balcony area, overlooking spectacular Biscayne Bay.

Thursday night's icebreaker features an array of hot and cold hors d'oeuvres and a cash bar for refreshments. **Special guest Jim Sanderson, of Conservation International** will update us on his exploits around the globe while doing field research on small cats.

Friday's events are non-stop. Early morning we'll bus to **Everglades Alligator Farm**. This commercial alligator breeding farm presents alligator and snake shows and alligator feeding demonstrations. Then we will embark on an adventure and thrill to a fast and furious **airboat ride through the everglades' river of grass**, renowned for natural beauty and abundant wildlife. (<http://everglades.com>).

Next we visit **Everglades Outpost** (www.evergladesoutpost.org), a rehabilitation center and zoo operated by Bob Freer. You may have seen Bob and some of the animals on the Animal Planet where he is a regular on Animal Cops Miami. During our visit, we'll get up close with tigers, Florida panthers, bears, alligators, king cobras, and more!

We'll stop for lunch and then head to **Parrot Jungle Island**. (<http://www.parrotjungle.com>) This lush tropical atmosphere boasts countless species of colorful parrots and waterfowl, and assorted animals including monkeys, snakes, lizards, tortoise, crocodiles, wolves and tigers. The highlight of the day will be visiting with **Doc Antel**, one of the world's most renowned animal trainers with well over 200 motion picture and



television credits, including Ace Ventura, the Tonight Show, and King of the Jungle. Doc has his own show at Parrot Jungle featuring trained tigers and liger. As the evening approaches and the Park closes, Doc will join us for a cookout style dinner at Parrot Jungle's Treetop Ballroom.

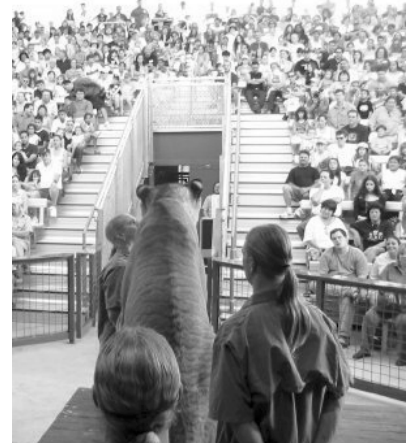
Saturday's guest speakers promise to inform and entertain.

Saturday night's banquet dinner, awards ceremony and benefit auction are legendary, so don't miss it!

The FCF Convention Doubletree Hotel room rate special is \$79 double occupancy. We have again secured special permission to allow our members to bring their cats with them to the hotel. A damage deposit will be required for those keeping cats in their room. Florida Fish and Game requires an import permit to visit the state with a wild feline.

Anyone bringing a cat must contact Kevin Chambers (812-397-2302 or ZooARC@worldnet.att.net). To make reservations, call 1-800-853-0270 (make reservation for the Doubletree Grand Hotel, Biscayne Bay) or 305-523-3321. Ask for the FCF special rate at either phone number.

Registration is \$130 per person. Fee covers Thursday evening hors d'oeuvres, all events Friday, and Friday's cookout dinner and Saturday's banquet dinner. Children 6-18 are \$75 and children under 6 are free. There is a \$15 late fee for those registering after June 20. Single day registrations are \$25 for Thursday and \$70 for either Friday or Saturday.



For the Love of Shadow

Margie Lineberry

I became a bobcat owner the spring of 1996. At the time I lived in one of the finest areas of Fort Smith called Fianna Hills, and there were covenants and a Property Owners Association. All of my neighbors were wonderful. I lived by very prominent people in society doctors, lawyers, realtors and bankers. I had lots of people come to my door asking to play with Phantom, my bobcat. I had become well known as the Bobcat lady. I lived in this neighborhood for about 8 years.

Phantom liked to hang out on the deck, which was enclosed by some very thick steel gauge wire fencing. One night a coyote managed to get to him and cut his throat. Phantom died 24 hours later. I was emotionally traumatized. I couldn't even talk about it without crying. I missed Phantom and eventually I purchased a female Bobkitty and named her Shadow. I put my home up for sale and purchased another. It had over an acre of level yard. I planned to build a 8-foot fence and inside this fence I would build her a playhouse, with slides, tunnels, a pond, and would build another fence inside this fence, so she would be very happy and very safe. I took a \$145,000 loss on my present home, just so I could purchase this dream home. Shadow, who was over a year old at the time, and I, moved in around April 30.

Shadow and I are very close. She is very smart and she loves for me to give her kisses. She listens to me, and she loves me back. I can come home from a very stressful day of work and Shadow will always be there to greet me with that little Bobkitty hello that all Bobkittys do. She jumps in my arms, and up on my shoulders, gives me kisses and hugs, then jumps down and wants to play. She's great at fetch; I will get a plastic clothes hanger and throw it across the room, and Shadow will bring it back to me. Our favorite game is called Monkey Business. I take this Hand Puppet Monkey that makes noises just like a real Monkey and Shadow will wrestle with it. We like to play hide and go seek. I will hide and she will find me, then she will hide, and I will find her. I can't explain how complete Shadow makes me feel. I have always made sure that she came first.

My house was at the end of the street in the cul-de-sac. The neighborhood that I moved to was a new subdivision called Riley Farm. There was a particular realtor who was my new neighbor. She knew, as did the developer that I owned a pet Bobcat prior to moving into the Riley Farm Subdivision.

I submitted plans to build an 8-foot privacy fence to the Architectural Control Committee and they were approved. Then I got a letter from the Property Owners Association that my Bobcat was in violation of the Protective Covenants of Riley Farm. The secretary gave me the name of two neighbors who had supposedly complained.

I spoke to them and they said they did not care that I owned a Bobcat. I went to speak to the developer. He rudely told me to get out of his office, that he was more educated than I.

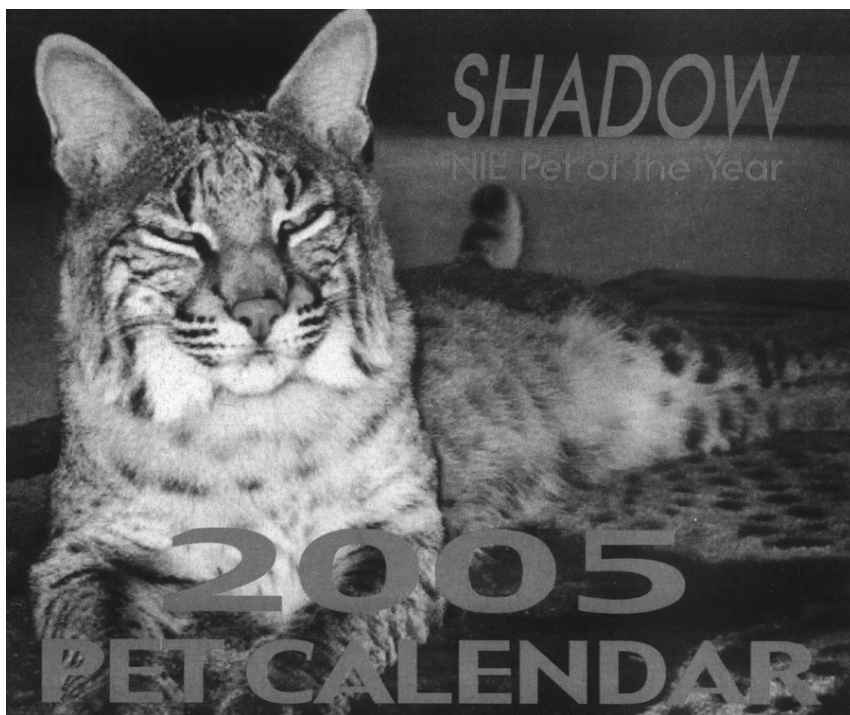
I still today do not understand what that comment was all about. I went to see an attorney and he told me not to worry there was nothing they could do. Then the POA, sent me a notice stating that I could not build my fence. My attorney advised me to build my fence anyway, so I did. The POA then sued me. I was never provided the Covenants at closing and they knew I owned Shadow prior to moving in.

The covenants state that all dogs and cats are welcome, but no wild or exotic animals. Well I can assure you that my Shadow is certainly not a wild animal. And we all know that Bobcats are not exotic in Arkansas. Then my attorney told me that he couldn't represent me because he was friends with some of the people that were suing me. The POA got a petition and out of 492 neighbors only 22 signed it, which was a group.

Meanwhile, the local newspaper in conjunction with a local camera shop sponsor an annual pet photo contest for a fund-raiser calendar. People enter photos of their pets and the public votes for their favorite, and the winner is given the front page on the Calendar and crowned "Pet of the Year". Competition was stiff, with many cute dog and cat entries, but more people voted for Shadow then any other and she won first place and is the cover shot for the 2005 Calendar!

In late December the case was heard before Circuit Judge Michael Fitzhugh. My new attorney Troy Gaston told jurors there was no dispute concerning the covenant, but Shadow was bred to be no different than an ordinary house cat who eats cat food and uses

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Legislative Updates

North Carolina - Senate Bill. 1032 The wording is from Animal Protection Institute's model legislation, with a few minor modifications. The person pushing this forward is the North Carolina Zoo's own Curator of Mammals, an outspoken PETA member.

The bill exempts only AZA facilities and the places they mentor, educational and research institutions backed by the state, vets, animal protection facilities, animal control, circuses and rodeos, and wildlife sanctuaries, defined in the same manner as the Captive Wildlife Safety Act; 501 c 3 tax status, no breeding, selling, exhibiting or conducting unnatural activities.

Anyone wants to pay money to see most species of wildlife they will have to go to an AZA facility. Isn't that how a monopoly is defined?

Existing pet owners must spay or neuter their animals (no alternative options are given), microchip and house them to AZA standards, obtain a \$100,000 insurance policy (companies are lining up to insure pets), and the permit makes their name, address, and written directions to their location a matter of public record.

USDA licensed facilities will be required to close their doors. With more than 50 licensed USDA facilities in NC potentially thousands of animals might become homeless as the commercial businesses are deprived of income to maintain their collections.

In addition, any animals kept in violation of this legislation may be seized. If the owner is not present or the animals escapes, the state takes immediate possession of the animal, and "if proper and safe housing cannot be found, the Department may immediately euthanize the animal."

It is past time for NC, a previously unregulated state, to move to a reasonable regulation system – however Senate Bill 1032, as written is neither reasonable or regulation – it is an all species ban bill period.

Senator, Sen. John Garwood, is the bill's sponsor and by all accounts, he is a reasonable man who knows nothing about animals, but is willing to learn. His mailing address is 1118 Legislative Building, Raleigh, NC 27601-2808, and his phone is (919) 733-5742. Most NC Senators are not very responsive to e-mails. Concerned NC animal owners and organizations are taking this bill seriously and working to educate Senator Garwood on the harm it can do so that it can be rewritten into regulations. Bill updates may be viewed by going to <http://www.ncga.state.nc.us/Senate/Senate.html> and entering bill number S1032. Mindy Stinner

Oregon SB 661 and HB 3046 are identical bills introduced at the behest of the HSUS. They forbid sending, receiving, possessing, and breeding of exotic animals. They remove the regulation of exotic animals from the control of the Oregon Department of Agriculture and place it in the hands of county animal control agencies and sheriff's departments, granting those agencies control over the possible

issuance of "personal possession permits" to current owners. There is no USDA or other significant exemption.

I have formed an online forum at www.exoticcatz.com/forum to coordinate the efforts to fight these bills, and our small but determined group has made some significant progress. SB 661 was introduced by the Environment and Land Use Committee chaired by Senator Charlie Ringo. We provided his office with information on existing laws, and his staff has since informed me that Sen. Ringo has no interest in granting the bill a hearing due to the existence of those current laws. This means the bill is effectively dead.

HB 3046 was introduced by Representatives Hass, Garrard, Berger, Brunn, Dalto, Farr, and MacPherson. We are beginning of the process of finding out where the various representatives stand on this bill and offering education on its numerous flaws, and several of us are planning a visit to the capitol to speak with them in person. With 661 dead, fighting this bill is the current priority.

For those willing to help, there is a lot of coordination on two online lists; the ExoticCatz.com discussion forum has most of it, with the folks on OR-Petlaw doing a lot of work as well. If you join the forum at <http://www.exoticcatz.com/forum> and post to the "Legislation Introduced in Oregon" thread I will make sure you receive any information I send out by private email, and of course you can participate and read posts. There is a lot of information there including links to the full text of the bills, materials that have been written in opposition, and links to Oregon's current exotic animal laws. I'm trying to confine most of my posts to those two lists so as to cut down on workload and avoid harassing people who aren't interested.

Oregon has excellent exotic animal regulations already in place, yet this is the second legislative session in a row where a ban bill (or bills) has been introduced. The presence of our current laws is obviously not working to protect against animal rights attacks on responsible ownership. The prospect of having to fight ban bills every single session has some of us wondering if it would be feasible to get a measure on the ballot for an amendment to the Oregon constitution guaranteeing citizens the right to own any species or breed of animal. Clearly we need to do something original to end this attack.

Jessi Clark-White

Arkansas HB2681 - Representative Prichard stated if G & F developed regulations for big cats he wouldn't file a ban bill for Representative Jackson. However, Rep. Jackson filed a big cat ban bill on March 7th, despite FCF efforts with G&F on this issue. HB2681 sat completely unnoticed by the animal community for almost 3 weeks. Valuable time to comment and educate legislators was lost because we believed the word of Rep. Prichard. In one day it was passed out of the House Committee and by the full House and sent to the Senate and assigned to a Senate Committee.

Jackson called me the day before the Committee public hearing to address FCF concerns. He amended the exempted parties list to include G & F permitted Breeder/Dealers and USDA exhibitors. At the public hearing, Committee members were given large FCF packages of information to read and only 3 FCF members were allowed to speak even though more were signed up. Rep. Jackson stated our state needs this bill "because people who run meth labs use tigers to guard their drug labs". Scot Smith, operator of the nonprofit sanctuary, Turpentine

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THE IMPORTANCE OF PROPER DENTAL CARE FOR CAPTIVE FELINES.

Recently, Tiger Creek Wildlife Refuge in Tyler, Texas contacted Canines Veterinary Dentistry regarding their 14-year-old Bengal tigress April, and her fractured canine teeth. They were interested in the proper methods of caring for this type of dental problem. We were able to repair the damage done by providing them with endodontics / root canals in order to prevent complete tooth loss and infection. The procedure involves the removal of infected or exposed pulp and replacing it with permanent filling material. This will prevent infection from occurring, which could cause abscesses, bone loss and ultimately tooth loss. As well as, preventing the infection from affecting the heart, kidneys and liver of the big cat. The root canal, while many humans cringe at the idea, also relieves pain and allows the cat to function normally.



It is essential that facilities provide proper dental care for their animals. The overall health of these beautiful cats is improved with the right dental care. There is a good chance that most facilities that care for large carnivores have cats that require dental care but are not providing it due to the concerns of cost and available veterinary dental services. Canines Veterinary Dentistry has provided dental care for large carnivores for over 18 years for many zoo's and animal facilities

around the country. We offer what your animals deserve, quality dental care at affordable prices. For more information visit www.tigercreek.org, or please contact us at m_mccullar@msn.com or 1-504-913-9247. We will be happy to offer our help.

For the love of Shadow, *continued from page 21*

a litter box. However, the Judge ruled against us and I had to remove Shadow within 30 days and I had to take down my 8-foot fence as well. I was not happy with my attorney's performance. I just want to fight this case until I win! I am sick of people like this. I interviewed another attorney to appeal the ruling. He believes the Judge did something illegal during the trial and he might get the case overturned and a new trial issued.

I put my home up for sale. I hope that people give me an A for the effort and love that I have for Shadow. I love her so much, I would not give her up for anything! It is sad: - that these people are so uneducated when it comes to animals, and they love making other peoples lives miserable!

A developer who is building a new neighborhood as nice as this one called me to say he would welcome me and Shadow with open arms to his neighborhood. Which gives me hope that not all people are BAD!

I found a house to rent temporarily and moved out of Riley. I have sold my house and will find the right place for Shadow and I and get it in WRITING that she is welcome, because we are staying together.

N.O.A.H. Feline Conservation Center



USDA breeders of African serval and caracal, Canada lynx, southern spotted bobcat and South American geoffroy's cat.

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Ohio Husbandry Course is a big Success!

My name is John Chuha. My wife and I had the pleasure of attending the FCF Wild Feline Husbandry course, which was held in Columbus, Ohio on April 9th. First, I want to thank Carol Bohning of Butternut Farm Wildcat Sanctuary for hosting and instructing the class and for allowing us to tour her facility. Second, we want to take this opportunity to thank the city of Pataskala, Ohio and the Pataskala police department for allowing patrolman Mark Schwartz to attend the course as well. Their willingness to cooperate with exotic animal owners is outstanding!

As for the course itself, it was fantastic. The knowledge you gain will benefit not only the "first time" exotic feline owner, but for others who do have the experience as well. It was wonderful to meet so many people with the same interest and to share their experiences. The course is packed full of information that is very important to all exotic feline owners. I recommended anyone who either has or is looking to own an exotic feline, to attend this course. It is a must as a responsible owner. We came home with many new ideas and information we have overlooked, as owners of 2 wonderful bobcats. Thank you FCF for having this course.

John and Terri Chuha of Burton Township, Ohio.

Distribution, abundance and reproductive biology of captive *Panthera Tigris* populations living within the United States of America assessment.

Author: Brian Werner, Executive Director

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Washington DC / www.tigerlink.org

Decision analysis using a Bayesian age-and sex-structured model incorporating multiple populations and facilitation dynamics, and applied to the captive tiger population of the U.S.A.

Abstract: 28 March 2005

Mathematics has changed the meaning of statistics - from concern with 'facts about society' to statistical method. Statistical education/training draws a boundary around statistical method that excludes dealing with the problem of the denominator. The adoption of Bayesian methods shifts responsibility for the evaluation of evidence from the statistician to the user. The Green paper plea for integrity of official statistics indicates a wish by government statisticians to distance themselves from the statistics they produce. To the extent that members of the public assume statistics is a part of mathematics, they may find it difficult to separate problems with official statistics from problems with mathematics.

The assessment and management of captive tigers lagged behind that of other animal population dynamics for decades, mainly due to non-registration, unregulated activities, undocumented events and a non-active census. Recent worldwide concern over the management of tigers has followed mostly-unchecked increases in their exploitation in the face of genetic depletion and mismanagement. Methods for the population assessment of captive tigers have thus received renewed attention and have improved substantially over the last ten years. We present here a sophisticated state-of-the-art population assessment model applied to the U.S. captive tiger (*Panthera Tigris*). This is an age- and sex-structured, population-disaggregated model that simulates the dynamics of the captive tiger population and the facilities, taking into account specific characteristics of tiger biology. The simulated population is assumed to occupy numerous areas, facilitations and to have age- and sex-specific movement between them including environmental factors that impact the stability of said populations including legislature applications. Bayesian statistical methods are applied to fit the model to the data and deal with the uncertainty in model parameters and assumptions. The model is used to investigate the effects of different assumptions for *Panthera Tigris* distribution on predictions of abundance and yield or lack of. Taking into account these assumptions, we apply a decision analysis to evaluate the potential consequences of different management measures on future captive populations.

An estimated 8,977 big cats are showing to be held in captivity within the United States of America (17,955 worldwide including foreign zoos, menageries and "fenced or managed game preserves").

Included within the dynamic model are an estimated 869 big cats within AZA Accredited Zoo's of which approximately 264 are tigers.

An estimated 2844 big cats are located within sanctuaries (mission oriented facilities) of which a projected 1,379 are tigers.

An additional 2,120 tigers are located within USDA licensed facilities with primary missions of either breeding or exhibiting with this total big cat population representing 3,434.

Thus leaving 1,129 tigers living among private collections (non-mission oriented homes) or 1,830 big cat populations among the private owners.

Of the U.S. captive big cat population an estimated 4,692 Tigers exist; down from the 7,568 tigers documented in 1997 (a 38% decrease).

Contents

1 Four categories of facilities within the model

2 Bayesian developments

References:

1 For the purpose of this study animal holdings were divided into 4 categories based upon primary activity:

1. Zoos- Accredited by American Zoological & Aquariums Association *
2. Sanctuaries- Primary operations involving rescue services with mission oriented life long care *
3. USDA Permit Holders- Other facilities licensed by the United States Department of Agriculture with a primary business model that includes either breeding and/or exhibiting without a main role involving rescue operations *
4. Private Collections – Non-mission oriented homes *

Notes for the purpose of this study:

- This study was conducted over the 10-year period from 1995 to 2005.
- Big cats are defined as cougars, leopards, cheetahs, jaguars, lions and tigers.
- Facilities may be involved in one or more of the defined activity areas, all were cataloged based upon primary operational mode and NOT based by potential secondary roles.

- At least one of four basic defined activities existed among all animal holdings: conservation/breeding, rescue, education and companionship/pet ownership. It is noted that a gradation of the four activities does exist among many of the private sector (non government entities) some may take on secondary roles aside from primary means of operation.
- Certain AZA Accredited Zoos are operated by private sector (non-government) but all were cataloged as AZA Accredited Zoos without any preferential treatment given as to private sector verses a government entity. AZA Zoos showed a slight increase in number of facilities and a slight decrease in tiger populations despite more emphasis being placed upon the managed breeding program. The decrease noted was mainly among generic tigers and resulted in a 15% decrease in the overall tiger population, generic populations dropped from 57 (generic) surplus tigers to about 23 (generic) surplus tigers.
- All Sanctuaries are privately operated; there are no government-operated sanctuaries. All sanctuaries were found to be involved in some form of commerce (commercial activity). All sanctuaries showed significant increases in number of facilities and extremely large increases of big cat populations, most especially tigers.
- USDA Permit Holders showed a slight loss in the number of licensed facilities and a significant decrease of big cat breeding while population holdings maintained among those currently in operation.
- Private Collectors showed a significant decrease in facilities and in the number of big cat holdings.

2 Bayesian developments

Over very recent decades being a Bayesian has changed from being a minority interest among statisticians to the dominant interest. The growing popularity of Bayesian statistics appears from the outside to be more like a change in the *style* rather than a change in the boundary of statistics method. But this change of style seems to represent a move away from the examination of statistical evidence.

Bayes' theorem dates from the 18th century. In essence the theorem expresses a posterior probability as the product of a prior probability and a likelihood function.

A study of the occurrence of a rare disease, childhood leukemia, provides an example of a Bayesian approach. A preliminary investigation produces a list of areas ranked according to the number of occurrences. Are the areas at the top of the list the most dangerous areas? The answer is arguably negative, because the list does not take into account the population sizes of the areas. If a new list is drawn up which expresses the number of occurrences as a percentage of the population at risk, then the ranked list of dangerous areas is quite different (see Langford, 1994).

The new list seems to accord with common sense, but the term 'arguably' seems appropriate because taking into account the size of population does not always seem appropriate. Does it make sense to say, for example, that urban populations are in more danger when the 'danger' being considered is that of being killed by a meteor?

The expected distribution in this study of childhood leukemia is the *prior probability* in the Bayesian terminology. The prior probability would be modified in accordance with the actual incidence of the disease to arrive at a *posterior probability*, which gave the risk of getting the disease in different areas. The use of statistical evidence on the distribution of population leads its author to call this study empirical Bayes. But its status as an *empirical* study seems to depend upon the correctness of the assumptions underlying the calculation of the expected distribution.

More commonly the concept of prior probability used is a judgment based on experience or special knowledge. At what may be the other extreme from this empirical use of Bayes theory, juries have been invited to express their prior probabilities on the guilt of the person being tried and to modify these prior probabilities in the light of the likelihood ratio derived from DNA blood matching tests. The use of such Bayesian procedures was thrown out in the Appeal Court precisely because the Court believed that juries should assess items of evidence separately (Balding, 1998, pp 1-2).

The use of Bayesian statistics affects the division of responsibility between the statistician and the user. The typical Bayesian statistician asks users about their expectation and suggests how that expectation should be modified in the light of the statistical evidence provided by the statistician. It is possible to interpret this situation as one of the statistician giving responsibility to the user instead of making an independent judgment. Thus the growth in popularity of Bayesian methods among statisticians in general can be interpreted as taking the statistician away from the consideration of the user's data, and in general away from the assessment of evidence provided by facts about society or human activities.

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2005 Felid Taxon Advisory Group Report

Lynn Culver

I attended year's AZA felid educational conference along with four other FCF members, JB Anderson, Robert Turner, Kevin Chambers and Leann Montgomery. I presented a PowerPoint update on FCF's successful in-situ conservation project at Playa de Oro. Hopefully the zookeepers and researchers will spread the word about this valuable rainforest reserve.

The theme this year was African Cats and the first stop on my St Louis 2005 Felid Taxon Advisory Group agenda was the **Cheetah Species Survival Plan** meeting where participants devoted most of their time to developing the concept of a Cheetah Training Workshop covering such diverse subjects as nutrition, genetics, enrichment, keeper management, conservation education and networking, with the goal to help keepers and managers do a better job of breeding cheetahs in captivity. There was also much discussion of updating the Cheetah Manual with new husbandry information.

Over at the **Lion Species Survival Plan** meeting, there was much to celebrate, having a total of 7 males and 12 female cubs to place. Last year's breeding success breaks the run of poor results and it is hoped that the 17 breeding recommendations for 2005 will net another crop of young lions. The development of a lion husbandry course syllabus was the next topic discussed and I felt a bit of deja-vu as the participants called out similar topics for the lion course.

Later on was the **Small Cat Workshop**. Several interesting statistics to remember - a zoo survey found that the public retains less than 10% of a message read on an exhibit sign. When there are people, either docents or keepers speaking to the public, retention of the message goes up to 50% or more. Most municipal zoos do not have tour guides, so this survey proves that the private zoo, sanctuary or traveling exhibit, with their personally delivered messages are actually doing a much better job of teaching conservation awareness than AZA zoos.

The major concern with the small cat workshop was "How do we get zoo managers interested in small cats? The zoo world is divided into many competing factions - every taxon is fighting for cage space. Budgets are tight. Small cats get ignored over more charismatic species. What to do? How do you get a director to exhibit small cats???"

The SSP felt they needed to 'market' their species to the directors, and one way to reach the directors is to reach the public and if there is an increased demand from the public, it will drive the directors to collect the small cats. They wondered, would gift shop items do? Posters, plushy toys, plastic models of cute small cats? The brainstorming was to 'create a buzz' about small cats. And I had to hold my tongue as I thought the whole problem was so obvious - if you could just hand-raise a few of these species - pallas, ocelot, fishing, sand, let the public see their personality, see an adolescent interacting with the



FCF member's Sand Cat

keeper - that sparks interest. Lets face it - what sparked the creation and interest in the Long Island Ocelot Club? The shared affection with supposedly 'wild' cats and learning their individual language and personality. We private owners are so lucky to have this option. Alas, the AZA zoo world cannot walk our path, though it is transparently clear that the keepers love the cats just like we do, and are attracted to the cuteness and beauty of these felines. But they cannot act upon their love in the same unrestricted manner that we can. They must forever remain aloof, for to show affection and interaction in public might invite attacks from animal rights fanatics.



Thai, the Culver's Fishing Cat

Friday was the beginning of the TAG speakers with **Jack Grisham**, of the National Zoo talking about **Sharing Knowledge on Cheetahs**. This species has a 5,000-year history with humans. Reproduction of this species in North American zoos is hindered by lack of libido, inferior sperm quality, unreceptive females and poor exhibit design, resulting in a 5% yearly population decline since 1987.

A move towards regional breeding centers seems to be one answer, addressing the need for large enclosures, multiple male

selections and isolation from people. The concept is for females chosen to be bred to be transferred to designated breeding centers, such as San Diego, Fossil Rim, White Oak and the Ohio Zoo complex. Once successfully bred and kittens delivered, they would be returned to exhibit. This concept was successful in 2004, with a female from Toledo being sent to Cincinnati's farm for breeding and four cubs were born.

However this approach of putting all priceless eggs into a few baskets is not without risk, as the North American captive cheetah population suffers from many medical problems, including contagious diseases such as chronic corona virus, FIP and persistent herpes virus.

Sarah Durant presented Conservation of Cheetahs in Tanzania by

studying the cheetah in the Serengeti and found that only one out of 20 cubs born will make it to adulthood.

Causes of death are snares; road kill, lions, hunting and a large percentage of deaths are still unknown.



Cheetah cub at Safari West. Photo by Tracy Wilson

Black-footed cats by Alex Silwa. He has taken on a field study of this small African cat. His study includes a total of 17 cats, and he has spent 1600 hours in direct observation of his study animals. He has documented the three hunting styles – the fast hunt, the slow hunt and the sit and wait, and pounce hunt. Probably the most incredible thing he documented was this species propensity for scent marking. Silwa noted in nighttime observations that 85 scent marks were left by a male, and states that scent marking increases to up to 600 times a night during breeding season. What is even more amazing is that black-footed cats don't drink water, but instead, get all their moisture directly from prey.

This species does very poorly in captivity, many perish from amyloidosis of the kidneys as early as 2 years of age. There is some

evidence of this disease in wild populations, but not to the degree found in captivity.

Bovine Tuberculosis of lions at Kruger National Park presented by Dewald Keet – This horrible disease is endemic in the south and central part of the park with as many as 78% of the southern lions and 46% of the central lions testing positive. Lions have a unique pathology with the largest variety of organs affected. We were shown photos of horrible lesions in the eye, bone, tarsal joint, knee joint, muscle and hip, sternum., skin, kidney, uterus, brain and intestinal tract. There are five modes of transmission; eating, aerosol, bite wound, suffocating an infected prey animal, and young can contract it thorough nursing an infected mother. Affected lions have reduced mobility due to inflexible joints, which leads to a decreased hunting ability, reduced fertility and longevity. This causes social changes such as smaller prides, imbalanced sex ratios and smaller sized lions. This is the sub-species of lion chosen to be managed in captivity by the AZA regional collection plan.

Christine Breitenmoser of the Cat Specialist Group presented a mock-up of the new Cat Specialist online Database. Part of the site, www.catsg.org will be a member's only access, requiring a password. (A great reason to join the Friends of the Cat group) A comprehensive list of cat species, cat conservation and research projects, as well as bios on researchers will be cross-referenced in an internal search engine allowing users to quickly and easily access contact info and data. Additionally there will be a Digital Cat Library that will include the Cat Specialists Group's publication of Cat News archives in pdf files.

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Is your pet food “Whole Prey?”

FACT: If you are feeding your carnivore canned or dry commercial pet foods you are not providing your pet with a naturally balanced or complete diet.

WildLife Whole Prey Pet Foods

**SAVE BIG!
Ask about bulk
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Another chance to visit Playa de Oro Reserve scheduled this September!

Feline Conservation Federation's next tour to the Playa de Oro Reserva de Tigrillos in Ecuador's Choco (coastal) rainforest, will be September 16-24, 2005.

As you know, FCF is working in partnership with the local people to preserve this important habitat for South America's smaller wildcat species (the ocelot, margay, oncilla, and jaguarundi). This is your chance to find out what is so very special about this amazing tropical rainforest, as well as to pass through remarkably different landscapes and cultures in route to and from Ecuador's beautiful capital city, Quito, and the Choco rainforest.

Ecuador is one of the most bio-diverse and culturally rich countries on earth. Its capital is in the high Andes, surrounded by snow-capped volcanoes. From Quito, our tours travel through stunning mountain scenery to Otavalo, home to South America's friendliest and most artistic tribe, there to spend an afternoon in the world-famous Otavalo artisans' market. Next morning we travel by mini-bus down the western slope of the Andes into the Choco rainforest. Where the road ends, we transfer to a dugout boat for a trip up the swift Rio Santiago to the Afro-Ecuadorian village of Playa de Oro, then beyond, into the heart of Playa de Oro's rainforest reserve. During our week-long stay in the reserve's jungle lodge, we will follow trails through the rainforest, boat and swim the river, dance with the locals to Afro-Latino rhythms, eat great meals incorporating traditional foods such as plantains, and sleep to the sounds of the jungle.

Join us in September, on our adventures to the Playa de Oro Reserva Tigrillos for an adventure of a lifetime!

FCF members who have visited Playa de Oro have been generous in sharing their wildlife care knowledge with the reserve's staff. Their main focus is the wild felines that have been rescued and brought to the reserve for release. A young ocelot named Little Chief, orphaned at infancy, resides at the lodge and considers himself part of the staff. Don't miss your chance to meet this little ambassador before he matures into an adult and wanders back into the wild.

The cost for this adventure is \$700, excluding your airfare to Quito, Ecuador. This price includes two nights at a charming bed & breakfast in Quito (breakfast included), an afternoon at the Otavalo artisan's market and that night in an Otavalo B&B (breakfast included), followed by six nights at the Playa de Oro Reserve Lodge with all meals, jungle guides, river trips, a visit to the village, and a children's dance performance all included. Private Transportation between Quito, Otavalo, Playa de Oro, and back to Quito is also included.

Your fee supports the Playa de Oro Reserve by bringing income to their village and providing them with work, and also assists with feline conservation projects being conducted at the reserve. In

exchange, you will see, taste, smell, and hear ancient rainforest as you have never imagined while being safely guided by local men through the jungle, coming to know the local people and experiencing their river and ancestral forest as they do.

Space is limited on each tour, so please sign up as soon as possible to reserve your space. You are required to have a passport to travel to Ecuador. Your \$350 deposit is non-refundable. If you cancel for any reason, this deposit will not be refunded. If FCF has to cancel the trip for any reason, your entire deposit will be refunded.

Mail payment to the following address, with a note for what trip date you plan to attend. Include your full name, phone number, mailing address, and email address where you can be contacted.

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3310 Remington Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46227-8126

FCF can also accept Paypal Payments if necessary for an additional fee.

Please contact me for more detailed info if you are interested in traveling to the reserve. Independent travel to the reserve is available, as are private tours for your own group.
<http://www.touchthejungle.org>

Tracy Wilson
Feline Conservation Federation
<http://www.felineconservation.org>



Little Chief leads the way into his jungle home. Photo by Donna Verba

Bobcat Stalks the Living room (*and the great outdoors*)

Editors note: Positive press can change the way exotic ownership is viewed by mainstream America. Non-profit sanctuaries get spotlighted on their rescue work, but when was the last time you read a feature article on the joys of bobcat ownership? FCF member Doug Kildsig let reporter Ed Moreth do just such a story on him and Imos. Doug mailed us a full page of the September 1 Clark Fork Valley Press complete with large color photos. Congratulations Doug. Article is reprinted with author's permission below.

Ed Moreth, Valley Press

Visitors to one Paradise resident's house could enter and quickly find themselves faced with a bobcat wrapped around their neck. She's not going for a person's throat in an attack mode; she just wants some playful attention. "Her name is 'Imos' and she's a two and a half-year-old pet bobcat owned by Doug Kildsig, who lives just outside of Paradise.

"She's a gift from God," said the 39-year-old Kildsig, who credits his Christian faith with helping him with the patience it took to raise Imos. Kildsig decided to get the bobcat after his common household cat "Sissy" unexpectedly died. "One minute she was OK, and the next she was gone," said Kildsig, who moved from Kokomo, Ind., to Montana about two years ago. Imos, Kildsig said, is an acronym in honor of his tabby cat that died, standing for "In memory of Sissy."

"I always referred to Sissy as my baby bobcat," he said, which gave him the idea of looking into a real bobcat. He said he jumped on the Internet and located three bobcat breeders in Florida, Minnesota, and Montana. He drove to Montana to get his four-week-old \$1,200 bobcat. Kildsig didn't stay long back in Indiana. Once he saw Montana he decided to make it home. He drove back to Northwest Montana and for one and a half months searched for a place to live

while living out of his camper before settling with Imos in a log home near Paradise.

His fiancée, Donna Haisley, and her 3-year-old son, Jackson, live with him. Kildsig has a bachelor and master's degree in management from Purdue University, worked for General Motors for 11 years. He now lives off his investments, he said.

Imos is like a child to Kildsig, he said, but he also admitted that it has taken a lot of patience and tolerance to get the cat to its gentle, loving nature. "She's forced me to go the distance," said Kildsig, who looked at the raising of a bobcat as a challenge.

Kildsig said that he's heard stories of other bobcat owners that just put their cats in a cage and fed them. Bobcats treated that way will lose their conditioning as pets. Kildsig believes it was God that helped him cope with the mischievous antics of Imos, which has been declawed and spayed, and now weighs about 25 pounds. He said he's done a lot of research about bobcats and how to raise them. He's talked to breeders, other bobcat owners and surfed the Internet. A breeder in North Carolina has been his best source of information.

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Kildsig and a friend constructed a 2,400-square foot caged enclosure for Imos, off the back of the house. He said it's important to not let Imos get loose because he's afraid she would not survive. He doesn't believe she wants to get away, but her curiosity would probably prompt her to check out other areas.

Because the cat grew up around dogs in Indiana, Kildsig is concerned that Imos would just walk up to a pack of coyotes, a wolf, or even a mean dog and would be killed. Because she has no claws, she may not be able to functionally feed herself. However, Kildsig's biggest concern is people, who may not notice her red harness around the animal and shoot her. Kildsig has taken special precautions to keep Imos safe.

His back yard fence goes about 6 inches into the ground and it has a top. He leaves the back door open, so the cat can go in and out at will, but bolt locks the front door to help reduce the chances of accidentally letting Imos out. He said that when the cat hears the front door, she usually makes a dash away from it. When outside or when he takes her to Plains, he puts her on a leash.



What a lucky bobcat. Imos's turf is bigger than Doug's home. You can sure see why Doug moved to Montana. Talk about beautiful country!

When Imos sees a deer, bear and the several housecats that roam the area, she goes from window to window in a predator mode. He said she's even seen one other bobcat. Pet bobcats can be standoffish or occasionally aggressive, he said, but he believes Imos is so friendly because of the time he's spent with her. He said he believes God has impressed upon him to build a good relationship with Imos, perhaps because sometimes he had neglected Sissy, he said.

The cat has torn up his bed sheets, shirts, socks and countless pairs of underwear. "Anything left out she'll get," he said. She often knocks over drinks just to get attention. "When she wants attention, she'll try everything,"

Although she has a large litter box made from a large storage unit in the house, she has a bad habit of marking her areas in the house, particularly after seeing the domestic cats through the window.



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2005 Felid TAG Report, *continued from page 27*

USDI changes in Import and Export Permits by Alan Shoemaker The USDI personnel is down from 10 biologists to 5 and zoos applying for permits need to allow up to 4 months for approval. Endangered species permits requires enhancement of the populations in the wild, and zoos need to plan years in advance, documenting ongoing support of in-situ conservation projects. USDI is forcing AZA to be conservation relevant. This criteria has helped many AZA target species, however, Felid TAG presentations show that species found in range countries that do not allow exports, do not gain AZA funding or support.

The FCF member supported Playa de Oro project is located in Ecuador, a country that does not allow the export of wildlife, and while FCF members expect nothing in return for their donations except the knowledge they are helping protect wild felines, it will be a hard sell to the AZA crowd. Interestingly, Alan reported that 50% of import permits applied for are for wild cat species.

Contraception presented by Cheryl Asa Several new options are available for preventing pregnancy. PZP an injection was heralded as a possible answer a few years ago, but testing has shown it to not be safe or effective for felids. Instead the recommended approach is GnRH agonists that stimulate the

reproductive system then down regulates reproductive hormones with the final effect of suppressing ovaries from producing follicles. Presently there are only a couple of products available. Leuprolide injections cost about \$200 and last 6 months. Lupron Depot is commercially available, but prohibitively expensive – about \$1000 for 6 months of contraception. Deslorelin implants are made in Australia and are not commercially available in the US. There is a loophole to allow them, under a use for ‘research only’. Work is being done to gain imports, as this product will cost just \$25 to \$50 for six months of protection.

Feline Herpes by Suzanne Kennedy Swartzkoff Modified live virus vaccines have caused herpes infections in zoo cats. Always used killed vaccine. I asked about Clamydia – as I have used Ft. Dodge Fe-Lo-Vac IV, which is a 3 way killed with a modified live clamydia – and Ms. Kennedy advised to stick to the 3 way killed PCT.

The interesting news about herpes is that 50% of infected cats will never develop clinical signs. And 80% of cats infected can be latently infected. Cats may develop clinical signs under stress, such as moving to a new location, illness, parturition, and lactation, environmental stress or corticosteroid administration. Ms. Kennedy’s goal was to clear up some of the misconceptions about herpes, with her message boiling down to the fact that when testing for herpes, just because the cat has positive titers does not mean the

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Bobcat Stalks the Living Room

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“Sometimes she’ll just walk up to me and pee on my leg, which is a little frustrating”.

She once took a hacky sack toy from a visiting friend. “If she jets a hold of something, she’s protective about it. However, she usually gets tired of things fairly quickly. She’s definitely a handful, he said. Kilsig says the bobcat has never bitten anyone and he believes she never will. Even when playing roughly, she mouths him only lightly.

I love to share her with people, Kilsig says. People love to come over and see his exotic pet.

Most of the time, Imos stays and sleeps in the house. Kildsig said he sometimes puts her outside at night because she’d wake him up by tearing at the bed sheets or pulling the sheets off. “I’ve had to put her out just so I can sleep past 5:30 in the morning,” he said.

Feeding Imos was another aspect Kildsig had to learn. When he first got her she weighed less than two pounds. He bottle-fed her a mixture of whole milk and cat food prepared in a blender. He had to cut the bottle nipple to get the food through the end. “I was just like a mother; I had to get up in the middle of the night when she was crying and feed her,” said Kildsig.

.When young he fed her a special feline diet mixture of ground beef, ground liver, bone meal powder, rice and vegetable oil. But when she was 12 weeks old she snatched a chicken breast, which was nearly the same size as her, off the kitchen counter, and ever since then her primary diet has been raw chicken. Every day she eats about one and a half pounds of chicken, including the bones, he said. Periodically, she’ll catch a mouse or a chipmunk. Once in a while, Kildsig gives her a special treat - jumbo shrimp. “That’s her chocolate,” said Haisley

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Blast from the Past

LIOC-Endangered Species Conservation Federation Newsletter
Volume 34 Number 4 July/August 1990

A FAREWELL TO SHERE KHAN

Shere Kahn was probably the last surviving jungle-born Geoffroy's cat in the U.S. She died in early June of 1989. Bob Roth imported her from Paraguay 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 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 this closely related specie, there is an allergen difference in the saliva and dander. I have shown reaction to some of the larger, non-jungle Geoffroy's.

Shere Kahn took over the household, ran it, and pushed around the domestic cats, which she considered lower class animals. She tried to make friends with Lucky, our tiger alley cat 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 awesome canned cat food that was present for the domestics. She weighed only 5 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 blood tests, physical examination and some x-rays found nothing wrong with her from a physical standpoint. Dr. Mark Meadow, of White Plains,

N.J. 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.

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 that 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 Reflex 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 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, Connecticut

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Federal Judge Acquits Marcus Cook

Marcus Cook was acquitted of two counts of false labeling under the Lacey Act in connection with the federal government's case against Ken and Nancy Kraft. This national case indicted the Krafts, Marcus Cook, Troy Hyde, Robert Baudy, Hans Jakob, Merle Multhaupt, Craig Perry and James Rienow.

According to Marcus Cook's attorney Brian Toder, of the law firm Chestnut and Cambronne, www.chestnutcambronne.com there has never been a reported case where a transferee was convicted with false labeling for a USDA 7020 form. There was one case tried years ago where a transferor was charged with such a count, but he was also charged with many other things too.

The original government indictment included a total of 55 charges; many of them were interstate trafficking in tigers, leopards and grizzly bears in violation of the Lacey Act. Several of the people indicted pled guilty to these charges. However, most defendants wanted to exercise their right to a trial by jury.

The case was heard in the US District Court in Minneapolis. Pretrial motions by Nancy Kraft's attorney Robert Richmond, citing the US Department of Interior's generic tiger ruling and case law about the Lacey Act's required two-step process, resulted in Judge Montgomery dismissing all the endangered species trafficking charges, leaving about 25 allegations of falsifying USDA paperwork as well as a few witness tampering and false testimony to a federal investigator charges.

Ken Kraft accepted a plea bargain offer by the federal prosecutors. Marcus Cook, Craig Perry and Nancy Kraft were tried simultaneously, other defendants motioned to sever their trials.

Toder explained, "The government attempted in a week long trial, using an ocean of paperwork to prove that Marcus Cook aided and abetted Ken Kraft in a conspiracy to generate false documents." Evidence showed that Ken generated the forms. On the first transaction, there wasn't proof that the 7020 form even left Ken's property; Marcus' signature is not on the form.

In the second count, Marcus did sign the 7020 form, but there was evidence of a donation and that is what the form stated.

The government's own USDA witness, special agent Thomas Charlson testified that it is not even mandatory for a licensee to use the 7020 form, only that animal transfer information is recorded in some written manner. The purpose of a USDA 7020 transfer form, also called a Record of Disposition, is to document the movement of animals.

There was no evidence presented by the federal prosecutors that Marcus had ever met Ken Kraft in person, and no evidence that he corresponded with Ken by phone or e-mail. All communication documented was between Nancy Kraft and Marcus.



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After the defense rested and the trial was ready for jury deliberations, Marcus Cook's attorney Brian Toder filed a motion for judicial acquittal because the prosecutor's case was so lacking in evidence that any crimes had been committed. The judge agreed that the case need not go to a jury for deliberation, as the federal government clearly did not meet the burden of proof. Both Marcus Cook and Craig Perry were acquitted by the judge.

NEW FCF WEBSITE ANNOUNCEMENT

Wild Feline Diets and Supplement Options to Consider

Tracy Wilson

The very best diet you can give will best mimic their diet in the wild: whole prey. That means the whole animal, innards, fur, everything. If you can find a supplier of feeder rats, or chicks over 3 days old (because they have more nutritional value than younger chicks), that would be the best diet you can feed your serval. You don't need to add supplements because everything is there in a whole prey diet that they need.

Most people don't go this route though. I would love to feed a whole prey diet to my cats, but with 17 exotics amongst many other animals I cannot afford it at around \$1 per rat. So I get game meat from hunters to spice up their lives when I can. Whole squirrels are an absolutely favorite here.

The rule of thumb for the amount to feed a healthy adult serval would be 3% of his body weight. For a growing kitten it can be as much as 5% of his body weight. The 3% pertains to real meat weight. Commercial diets like Zupreme and Mazuri are condensed/concentrated and therefore fed in lesser amounts.

If you have your serval on a Zupreme diet only, and give him a chicken bone once or twice a week for his teeth, you'll find that he might start to refuse the Zupreme entirely and prefer the raw meat. Zupreme is a balanced diet as is, but it is not great for their teeth.

Commercial meat feeds such as Nebraska or Bravo or Natural Balance are made from horsemeat or beef with various fat ratios and vitamins and calcium for different needs. The down side is these companies sell in large bulk, so it makes it hard for people with very few cats to order. You can however contact their sales representatives and piggy back your order onto other customer's orders in your area.

The most common diet fed to exotic cats is raw chicken leg quarters with a vitamin supplement. A chicken leg quarter (with the bone) is pretty well balanced in CA:Ph by itself, but it is not really a "whole" diet and needs a multivitamin with taurine supplement added. You can use any number of vitamins made for domestic cats, and there are only a few vitamins out there made specifically for wild felines.

I am the producer of Wild Trax supplements. WildTrax is designed specifically to enhance the chicken w/ bone diet. We use Brewer's yeast as the base of the vitamin because of its nutritional values instead of useless filler or base. But the main thing is that you feed some kind of multivitamin to your cat if you feed chicken legs or quarters to keep them as healthy as possible.

What it comes down to, is choosing the right vitamin your cat likes to eat; they are all pretty similar as they are based upon nutritional standards developed for felines. You can buy the most expensive top of the line vitamin for your cat, but if your cat refuses to eat it, then it is worthless. Make sure whatever vitamin you pick includes taurine in it, or add taurine to it yourself. Other brands of vitamins I have used in the past and really liked were Mazuri vitamins, K-Zyme for felines, and Vionate (need to add taurine to that one).

I encourage people with young servals to give them an extra calcium supplement every day until they are at least 2 years old, because servals grow so fast during that time, they need the extra calcium for their long bones. Think about what you have probably learned already about big dog breed puppy nutrition and apply it to a serval kitten as far as vitamin needs. They are growing their bones through at least 18 months of age. Not enough calcium during this growing time will cause weak thin bones that are prone to fractures and breaks.

I keep my servals on a bottle of milk formula through 18 months to 2 years old in order to make sure they get extra calcium. But if you don't wish to give a bottle, just add a calcium powder to their food. I have used OsteoForm calcium powder and have had great results with it.

You also need to feed a diet that you will be consistent with in your lifestyle—meaning if you choose a diet that requires you to add a vitamin to it every day, make sure that you will do that every day. If you have a busy crazy lifestyle and you are prone to get lazy when feeding and often forget the vitamin because you are tired or in a hurry, then this is a not a good diet for you to feed your cat. Maybe a commercial diet that is balanced would be a better choice in that circumstance. You also have to consider what you can afford to feed long term. Such as, if you decide to feed whole prey diets right now, and you are buying nice fat whole feeder rats for your cat now—if later on you cannot financially afford to continue feeding whole rats, your cat might not switch over to a chicken leg quarter diet very easily or happily.

The bottom line is that there are a lot of good diets and vitamins out there, but you need to choose what works for your lifestyle and what makes your cat happiest. If he is not happy on one diet, he will not thrive overall as well as being on a diet he enjoys more. Just don't let him talk you into feeding him a bad diet. Let him try some different balanced diets and see what he enjoys the most.



Iberian lynx, *continued from page 4*

in northeast Andalusia, in southern Spain. The other is in and around the Doñana National Park, in southwest Spain.

The Doñana lynx population is the smaller of the two known breeding populations, with around 20-25 adult lynx, and about 13 cubs being born here in 2004 from about 6-8 reproducing females.

The causes of the lynx decline in Doñana are:

- Reduced rabbit numbers; due to habitat loss, rabbit disease (e.g. RHD) and excessive rabbit hunting.
- Reduction in lynx habitat; due to intensive agriculture (e.g. strawberries), forestry and other causes (e.g. urbanization and use of "quads").
- High non-natural mortality; due to hunting and fast road traffic - the latest lynx killed by road traffic died on 14 March 2005, on the road between El Rocio and Matalascañas.

Organizations, such as the Junta de Andalucía, Ministry of the Environment, Biological Station of Doñana, the Doñana Foundation, WWF Spain and Ecologistas en Acción are implementing conservation projects in Doñana including habitat improvement, rabbit repopulations, lynx supplementary feeding, underpasses and fences on roads and outreach work with the local human population.

To help support lynx conservation in Andújar, Andalusian politicians need to urgently approve a Regional Lynx Recovery Plan. FCF members should voice their support for a lynx recovery plan by writing the President of Andalucía at:

Excmo. Sr Presidente de la Junta de Andalucía,
Dr Manuel Chaves, Palacio de San Telmo,
Avenida de Roma, 41071 Sevilla, SPAIN
or email him at:
manuel.chaves@juntadeandalucia.es

To end on a positive note: Conservation projects by the existing LIFE project and WWF/Adena have contributed to the stabilization of the Andújar lynx population. In addition, it has now been confirmed that the population range expanded to the west in 2004 to include new territories in Cardena Natural Park.

For further information about the Iberian lynx, and how to support conservation, contact SOS Lynx at sos_lynx@yahoo.com, or visit www.soslynx.org

The FCF thanks Gary Roberts & worldwidefeatures.com for his photos.



These Iberian lynx kittens orphaned in the wild, will be part of a captive breeding program to save the species. Photos by Gary Roberts ©

Lucy Laing writes: The Iberian Lynx is also known as the Tiger of the Algarve. At the moment, the species' hope lies with two lynx in a municipal zoo in Jerez, Southern Spain. Christened Sally (short for Saliega) and Aura, they were the first two lynx in captivity in the world and they have just produced their first litter of three offspring; the start of a captive breeding program for a desperate last-ditch attempt to repopulate the numbers in the wild before they drop beyond help.

The breeding program is the first in the world. The lynx live in an isolated enclosure away from the public. The zookeepers have to walk through disinfectant before feeding them three times daily with chopped rabbit and chicken.

Since the turn of the century, when there were 100,000 worldwide, the lynx population has shrunk alarmingly. Zoo director Inigo Sanchez said: 'It's a very exciting time. We have bred bobcats, which are similar to the lynx, to gain experience. We hope the program will be the last chance to save the Iberian lynx. 'The public can help by donating funds via SOS Lynx. We are a municipal zoo with a very small budget. In order for this breeding program to work we need funds for enclosures, keepers and food. Funds can be sent to SOS Lynx, 23 Albany Villas, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 2RS. The website, where the lynx cubs are set to be viewed via webcam, can be contacted on www.soslynx.org

Letter from FCF supported researcher Shekhar shares both good news and bad

Dear Tracy,

Greetings from Bhopal. I am coming out of the Panna tiger reserve in central India after a productive field exercise. I managed to gather wonderful information on the ecology and habitats of the wildcats in the region. I will work on the data I collected in the coming month and send you a detailed report.

Did you hear about the tiger crisis in some northern Indian parks Tracy? Panna is one of them. While the park claims 30 + tigers I could sight just 3 in the last 4 months and the others are just not there. We are in a tight spot with this situation. Honestly India cannot support viable tiger populations Tracy. Our parks are just too small to accommodate such large predators.

To support this species we are talking of 5000-6000 sq km parks that can accommodate 200-300 tigers. We don't have a single park in the country with such an area. Most are between 500-1000sq km range and have very few tigers . . . 30, 50 , 100 at the most. Well many things go wrong in such situations:

- a. weakening of the gene pool
- b. disease threat
- c. poaching
- d. no space for spill over populations
- e. increasing conflict with the locals etc etc..

We saw this sad situation in Panna but I did manage to see jungle cats, rusty spotted cats, leopard cats and Asiatic wildcats.....no caracals were sighted.

I am in Bhopal now and discussing with the government on supporting a long-term study. It is time to collar some of the cats and Panna is one of the ideal locations because we have 5 species of small cats in just one park.

April and May will take me to the eastern Ghats to study it's cats and I will travel to Namdhapa tiger reserve later. Lots of cat work on hand and I am very exited about the data I managed to gather and looking forward to sending it soon.

Sincerely,

Shekhar
India-small wildcat project

Legislative Updates, Arkansas continued from page 22

Creek lied about the details of the four loose lions in Arkansas a few years ago, and stated cat owners are drug dealers/users; pet owners are unknowledgeable and keep cats in horrible conditions, etc.

An FCF member how os also a narcotics police officer testified against eh bill, stating that in 15 years of law enforcement working all over the state of Arkansas, he had not seen one single exotic animal of any kind at a drug bust.

FCF was unable to overturn the momentum, and a bad bill was approved by the Committee and voted on by the full Senate later that week.

HB2681 prohibits new ownership of lions, tigers, and bears. All present owners, not exempted, must spay or neuter, meet USDA caging standards, pay a \$250 per animal annual fee, and hold a \$100,000 liability insurance policy. County sheriffs will enforce this law. Exempted parties are USDA exhibitors, Arkansas G&F breeder/dealer permit holders, nonprofit 501c3 facilities, AZA zoos, wildlife rehabbers, G & F officers and humane societies.

We are unaware of any pet tiger or lion keepers in Arkansas. However a more ominous development has followed with the G & F Captive Wildlife Committee showing extreme bad faith by dropping the proposed Big Cat caging regulations developed in cooperation with FCF, and instead proposing a ban on issuing Breeder/Dealer permits for 7 species of big cats, including cougar.

Also disturbing is that HB2681 exempts 501c3 sanctuaries from the any regulations for lion and tiger and the G & F regulations defer to the state code. This means sancutaries for these species are completely unregulated, but all keepers of cougar are now in a catch 22 situation. Proposed G & F regulations will prohibit possession of this species, except for Breeder/Dealers, however, G & F will not issue Breeder/Dealer permits for cougars.

This is the opposite of the FCF goal to insure public safety and the future of continuing captive husbandry. All facilities should be treated equally by Game and Fish and should be given the opportunity to come under Breeder/Dealer permit regulations.

I will be addressing these G & F regulations at the April Commissioner's meeting.

Lynn Culver

read more Legislative Alerts on age 42



*Are you my mommy?
Mishi cougar enjoys suckling a very permissive Momma Cat
photo by Lynn Culver*

FCF 2005 First Quarter Meeting Minutes

Harold Epperson, secretary

The First Quarter meeting was conducted by President Robert Turner via email and was concluded on March 12, 2005. The motions received are listed as follows.

Motion by Tracy Wilson and Second by Lynn Culver: FCF to purchase a portable printer and one ink cartridge for \$170 plus tax and shipping for use with the laptop computer to present husbandry classes and during convention.

Ten Yes and One No Votes, Motion Passed

Motion by Kevin Chambers and Second by Tracy Wilson: FCF to grant permission to Jessi Clark-White to reprint the following articles from the FCF magazine for use on her website with appropriate credit given to the original author and FCF. The articles are: Where Have All the South American Spots Gone? by Jean Hatfield, Keetah by Pete Bergerson, Why Keep Big Cats ? by Tim Stoffel, Sugarmint by Bob Turner, One Viewpoint by John K. Babb, Unique Challenges in the Captive Propagation on Endangered Felids by James Godsmark, Metabolic Bone Disease by Gail Hedberg, Loose Serval Recovered Safely by Kathy Arnold and Camie Steiner, Clouded Heaven by Judy Berens, The Clouded Leopard by Robert Baudy

Zoologic Milk Matrix by Debra Hoffmann, Life History of the Bobcat by Timothy John Mallow, Bobcat Enrichment by Corolyne Clendinen, A Crash Course in Crisis Management by Karen Sculac, A Bit About Bobcats by Lynn Culver
Eleven Yes Votes, Motion Passed

Motion by Kevin Chambers, Second by Bobby Bean: Move that FCF accept the Programs and Policies as presented.
Eleven Yes Votes, Motion Passed.

Motion by Lynn Culver, Second by Marcus Cook: Move that FCF approve \$300 toward the cost of Lynn Culver to attend the Missouri public hearing on behalf of FCF.

Eleven Yes Votes, Motion Passed

Motion by Lynn Culver, Second by Robert Turner: Move that FCF approve \$400 toward the cost of Lynn Culver and Donna Verba to attend the Lolli Brothers auction in Macon, Mo on April 6th.

Ten Yes and One No Votes, Motion Passed

Motion by Lynn Culver and Second by Kevin Chambers: Move that FCF approve the 2005 proposed budget submitted by Lynn on 3-5-05.

Nine Yes Votes and two No Votes, Motion Passed

VP Kevin Chambers reported on status of FCF branches. MEFES fulfilled all requirements. ACEF president Jeanne Hall tendered a letter of resignation of the ACEF as a branch effective February 28, 2005. The reason given was that ACEF did not meet the requirements and chose to become an independent entity rather than to address those issues.



Grace Lush shares this amusing photo of her Chinese Crested bitch mothering her two puppies and a serval and a caracal kitten

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2005 Felid TAG Report, *continued from page 32*

cat should be isolated, or is at risk of developing symptoms. It only means the cat was exposed to the virus either through vaccine or 'street exposure' at some point in its life. Her advice is to only test a cat when there are visible signs of herpes

In-Situ Ex-Situ Conservation for Felids in Thailand by Kathy Pelican An AZA zoo funded project to breed clouded leopards in Thailand zoos has experienced good news and bad. Since the project began in 2002, a total of ten cubs have been produced and two of these cubs were recently imported into the US to be paired up with the litter born at Point Defiance Zoo (see FCF magazine Jan/Feb 2004 when Karen Povey shared with readers about Jose and Raja and the birth and hand rearing of their cubs) The bad news is that there were four deaths in Thailand, suspected from feeding bad meat, as a Bantang at the zoo died of unknown causes and was fed to the collection's carnivores and many became sick or died. AZA has flown in experts to stay full time and oversee the introduction of adults to make three new breeding pairs. So far these are allowed together during days, but still separated at night.

Ron Tilson – Tigers – Hot News, Good News and Bad News A man synonymous with tigers, Ron shared his findings that there are approximately 400 Amur tigers in Russia. These felines all descend from as few as 30 tigers. Back in the 30's and 40's, the wild population was almost wiped out by poachers and habitat destruction. Interestingly, the US captive population has 57 founders, suggesting the captive population might have more genetic diversity than the wild.

Another piece of news is that recent genetic studies of the Indochina tiger has concluded that it is actually two separate populations – with those from the Malaysian peninsula being separate from those that occupy the north part of the sub-species range. Fortunately, the AZA zoo population is not a mix of the two, but contains only the southern range tigers.

In the AZA zoos, are three subspecies present. Analysis of the age pyramids, a strong indicator of the health of the population as a whole, shows the Amur population is good, the Sumatran population is bad and the Indochinese population is small, but building.

The most critically endangered sub-species, the South China tiger is, according to Tilson, gone from the wild. China does have a captive population of 47 tigers, descendants of 6 founders.

After two three days of very informative lectures, I had a nice opportunity to talk with Ron about the private sector captive tiger population as it pertains to conservation. Ron clarified that he was not against responsible ownership, but motivated to speak to the press as a tiger advocate in response to the injuries, escapes and accidents involving non-AZA tigers.

Ron and I agreed that the wild populations are all in terrible shape – Sumatra is an island overrun with humans and its tiger

reserves lack corridors to connect them for safe dispersal of offspring and genetics. China, Russia and India, are suffering the exact same pressures – too many humans, not enough habitat. And essentially, all wild populations will continue to degrade.

Meanwhile the AZA regional collection plans mandate that zoos purge their collections of their remaining Bengal and generic tigers to make room for the three sub-species they are collecting. The reason for this is protection of these genes for possible reintroductions into nature. Ron and I discussed how likely is that goal – and how can it be accomplished? Ron relayed that 20 years ago the idea was to develop artificial insemination and embryo transfer so that a wild female could be caught, brought into captivity temporarily, and impregnated with new genetic material and then released to give birth in the wild. However, two decades later there has only been one success at AI. The idea of releasing captive born zoo tigers into the wild is not an option either, for obvious social, political and economic reasons. Which leaves the zoo's pedigreed captive population locked in their captive habitat, same as the privately owned population, possibly for perpetuity.

Mankind has stolen most of the tiger species' rightful habitat, and given a select number of tigers a new *captive* habitat. And it is quite possible that none of those in captivity or any of their offspring will ever find their way back into nature. The only way captive tigers are helping save wild tigers is to perform a very important job as ambassadors that raise awareness, build empathy for their cousins in the wild and are a catalyst for conservation fund-raising and habitat protection. And tigers in captivity serve as research models into behavior and biology that can aid the survival of wild populations. The USDI acknowledged in their Generic Tiger ruling, it doesn't matter if ambassador tigers are generic or pedigreed sub-species pure, or whether they are housed in AZA zoos, or private sector facilities - all of them can perform this mission.

Tilson agreed with me, that *all* captive tigers, whether sub-species pure or generic can serve this purpose and probably no other. When I questioned Ron about the number of times his remarks have been used by animal rights fanatics to pursue their objective of destroying the privately owned captive populations I was encouraged to hear him tell me "I am not against all private ownership, I am against bad ownership. When I speak to the press, I speak volumes and they boil my words down into short sound bites." I had to agree with Ron – the press has done that to the animal community plenty of times. I asked Ron to work with FCF in the future, and stop letting reporters' quote him with that AR sound bite, *'private sector tigers are irrelevant to conservation.'*





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Legislative Updates, *continued from page 38*

Maryland Bill HB339 and SB296 The prohibition against Wildlife as Pets proposed amendments to the existing 2002 law were defeated. Neither bill got out of committee in Maryland. The house bill was withdrawn and the senate bill died in committee “no action”. They will have to start from the beginning next time they try.

The early warning from FCF and fast mobilization where probably the most critical elements that laid the ground work for a successful campaign. Pointing out to the legislators how much they had been misled by the AR people was also a major factor. I'd like to say that common sense had a part in this but I can't.

FCF got me started right and I was fortunately able to motivate just enough others to make it work. Notable by its absence was Pet Joint Industry Council (PJAC) Marshall Myers' group. Only one pet shop owner could see where this was going. The herp group was the best represented. They had one at the house hearing but six or seven at the senate one. Two wildlife educators were good. Two private breeders, one for small cats and the other in primate entertainment (movies, commercials, etc.) helped as did the four other private zoos open to the public in the state. All in all not that many people that actually gave testimony.

The state Wildlife and Heritage Department bowed out and sent their PR man to the senate hearings to say so. They wanted nothing to do with exotic wildlife regulation. BIG MISTAKE. I hope to be able to change their minds over the summer and go to the legislators this fall with our own bill. We'll see how it goes. Again many many thanks to FCF and good luck with the other fights.
Richard Hahn

WA HB1511 and SB5375 These bills are API sponsored bans that prohibit all primates, big cats and poisonous reptiles and give liberal powers of confiscation and euthanasia with no due process. Both Senate and House versions passed and in the final days of the legislative session the two bills were in Executive Committee to work out the differences. It appeared unstoppable. However WA animal people had been in this same place last year and they were not giving up. While in executive committee the Senate bill was lacking one signature to pass. Senator Rasmussen and Senator Carrell had added amendments to the bill and caused it to be stopped. Gloria had been communicating closely with her Senator all session to get this bill dropped. It was another big fight and another year down. Washington residents need to start real early formulating next year's strategy. Contact these two senators and give them a real BIG THANK YOU!!!!!!

West Virginia SB277 A team of multi-species groups representing dog people, the American Federation of Aviculture, the Organization of Professional Aviculturists, Herp groups, the very experienced negotiation team of the Feline Conservation Federation, the proactive e-mail list Phoenix Exotics, NAIA, AKC and PIJAC and others alerted members to contact each Delegate and they received emails in the HUNDREDS as far away as Puerto Rico and Alaska. Calls to the West Virginia Legislature resulted in multiple operators receiving nonstop calls from 8am to 5pm the first day, and the second and last day calls were received at the rate of 200 calls in the first three hours.

This is a prime lesson to us all on how we must band together, and not allow, “Divide and conquer”...to conquer us. I sincerely thank each and every person that answered the Call of West Virginia.
Colby Homer

FCF Membership Drive at the Mt. Hope Auction

Evelyn Shaw

We had a very nice time at the Mt. Hope auction. We heard the same concerns numerous times. Everyone was concerned with legislature. The Captive Animal Safety Act had a huge impact on the auction this year. You could not purchase any big cats or primates outside of the state without an USDA license. I heard from a couple of people that the USDA inspector was not supportive of private ownership of any kind. I did not have the opportunity to speak to him myself but I will make an effort to do so in the near future. We heard so many positive

private ownership stories. I wish they would make the news.

We had a very nice time and spoke to a lot of very nice people. We signed up five new members and gave out numerous applications. I had a wonderful time with the members that helped work the booth. I would like to thank the FCF members who helped out (Amy, Beau, Jay, John, Nancy, Rick, and Terri).

Hunter and Lea's Project - Just a reminder to those who are planning on purchasing an exotic. I know you have heard this a million times but I want to remind you to check you local, state and federal laws. I also want to encourage all existing owners to get involved with your local authorities. Educate them. We are finding a lot of ban laws are passed due to misinformation. I want to encourage you to work with your local authorities because it can mean the difference between life and death in an emergency. I truly believe that people are afraid of what they do not understand. Educate them on your animals become a resource. This is why I started Hunter and Lea's Project. It has been very successful in Ohio. I thank everyone involved. Carol is creating pamphlets to give to police, fire and animal control officers as a resource. We have grown a lot this year and hope to continue to make a positive influence here in Ohio.

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Gone, but never Forgotten

Bart Culver

Today, as fleecy clouds paraded across an indigo sky, and daffodils danced in the wind, a 20-year love story came to an end. I was preparing dinner when I heard Mercury scream. As raining monarch it was his privilege to announce it was dinnertime. He knew that whenever he called, we always came to attend him. "Dinner's coming Mercury", I replied. When I arrived with his dinner I saw the still form and the unseeing eyes and I knew that he was gone.

Was that scream a cry of pain as he suffered a fatal heart attack, or even a cry of fear? It would have been the first time in his life that he ever felt fear. Our love saw to that. We sacrificed so much, at one point we literally sacrificed everything we had to protect Mercury and the others from fear.



Tara and Bart hug

Mercury lived twice as long as the outer limits for longevity in the wild. A week before, his lifelong mate and adoring companion, Tara, gave up her struggle. She could no longer walk to her favorite sunning spot or jump up to her ramps. Her lungs were now failing as well. She was just worn out. Tara lived a charmed life and I told her story in the Phoenix Small Cats book, predicting that she would soon die in my arms purring with her last breath.

She lingered for two more years after the story was published, but when the time came, it was as exactly as I predicted. Mercury watched solemnly as we buried Tara in her favorite sunning spot. Lynn planted bulbs over her body and later Mercury's paw prints were all over her grave. There were signs that he tried feebly to dig her up and then lay by her grave for a long time.

It made me think about the time Mercury was very sick and fasted for 17 days and for every minute of those days Tara lay by his side, grooming him and keeping him warm. Such devotion is exemplarily in humans, but when you see it in supposedly inferior animals, it makes you wonder how humans could be so ignorant and audacious as to think themselves the exclusive recipients of God's love. It taught me what I never learned in schools or churches. It taught me that nature works on love. Love flows through the wild heart as readily as light flows through air. Only the human heart is capable of such darkness as to block out love and nature.



Tara greets Mercury through the fence

I knew that Mercury would not long survive the loss of his mate, he had a long and wonderful life and his passing would not be a tragedy. I thought I was prepared for this moment but I found myself moving as if a trance. I fell on top of Mercury and caressed his beautiful face and wept until I was dehydrated.

It was then that Mercury gave me the last of many gifts. I felt palpable energy flow from him to me and I arose a rejuvenated man, filled with strength and courage, enough to triumph over all the slanders and fanaticism that assail humans that love nature's creatures. And I knew the meaning of Mercury's last utterance on this Earth. "I Mercury, king of the cougars go to the afterworld to find my beloved Tara and be with her forever. Mother, father, I love you. I will leave a clear trail, so you can find us. It is a good day to die."



*Spring kitten season has arrived!
An Easter basket filled with serval fur balls is better then one with chocolate bunnies!
Photo by Tracy Wilson.
Read about kitten care on page 6.*