



**Feline Conservation Federation**  
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## Feline Conservation Federation Officers and Directors Contact Information

### Founder: Catherine Cisin

#### Copy Editor/Layout:

**Mike Friese**

204 S. Batavia Street

Orange, CA 92868

714-532-4041

editor@felineconservation.org

Member, Cat Writers' Association

#### Executive Director

**Lynn Culver**

141 Polk 664

Mena, AR 71953

479-394-5235

lynnkulver@hughes.net

#### OFFICERS:

##### President:

**Kevin Chambers**

7816 N CR 75 W

Shelburn, IN 47879

812-397-2302

president@felineconservation.org

##### Vice President:

**Patty Perry**

P.O. Box 2359

Moorpark, CA 93020

805-517-1005

vicepresident@

felineconservation.org

##### Secretary:

**Joseph Fortunato**

146 Frog Hollow Road

Churchville, PA 18966

215-852-9030

secretary@felineconservation.org

##### Treasurer:

**Kurt Beckelman**

4403 S. 334th E Ave.

Broken Arrow, OK 74014

918-407-0341

treasurer@felineconservation.org

#### DIRECTORS:

##### Conservation:

**Pat Callahan**

3400 Vine Street

Cincinnati, OH 45220

513-304-7155

conservation@

felineconservation.org

##### Development:

**Billie Lambert**

P.O. Box 40175

Panama City, FL 32403

850-532-5652

development@felineconservation.org

##### Education:

**Sylvia Gerber**

1679 NW 114th Loop

Ocala, FL 34475

352-875-7699

education@felineconservation.org

##### Marketing:

**Ron DeArmond**

1203 Columbus St.

Pella, IA 50219

312-213-7975

marketing@felineconservation.org

##### Public Relations:

**Dan Stockdale**

P.O. Box 221

Harriman, TN 37748

865-300-3232

publicrelations@

felineconservation.org

##### Membership Services:

**Elizabeth Whitlock**

1385 Middle Burningtown Road

Franklin, NC 28734

828-524-6943

membershipservices@

felineconservation.org

##### Legislation:

**Robert Johnson**

PO Box 31210

Myrtle Beach, SC 29588

786-390-8553

legislation@felineconservation.org

#### DEPARTMENTS

##### FCF Feline Facility

##### Accreditation Chairman:

**Kevin Chambers**

7816 N CR 75 W

Shelburn, IN 47879

812-397-2302

ZooARC@att.net

##### Conservation Advisor:

Jim Sanderson, Ph.D.

356 Freeman Street

Hartford, CT 06106

505-720-1204

gato\_andino@yahoo.com

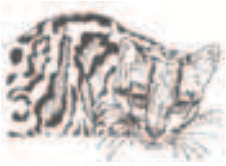
### TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE FCF JOURNAL AND JOIN FCF IN ITS CONSERVATION EFFORTS

A membership to FCF entitles you to six issues of this journal, the back-issue DVD, an invitation to the convention, and participation in our discussion groups. Your membership helps the conservation of exotic felines through support of habitat protection and conservation, education, and breeding programs. Send \$35 (\$40 Canada, \$50 international) to FCF, 4403 S. 334th E Ave, Broken Arrow, OK 74014

Members are invited to participate in email list discussions on-line at:

[http://groups.yahoo.com/group/The\\_FCF](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/The_FCF)

**Cover: Bear Creek Feline Center's jaguarundis, Sun Bear (top) and Ollie share a quiet moment. Inside: The eyes have it. Another one of Sun Bear. Photos by Jim Peacock.**



This magazine is published bimonthly by 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 on exotic feline ownership, husbandry, veterinary care, conservation and legislation are 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 second Friday of even numbered months. Please submit all photos and articles to the editor. Persons interested in joining FCF should consult instructions on inside front cover of this journal.

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## Letter from the President

It's just a few more days until the big convention in Salinas. Dan Stockdale and Kate Conner have been planning and finalizing our speakers and special events. I have no doubt it is going to be another memorable experience for all of us.

One of the highlights at the Saturday night banquet will be the presentation of the money we have raised for the Andean Cat Conservation and Monitoring Center to Dr. Jim Sanderson. There is still some time to send in your donations, which will be matched (up to \$2,000) by Fred Boyajian and again by Thierry Plaud, two very generous FCF members. In other words, they will donate two dollars for each dollar donated by you.

Once a year the members have the opportunity to bring forth agenda items for discussion at the convention membership meeting. If you have a project you want FCF to pursue, a suggestion for direction, an idea to present, please submit them in writing to the secretary so we can get them on the official agenda. You do not have to be at convention to have your agenda item presented.

As the president and chairman of the FCF accreditation committee, I am especially pleased to congratulate Zuzana Kukol on her recent facility accreditation by the FCF. Zuzana proves that you do not have to be a USDA facility or a commercial operation to meet the high FCF standards. I hope that more members will apply for FCF accreditation. Self-regulation and high standards demonstrate our credibility to lawmakers and to enable us to keep the cats we love.

During the annual board of directors meeting, applications for Accreditation Committee members will be voted upon. I have been on the committee since its inception. My term is up and it is time for me to step down and make room for a new FCF member to contribute to this committee. Send your application to me with your contact information and a description of your experience with facilities, construction, felines, and whatever strengths you can offer to the committee.

The board will also be appointing volun-



teers to the convention committee, so if you want to help out next year, let me know. Every other year the board appoints an editor. As our long-term members know, Mike has done wonders for our journal since his appointment in 2005. If this is an area you think you have skills and time to offer, please send the board a resume and letter of interest. We are looking for an editor for the still-on-the-drawing-board, online e-newsletter. There is a template just waiting for an active volunteer to work with our executive director so the content can be launched into cyberspace. If you would like to be considered for the electronic newsletter editor or have any questions, contact me.

You will see an article in this issue about the African safari sweepstakes. It is very important that all FCF members spread the word about the sweepstakes. Giving someone the opportunity to win a \$7,000 vacation of a lifetime for a \$10 donation is not a hard sell. The best part is that the international airfare is included. All the winner has to do is pay for his or her way to the international departure airports in Washington, DC or New York. There is not a bunch of hidden costs that will make the trip unaffordable to anyone. I challenge each FCF member to bring in at least ten sweepstake entry forms. Take them to fairs, family gatherings, baseball games...anywhere your friends and family congregate. For every ten \$10 donations you bring in, you will receive a free sweepstakes entry for yourself and the top seller will receive free

hotel and registration at the 2010 FCF convention. A downloadable poster has been uploaded to the members-only part of the FCF website, [www.felineconservation.org](http://www.felineconservation.org), that you can print and use for a visual promotion.

We need to bring in every dollar that we can to make the FCF stronger. FCF utilized Vitello Consulting during the recent CITES meeting in Geneva, Switzerland. Vitello Consulting is one of the best lobbying firms for wildlife issues in Washington, D.C. The FCF board is interested in retaining them as full time FCF representatives. These kinds of services are expensive, but when you consider organizations like HSUS spend hundreds of thousands of dollars in lobbying, FCF needs to counteract their efforts. Promote the African safari sweepstakes or make a donation to make this come true.

Vitello Consulting is also very experienced with the US F&W import and export application permit process. If you have a need for this kind of service, contact Todd Willens at [todd@vitelloconsulting.com](mailto:todd@vitelloconsulting.com). Several FCF members have used them and have been impressed with the results.

For those of you with facilities or shows open to the public, do not forget that we have FCF brochures available at no cost to members. Just send Lynn Culver a note on how many you need and she will see that they get sent to you. Please do your part to help promote FCF.

Working together today will bring a better tomorrow for us and for the cats.

—Kevin Chambers



## How to Help FCF, and Help Yourself Win a Safari in Africa!

Once again, FCF is offering its members an opportunity to experience the wonders of Africa for as little as a \$10 donation to FCF. Not only does this grand prize cover the one week at your choice of three different Zulu Nyala safari lodges, but also includes international air travel from New York or Washington D.C. to South Africa on South African Airlines. And to top it off, you can bring a guest of your choice at no extra charge. How is this possible you ask? Let me explain.

The FCF membership has until January 1, 2010 to offer friends, family, and attendees at their parks, exhibits, and events a chance to register for this Safari Sweepstakes. For each \$10 donation to the FCF, an entry form can be filled out in the donor's name and will be included in the grand prize drawing.

There are a lot of Safari trips offered out there, but few include the airfare to reach Africa. This one does. And so, for as little as the cost of your transport to the international departure airport, and some taxes, tips, transfers, and some shopping funds, or the cost of adventuring on any of the featured field trips to nearby attractions, you can have the dream vacation of a lifetime. This is a \$7,000 value!

But FCF needs you to help out. Your promotion of this African Safari Sweepstakes is vital to the fund raising success of this venture. Now here is where it gets really beneficial to FCF members who promote the safari. For every ten \$10 donations generated by you, one entry form will be filled out in your name. These entry forms have a "referred by" line on them. To get proper credit, be sure to have your name filled in the forms and we will keep a running total and make out entry forms to correspond.

The last issue of the journal and this issue of the journal included a single page of four sweepstake entry forms that you can photocopy and cut apart and offer to guests, friends, family, yourself, and everyone you meet. You do not have to be an FCF member to win this prize, but you do need to be an FCF member to be the referring person.

To help promote this safari prize, you can display the safari promotional poster. A file has been uploaded to the Members-Only section of the FCF web site under the

African Safari heading. Download this file and take it to your local printer to have printed in color (11"x17" or larger) and then mount it on poster board in a standing display for the next six months in your front office, gift shop, entrance, outreach programs, or public appearances. Donors may take entry forms and mail them directly, or you may assist and collect these FCF donations. Be sure to cut each entry form in half, and give the donor their receipt side and mail the Entry Form, and all donations to the FCF Executive Director, Lynn Culver, 141 Polk 664, Mena, AR 71953. Remember: for every 10 sweepstakes entries you are listed as the "referred by" person, a single sweepstakes will be entered in your name!

Another set of files

**For a \$10 donation to the Feline Conservation Federation You could WIN a 7-Day Safari for two at Zulu Nyala in South Africa! This is an incredible \$7,000 value and includes international airfare!**

**For each \$10 donation to the Feline Conservation Federation you may fill out an African Safari Sweepstake Entry Form here. A winner will be announced January 16, 2010. You may book your safari anytime in the next year.**

Grand Prize details: Six days and six nights accommodation for two people at your choice of either Zulu Nyala Game Lodge, Zulu Nyala Heritage Safari Lodge, or Zulu Nyala Nyati/Ndlovu Lodge. Included per day are three meals prepared by the finest international chefs, and two game viewing safaris guided by professional game rangers in open game viewing vehicles. International airfare for the winner and guest aboard South African Airlines is also included.

Zulu Nyala was the setting for the filming of, "1 Dreamed of Africa." This paradise boasts a variety of game from black rhino, majestic elephant, cape buffalo, and stealthy predators to abundant plains game, and a wealth of bird life. All of the facilities are of superior quality and are rated at 4 or 5-star. Zulu Nyala's website can be seen at: [zulunyala.com](http://zulunyala.com)

**Print and display this 11" x 17" poster at your front office, gift shop, information center, and anywhere you are set up for public exhibits and shows.**



## So...Now I Have Some Jungle Cats

By Teresa Shaffer

It was on the FCF Yahoo group that I first heard of the three jungle cats available. A while back Sandy at Cossette Exotics had passed away and Jerry was rehoming their cats.

The jungle cat (*Felis chaus*—also called the swamp lynx) is one of the lesser-known smaller exotic cats. They range about 18-35 lbs. and their coloring is most commonly similar to a cougar. The kittens are striped and spotted at birth but slowly fade as they grow older. Melanistic (black) jungle cats are also not uncommon. This cat is distributed over Egypt, West and Central Asia, South Asia, and Sri Lanka. Though called a jungle cat, it inhabits various habitats, such as savannas, tropical dry forests, and reed beds along rivers and lakes.

They share the distinction with African wildcats (*Felis silvestris*) and domestic cats (*Felis catus*) of having been mummified and placed in the tombs in ancient Egypt. It has been speculated that jungle cats are in the ancestry of the domestic cat, but the bodies found in Egyptian tombs have not been able to provide the evidence needed to prove this.

I was not at all sure I wanted jungle cats, but my husband Scott sure was!

We already were adding a few caracals and servals soon and new pens were to be built. The decision was made and Scott made the trip from Missouri to meet Jerry and picked the jungle cats up to bring them back to their forever home. All three of the cats, Ezebert, Andreka, and Janos, were

zoo raised and not at all friendly. They were brought in from Hungary and offer a new bloodline. This was one of our deciding factors that led to the decision to get them. We felt it was very important to continue their breeding program.

When he got home and I saw them for the first time, it was love at first sight! Those puppy dog eyes are unlike anything I had ever seen in an exotic cat. Not only are the eyes puppy-like, but jungle cats bark just like a big dog!

I remember the surprise we had when we heard the “Rrrrrff, Rrrrrff” coming from our yard and realized it was our cats. Imagine explaining to your neighbors: “No we did not get a bunch of dogs...it is our cats barking.”

Less than three weeks after they came to us, Scott was out feeding and saw a baby jungle cat laying in the bedding not breathing and lifeless. Momma wasn't having any part of him taking the baby so he got a grabber pole (one of those things you change light bulbs with) and scooped up the kitten. We did not even have a clue she was pregnant and now here we are with a kitten. The baby was cold and not breathing so Scot called me and asked me what to do? I told him to clear his airways and try to get any mucous out of him to see if he would start breathing. I meant clear the airways with a bulb syringe we had in the house. I heard on the other end of the phone, my husband spitting! YUCK! He had sucked on the baby's nose and mouth and got a glob of mucous out! Well, then I

heard a sound that was music to my ears: it was crying!

He then warmed the kitten in a sink of lukewarm water to slowly bring his body temperature up. After the kitten was warmed we proceeded to tube feed him some fluids and kept him on a heating pad till he was ready to suckle a bottle.

That was a year ago and we named him Yukon Jack. He was an ambassador cat at Sea World and was even on Martha Stewart and the morning show.

We now have had another jungle kitten born, a female Sasha. We are keeping her!

I am hopeful that I can do a small part to help promote the lesser-known jungle cat, which was popular in the 1980s but has slowly lost out to the serval and its beautiful spots! My ultimate goal is for the jungle cat to make its way back to the zoos and educational programs in the future.

Jungle cats are not as commonly kept as a pet as a serval. We have raised servals for many years and servals have a very tight bond with their owners. Although friendly at times, the jungle cats I have raised are more independent and less loving. Instead of the common serval hiss, my jungle cats growl. I have talked with people that have jungle cats that are extremely sweet tempered but like any animal, every one is different. Jungle cats are a unique and important smaller exotic cat species and I am so thankful we got them! The barking still amazes me every time I hear it! Maybe in time you will be at a zoo or educational park and get to enjoy a Rrrrrff too! •



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# Tiger Pups



Tom Harvey

*By Allie Harvey*

For the past several years, our visitor traffic had been declining, so much so that in 2008 Tom and I had decided that if God did not do a miracle we had no choice but to close the doors of Safari Park on August 1, 2008. It was really out of our hands as our yearly revenue had been cut down to one fourth of what we would generally bring in, barely enough to feed the animals and keep the lights on, let alone make improvements on habitats and get them up to Kansas law standards that we had been slowly working on since their inception. So, I thought our last hoo-rah was going to the FCF conference in South Carolina at Myrtle Beach. What a grand way to finish up what Tom had started over 20 years ago, with blood, sweat, and tears. Little did I realize that in the midst of all these trials,

he had not given up hope and was diligently believing in God for a miracle.

Leaving was slightly difficult as Sassy our female white tiger was pregnant. She was due anytime, yet we left the park in good hands and hoped that we would make it back before she birthed. While flying home on July 27 we got a call from our head intern. She said Sassy was giving birth. She had had two and acted as if she was not quite finished. By the time we got home at 2:00am, there were three cubs and she was barely taking care of them. As the sun came up and the temps rose, we anxiously watched as she moved away from them, leaving them by themselves in the middle of the pen. Tom made the decision that we would need to get them and nurse them ourselves.

Enter Isabella our golden retriever who

had just had two puppies four weeks prior. When Tom brought the nearly lifeless cubs inside, Isabella was nursing her puppies and I was feeling a bit anxious as both Tom and I began to get the formula ready. Then almost instantaneously, Tom, myself and his mother who was there at the time, looked at each other and we thought: Isabella, milk, babies. So I put one down at her tummy and the little cubby latched on to her nipple and started to suckle! Bingo!

I quickly placed the others there too and she began cleaning, licking and stimulating them as they nursed. Thinking it quite cute, I reasoned we are closing the doors in two days, so why not go out with a bang? I called a couple local papers. The Independence Reporter, which is 25 minutes away, sent Rob Morgan, who took pictures and wrote a small story. He said, "Hey you



don't care if I put this on the AP wire do ya?' I said, "go ahead, it can't hurt anything!" And as they say, the rest is history. The next day our phone began ringing off the hook. We received calls from New York Today Show, The Early Show, MSNBC, Fox News Network, Minnesota Public Radio and Harper Collins Publishing Company. We were open-mouthed at the response, all the while Isabella quietly nursed the cubs looking motherly up at us while we were dealing with all the people.

Visitors started pouring in and the news of Isabella and the tiger pups became a worldwide media sensation. We not only did interviews and TV segments for newscasts, but also were featured on the Oprah Show and Animal Planet's 2008 Top 10 Animal Stories of the Year. We were asked to appear live, with the cubs and Isabella in the Today Show Studio at Rockefeller Plaza. The Tiger Pups took Manhattan! The Today Show's hospitality was phenomenal. We were treated to limo service, room service, and the largest suite in the hotel so the tiger cubs and Isabella would have adequate accommodations while in NYC. It was an experience of a lifetime.

The cubs were thriving and it looked




**Tiger pups invade the set of the Today show.**

hopeful for the park. Tom had been talking with a representative from Harper Collins and they proposed a book deal to us. After finalizing the contract, I began writing information about the cubs everyday, how they were doing, what stages of growth they were in, how big they were and how Isabella was doing. Each day was a new day for them with new sounds, smells, and

adventures. Tom was ready at the camera taking pictures and video, capturing the whole story on film. It was quite exciting for us country folks!

Much of the success with the tigers can be traced to the expertise that Tom brings to the table. He is a very charismatic instructor, not to mention a well-rounded handler with an almost Dr. Doolittle-like intuitive

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**Momma pup and tiger pup teen play.**



**VIP treatment: Allie and Isabella, a Very Impressive Pup, are chauffeured by limo to TV studio.**

nature. I call him the Animal Whisperer. He does not train our animals, but he can work with any animal he sees. He has such a confidence in them and himself. He watches their body language and pays attention to what they are telling him. He can take care

of any situation with any of our animals or any animal that is in distress, etc. People often remark when they visit, there is something different about your animals—they seem happy, they look healthy.

Our book is due out June 23 and we are

very excited. We are hopeful that this will take care of our issues with revenue as we are still facing the economic crunch that the rest of America is enduring. We give God all the glory for this situation. We would have never in our wildest dreams thought that our dog would have been able to save the park. There is a scripture in the bible that says, “God has chosen foolish things of the world to confound the wise,” and that is what we believe! The book deal was totally unexpected and done solely on the publishing company’s part. I have spoken to several people who ask, “wasn’t it hard to get a book published? I have been trying for years.” I just shake my head because they pursued us and took care of it all.

The Tiger Pups are now the Tiger Teens, each weighing right at or just over 130 pounds! Isabella and her puppy, Sadie, continue to visit the girls and play, albeit supervised by Tom of course. Not that they are doing anything aggressive it is just that they get excited to see her and all three of them together weigh approx. 400 pounds, give a dozen pounds if they have just eaten! We look forward to seeing what the future holds and do so with a positive attitude that anything can happen if you just believe!

We hope our story will be an inspiration to those who feel like giving up.

During a drought a tree’s roots go deeper to find water, which gives the tree strength. Life has its droughts and the situations people go through will build endurance and character. Hope is not based on what you see, but what is in your heart; as long as

**Geoffroy’s kittens available from N.O.A.H. Feline Conservation Center.** Native to South America, this species is rare in the United States. Adult weight will be about 5 to 10 pounds. Spotted and melanistic female kittens available now, other litters due later this year. For more information, or to purchase, contact Lynn Culver at 479-394-5235, or email at [Lynnculver@hughes.net](mailto:Lynnculver@hughes.net)



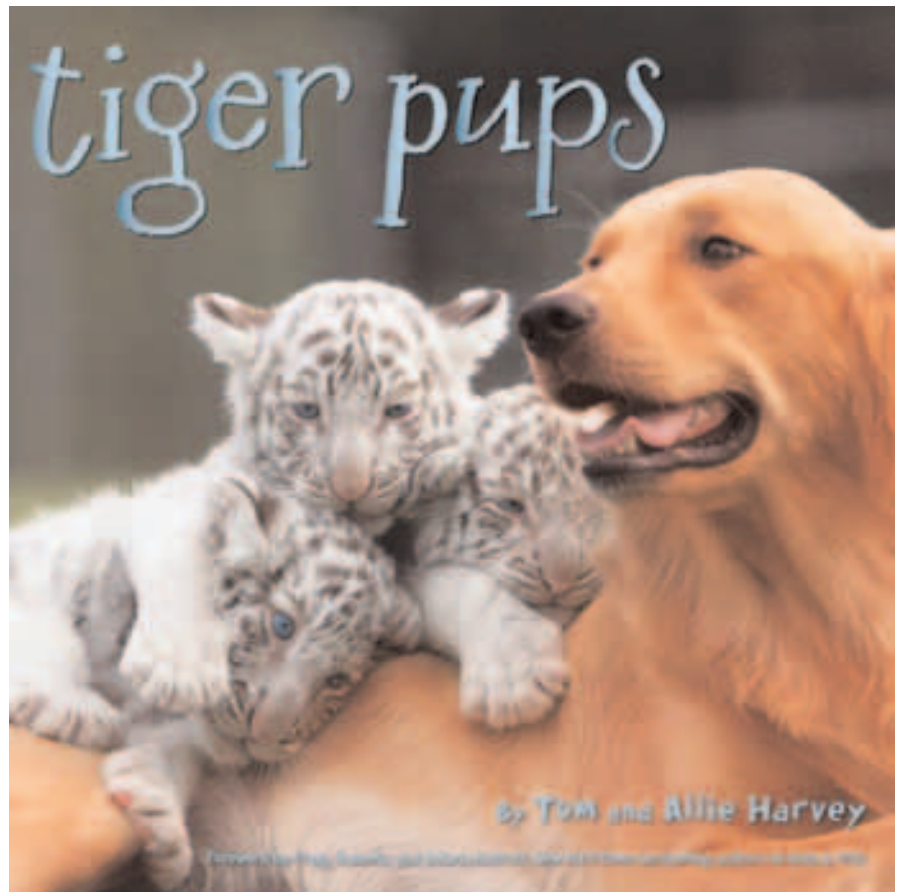


you have hope, you have a future. •

*Editor's Note: Tiger Pups can be purchased from Safari Zoological Park. Tiger Pups is a 50-page hardback book, written for children, with a target audience of 5 to 9 years. The many amazing and high quality photos in this large book also make this a unique addition to any coffee table, a quick read, and great conversation starter.*

*To help support the animals at Safari Zoological Park, send your check or money order for \$21.95 made out to Safari Zoological Park. Send to Safari Zoological Park, 1751 CR 1425, Caney, Kansas 67333. This price includes shipping to any US address. For international orders, please contact Tom at 620-879-2885 to get a price quote for shipping.*

*Tom is linking this amazing story of animal-helping-animal to conservation. Tom incorporated into his book contract for Harper Collins Publishing Company to donate \$1000 to the Feline Conservation Federation from the sales of Tiger Pups. Additionally, Tom has pledged to match this amount. Thank you, Tom and Allie, and good luck in the future! •*



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## Starting a Cougar Breeding Program

*By Vincent DeMaggio III*

I have always been interested in wildlife, but growing up in a big city made it very difficult to own any animals, never mind my favorites, exotic cats! I still managed to end up with lizards, a couple of raccoons, and a few snakes though my mother didn't appreciate them. I even owned a red tailed hawk, but it just wasn't fulfilling my dream.

Now that I'm a grown man, through some great friends, Lynn and Bart Culver, my dreams have become reality. I own a little piece of paradise on the river in northwestern Arkansas. My first exotic cat was a bobcat. She is now 3 years old and lives in an outdoor enclosure I designed and built for her. She taught me a lot and

further fueled my fascination with exotic cats.

Back in the 1980s and 1990s Arkansas was home to many puma owners and in Arkansas there were several licensed breeders of this native cat. However, by the end of the 1990s, nearly all the breeders had retired. In 2005 the state legislature passed an act that restricted possession of lions, tigers, and bears to USDA exhibitors and required a permit from the Arkansas Game & Fish Department. Once that happened, existing owners that were not USDA exhibitors had to register their big carnivores with the local sheriff's department and new owners had to be USDA licensed exhibitors. When this legislation passed, the Arkansas G&F tried to claim that the act

covered mountain lions because they were, according to Blake Sasse, G&F wildlife biologist, a "type of lion." Thankfully, G & F backed away from this position when members of the FCF including Lynn Culver, Wayne Sludder, and an attorney and fellow cougar owner Julie Roper, confronted the G&F agency and scheduled a speaking slot at the regular commissioners meeting. The agency dropped that interpretation, but found another path to stop Arkansans from owning cougars. They just amended their existing regulations to require everyone who currently possessed these cats to obtain a Breeder/Dealer Permit, even if you were not breeding or dealing. Arkansas G&F set a 6-month timetable to apply for the permit. Then a short time after that,



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## Mice



Size	Less than 500	500	1000	2500	5000+	Length(inches)	Weight(grams)	Count
X-Small Pinkies:	\$0.16	\$0.15	\$0.14	\$0.13	\$0.12	0.50 - 1.00	1.30 - 1.80	100
Small Pinkies:	\$0.16	\$0.15	\$0.14	\$0.13	\$0.12	0.50 - 1.00	1.90 - 2.40	100
Large Pinkies:	\$0.16	\$0.15	\$0.14	\$0.13	\$0.12	0.50 - 1.00	2.50 - 3.00	100
Peach Fuzzies:	\$0.19	\$0.18	\$0.17	\$0.16	\$0.15	1.00 - 1.25	3.10 - 4.40	100
Fuzzies:	\$0.19	\$0.18	\$0.17	\$0.16	\$0.15	1.25 - 1.50	4.50 - 7.00	100
Hoppers:	\$0.30	\$0.28	\$0.26	\$0.24	\$0.22	1.50 - 2.00	8.00 - 12.00	100
Weanlings:	\$0.40	\$0.38	\$0.36	\$0.34	\$0.32	2.00 - 2.50	13.00 - 19.00	50
Large Adults:	\$0.45	\$0.43	\$0.41	\$0.39	\$0.37	2.50 - 3.00	20.00 - 29.00	50
X-Large Adults:	\$0.55	\$0.53	\$0.51	\$0.49	\$0.47	3.00 - 3.75	30.00 - 50.00	25

\* We offer combined quantity discount mouse pricing. \* Measurement does not include tail length.

## Rats



Size	Less than 500	500	1000+	Length (inches)	Weight (grams)	Count
Pinkies:	\$0.39	\$0.34	\$0.29	1.50 - 2.00	3.00 - 8.00	100
Fuzzies:	\$0.49	\$0.44	\$0.39	2.00 - 2.50	9.00 - 19.00	100
Pups:	\$0.79	\$0.74	\$0.69	2.50 - 3.50	20.00 - 29.00	25
Weaned:	\$0.89	\$0.84	\$0.79	3.50 - 4.50	30.00 - 44.00	25
Small:	\$0.99	\$0.94	\$0.89	4.50 - 6.00	45.00 - 84.00	20
Medium:	\$1.39	\$1.34	\$1.29	6.00 - 8.00	85.00 - 174.00	10
Large:	\$1.49	\$1.44	\$1.39	8.00 - 9.00	175.00 - 274.00	5
X-Large:	\$1.59	\$1.54	\$1.49	9.00 - 11.00	275.00 - 374.00	3
XX-Large:	\$1.79	\$1.74	\$1.69	11.00 - 13.00	375.00 - 474.00	2
XXX-Large:	\$1.99	\$1.94	\$1.89	11.00 - 13.00	475.00 - 600.00+	2

\* We offer combined quantity discount rat pricing. \* Measurement does not include tail length.

## Coturnix Quail



Less than	500	500	1000+	Grams	Oz.	Count
Size	500	500	1000+	7.50 - 10.00	.25	100
1 Day:	\$0.34	\$0.29	\$0.24	30.00 - 40.00	1.0	25
1 Week:	\$0.64	\$0.59	\$0.54	50.00 - 75.00	2.5	10
2 Week:	\$0.84	\$0.79	\$0.74	100.00 - 125.00	4.0	10
3 Week:	\$1.04	\$0.99	\$0.94	130.00 - 150.00	5.0	5
6 Week:	\$1.34	\$1.24	\$1.14	155.00 - 185.00	6.5	5
8 Week:	\$1.44	\$1.34	\$1.24	190.00 - 225.00	8.0	5
10 Week:	\$1.64	\$1.54	\$1.44			

\* We offer combined quantity discount quail pricing.

## Rabbits



Size	Our Price	Weight (lbs.)	Count
X-Small:	\$3.50	0.50 - 0.75	1
Small:	\$4.50	1.00 - 1.75	1
Medium:	\$5.50	2.00 - 3.75	1
Large:	\$6.50	4.00 - 5.75	1
X-Large:	\$7.00	6.00 - 7.75	1
XX-Large:	\$8.00	8.00 - 9.75	1
XXX-Large:	\$9.00	10.00 - 11.75+	1

## Chicks

Less than	500	500	1000	5000	10000+	Grams	Ounces	Count
Size	500	500	1000	5000	10000+	30.00 - 35.00	1.0	25
Small:	\$0.25	\$0.20	\$0.15	\$0.12	\$0.10			



## Guinea Pigs

Less Than	500	500	1000+	Inches	Grams	Count
Size	500	500	1000+	6.00 - 8.00	85.00 - 174.00	10
Medium:	\$1.39	\$1.34	\$1.29	8.00 - 9.00	175.00 - 274.00	5
Large:	\$1.49	\$1.44	\$1.39	9.00 - 11.00	275.00 - 374.00	3
X-Large:	\$1.59	\$1.54	\$1.49	11.00 - 13.00	375.00 - 474.00	2
XX-Large:	\$1.79	\$1.74	\$1.69	11.00 - 13.00	475.00 - 600.00	2
XXX-Large:	\$1.99	\$1.94	\$1.89	13.00 - 15.00	601.00 - 900.00+	1
XXXX-Large:	\$2.29	\$2.24	\$2.19			

\* We offer combined quantity discount guinea pig pricing.



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they created a special permit called a Pet Mountain Lion permit for the non-commercial owners, and encouraged everyone to voluntarily switch over to it. Of course, you cannot breed with a pet permit. And then shortly after they created this new Pet Mountain Lion Permit, they declared they were not issuing any more pet permits.

I had begun building my compound and applied for the Wildlife Breeder/Dealer permit the end of 2005 according to the regulations in effect. I was probably the last person to be approved for an Arkansas Wildlife Breeder/Dealer permit for cougars. Although it wasn't easy to achieve, I now own a mountain lion named Bakira, as well as two bobcats, the first named Keesha and my latest addition, Savior, now 8 months old. I also have a wolf named Jasper.

I have a physical and loving relationship with all my animals. Jasper and Bakira were raised together and have become their own family with me as leader of their pack. They consider themselves brother and sister and I am their father. We play together all the time and I lose track of time on many days just spending it with my cats. It was a lot of work building their facilities, using regulation wire, posts, double gates, and several locks. The enclosures were inspected by the state Fish and Game officers. It was well worth it. At Lynn Culver's urging, I applied for facility accreditation with the FCF and was approved. It is with great pride that I have mounted my FCF Accreditation logo sign on the entrance gate to my facility.

I am very interested in breeding cougars in the future. I am planning to obtain my

USDA license and I plan to purchase a male cougar cub in the future. I have noticed how rare the cougar has become in the past few years. It seems to have gone from being a common feline, to a species that is rarely bred in captivity. I think there will always be a need for captive breeding programs to fill exhibit space, educational needs, and hopefully, future breeding programs, though with the state regulations and federal laws that have been passed recently, very few Americans qualify to possess this species.

I give my appreciation to the FCF and the members that helped me along the way to achieving my dream. Thank you so much for everything. •

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# the search for littlefoot

By Jim Broaddus

How many of you have ever seen a *Puma yagouaroundi*? I mean one in real life, not just a photo. Not until November 2004, did I first see a representative of this species. We purchased three jaguarundis from Europe and they were flown via British Airways to Atlanta's Hartsfield International Airport terminal. These little 25 pounders thought they were "black forest giants" as they spit and sputtered hello to me in something resembling a Czech version of "get out of my face!" My friend, David Sparandara, organized the transfer from his home in Prague, consisting of two cats coming from the Decin Zoo and one from Zoo Jihlava, both near Prague in the Czech Republic. And you ask, "Why would any American purchase felids that range from Texas to Argentina from central European zoos?" This answer will be woven into the remainder of this article.

Since captive born jaguarundis are CITES Appendix II in the Czech Republic, the paperwork was simple, that is, after I purchased a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Import/Export license and completed what they call their "package." With all the paperwork properly done, we journeyed from Panama City, Florida to Atlanta, Georgia, a distance of about 275 miles, for the delivery. Mind you that we had to apply for processing for an Atlanta arrival, rather than to Miami which seems to be the favorite Southeastern POE for the "service," more than 600 miles away. Just for the record, we have imported seven felids through Atlanta and each transaction has been flawless. We made it that way by contacting USF&W for appointments, by calling U. S. Customs to schedule meetings to obtain their blessings, and, just for good measure, notifying USDA and the Fulton County Health Department. The last two steps were unnecessary as they exclaimed that they have nothing to do with wild felid import/export. In fact, after this first successful transaction, USF&W kindly gave me a hard copy of a guide for such transactions through Atlanta. The actual process that we had just completed tracked pretty well with the government's guide, but I should add, do not make a late afternoon appointment unless you have standby motel reservations. U. S. Customs and USF&W sometime have schedule coordi-

Jim Peacock



nation problems and cats are retained within the customs receiving warehouse while paper work is scrutinized overnight!

It was just after dark that same day as we arrived back at BCFC and we carefully set about the task of opening each of the three crates. We found all three cats to be healthy, but the female had facial deformities. The two males, one reddish-brown, the other almost black, were in good spirits. The female, who was determined to be the sister of the black male, was found to be blind in one eye and with “buck teeth” that would rival the Disney character, Goofy. Early the next day, I called David in Prague to report my findings. Since he had not personally seen the cats, he phoned his zoo friends and it was concluded that “Yes, there could be a good possibility that the female lacked genetic diversity.” At that juncture, I was not terribly upset by this revelation. But, this became Bad Decision #1. Pretty much all jaguarundis in European zoos have gene pool issues, I have learned. I still conclude that two out of three ain’t bad! After all, there are no jaguarundi in the European wild unless an inexperienced intern allowed one to escape, which could happen.

So, happily we spread the word that there was a new jaguarundi breeding colony in town! Just about three years later, not so happily, we found one single neonate, cast aside by the mother. The tiny kitten died 24 hours later. I am convinced that she probably did not know what the kitten was other than a severe pain in the posterior!

All three of the jags were housed in our best quarters, which became Bad Decision #2. Mind you that the brother and sister were housed with the second unrelated male, so the brother could have been the father of the neonate. Maybe it was a blessing that the neonate did not make it as I hope to never be tagged “Bear Creek Inbreeding Center.” My dear friend Shelleen Mathews at the Wild Felid Advocacy Center near Seattle-Tacoma jumped on the chance to take the male/brother/father and she was kind enough to reimburse me to the penny for all of my expenses. She still has this cat, who remains healthy, but still has no mate. Shelleen introduced me onto a chap named Dale Anderson. To make a bad story short, he deemed that “we were not worthy” to receive one of his jaguarundis. This was based upon the fact

that we sold several servals as pets about a decade ago. We will call this my Bad Decision #3.

In the wild you might see jaguarundi from a Florida deer hunter’s tree stand. Several of my hunter friends have reported sightings in their “cross hairs” near Pace, Florida. Just this past March, I received a photo of a possible jaguarundi sighting in Sowl, which is about 40 miles south of here. The melanistic cat had the characteristic elongated muzzle and rounded ears, rather than typical domestic cat pointed ears. But we have no reports of road kills and no nuisance cats of this species in our garbage cans. There have long been stories of a derailed circus train passing north of here between Pensacola and Tallahassee back in the 1920s. It is said that some of these little guys escaped into the north Florida wild; maybe they multiplied. There are urban legends that suggest jaguarundis were imported from Mexico and released into the Ocala National Forest south of here back in the 1960s. Florida Fish & Wildlife does not recognize them as indigenous. You can depend on the fact that they are out there in Florida’s swamps, however. If you were to see one, you might think it to be a small puma or even an otter. They have been nick named “otter cats” by the locals. Their fecal matter is reasonably inoffensive (nowhere near the smell of an ocelot or tiger) and their urine is tolerable, much like that of a serval.

I have worked with captive jaguarundis for six years here at BCFC. We have five

other species in residence, and by comparison, this species takes the cake, pie, donuts, and sweet tarts. They are known to have at least 14 vocalizations. One of them is their distinct whistle. I cannot begin to describe the others. Call us for a reservation and discover this behavior first-hand if you like. When approached, they are hissy and they can spit in your eye with pinpoint accuracy from about six feet. Mind you that mine are zoo cats. But, they are not dangerous and seem to enjoy affection while they spit and hiss. Mine have never bitten anyone, but they are extremely food aggressive, thus an occasional scratch might be on the menu. Both cats eat more than a pound each day, which is a lot when you apply the 2% rule. From zero to 60 feet these cats are faster than a cheetah. This is not too hard to believe since their closest cousins are pumas and cheetahs. Jaguarundis resemble oncilla, Geoffroy, and margay in terms of their head structure: sort of convex with a definite “Romanesque,” prehistoric appearance. Their tails are almost as long as their bodies and they use them as rudders to counterbalance when they are at full gallop. Some of the photos included with this article support the theory that the male protects the female. They sleep in a pile, and are very social in captivity. In the wild, your guess would be as good as mine. They enjoy high perches and are possessive of their lair. Who would think that they would eat fruit? Not much, but some. I am told that they like water, but I have not observed them in their sauna. As for hand-fed babies,

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they are said to follow their keeper around like a puppy dog! Upon meeting a baby for the first time, one might think that the kitten was ill. They tend to lie in their keeper's lap as they feast on belly rubs. Adult diets consist of mostly chicken quarters, necks, and rib eye steaks. Our meat purveyor sells us beef at about a \$1.00 per pound for ribeyes that are out of date, but still fresh. (We enjoyed grilling some last weekend.) As for courting, the male and female are attached at the hip! Maybe that is the reason we have not been blessed with kittens.

Since I am not independently wealthy, I have become a "world-wide *Puma yagouaroundi*" researcher. My wife, Bertie, and I have made two separate trips to the Republic of Panama to meet with Autoridad Nacional del Ambiente officials. Our local contact person, Linda Walden, has been most gracious to us over the years. For the record, she keeps three ocelots and one single oncilla. The oncilla is closely akin to the Geoffroy. The other Central American wild felid species are jaguar, margay, and puma. I would not say that these species are indigenous to the area on good advice from Dr. Jim Sanderson who reports that they range through the Meso-American corridor. "Ranging" and "indigenesness" are all together different. Jim explained this to me during a conversation with him at the Myrtle Beach convention last year. His advice was sound and straightforward when he said that I must firmly decide what I want to accomplish with wild felids and "just do it!" He did not infer that it was a great idea to see how many rare felids one man could collect in a short lifetime. My sense was that he means "lower your head and get the job done, but do not chase around seeking everything with spots or stripes." Did I forget melanistic? We have made many good friends in Panama, and you might want to read the "Tale of Two Panamas" which I wrote for this journal and was published in the March/April 2008 issue.

The jaguarundis are plentiful in the wild in Central America, not quite like tree squirrels, but, the fact remains, they are listed CITES Appendix I in all Central American countries. Here's the problem: jaguarundi in all of Central America carry



CITES Appendix I designation due to exploitation. I did not know that a wild felid can be an IUCN animal of "least concern" (not threatened) and still be listed as CITES Appendix I. Believe it, because it is true. All of these problems are exacerbated by the fact that there are few that are captive-born. So, at the risk of losing count, this was my Bad Decision #4. After we sent the Panamanian government a dart gun and arranged to have one sent to the Summit Zoo in Panama City as a gift from Deborah Warrick, things did sweeten things up a bit. I was offered free jaguarundis on my last trip in April. This was all completely legal and was worked out by a Panamanian veterinarian, Dr. Alberto Crespo, who works for ANAM. The CITES I permit was

blessed by their officials. This transaction may come to fruition someday, but the USF&W plays hardball, fast pitch, on all CITES I animals coming out of the Republic of Panama. I am having a difficult time getting my arms around this one since Bear Creek Feline Center is currently operating as an educational facility. USF&W almost never approves the import of a CITES I animal for educational purposes. A better chance is had if the animal is being imported to be part of an established captive breeding program. This creates the classic "chicken and egg" situation, since there is not presently any established captive breeding programs for jaguarundi in the US. And also, to gain the USF&W importation permission of a CITES I animal, the captive breeding pro-



gram needs to somehow benefit the species in the wild. Clearly this goal of mine requires long-term commitment. Time will tell.

The next few lines of essay should actually be the lead paragraph, but for the sake of chronology, they are not. These facts are extremely important to anyone who fancies this species and seeks to import them. Only the Central American population of jaguarundi are listed as Appendix I species. Those native to South America are listed as Appendix II, making their importation much less problematic, if—and this is a big if—a reliable and trustworthy source for this species can be found.

Since I have become associated with Alan Shoemaker, he has introduced me to jaguarundi people in the Cooperative People's Republic of Guyana. Alan is a knowledgeable person who works closely with AZA zoos. Although I am not particularly in love with AZA, I like Alan's straightforward approach. His contact in Guyana, who will remain nameless at this point, writes and I quote, "With regards to the jaguarundi, Guyana has never exported this species so the government would need to allocate a tax on that before we would be able to quote you a price. I am hoping to receive positive feedback from our ministry within a few days time and will let you know." That email was dated April 11, 2009. So, I optimistically wrote another email to query the status. The answer...."These animals cannot be exported as animals on the normal quota that the ministry has given to us. We have, however, commenced on a breeding program and hope to get out a few. We were offered US \$23,000 for each jaguarundi a few years ago. We have never




**Shelleen Mathews' jaguarundi, Icarus.**

exported this specie out of Guyana and neither has anyone else. We will have to conduct a vigorous campaign to our ministry with proper presentation and information before the scientific authority gives us approval. It would not be an easy task, but I think we can be successful on this." Is there a typo in there somewhere? Is the number

US \$2,300 or did I read US \$23,000? Am I about to make Bad Decision #5?

I think that it is widespread knowledge that *Puma yagouaroundi* is now on the approved AZA list. By this addition, this might increase the demand for the little jags. We have two options as FCF members, flood the market with a "buzz" about the new value which might be placed on this species, or work together to establish several bona-fide breeding colonies here in America. Remember that the AZA zoos are not in the habit of paying big bucks for felines. So, my bottom line is simply this, contact me if you want to find "littlefoot" and let's work to combine our assets so that we might work together. Mind you, this will take a lot of time, some travel, and a fair amount of money! Bad Decision #6 will be for all FCF members with a profit motive to "rush for the exit." •



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# Owned by Leopard Cats

By Marie and Mike Bloodgood

It all began with an ad in an Arkansas Sunday newspaper. “Bengal kittens for sale.” From that day 13 years ago, our search for the ideal Bengal cat began. Little did we know how far we had to go to try to imitate the natural beauty of the leopard cat species. If someone had told us someday we would establish the Leopard Cat Foundation and breed the beautiful and exotic leopard cat, we would never have believed it! It has been an amazing journey caring for and learning about the *Prionailurus bengalensis* species, especially the *euptilura* and *chinensis* subspecies of the leopard cat. They have a regal look and intelligence that is hard to put into words.

The *P. bengalensis chinensis* subspecies is a small cat weighing in at around 7-8 pounds. The coat is silky soft, with rosetting ranging from arrowhead, paw print, or chaining effects. The background coloring varies from golden wheat to the less rufous coloring. The belly is pure white and spotted. The *chinensis* are amusing in that they literally freeze in whatever position you find them. I wonder if they think I cannot see them. Their native range is central China and Taiwan in forests and scrublands, often near water. In the wild, their diet consists of hares, rodents, game birds, insects, amphibians, moles, reptiles, and fish.

The *P. bengalensis euphilura* subspecies can weigh as much as 20 lbs, and has a slightly longer, denser coat. The tail is thick, short, and blunt tipped. The spots of these cats tend to be smaller and rosetting is quite common. The head is longer than the *chinensis* and the eye is almond shaped. The *euptilura* is not as nocturnal as other subspecies. Their natural range is North and South Korea, eastern China, eastern Russian and eastern Siberia where their thicker coats serve them well. Their diet is similar to other subspecies. They are not afraid to enter water to hunt for prey.

We started out with two male leopard cats: one *P. b. euphilura* and one *P. b. chinensis* subspecies for use in our bengal breeding program. We later realized that pure subspecies were difficult to find because there were few LC breeders and nearly none working with pure document-



ed subspecies. In time we were able to add unrelated bloodlines with the desire to preserve pure subspecies. We established the Leopard Cat Foundation in 2000 with a dream to eventually breed and preserve all 16 LC subspecies.

Our first *euptilura* named ZaRu could be found basking in the sun or simply checking out whatever we were doing in the compound. He was a gentleman with the females, never making them feel threatened and giving them space until they were ready to be bred. He was loaded with personality and we miss him deeply since his passing of old age last fall.

Our first leopard cat kitten, Maximus (pure *chinensis*), was about 12 weeks old and still on the bottle when he came to us. Max would follow us around the house like a puppy and enjoyed sleeping on our bed with the warm sunlight bathing him. He would play hide and seek with Marie and if we called out “Hey Max, you want your baba?” he would be sure to gallop from wherever he was, leap into our laps and take his bottle. Max is unique in that he would readily accept most female bengal queens as mates. Best of all, he has produced many outstanding pure *P. b. chinensis* leopard cubs. His son, Magnum, is a

stunning example.

I have been privileged to bottle-feed and hand raise many LC cubs from the time they are 10-14 days old until they are weaned onto raw meat at 6 weeks old. We use canned Goats Milk Esbilac supplemented with taurine for the young cubs. At 3 weeks the cubs are using a litter box and have continued to do so ever since. They are very affectionate, giving kisses and purring like little engines! I did not know that an exotic cat could express such affection. We are currently raising four *P. b. chinensis* leopard cat cubs out of Titan and Mai Tai. The three boys and one girl are growing and developing very well. We have produced as many as 24 cubs, both *euptilura* and *chinensis*, in a single year. All our females have produced by their second year, many having two litters a year, averaging two-four cubs each litter.

We keep our adult leopard cats in outdoor, partly roofed enclosures equipped with straw-filled houses (winter months), shelves, trimmed cedar trees for climbing, and a four inch PVC pipe that serves as a feeding chute. They all have and use their litter boxes, which makes cleaning much easier. In fact, we have trained even the zoo-raised LCs to use them. Our LCs’ diet



has ranged from chicken drumsticks rolled in vitamins to a raw meat diet composed of chicken with liver and gizzards, beef hearts, rice, corn, carrots, and vitamins served in a ground form, to live coturnix quail and day-old chicks. We feed our LCs once per day after dark when they are more active and there are no flies. If any cat should need medicating, we either inject meds into a chicken drumstick or insert a pill into a day-old chick, which is completely consumed.

Leopard cats have a fast metabolism and require feeding daily. If they go off their food for more than 48 hours, they *must* be force-fed. A trick we learned about LCs is they will eat whatever we can get into their mouth. We cut fresh chicken meat into strips and force-feed them with a barbecue tongs getting them to hiss and stick the meat into the mouth. This is done until they are back on their feeding schedule. This is much better than the alternative of netting and tube feeding them, which upsets them more, and makes them less likely to start eating on their own.

Raising these exotic cats has been a wonderful experience but sadly both

Mike's and my health has slowed us down. Our children have grown and left the nest and left us with more work than ever. It is a challenge to keep up with it all. It is our hope that others will continue the work we have started. I am concerned that the future of these amazing cats may be in jeopardy. There are poachers capturing LC cubs in the wild and attempting to ship them out to anyone who has the right amount of cash. Others capture the adults for their exquisite spotted coats. Who can say how long the

LC will survive in its natural habitat? We hope that interested feline conservationists will take up this cause. Contact us if you are interested, we have pairs and trios of our *chinnensis* and *euptilura* LCs available to facilities that intend to provide loving care and breed them to preserve these ALC as pure subspecies.

For more information on these and other leopard cats, please visit The Leopard Cat Foundation's website at:

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## Thailand Clouded Leopard Consortium

*By Thierry Plaud*

I have recently completed an internship in Thailand with the Clouded Leopard Consortium at the Khao Kheow Open Zoo. This internship was related to a project I am involved in with the French National Museum of Natural History (leading scientific authority in France for life sciences). My goal was to learn more about clouded leopards, and especially about the pairing process and cub hand-raising. Being allowed to be there was a special privilege. Many thanks to Dr. JoGayle Howard (Smithsonian Institution, Project Coordinator) and to Rick Passaro (Project Manager) for having taken the time to teach me and endure my endless stream of questions. The text and pictures following are an attempt to

report to  
the FCF members of  
this extraordinary experience.

### **The clouded leopard conservation situation**

Since I assume that every FCF member knows what they look like, I will not include any physical description nor will I write anything about the Clouded Leopard geographical range or diet. That information can easily be found via libraries or the net.



Very little is actually known about wild clouded leopards. Only six cats have ever been radio collared, and sightings are extremely rare in the wild—like all nocturnal cats. This lack of in situ data and absence of precise census must not hide the fact that they are not doing well in the wild. Listed as vulnerable by the IUCN (population estimated less than 10,000 individuals), they are listed under CITES Appendix I. Because of frequent poaching and destruction of their natural habitat caused by large scale logging throughout their range in southeast Asia, it is largely assumed that the number of cloudeds is shrinking at an alarming rate.

Unfortunately, the captive population is not doing better. In fact, breeding them has always been a challenge worldwide mainly due to male aggression, decreased breeding activity between paired animals, and high cub mortality. Artificial insemination is also a challenge due to their unique reproductive traits, although reproductive physiologist JoGayle Howard used this technique to produce two cubs at the Nashville Zoo.

#### **How the project was created**

In 2002, representatives of the Smithsonian's National Zoological Park, The Nashville Zoo, the Thailand Zoological Park Organization (ZPO), and the Asian Wildlife Consultancy Co. with the support of the Clouded Leopard Species Survival Plan (SSP) created the Clouded Leopard Consortium, a multi faceted project to improve husbandry, nutrition, breeding, and collection of biological data. Although it was largely a team effort, on the American side two people really developed the project with their blood and tears: JoGayle Howard and Rick Schwartz.

A census was made of the captive population in Thai zoos, and most of the clouded leopards were obtained from confiscations or donations from the public. It was decided that the Khao Kheow Open Zoo in Chonburi would be the site for the ex situ breeding project, and 27 captive clouded leopards (all wild born except for four animals) were transferred there. The ZPO graciously provided a site where huge hornbill cages were renovated, and the American zoos provided an on-site manager. At the beginning, it was decided that this manager would be a senior keeper who would be

sent for three-month intervals by one of the zoos involved, but this proved too complicated to run efficiently, so Rick Passaro was hired in 2004 as permanent on-site manager. His experience with clouded leopards, combined with excellent social skills and the ability to adapt to foreign culture made him the ideal candidate.

Of course, all the people involved in such complex projects know that it is a day-to-day struggle and a lot of hurdles must be crossed, but this team was so dedicated that with the help of the ZPO, they managed to do it.

#### **The Clouded Leopard Consortium of Thailand, Khao Kheow Open Zoo: Goals and Achievements**

The Khao Kheow Open Zoo is an integral part of the clouded leopard project to improve the breeding success and care for the animals. Basically the Khao Kheow Open Zoo provides the breeding facility where a huge emphasis is given on cub raising and pairing young individuals. It is also the main source of biologic samples used for fundamental research about clouded leopards. Those samples (primarily feces) are collected regularly and put in a frozen container which is shipped two or three times a year by plane to Washington, DC to be analyzed for fecal hormones, specifically reproduction and stress hor-

mones.

The amount of data collected is very impressive and is used in programs mainly aimed at understanding their reproductive physiology but also to collect genetic information that will be used by SSP coordinators.

The Khao Kheow breeding project is by far the best breeding and research facility for clouded leopards: over 40 cubs have been produced there during the last six years, a feat achieved by no other facility in the world. (Remember there are only three facilities in the world breeding clouded leopards on a regular basis, meaning at least one litter per year.)

#### **How I ended up there and how it feels from the inside**

I was reasonably certain that my friends at the French Museum of Natural History were interested in a clouded leopard project. They told me that they would be willing to work with my small facility. I knew there would be a unique chance to get a couple of my dream species in France. Of course I had to try to learn more about the unique husbandry and breeding problems of those cats.

I took the opportunity of my next flight to Bangkok to arrange transportation to Khao Kheow Open Zoo. From my downtown hotel, the concierge was obviously a bit puzzled at my quest since Khao Kheow, situat-



**Typical enclosures used for the clouded leopard program.**

ed 1.5 hours south of Bangkok, is a popular destination among Thai people but does not normally attract foreign tourists.

I arrived at the gate of the zoo late morning and inquired about the Clouded Leopard Consortium. People at the gate did not speak very good English and obviously had trouble understanding me, so I tried to explain what I was looking for. After a few minutes, someone seemed to understand and took me for a short car ride up a hill to a remote part of the zoo where I was welcomed by a puzzled but very friendly American man who happened to be Rick Passaro, manager of the project in Thailand. I introduced myself briefly and asked if it would be possible to visit the project and see the cats. This was no problem for Rick, and we spent a couple of hours together.

As you may imagine, I asked Rick numerous questions but spent most of my time watching the cats in awe. Apart from Prague Zoo, I had never seen clouded leopards at such a close range and marveled at their beauty but also at their friendliness. Most of them greeted me with chuffles



(Rick told me later that for some of them this was unusual). They were obviously seeking interaction and this was opposite to what I had previously heard about this species (and experienced at Prague Zoo).

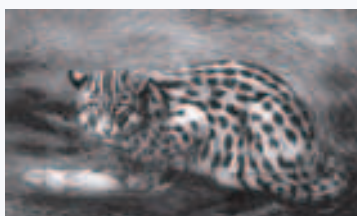
They were supposed to be very easily stressed, but instead, most of the cats came to the fence and greeted me—very surprising that they were visible to a stranger and not hiding. This behavior must have been the result of the hand-rearing and socialization being evaluated in the project.

We had an excellent Thai lunch at the zoo, and I promised to send him some pictures of both my facility, cats, and of the places where I previously worked. It turned out that Rick was expecting a litter in December at a time when I had my winter vacation. He kindly invited me for the occasion so that I could learn more about the subtleties of hand raising clouded leopard cubs. Needless to say I accepted without hesitation!

A few weeks later, I was ready to go but unfortunately Bangkok Airport was closed due to the blockade of all Bangkok airports by the so called “yellow shirts” who at that time confronted the “red shirts” to obtain the resignation of the prime minister. It was total chaos and numerous tourists were stranded in Thailand. It seemed that nobody knew what was going on and how the problem would be resolved. After a week of daily phone calls with Rick, I took the opportunity of the first flight to Pattaya in the south of Thailand to try to get there. I was lucky enough to board a connecting flight to Utapao and found a car to make the 1.5 hour drive to Khao Kheow, an 18

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hour trip total.

I was welcomed there by Rick with a cold beer and hot Thai food. Rick told me that we would be in time for the 6:30pm bottle-feeding after my shower. Unfortunately at 8:00pm, the water was cut off and remained so until the next afternoon. Such events (water or electricity being shut off) are fairly common at Khao Kheow. The water and electricity systems are old and need frequent repairs by the maintenance staff, so I learned that Rick has a permanently operating insulated boiling pot to make sure he will be able to prepare the bottle for the cubs at the scheduled time.

There were one male and two female cubs. The cubs were temporarily named Rump, Neck, and No Name according to the part of their body shaved to identify them more easily. I say temporarily because since the project relies heavily on private sponsoring, it is customary to name the cubs according to the wishes of the most generous sponsors. As Rick explained this to me, we joked about the potential names of the cubs and imagined them called Exxon, Citibank, or General Motors.

Cubs of this age stay in Rick's house and have five bottles a day at 6:00am, 10:00am, 2:00pm, 6:30pm, and midnight. We would give half of the meals with Rick while a young Thai woman named Nok would give the other half. For Rick to have one litter only at a time is a relief. There have been times where the project had two litters simultaneously and things get a lot more complicated at feeding time.

I was very excited about meeting the cubs. The bottle preparation was interesting. The formula used is made of 75% KMR and 25% Milk Matrix 33/40. No taurine is added (since it is included in the KMR) but Rick does add lactase to help their digestive system break down the lactose in milk.

Cubs are removed from the dam on day one and start with seven meals a day. They are fed on milk exclusively until around day 30, then are progressively introduced to baby food and meat. They are extremely sensitive to overfeeding so each bottle is prepared specifically for each cub and weighed by the gram. This gave me interesting moments: imagine one bottle is supposed to weigh 29g. You pour the milk and



since 1g is an extremely small quantity, of course you overpour and get 32g. Then you try to pour 3g out of the bottle but you overpour to 28g, so you pour again and get to 32, and this can go on and on. The nipples used are human premature nipples perfectly adapted to the size of their mouth.

As all of you who have hand-raised cubs know, hygiene is paramount and unfortunately the tap water at Khao Kheow is not of drinking quality. We still used it to

wash the nipples but boiled all the supplies afterward to prevent bacteriological contamination.

Those of you who have never seen those little furballs cannot imagine how cute they are. Rick knew I had already bottle-fed numerous young cats, so he immediately trusted me. I could see the cubs sensed there was a new person around but they had no problem adapting to me. After the bottle, like every cub they began crawling



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around, and I understand why Rick said it was better to have two handlers for a litter of three. A human being has only two hands and you can be sure that once you grab the little devil who tried to explore the electric plug and her sister who tried to spill all the hot water from the heating bowl, you suddenly realize that the remaining one has crawled and gotten stuck between two kennels.

After a few days and under the careful tutelage of Rick, I had become used to the routine and things were much easier. The cubs stay in a nursery room until the age of 6 weeks. Adjacent to this room is a small cage where they will be introduced to the outdoors. They have to remain under surveillance once in the outside cage because of the numerous poisonous snakes in the area (Rick caught a 10ft king cobra inside the adult's enclosure. As a true conservationist and well aware of the importance of snakes, he did not kill it, but released it in the wild.) There are also aggressive monkeys roaming the surroundings of the house. Those monkeys could easily kill a cub by trying to pull it out if one of the cubs stuck a leg outside of the mesh.

As I mentioned above, their health is extremely fragile before the age of one month and they can easily get diarrhea (sometimes bloody) that is difficult to cure. Among all the species of small cats that I have cared for, they seem to be the most difficult to raise.

The next day, water was still not available. After a light breakfast, still jet lagged but happy, I was introduced to the staff and animals.

Khao Kheow Open Zoo's contribution to the breeding project (thanks to the ZPO) was cage space, access to the zoo veterinary clinic, and manpower (three zookeepers who were trained by Rick). The cage space was old, unused hornbill cages (the zoo is very successful in breeding hornbills) and a building that was renovated to adapt them to their new inhabitants. Some of the cages were as huge as 75' x 25' x 30' while others were high concrete structures but much smaller. Other cages were further built by the project in the same type as the huge ones, only smaller. They were intended for young or subadult animals and were designed to be easier to use by the staff. All



the cages are situated on steep slopes so no extra space is presently available for new enclosures, and the grass cutting has to be done by hand (plants grow very fast in Thailand at any season). Those slopes may also cause landslides during the monsoon and such a landslide may collapse some of the cages.

The veterinary clinic is well equipped and a whole team of veterinarians and technicians are working there. The ZPO also hired Dr. Mitchell Bush, a retired veterinar-

ian from the National Zoo as senior adviser for all the zoos managed. Dr. Bush is living day-to-day at Khao Kheow so he can assist on complex cases.

The Thai keepers, Arun, Tong and Nok, were extremely nice to me, as were all the people working at the zoo. This did not surprise me since Thailand is well known among aircrew to be one of the nicest cultures in Asia, and all the Thai people I met were smiling and gentle. Nok even offered me a present at the end of my stay.

Nok's job is essentially hand-raising the cubs, and Rick considers her a very capable and trustworthy foster mother, while Arun and Tong do the general husbandry, collection of biological samples, and enclosure maintenance with Rick.

One of the main reasons why clouded leopards are difficult to breed is that they tend to show extreme male aggression toward females. This means the pairing process of adults often results in the death of the female from a bite of the male. Penny Andrews at Hexagon Farm in California discovered years ago that this could be avoided by introducing a sub adult male to a fully mature female, a process that could happen in nature.

Khao Kheow proceeds in a different way, forming the pairs as young as possible and in any case before the age of one year. The introduction to each other is done under Rick's supervision, made possible by the fact that all cubs are hand-raised. Once each cat is reasonably comfortable with the other, they are left together but some pairs have burst of rough play or aggression with each other. Those pairs are separated at night because Rick observed that aggression tends to be more frequent at night and also because since the enclosures are in a remote part of the zoo, there would be no one at night to separate the cats if they fought. All the habitats of the adults are built in a way permitting, if necessary, to separate the males and the females.

I witnessed this tendency toward aggression between individuals in different cages, even among non-sexually mature cats. The huge structures make it difficult to physically separate the cats because the mesh panel surface is huge. Unfortunately, the lack of separation caused three cats to lose a front leg. One of the males had to be euthanized after a second aggression and the loss of his second front leg which was a heartbreaking event because I remember him as the sweetest and most friendly cat I ever met. I shall remember him forever.

The feeding and general husbandry was not very different from other cat facilities where I spent some time except the that due to Avian Flu constantly present in Thailand, the cats are never fed poultry.

Their medical care is basic, and all the

cats I saw were in excellent health and obviously happy and unstressed. Some of them—especially young cats—developed some strange red rash on the inner thighs. The rash sometimes gets infected and needs to be covered with topical creams (corticosteroids and antibiotic). Although samples were taken, Rick still does not have any explanation for the rashes.

Working with those cats was a real pleasure for me, and very few showed discomfort or exhibited aggressive behavior. Rick tries to keep human interaction at a balanced level so that cats remain comfortable with their keepers, allow medical care and human presence during introduction, but also keep their wildcat instinct so as not to interfere with the breeding process.

Interacting with the pairs was wonderful and great fun. Clouded leopards really have monkey capabilities; they are able to climb anywhere, perform huge jumps, even climb down a trunk head first (something only margays are able to do), so it is difficult to keep your eyes on both cats, specially during concerted attacks.

So, my stay with Rick passed like a dream. Soon it was time to say goodbye to everyone and every cat, something always difficult but I had to come back home to care for my own cats. During the long

flight to Paris, I could not help thinking about the extraordinary moments spent there.

What I would like to add is that the job done by the Thai and US teams is a model of how such a project should be managed. Those people are doing an outstanding job, and I would like it to be eligible for the FCF conservation grants. Individual donations will also help tremendously and I give you my word that the money will greatly help clouded leopards both captive and in the wild.

To make a donation, you may send the funds to the FCF treasurer, and note that they are for the "Thailand Clouded Leopard Consortium." One hundred percent of the funds will then be forwarded to this project, giving both you credit and a tax deduction for your donation, the FCF credit as an organization for supporting this project, and, your generosity will directly benefit the work being accomplished toward clouded leopard captive breeding, research, and habitat protection in Thailand. For more information, you may contact JoGayle Howard at [howardjg@si.edu](mailto:howardjg@si.edu)

I also would like to thank Rick Passaro and JoGayle Howard for allowing me to be there and all the people I met at Khao Kheow for the heartwarming welcome. •

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# Evolve. Or Go Extinct.

By Erin Patters

We are all exotic feline enthusiasts and conservationists contemplating how ever-changing environmental variables, accelerating loss of natural habitat, and improper breeding is creating the possibility that one day this world may lose many of the exotic felids each of us adore. Yet we have so many examples of FCF members doing a phenomenal job to insure our exotic felids can one day propagate and survive self-sustaining in the wild. Yet we face one more hurdle: we face the beginnings of a severely deepening loss of captive habitat.

I have had the recent fortune of being an intern with a sanctuary, a private sector owner, wildlife rehabilitation facility, and even a privately owned zoo. Each of them has been a relevant classroom and I could

not imagine my journey being as successful as it has been without the contributions of each.

At each crossroads on my new path to learn as much as I can from all sides of animal conservation, I began to notice some widespread obstacles in not only sustaining the various facilities exotic felid population, but in procuring new felines for those that had breeding facilities.

For example, the federal version of what is called the Haley's Act that is circulating to legislators is attempting to give the USDA the legal rights to prohibit public baby cat ambassadors. This throws out the educational factor that creates community awareness of the importance of captive management of exotic felids. Lobbyists who are many times powered by misguided

and ignorant animal rights activists, spend their large budgets lobbying against exotic feline ownership. They exhale black and white statistics and biased numbers like those from the Captive Wild Animal Protection Coalition. These alarming statistics are presented without clarifying the extenuating circumstances of the incident, such as a drunk guy running around a cougar cage or a careless handler treading right into a tiger cage. There is also the recent proposition in Florida of moving cougars from a Class II felid to a Class I, hindering many who might do much to sustain the species. More and more laws spring up, many of which are banning the ownership of exotic felines in anything other than a large-scale zoo or similar facility. Succinctly stated in a recent FCF post dubbed *Straight Talk about*



*Sanctuary Overcrowding...* “Legislation supported by those who oppose captive breeding and private ownership of exotic cats have resulted in the closure of facilities that provide quality captive habitat.”

We have the AZA breathing down our necks with their so-called Species Survival Plan. We have everything from transportation regulations and CITES changes that could hamper some of the very good work we do everyday. We have many in the US Congress doing their utmost to wipe out all that we do out of ignorance and misplaced fear of “predators.” We even have some within our ranks of the feline community who want to ban any private ownership—sanctuary or otherwise—and wipe the earth with our remains. We have the animal rights groups battling us often, and we have our own inability to band together, creating disension.

I began to question the philosophies and motivation as to why we find ourselves—kindred souls with love for the cat—so overwhelmed and burdened with the discord created by our opinions on what is right and wrong in feline ownership and conservation. I asked the officials, the owners, the down to earth interns, and workers. I questioned the directors of education, the assistants, and the directors themselves.

My main question, “Does your facility have any affiliation with any of the surrounding area’s different facilities, private sector or otherwise?” I heard a heart wrenching “No” from most of the larger facilities, and then I asked the seemingly simple question “Why?”

The response often was a tilted head and a moment’s hesitation, as if to say, “Hell, I don’t know. Get back to the easy questions.”

What I gleaned from the different types of individuals was that for a few aspects of felid conservation, most of the time it wasn’t an aversion of the other aspects of felid conservation, but trying to defend their own work due to either their facility having been profiled under a specific stereotype, or of them stereotyping another type of animal facility.

Take, for example, the privately owned zoo where I am currently working. The assistant director mentioned his distress that sanctuaries in the past made a decision not to associate with them due to the difference in mission statements. Most sanctuaries, in my experience, believe in enrichment and

human-interaction with their felids. To many, the idea of placing their beloved four-footed furries in a plastic and chain-link environment with no enrichment by the zoo staff was abhorrent.

I worked at a small sanctuary once as well, and I think back at the horror-stricken look on my face when we spoke of a felid who was a “rescue” from the loneliness of a zoo habitat. I know there are, in fact, many zoos out there that think such enrichment between humans and especially the bigger exotic felids is detrimental to the animals. Then we visit the zoo and see the lethargic cat prostrated in the same spot day after day, begging for a reason to give that happy chuff. See what I mean? Even I found myself victim to stereotyping zoos.

Yet there are those facilities which are overlooked as a potential home for felids that need rehoming. It is unwise to keep a viable option for rehoming out of your choices even though one might classify them with the many who don’t see things as we would.

They might have applicable, sustainable captive habitat. By not considering them,

we ourselves create another small bit of habitat loss for our very own felids.

I offer you the point of view gleaned from working side-by-side with proponents of various aspects of felid conservation, each so different from the other, but not strong enough to stand on their own. We must band together, even if we may loathe what the other is doing. If we do not stand together, there will no longer be much to disagree with. We cannot excise every other way of felid conservation we do not agree with. In many small ways, even those we do not agree with are often working to further the cause.

We need each other. We need the numbers, the votes, and lobbyists. We need the world outside of our own to see the bigger picture, instead of giving them fuel for controversies. We need all of them to not myopically see breeders, brokers, responsible owners, sanctuaries, and educational facilities but to see the FCF as a whole. As one smart cookie told me as I began, “...like all of nature, we are faced with a need to evolve in a changing environment. We must evolve or go extinct.” •

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# Lessons for Applied Cat Conservation in Brazil: Integrating science to a community-based approach.

By Anne-Sophie Bertrand, MSc.  
(annesophie@rede-verde.org)

The Puma Project keeps expanding and brings concrete results. After 160 kilometers in the bush doing spoor surveys, guess what we have found? We have found that the most common animal in the Iguazu National Park is... the human being! It is amazing to see this huge forest remnant (2,000 km<sup>2</sup>), the last and largest remnant of Atlantic forest from southern Brazil to be under federal protection, this World Natural Heritage Site, being totally overrun by poachers, palm-tree extractors, and fishermen?

Do the math and measure the seriousness of the case: we registered 249 infractions such as hunting trails, hunting camps, salt licks, miradors (a type of hunting

blind), and hunting hounds. I could also tell you this represents 2.5 infractions per walked mile or 8.8 infractions per daily expedition. Interestingly, the top two most common mammals that we have found using trails and muddy roads were gourmet meals for pumas: red brocket deer (his favorite, Fig. 1; n = 121) and agouti (never says no; n = 119). Tapirs came next (n = 114). Pumas would feed on a tapir baby if it gets the chance, but tapirs remain the jaguar prey par excellence. The excessive abundance of tapirs reflects the absence of jaguars in the park. Indeed, while we found 87 records of pumas (most of which were scrapes on the ground), we only found two records of jaguars. We also recorded 36 little spotted cats, 22 ocelots, and two jaguarundis. Hunting dogs (n = 58) were more common than any of those felids.

As a result of FCF support, the Puma Project has been able to buy two Reconyx cameras that present several important qualities: perfectly silent, trigger speed: 1/10 sec., infrared (understand: night vision and no flash), great capacity (up to 15,000 pictures), batteries last for three months, and 1.3 megapixel monochrome pictures. Above all: these cameras handle the humidity just fine; it can get over 97% of water saturation in the air here. This is the first brand that actually works!

See what kind of interesting data such cameras can bring up: we have visited some trails several times, to check its use by wildlife and humans over time and to place and remove the cameras. We noticed that we were following big cats...and...they... were following us too! Look at these pictures (Fig. 2-5). They were taken in a remote area in the northern part of the Iguazu National Park (INP). We placed our cameras in these spots and waited for the kitties to show up. A jaguar (which we assume to be a female according to its morphological characteristics) peed on the trail we were on. We were admiring



**Fig 1. Puma's favorite prey: red brocket deer. (*Mazama americana*)**

the little waterfall at the end of the trail just a few hundreds yards away from her. When we headed back, I noticed a strong musky smell and there it was. Pee: still dripping and warm, on a recently fallen tree crossing the trail. I knew it was of a big cat, but I was not sure which one. Who would trust his/her nose 100%? My field assistants were so thrilled to imagine they' had been followed by a jaguar or a puma. The camera-trapping was very rewarding.

The other good news is that we were able to provide our database, maps, and a detailed step report to the park staff. The database contains over 1,600 data entries on wildlife presence signs, human presence and location information that the park staff could use this material to define some kind of strategy.

The project is now looking for more funds to buy 30 Reconyx cameras, which are going to have even better image resolution (3.1 megapixels) and cost (\$550 instead of \$600). The Puma Project is the core section of my PhD on which I am honored to have our colleague and friend Dr.



**Figure 2. Jaguar urine on a fallen tree.**



**Figure 3. Jaguar and urine location on fallen tree.**

Jim Sanderson as an external advisor. This June, I am going to London to meet my faculty supervisor (Dr. Rob Ewers at the Imperial College London) and my two co-supervisors from the Institute of Zoology from the Zoological Society of London, Drs. Chris Carbone and M. Rowcliffe. Project activities for 2009 consist of doing divulgation using all media available, the Internet (through Rede Verde's website <http://redeverde.org>), the press, and the magazines.

I am currently assisting an UNESCO partner from Maryland University in his work financed by NASA. Geographer Benjamin White has built a model to assess the habitat quality and conservation state of the World Heritage Sites. His objective is to provide a working tool to locally empower World Heritage Sites' managers using high-resolution mapping techniques. For the next 15 days, we will be characterizing the INP.

In May, I will also be receiving a

research assistant from Chicago for one year and he will assist me in this task. We will also visit farmers that live on the northern edge of the INP to inquire about the situation. We need information regarding livestock depredation (it has turned a very rare thing), wildlife sightings, and their relationship with the conservation advocates from the region. By identifying the gaps and myths, we will develop activities accordingly, aiming at creating an environmental awareness among these farmers and their families. We will also assess the situation among the poorest communities, which happen to live on the city's main headwaters, where there usually is some habitat left. These people live in very humble conditions. You can imagine how hard it can be to make them understand that we need to protect nature and wildlife when their own children are being mistreated or exploited in so many ways, I won't even elaborate here. That is why I mention the community-based approach. It is a key concept here. The INP is the only forest remnant left in the region. Many people rely on it to survive, whether it is directly or indirectly. They do not necessarily see this.

The threats we identified such as poaching, fishing, palm-tree extraction, and road kills are coming from the outside of the park. Cat conservation must make an attempt at diminishing the intensity of those threats. This will only happen through a perception shift, which is a slow process.

We all can acknowledge that it is not because what we do is being criticized by someone that we will change a thing about it. Human beings instinctively look for stability even though there is no such thing in life. Changes are not seen as a pleasant thing and are usually rejected before even being considered.

So imagine this now in communities where the human dignity was withdrawn, where life is an every-minute struggle. It makes it ten-fold harder. And here is the thing: if the communities do not evolve, this nice PhD research on the cat will not have any concrete conservation outcome. I have met an interesting character, Father Giuliano. He has been working with kids and teenagers from a neighborhood near the INP. Those kids live in the middle of

dirt and garbage, in very poor conditions, monetary and morally speaking. They are usually victims of drugs or sexual exploitation. Father Giuliano has created a huge center where they can benefit from free, quality health care, social and psychological services, preschool, and school. Some of kids who went through his initiative have now rejoined society; they are hard-workers, responsible and mature. They make me believe that even the most dramatic changes are possible. But it has to come from within. I got in touch with Father Giuliano who welcomed the initiative; we are going to join forces. We will be training his educators to provide some key concepts to the teenagers and make them, in turn, part of the solution. But first, we will be visiting the families in their homes and we will listen to them. It is a long-term effort but it can be very rewarding as you see an environmental awareness being created in their minds.

We have also created collaborations on the other side of the Iguazu River, with the ITEC, a technological institute supported by Canada providing capacity courses in different sectors: hotel business, tourism, cuisine, and communication. They also offer these classes to the last remaining Guaraní Indians that live on the edge of the Argentinean side of the INP.

Many trainees will participate in the Puma Project. They will be trained and informed. At all stages and on a two month turn-over period, there will be field locals and international assistants working together. They will be trained to work in the field using simple but effective techniques like track surveys and camera-trapping. They will be trained to interview the farmers, poor communities and also, town people. A series of open talks will be organized downtown to sensitize the people living in the city regarding the value of the natural treasure they have about 12 miles from their home.

My three years of experience in Brazil has taught me that combining proper science with a community-based approach might be the only way to come out with actual changes. If any FCF educators feel like coming down here to help us out, they would be more than welcome. See you in Iguazu! •



**Figure 4. Ocelot urine on a wooden bridge.**



**Figure 5. Ocelot and urine location on bridge.**



## Animal Junction and Bucks County Zoo... My Dream Comes True

By Joe Fortunato

Since I was a young boy, I have always had two dreams: to be a police officer and to be a zookeeper. I have been interested in animals since childhood and worked in a pet store during my high school years. In 1988, I began my career in law enforcement. During the 1990s, I had moved to Florida continuing my profession as a police officer while incorporating a business, Creatures of Myth. My new company consisted of breeding rare and exotic animals and maintaining a variety of exotic plants from around the world. It was the perfect environment, except for those darn hurricanes! I then moved back to my family in Pennsylvania. In December of 2005, after 17 years on the force as a police officer, I was injured in the line of duty and diagnosed with a spinal injury that ended my career. After reality set in, I realized that I needed to find a new direction. I entertained the idea of following my second dream by building up a collection of ani-

mals for breeding and educational programs. With the support of my family, I began an extensive collection in specially designed enclosures at my residence.

After acquiring a unique grouping of exotic animals, Animal Junction, a traveling educational zoo, was born! Animal Junction was incorporated in January of 2006, and our website was created. In April 2006, I performed my first wildlife traveling educational program. I packed 30 different species of birds, mammals, arachnids, reptiles, and amphibians into my Toyota 4Runner SUV and headed out to Collegeville, PA for a two-hour event. To date, Animal Junction has performed thousands of shows throughout the tri-state area.

In March 2006, I met world-renowned wildlife expert Jack Hanna at the Patriot Theatre at the War Memorial in Trenton, NJ. My original intentions were to meet Jack to get an autograph and a photograph. I wanted to see his show to gather ideas on how I would proceed with Animal Junction,

never thinking that we would exchange business cards and one year later I would be working with the famous Jack Hanna. Since then, Jack and I have traveled around the eastern seaboard performing at numerous theaters, universities, and other places including many television performances. I was recently acknowledged in his most recent publication, *Jungle Jack Hanna, My Wild Life*.

In June 2007, I leased a 5,000 square foot facility that I started to turn into a zoo facility. Who would have thought that, I would soon host the grand opening of the Bucks County Zoo, the first zoo in Bucks County, PA with special guest of honor, Jack Hanna.

With over 60 exotic animals at our zoo, we are now open to the public for private tours as well as private birthday parties. I am so fortunate to have followed both of my dreams! •

<http://www.animaljunction.com>



“Jungle Jack” Hanna and “Jungle Joe” Fortunato (center, light shirts) and Buck’s County Zoo staff.





## Reviewing our First Ten Years of Geoffroy's Cat Research in Argentina

By Javier A. Pereira

*Asociación para la Conservación y el Estudio de la Naturaleza (ACEN)*

*Research Council of Argentina (CONICET)*  
*IUCN – SSC – Cat Specialist Group*

Geoffroy's cat is a small felid distributed from southern Bolivia and Brazil throughout southern Patagonia in Argentina and Chile. Because the distribution of this species covers almost the entire Argentine territory and just a few parts of other countries, research efforts on this species in Argentina may greatly contribute to its global conservation. Due to the lack of knowledge and concerns for the impact of human-related habitat changes upon its populations, Geoffroy's cat was upgraded to IUCN's "Near threatened" category in 2002. This species was heavily hunted for the international fur trade until the middle of the 1980s. At least 350,000 skins were exported solely from Argentina between 1976 and 1978. At present, habitat loss and poaching (mainly for control of predation

on domestic poultry) are probably the main threats to its survival.

Little previous effort has been made to study Geoffroy's cat in the wild and most of these studies were focused on its diet or spatial ecology in protected areas. As a result, there is almost no information on its demography, health, genetics, or its ecological flexibility. Also, it should be noted that the potential of protected areas as habitat for wildlife is usually limited by their size. Because conservation of wild cats must occur also in human-dominated landscapes, information about these landscapes is of a critical nature.

Faced with this outlook, I started a research and conservation project in 1999, with the purpose of gathering vital information about the natural history and conservation status of Geoffroy's cats. Most of the distribution range of Geoffroy's cats encompasses arid and semi-arid environments. For this reason, I selected the Lihué Calel National Park and neighboring cattle

ranches (37°57'S and 65°33'W), located in the endemic semi-arid biome of the "monte" as my study area. After the first steps in this extraordinary place of central Argentina, the "Gatos del Monte" project was born.

Since the beginning of this experience, several biologists and veterinarians from the Field Veterinary Program of the Wildlife Conservation Society (headed by Marcela Uhart), park rangers, sociologists, students and volunteers—with different research interests—have participated in the project. After 10 years of hard (but exciting) work, this is a good moment to look back and list some of the results achieved to date.

We have captured 40 Geoffroy's cats using box traps. While under anesthesia, cats' weight, sex, age, and standard body measurements were recorded and a complete physical exam was performed. Biological samples, including blood, feces, ectoparasites, and hair were collected from



all the animals. As a result of this work, a detailed protocol of capture and anesthesia has been developed for the species. Of these cats, 35 were radio-collared and monitored by radio-telemetry and information about their home range sizes, habitat preferences, activity, and movements was collected. This work produced thrilling new discoveries. To highlight, several Geoffroy's cats have moved away from the study area during periods of low prey densities, and they were found by conducting radio-telemetry from the air more than 100 km from our study area. These cats passed through natural fields, cattle ranches, and coops, indicating that they can disperse long distances. On the other hand, this information has been useful to establish Geoffroy's cat population dynamics, driving some hypotheses (and their related conservation implications) about the regional population structure of this species and the temporal fluctuations that they face in this arid environment. Now, we want to go forward and investigate the effects of this dispersal ability on the gene flow of this species, in order to count with brand new information to detect conservation needs.

During the course of our research, a severe drought took place in our study area.

This natural disturbance provided us with the opportunity to study the effects of extreme conditions on the abundance of prey and its consequences for Geoffroy's cat density and spatial behavior. Some of these findings have been published in the *Journal of Mammalogy*. Probably as a result of the climate change, drought periods are at present more frequent than in the past at central Argentina. This fact increases the value of our work, since nowadays similar situations are common there, and cats (and wildlife managers) have to face this problem.

In order to study the diet and prey preferences of this species, we have conducted seasonal analysis of feces during a three-year period. We found that small rodents were the most frequent prey item, whereas birds and reptiles were used as well but much less frequently. We also concluded that Geoffroy's cats have an opportunist behavior, consuming almost all prey species according to their availability in the field. Also in cattle ranches, Geoffroy's cats consume mainly rodents, but their trophic niche become wider.

As part of a monitoring program for Geoffroy's cat in places with different pro-



**Geoffroy and prey.**

tection levels, several camera trapping surveys have been conducted since 2006. Different individuals of this species can be easily identified by their unique spot patterns. Results showed a high density of this wild cat in the protected area (80-140 individuals / 100 km<sup>2</sup>), but values dropped nearly 50% in cattle ranches. A high proportion of transients seem to be common in the protected population.

We have located litters by radio-tracking females or by searching known sites where females have bred previously. In this way, we have recorded seasonality the births, mean litter size, and cub survival. An average of 1.8 cubs per litter was recorded during summer or spring, and no reproductive activity was recorded during the rest of the year. The severe environmental conditions of this arid zone probably preclude a greater litter size, common in other areas of the distribution of this cat. Radio telemetry has also been helpful in determining survival of adult Geoffroy's cats and their main mortality causes. Deaths due to starvation, high parasite loads, or predation by puma were common findings during drought periods, whereas road accidents and illegal hunting were frequent on cattle ranches.

Threats to the health of wildlife from anthropogenic influences are often associated with increased contact that wildlife has with domestic animals and livestock. In order to identify potentially limiting factors that may negatively affect the Geoffroy's cat population growth, a preliminary health



**Tracking Geoffroy radio collars by air.**

assessment has been carried out in the study area. Some of the animals tested positive for feline calicivirus, toxoplasmosis, canine distemper, and infectious feline peritonitis. This implies that Geoffroy's cats from our study populations are exposed to various pathogens common to domestic felids and canids. These findings support the need to continue monitoring the health of wild and domestic populations in order to understand the role of diseases in population dynamics and their significance for the conservation of wild felids.

As a result of necropsies practiced on dead cats and the analysis of fresh feces, new species of helminthes were found for the first time in Geoffroy's cats and other helminthes have been reported for the first time in South America as well. On the other hand, infections with other helminthes might be the result of interactions with domestic cats. These findings have activated a more profound study of parasitic diseases in this wild cat, which is currently being carried out by a member of our team, Pablo Beldoménico.

On the other hand, another member of our team, Julio Rojo, is studying the variation of Geoffroy's cats along its distribution range with molecular genetic techniques, based on DNA extracted from museum and live animals. Results of this study and those obtained by the way of skull morphology (also performed by Julio) could be analyzed together to accurately establish different evolution units and to propose conservation priorities for the species based on a full knowledge of the species variation. Current Geoffroy's cat taxonomy has been described more than 25 years ago, based on few individuals and skull characters. We are including in our analysis new methods (such as molecular genetics and geometric morphometry) and a lot of new samples to assess if a new arrangement of subspecies is supported.

Finally, we are continuously interviewing the local people living in cattle ranches as the easiest and most cost effective way to assess the perception and attitudes of local inhabitants toward carnivores. In this manner, management models or conservation strategies based on concrete ecological information can be outlined in order to make the preservation of wildcats possible within the framework of regional and

social economic development. We believe that the only way to conserve these magnificent cats in the wild is creating awareness in local people about the need to harmonize their production with the conservation of wildlife in their lands.

Several Argentinean and international institutions have decided to support the "Gatos del Monte" project, including the Rufford Foundation (UK), the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo (USA), the Roger Williams Park Zoo (USA), Idea Wild (USA), the Amersfoort Zoo (Netherlands), Le Parc des Felines (France) and the Wildlife Conservation Society (USA). We are very pleased to invite the Feline Conservation Federation to join us to face the exciting challenge of conserving Geoffroy's cats in the wild. •

*The FCF Conservation Grants Committee has recommended approval to award \$1,400 for a research proposal titled "Effects of Landscape Pattern and Human Activities on the Gene Flow and Genetic Structure of Geoffroy's Cat" (Leopardus geoffroyi).*

*This project presented by Javier Pereira has already received \$10,000 in funding from Amersfoort Zoo. The FCF will partner with this Netherlands zoo and pick up*

*cost of laboratory supplies to finish the research.*

*The anticipated project outcome include descriptions of natural and human barriers that affect Geoffroy's cat population's connectivity, better understanding of intra-specific genetic differentiation applicable to conservation, and an overview on implications of different landscape features on the habitat requirements of Geoffroy's cat that will establish a relationship between the population genetic diversity and its related habitat characteristics. Further, this proposal will produce an outline of habitat requirements necessary to maintain a healthy population of Geoffroy's cat, and assess how different land uses affect the species and which activities have greater impacts on population genetics of Geoffroy's cat. These findings will develop basic conservation guidelines to maintain connectivity between populations aiding conservation strategies for Geoffroy's cat compatible with the regional production systems and land use patterns. Finally, a complete collection of Geoffroy's cat samples (DNA, skulls, skins, bones) will be housed at the Argentinean Museum of Natural Sciences' collection (MACN), the most important scientific collection in Argentina.*





# FCF Convention Fast Facts

Don't miss this opportunity to network, learn and have fun at Vision Quest Ranch, Thursday, July 22 to Saturday July 25.

This year's convention theme covers education and working to improve FCF. Not only will we be enlightened on felines in nature and the latest in veterinary medicine, FCF members have agreed to share their business improvement ideas, their inspiration to persevere, and how to move forward in a positive manner that helps the cats and the cat community. Also, we will get on the fast track of social networking on the Internet, how to use these tools to benefit the FCF and ourselves. Come help yourself and get more involved in the FCF. If you are serious about your cats, this is the event you have been waiting for.

## Accommodations:

Laurel Inn, 801 West Laurel Drive, Salinas, CA. The FCF room block is now closed. Call 831-449-2474 to reserve. Kittens and cats under 30 pounds are allowed. IMPORTANT: Anyone bringing an exotic cat must report this to Dan Stockdale at 865-300-3232. California F&W regulations require import permits to bring exotics into the state.

## Airports:

Nearest: Monterey. Also: San Jose and San Francisco.

You may hail a taxi at the Monterey airport to take you to the Laurel Inn, about a 20-mile drive. Rent a car from San Jose or San Francisco airports or reserve public transportation using the Monterey Airbus: 831-373-777, (reserve online at [www.montereyairbus.com](http://www.montereyairbus.com)) the Monterey Airbus picks up at terminal 1 and 3 of San Jose airport, and at the San Francisco terminal A and C. The Monterey Airbus provides passenger service between the Monterey Peninsula, Salinas, Morgan Hill and San Jose (SJC) and San Francisco (SFO) International Airports, starting at 4 am. You can reserve a seat 24 hrs a day on-line. This bus service drops off at the Prunedale Park and Ride Lot in Salinas, which is about 10 miles from the Laurel Inn. Rates are \$40 from San Francisco and \$30 from San Jose, each way. From the drop off point you will have to take a taxi the final 10 miles to the

Laurel Inn, about \$20.

## Activities:

### Wednesday, July 22:

Both the Basic Wild Feline Husbandry Course and the Wildlife Educators Course will be held at the Laurel Inn and run from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

### Thursday, July 23:

The FCF board of directors will conduct their annual meeting in the hospitality suite in the morning. Members may watch.

Convention registration opens at 2:00 p.m. Auction items should be dropped off for silent bidding. Any kittens and small cats brought to convention will be on exhibit all day at the hospitality suite. The icebreaker features a cocktail hour and assorted appetizers. The annual FCF membership meeting follows. If you have an agenda item you wish to be presented at the membership meeting, send it by mail or email to the secretary, Joe Fortunato.

### Friday, July 24:

Spend the morning and afternoon at Vision Quest Ranch. Get ready for that "wow-factor" as Charlie Sammut's amazing facility and collection of professionally trained animal actors, wildlife ambassadors, and the African elephant sanctuary are sure to impress and entertain us. Hyatt caters lunch for us at the ranch. Charlie has several hands-on felines and also a new "surprise" to share with us that will be sure to make this visit memorable. Late afternoon and evening is free to experience the great attractions in Monterey and the bay area.

### Saturday, July 25:

Return to Vision Quest Ranch for an outstanding lineup of thought-provoking and entertaining and motivational speakers. Some of the featured speakers include:

- Dr. Jim Sanderson, FCF conservation advisor, and international small cat researcher.
- Marty Dinnes, D.V.M., and founder of Natural Balance and Telinject, Inc.
- Mindy Stinner, founder, Conservator's Center, Inc.—Managing your public image: Positive Press and Proactive Publicity
- Tom Harvey, founder, Safari Zoological Park—Never Give Up, Never Surrender
- Liz Hatton—Using Social Media to benefit FCF and captive conservation

Lunch is catered by Hyatt and graciously provided compliments of Dr. Marty Dinnes, and Natural Balance.

And new this year, Charlie has developed three thought-provoking roundtable discussions with full member participation. These topics are sure to get the room electrified.

Those who have registered with the FCF as either basic or advanced handlers will stay behind for Charlie Sammut's registered handler's-only animal training class that will follow.

The Saturday evening banquet dinner, awards, live auction, and special surprises concludes this year's convention. Dress code includes tuxedos to jeans and everything in between. Be comfortable, and, to paraphrase a TV tiger, "have a grrreat time!"

### Sunday, July 26-Tuesday July 28

Charlie Sammut has put together an intense three-day seminar/class at Vision Quest Ranch/Wild Things that follows the FCF convention. He has reduced the price for FCF convention goers to only \$900 per person. Those attending the class who also attended the FCF convention will receive a 5-day course certificate for attending both.

Topics will include the ins and outs of being in this business/industry based upon the types of animals at Wild Things. Charlie is a member of the California Fish & Game Commission Advisory Committee and is very familiar with the political climate of state and federal agencies as well as the several private accreditation organizations that we might all be dealing with in the future. Charlie is the president of International Animal Welfare Alliance, [www.iawa.info](http://www.iawa.info), and will enlighten on the difficulties of uniting the private animal industry. This course will provide hands-on with the Vision Quest animals to give all an extremely well rounded idea of what it takes to own, operate, and maintain a facility like this. Also covered will be financing, employee nightmares, risk management, etc. This is not aimed at kids who think that our industry amounts to playing with cubs for a living.

The course: [http://www.visionquestranch.com/html/training\\_school.html](http://www.visionquestranch.com/html/training_school.html)

For Application and Registration information, contact Heather at 800-228-7382 or [heather@wildthingsinc.com](mailto:heather@wildthingsinc.com) •

# REXANO Founder's Facility is Accredited



**Two of the tiger enclosures. Foreground: This 8,000 square foot enclosure features two pools. Perimeter fence is in the distance. Can you spot the tiger?**

FCF accreditation committee member, Karl Mogenson says, “It is a pleasure to welcome to the fold, outstanding people like Zuzana Kukol and Scott Shoemaker, who obviously have a great deal of knowledge and have done everything right.” He sums it up with, “Their facility is a fine example of how to properly provide for large and small cat species.”

The FCF facility accreditation is the only accrediting board that examines all forms of captive habitat, from private collection, to public exhibit, and evaluates all types of facilities for their safety, structure, design, management, and professionalism

of operation.

There are many reasons to own exotic felines. For Zuzana Kukol, it is their intelligence, power, and affectionate personality that hold her captive to their every desire. Her reward for such loyalty is the positive emotional connection she shares with them and the personal gratification she derives knowing she has provided each of her cats a life that is both stimulating and enjoyable.

There are many ways to gain experience and prepare for the awesome responsibility of big cat husbandry. Zuzana Kukol acquired her first exotic feline, a serval, 15 years ago. She has owned tigers for about a

dozen years. When asked what she bases her training and handling techniques upon, Zuzana told me, “I draw from the knowledge I gained from attending professional dog training school.” Previously, Zuzana owned a large, male US-bred Doberman Pinscher. Since these powerful dogs are bred for guard and defense, Zuzana understood the importance of behavior conditioning, so she enrolled in a three-month dog-training course. This same dog and its younger, half sister were raised with Zuzana’s first tiger, Pepper, which came into her life as a 3-month old cub. Zuzana says the Doberman helped her teach Pepper



to be well mannered.

Zuzana also learned from observations of her close friends, the Fercos Brothers, who are professional exotic animal trainers and master illusionists who utilize large cats in their internationally acclaimed performances.

Scott Shoemaker, partner to Zuzana, has been working with Zuzana and the cats for the past five years. Together, they have constructed several new habitats for large and small cat species and a growing pack of wolf hybrids at their facility in Pahrump, Nevada. Presently they both care for the following felines: tigers, a lion, a cougar, bobcat, ocelot, and serval.

Their facility is state licensed by Nevada to possess the native species, puma and bobcat. The 10-acre property is completely perimeter fenced with 8-foot chain link with V-arm barbed wire recurves above. Safety and security is paramount. The perimeter fence has an electrical hot wire at the top and also six inches above the ground level. Zuzana explains that the bottom electric strand prevents any wildlife from getting too close or attempting to burrow onto the property.

The serval, bobcat, and ocelot enclosures are about 400 square feet and completely roofed. Their female puma, Coogie, has an 800 square foot habitat. On a regular basis, Zuzana and Scott leash up Coogie and allow her to visit with them inside the house.

The lion and tigers enjoy fenced-in compounds ranging from 7,000 to 9,000 square feet. These *Panthera* species are safely contained behind walls of either six or nine-gauge chain link fence, 12-foot tall, with double recurves of barbed wire at top. These habitats have electric hot wires attached at the end of the recurve at the top.

While the desert does not naturally lend itself to lush plant life, with supplemental irrigation, Zuzana and Scott have encouraged a variety of plants to provide natural shade and create relief from the summer sun. Zuzana reports that she has great success growing Thompson seedless grapes, which, according to her, “Cover the chain link fences, create a solid patch of green, make lots of shade, attract song birds and, as an added benefit, make a delicious and refreshing snack to quench your thirst as you work around the compound.” Zuzana

has also planted flowering trees and jasmine vines, which she says, “smell wonderful when they bloom and attract songbirds and hummingbirds, which is entertainment for the resident felines.”

Inside the compounds are creosote bushes casting shade and creating hiding spots. The creosote bush is an exotic plant that has adapted to the sparse amount of natural rainfall.

Enclosure roofs are covered with dried plant material, such as dried palm plants, and several habitats have umbrella structures and shade cloth to cast shadows. All the roofs are plumbed with overhead misters to cool the air and water the plants below. Some of them are on a drip system and positioned to periodically refill the water tubs below. Inside the enclosures are various balls and tires for enrichment. Toys, hammocks, houses, platforms, and boulders that diversify the environment and provide comfortable resting areas and protection from the summer sun.

For the water loving tigers, Zuzana and Scott provided swimming pools, some in-

ground, some above ground. Pepper, her original tiger, has a poured concrete pool. Other tigers have metal stock tanks for water playing and soaking. The latest enrichment idea being tested out by Zuzana and Scott is in-ground metal stock tank pools. First they dug a hole large enough to hold the tank and drainage ditches. Then the metal pool was buried up to ground level and the drain lines were plumbed from the tank to draw the water about 30 feet away, outside the compound. Finally, large flat rocks were laid completely around the tank to keep the immediate area from getting muddy from the splashing. The final result is a pool that is visually pleasing to people, and inviting to the big cats.

Zuzana and Scott feed their felines a variety of meats, including poultry parts, pork roast, and beef. Zuzana and Scott also process horses to provide horsemeat for the cats. The addition of commercial vitamins and calcium supplements round out the diet and assure that cats have nutritionally complete meals. •



**Bobcat Jasmine and ocelot Isis enjoy their lushly planted enclosure.**

## 2009 AZA Felid TAG Report

By Kevin Chambers

The 2009 AZA Felid TAG (Taxon Advisory Group) Conference was held April 27-May 30 in Tacoma, Washington. The Point Defiance Zoo hosted.

The first three days were the husbandry courses. Two classes were offered, one for big cats and one for small cats. The large cat course was well attended and the maximum of 25 students took the course. Students were not limited to AZA members and included four private owners. FCF members Chemaine and Joel Almquist (Forever Wild Sanctuary) and Marie Martinez (Safari West) took this course. The small cat course was disappointing in its attendance. Only 12 people attended and of these 12, only three were from AZA institutions. Four students were from English zoos and the balance were private owners. FCF members Collette Griffiths, Anthony Harper (Forever Wild Sanctuary), Chris Jurebie (Forever Wild Sanctuary), and Shelleen Mathews took the course. The lack of interest in small cats from the AZA exemplifies the fact that the future of small wild cats in captivity falls squarely on the shoulders of the private sector, and the FCF.

Thursday kicked off the main events of the TAG with an icebreaker at a beautiful Japanese pagoda situated right on the shores of Puget Sound. A stunning sunset bid farewell as we returned to the hotel that evening.

Speaker presentations began Friday morning and lasted through Saturday at noon. Following are brief summaries of the talks.

FCF's Director of Conservation, Pat Callahan, gave a presentation on the FCF's efforts in education and conservation. He told about our husbandry courses, website, and conservation grant programs. This was well received and almost every audience member picked up a sample FCF Journal that we had made available.

Cheryl Dikeman gave an update on feline nutritional issues. Her research has found that many of the commercially prepared diets have fat levels that are too low.

Omaha Zoo is also developing a diet for cats with renal failure and they are in negotiations with a Colorado company about having the diet commercially available.

Three talks were given on clinical veterinary and disease issues with felids. Recommendations are that routine examinations and vaccinations are only necessary every 1-3 years. Diseases of concern in wild felids are, FIV, FeLV, FIP, FPV (panleukopenia), rabies, canine distemper, toxoplasmosis, tularemia, and influenza. In the 1990s, distemper killed one third of African lions in the wild. Dr. Steve O'Brien's research at the National Cancer Institute has shown the FIV is endemic worldwide in most wild feline species, but is not considered to be dangerous to wild cats. There is no association with mortality and he sees it overall as not a significant pathogen.

The Snow Leopard Trust discussed their work with conserving snow leopards. Interestingly, snow leopards were first described to science in 1778, but a picture of a wild

snow leopard was not taken until 1970 by George Schaller. The biggest threats facing snow leopards now are retaliatory killings for livestock depredation, illegal trade in fur and bones, and loss of wild prey. Satellite tracking is showing that several cats share the same range, most likely because of good prey populations. Some of the conservation initiatives include providing livestock insurance in India, limiting domestic herd sizes in Pakistan to lessen pressure on wild prey, and cooperating with natives in Mongolia, Kazakhstan, and Pakistan to sell their crafts giving the farmers added income and less dependence on their livestock. The trust is selling these items in 84 retail stores and 40 zoo gift shops.

Jaguar conservation in Belize was summarized by the director of the Belize zoo. In 2001, 22 jaguars were killed and another 65 were killed in 2002-2004 because of livestock depredation. The zoo has taken in nine jaguars from the wild and two nuisance animals have been exported to Amer-



**FCF's director of conservation, Pat Callahan, informs TAG on the FCF's efforts in education and conservation.**



ican zoos. They have initiated an outreach program concentrating on school children explaining the importance of jaguars and how to co-exist with them. Alan Rabinowitz is also working on jaguar conservation there.

The Felid TAG has revised the program status of four species of cats. Bobcats have been made a DERP (Display-Education-Research Population), Amur Leopards have been upgraded to an SSP from a PMP. Pallas cats have been downgraded from an SSP to a PMP, and jaguarundi has been added to the Regional Collection Plan (RCP) as a Phase-In Population. Currently, no AZA zoos have jaguarundi. To explain, a DERP means that the species is not to be bred, but can be used for display, education, or research population. A PMP is a population management plan that is less controlled than an SSP (Species Survival Plan). PMPs make recommendations for transfers and breedings voluntary, where in SSP's, transfers and breedings are mandatory, and only animals owned by AZA accredited institutions may participate in the breeding program. The other species in the RCP did not have their status changed. These species continue to be managed under SSPs: black-footed cat, fishing cat, sand cat, ocelot, clouded leopard, snow leopard, cheetah, lion, tiger, and jaguar. There are PMPs for serval, caracal, cougar, and Canada lynx.

Two very interesting presentations were given on the use of ambassador cats. This issue is controversial among AZA members, with some feeling that a tame animal with human relations should never be displayed in public. The presentations were very compelling; showing that using ambassador animals greatly increases the retention of information by the audience. One facility timed the amount of time visitors spent viewing the exhibit animals before seeing a program animal and after seeing the ambassador. The average visitor spent 55 seconds at the exhibit without seeing the ambassador and 180 seconds after. Most importantly, visitors were asked to tell something about the species. The goal was to see if visitors could give cognitive

responses. In other words, if they could tell something about the species that they could not observe. For example, saying that a snow leopard has a long tail is not a cognitive response. Saying that the snow leopard uses its long tail for balance in its habitat of rocky precipices is cognitive. Nine percent of visitors that only viewed the exhibit were able to do this, while 69 percent of those who saw a program with an ambassador animal were able. Obviously, program animals are a tremendous aid in educating the general public, much greater than just displaying an animal with signage.

Three presentations were given on assisted reproduction in clouded leopards. About 80 percent of the sperm is malformed in captive male clouded leopards. This is indicative of the high amount of inbreeding in the captive population. It has also been found that in contrast to the commonly held belief that all cats are stimulated ovulators (meaning that they will not ovulate until they are stimulated by the act of copulation), some clouded leopards are able to spontaneously ovulate. The National Zoo is doing research with chemical suppressants to stop spontaneous ovulation

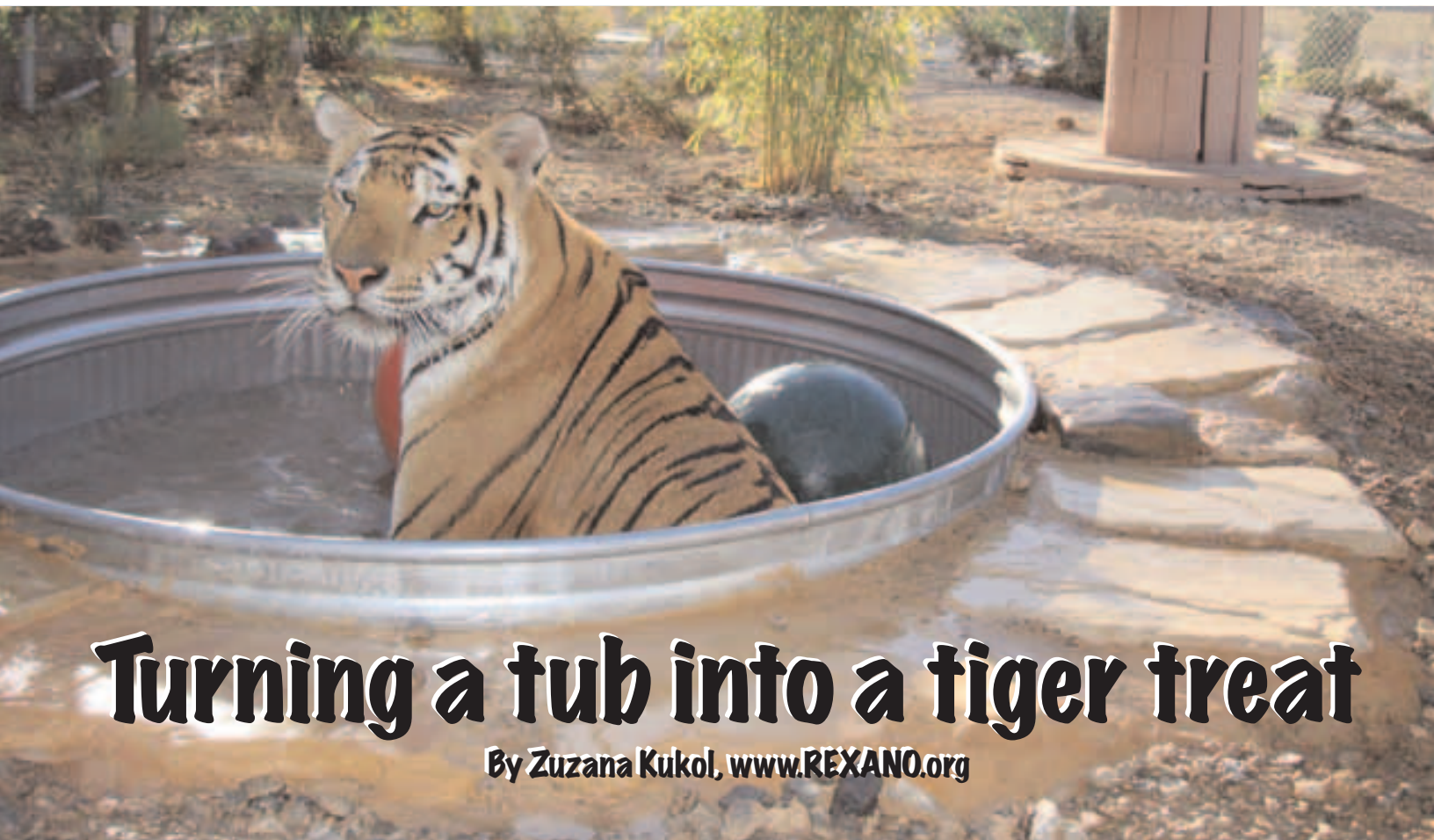
since this makes artificial insemination very difficult. It is ironic that such research is going on since there has only been the birth of two clouded leopards using artificial insemination in the last six years. Research is being conducted in using chemicals to reduce aggression in males to facilitate natural pairings. In a personal conversation with representatives from Marwell Zoo in England in attendance, they found this incredible. They have produced over 50 cubs in about the same time period using natural mating, and improving their husbandry methods. The AZA zoos seem intent on foregoing nature and relying on artificial methods.

Saturday afternoon was a tour of the Port Defiance Zoo. The only felines in the current exhibit are tigers, but do have some others that they use in one of the best educational shows I have seen. The show has a storyline about two people going out on an outing and encountering several different species as they go about their mission to find a way to make the Earth better. Not only was it educational, but very entertaining as well. The animals were very well trained and were the stars of the show. •



LEPERS ... I HEAL LEPERS

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# Turning a tub into a tiger treat

By Zuzana Kukol, [www.REXANO.org](http://www.REXANO.org)

Most of us private exotic and domestic animal owners do not have the thousands or millions of dollars needed to construct the beautiful and fancy pools and waterfalls you see in the major zoos. The round or long standard livestock metal water tanks with a drain are some of the most used source of water containers. They are available in many different sizes. The upside is that they are relatively cheap and easy to find and clean, and tend to be durable. The negative is that they are ugly and might get too hot in the summer, causing the animals less likely to try to climb in to avoid touching the hot metal surface. Sometimes, an old bathtub can be used for the same purpose.



We worked with one old plastic bathtub and two metal tanks, a round and a long one.

Living in the hot Nevada desert and not wanting to waste too much water, my fiancé Scott Shoemaker decided to make the tubs more aesthetically pleasing, as well as practical by insulating them to keep the water cooler in summer. To accomplish this, he buried them in the ground. If you do not have a sloping ground, you can build a mound.







The soil around here is very dry and rocky, so Scott used the sifter to get rid of the big rocks from the soil dug up from the hole. The fine sifted soil (can be substituted with sand) was then used to fill in the space around the tub in the hole.

← The hole was dug in the shape of the tub, and the hole for the drain pipe continued outside of the cage, so the animals cannot get to it and chew on the drain valve.



→ We used the plastic PVC pipe available in home building stores. ← The wider the pipe, the faster the pool will drain and the less likely it will get clogged with animal hair and other debris.



Depending on what size the existing tub drain hole is, you can get different attachments, fittings, and valves to drain the tub. Once the pipe was tested for leakage, it was buried under the soil.



→ The only thing left exposed is the valve to drain the tub. ←



Time to fill up the in-ground tub with water.







Being sensitive to Nevada water issues, we decided to fix the problem by pouring concrete around it and setting in a combination of commercial stepping stones and local boulders. We arranged large native boulders in a half circle around the top portion of the in-ground metal tub and filled it with smaller rocks and dirt.



Next we sprayed our rock structure with water to prepare it for pouring of concrete.



Once the concrete hardened, the tub was filled with fresh water.

The tub passed the technical test and is now tiger approved. However, leaving soil around the tub will increase the pace at which the tub water would get muddy too soon, thus increasing the frequency at which the water needs to be changed.



Then we put wire rabbit fencing over it to keep it all together.



Concrete mixed with water and cement color was poured inside our boulder "structure" and directly on the ground around the rest of the tub, and the stepping stones were set in it around the tub, creating a ledge.





**A1 Savannahs is hosting the next  
FCF Wild/Exotic Feline Husbandry Course**

**When: Saturday, August 22, 2009**

**8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.**

**Where: Holiday Inn Express**

**2809 North 14th Street**

**Ponca City, OK**

***to reserve a room call 580-762-3700***

**Price: \$95.00 FCF members**

**\$130.00 non-members**

**Mail registration form and check to:**

**A1 Savannahs, c/o Kathrin Stucki**

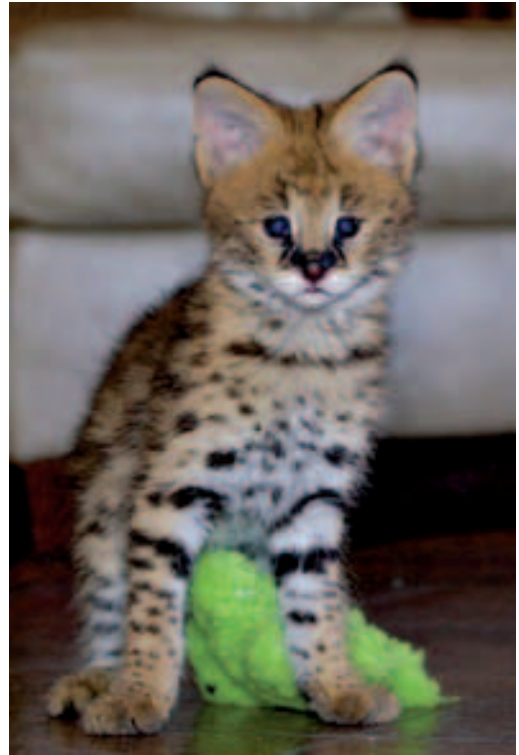
**7750 W. Riverview Road,**

**Ponca City, OK 74601**

***You may also register online and pay with Paypal  
on the FCF web site under Husbandry Course***

**Need more course info? e-mail:**

**education@felineconservation.org**



This 8-hour course focuses on responsible captive husbandry. Featured topics include: natural history of the feline species, nutrition, health care basics, handling equipment, facility design, behavior conditioning, contingency planning and regulatory agencies. This is an instructor-led, multimedia presentation, complete with student textbook, workshops, final exam and decorative certificate of successful completion.

This course has been recently upgraded. The nutrition section covers new materials on calcium and vitamins and diet designs. Health care information has been updated. There are dozens of new photos of cages, fencing, materials and enrichments in the facility section. There are better feline species photos and better range maps for natural history. The student textbook is now 149 pages chock full of useful information to take home for future reference. Course registration fee includes lunch.

**Sunday August 23, 9:00 am  
Students are invited to tour  
A1 Savannahs, a USDA li-  
censed breeding facility for  
serval and Savannah hybrids.**

Students have the opportunity to see first-hand A1 Savannah facilities, enrichments, nutritional regime, and breeding programs.

Course host is Kathrin Stucki of A1 Savannahs,  
e-mail questions to:  
A1savannahs@yahoo.com  
call: 603-944-5047

Nearby Airports:  
Wichita (ICT) 90 miles  
Tulsa (TUL) 100 miles  
Oklahoma City (OKC) 114 miles

**Registration form - please cut out or photocopy and mail with  
payment check to: A1 Savannahs 7750 W. Riverview Road,  
Ponca City, OK 74601**

**Name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City** \_\_\_\_\_

**State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone :** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-Mail** \_\_\_\_\_

Attending the Sunday tour of A1 Savannahs ( ) yes ( ) no

**Total enclosed** \_\_\_\_\_

## Blast from the Past. . . .

### Living with Jake

**Long Island Ocelot Club**

**Jul/Aug 1973—Volume 17, Issue 4**

*By Wally and Ginger Bordwell*

Jake is a playful bobcat kitten. His health is good now, but we have a new problem—his teeth! Yes, they're in real good health—that's our problem. He uses them a little too much. I am sure he doesn't mean to hurt us.

We decided we would try thumping him (not too hard) on the nose when he bit hard. Well, to our surprise he actually seems to enjoy this. The minute you thump him, he stands on his hind legs and leaps at you. The more you thump him, the more he leaps upon you, like a jumping bean. He's so fast.

He's only three and a half months old, so his little attacks give only minor scratches. This is really a comical sight to behold. Apparently thumping is not the answer.

Fortunately, Jake does not always bite. The minute he sees anyone, he runs for you and begins to rub and lick your face. Then he bites! It's almost like it was his way of saying, "Hi!"

If anyone reading this has had a helpful

experience, we would love to hear from you.

Jake has another habit we feel you may find unusual as do we. This is his sucking. We had thought only ocelots and margays liked to suck on their owners. It's not just

his sucking that is unusual, but it's the way he goes about it. He begins by slobbering all over your hand, then he rubs it around with his nose until it foams. Only now will he begin to suck. This lasts one to two hours, twice a day. Believe me, it is very hard to hold still that long.

After observing Jake and his sucking ritual, which seems to mean so much to him, noting that if he is interrupted, he becomes very upset. I have wondered about the effects on kittens that are deprived of this natural sucking ritual. I know we're not equal to a kitten's mother, but I believe we must try.

I think a good question for a prospective exotic owner might be "Would you be willing to give up two hours (maybe four hours) a day for a kitten to suck on you." It may sound like a dumb question, but I believe it's very important.

Jake is our first bobcat and I'm sure a lot of our experiences have already been experienced by others, so bear with us. Jake is a joy in our life that makes us bubble over at times.

I hope sharing our experiences may be helpful and enlightening to others. •





## Registered Exotic Feline Handler Program Update

As secretary for the FCF, it is my responsibility to oversee the FCF Exotic/Wild Feline Registered Handler Program. This has been a great year for the Registered Handler Program and I think that the online application has been well received and it is great to be able to keep all the applications in one location. I would like to encourage our members to visit the members-only section of the FCF web site and utilize this tool. Keep those applications coming in because this is a very important program.

Only fully completed applications will be considered for registration. It is very important that handler experience is listed in complete detail on the FCF handler application. It must include the number of years, the amount of time spent with cats during those years, the specific types of felines you have worked with, and a detailed description of the experiences, when the experience was acquired, what facility was the experience acquired, and any other continuing education programs you have graduated from, or professional training you have received. The extent of detail allows me to determine if an applicant qualifies for registration, the type of registration—basic or advanced—as well as providing valuable information to be shared with other FCF members and to enable an online directory to be created in the future. Members should take pride in their experience and this should be reflected on their applications. Incomplete or vague

FUZZY PRODUCTIONS PRESENTS

AT ROMAN NOSE STATE PARK

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### Registered Exotic Feline Handler Program

The FCF board of directors congratulate the following individuals who have made application for and been accepted into the Registered Exotic Feline Handler Program the past two months.

**Joe Fortunato—basic**  
**Scott Shaffer—advanced**  
**Teresa Shaffer—advanced**  
**Marie Martinez—basic**  
**Leslie Thalman—basic**  
**Jeremy Bolton—basic**  
**Nicole Ammon—advanced**

FCF provides input to legislators and regulatory agencies that make decisions that affect ownership, breeding, or exhibiting of cats. Registration of more members increases the weight and authority of our comments.

A new online handler registration form can be filled out directly in the members only section of the FCF web site and the \$30.00 registration fee can be made through PayPal. Additionally, when making updates, you can view your previous experience and add new experiences to build your handler experience file.

The registration remains active as long as you are an FCF member.

The board further challenges these experienced handlers who maintain facilities to apply for the FCF Facility Accreditation. The overview, basic standards, and Accreditation application can also be found on the FCF members-only website.

Congratulations to all of these members for their dedication to their cats.

*Joe Fortunato*  
*FCF Secretary*

applications will not be considered. Only serious inquiries for registration will be approved. Once approved, I will send you a registered handler's card and letter. Your basic or advanced status will be indicated on the card. Please remember to update your registered handler experience periodically through the FCF website.

As mentioned above, in the near future the FCF would like to post registered handler experience under each member's profile. This would serve as a great resource for our members. By having this information viewable, it would allow members to research the FCF website to locate individuals or organizations who have experience with particular species of exotic felines. Exotic

feline handler experience also provides documentation that can be utilized for employment or volunteer positions at zoos, sanctuaries, and other organizations. It could also serve as a database which can be researched if necessary to provide information for legislative issues.

For those FCF members attending the 2009 FCF Convention in Monterey-Salinas, California, you will have the privilege of being able to attend a new FCF program, the Advanced Wildcat Handling Course. This free course is limited to registered handlers only. For those of you who are not registered handlers, I urge you to please register. As an added bonus for registered handlers, you may present your card for free admission to Animal Junction, the first and only exotic animal zoo in Bucks County, PA. I hope to see you soon!

—Joe Fortunato

## 2009 Second Quarter Board Meeting, May 15 to 24, 2009

The 2009 second quarter board meeting was held May 15-24, 2009 online via the FCF website forums.

In attendance were Kevin Chambers, Lynn Culver, Kurt Beckelman, Dan Stockdale, Betsy Whitlock, Sylvia Gerber, Robert Johnson, Billie Lambert, Ron DeArmond, Patty Perry, and Joe Fortunato.

Three motions were voted upon and several other topics were discussed.

Motion: Ratify prior approval of January 24 board of directors meeting minutes. The minutes were ratified.

Motion: Moved by Kevin Chambers, seconded by Robert Johnson that the Programs and Policies be amended to read:

7. FCF Field Representative Program  
7.1 The purpose of the FCF Field Representative Program is to support its members and private exotic feline ownership. This is accomplished by providing a network for training members to interact with legislators and media persons on three fronts: the local, state, and federal levels.

7.2 The FCF Field Representative Program shall be operated under the guidance of the FCF executive director and the FCF board of directors.

7.3 FCF members interested in being considered for State Representative should write the executive director and provide a brief outline of their skills and experience with public communication, legislation,

media, and feline husbandry.

7.4 State Representatives must remain current FCF members; they must maintain clear communications between the executive director and FCF members in their state; provide assistance and needed advice, and open door accessibility to information.

7.5 The Executive Director will appoint State Representatives.

7.6 Each State Representative is responsible to identify exotic feline related issues in their state. They will act as a liaison between the FCF executive director and the media and state legislators and wildlife departments and community leaders.

7.7 State Representatives may organize state working groups to increase local involvement in exotic feline related issues. They may be called to engage federal levels of legislation or national media platforms by the FCF board of directors on a case-by-case basis.

7.8 The State Representatives shall alert the FCF executive director to any situations, news events, or legislative actions in their state that may be deemed important or of concern to the FCF and feline community.

7.9 Anticipated newspaper, television, and radio interviews should be brought to the attention of the director of public relations for input and guidance until the State

Representatives are formally trained in media presentations.

Motion: Moved by Betsy Whitlock, seconded by Kevin Chambers, that FCF offer a 10% commission to any person who applies for and secures a monetary grant for programs offered and supported by the FCF. The Exec. Director and the Board Members are exempt from receiving this commission but are to actively assist any person who needs information to apply for said grants.

Discussion Topic: Changes to registered handler program. There was discussion on registered handler program and what constitutes handler status. The secretary will propose an official definition of 2-years experience to guide the approval and registration process

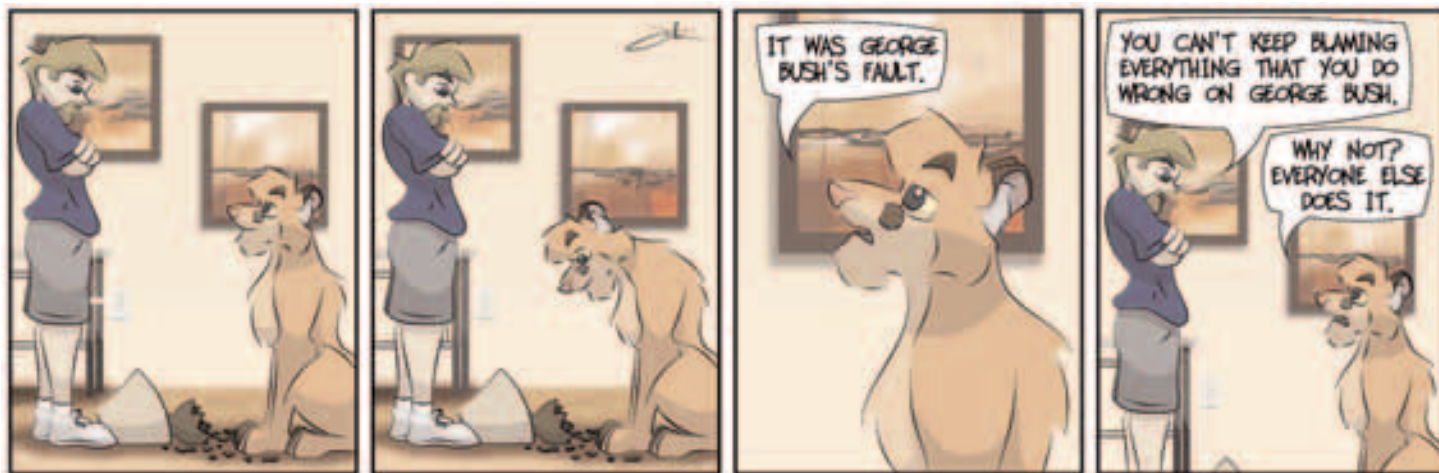
Discussion Topic: Products for FCF store. Lynn is working on having note cards for sale on FCF store. There was also discussion about calendars and other merchandise/products, which could be sold on commission.

Discussion Topic: Educators course. The educator's course is just about complete and is awaiting finishing touches. The course will be taught at the FCF Convention next month.

Treasurer, Kurt Beckelman, gave a treasurer's report. 1st quarter of 2009 FCF had \$12,813.22 Total Income, \$14,738.01 Total Expenses. Net Income (\$1,924.79). •

## SANDUSKY

by John Prengaman





## Andean Cat Conservation and Monitoring Center

We wish to thank all the many FCF members who responded to the April letter requesting donations for the Andean Cat Conservation and Monitoring Center. FCF member support of this project is vital to meet the projected expenses to build this center.

We wish to extend a special thanks to the Meeks Group for donating magnetic signs for the Andean Cat Center vehicles. The signs depict the FCF logo and web site and will be advertising our support of this project throughout the Andes.

All members who donate \$125 receive a half-sized, life-like, stuffed Andean cat toy. Members who attend convention and have donated \$125, will have a photo taken of them with Jim presenting the Andean cat thank you gift and will receive a press release you can submit to your local paper.

Last issue we announced that FCF member and avid conservationist, Fred Boyajian, pledged to match up to \$2,000 in FCF member donations received between May 25 and July 22.

Now we have even more good news! Thierry Plaud has also made the same pledge, so now when you donate \$5, the Andean Center will receive \$15, or your generous donation of \$100 gains Jim's Andean Cat Conservation Center \$300!

Hurry and mail your check made out to the Feline Conservation Federation to the FCF treasurer, and note that it is for the Andean Cat Center. Or visit the Support Us page of the FCF web site at [www.felineconservation.org](http://www.felineconservation.org) and chose Andean Cat Fund in the drop down menu •



## Donations

The FCF membership and the board of directors wish to offer a special thanks to the following individuals who have made donations to various projects over the past few months. These donations make it possible for the FCF to provide additional funding for special projects, fight negative legislation, and support conservation projects which we might not be able to fund as fully in our annual budget.

We thank these contributors for their special effort and encourage others to follow their example by helping to provide extra funding for those projects that are of special interest to each individual.

### Project: Andean cat

Joe Fortunato  
Robert Johnson  
Paul Gourley  
Robert Hohn  
Sandra Hohn  
Patricia Garvey  
Cynthia Tessler  
Kamala Strohmeyer  
Kurt Beckelman

Margaret Woodard  
Dan Wenzl  
Jodi Wenzl  
Kathleen Rullo  
Elizabeth Hatton  
Nanette McGann  
Cathryn Hilker  
Cincinnati Zoo Angel Fund  
Katherine Benford

The FCF appreciates your generosity and continued support.

*Joseph Fortunato*  
Secretary, FCF

### ANIMAL FINDERS GUIDE

18 issues a year for only \$30.00  
Single issue \$2.50



Informative articles on exotic animal husbandry. Exotic animals, products, services, auctions and shows advertised.

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**FOCUS ON NATURE**®  
*Insight into the lives of animals*  
**BLACK-FOOTED CAT**  
*(FELIS NIGRIPES)*



Weighing only 1.2-2 kg (2.6-4.4 lbs), the tiny BLACK-FOOTED CAT feeds on rodents, small mammals, birds, and spiders. This diet provides all the moisture needed to survive in the arid grasslands and deserts of South Africa, Botswana, Namibia, and Angola.

*Rochelle Mason raises awareness about endangered species through her paintings, columns, and traveling exhibits. Her wildcat paintings and prints are sold through [www.Rmasonfinearts.com](http://www.Rmasonfinearts.com)*





**Clockwise from top:** Judy Berens and her 13 year old clouded leopard, Melly—Linda Reimanschnider • Cougar Ivy cuddles with bobcats Rufus and Bobbilinni at Arnolds Wildlife and Rehabilitation Center—Cindy Hornstein • Two house servals—Paula Zentz • Sebastian the bobcat oversees the printing of the FCF Journal. That is Robert Hohn in the foreground flanked by his kids and a busy print shop employee.

# Your best Shot







**Globetrotting Thierry Plaud interns at the Clouded Leopard Consortium project in Thailand. Check out his detailed trip report inside.**

## FCF Upcoming Events

**FCF Educators Course, Wednesday, July 22** Laurel Inn, 801 W Laurel Drive, Salinas, CA ([www.laurelinnmotel.com](http://www.laurelinnmotel.com)) 8:00am-5:00pm. \$95.00

**FCF Feline Husbandry Course, Wednesday, July 22** Laurel Inn, 801 W Laurel Drive, Salinas, CA. ([www.laurelinnmotel.com](http://www.laurelinnmotel.com)) 8:00am-5:00pm. \$95.00.

**FCF Annual Convention, Thursday, July 23-25** Salinas/Monterey, CA. Reserve your room at the Laurel Inn Motel, Salinas, (call 831-449-2427) and tour Vision Quest Ranch, home of trained working wildlife and elephant sanctuary. Learn from outstanding speakers, enjoy Saturday evening's banquet dinner, special events, and fund-raiser auction. Registration is \$225.

**Three-day Animal Training Class, Monday, July 27-29** follows FCF Convention at Vision Quest Ranch. Covers business/industry and future challenges, management, training, and hands-on daily work with animals at Vision Quest Ranch. \$900 registration fee. Contact Heather at 800-228-7382 to register.

**FCF Feline Husbandry Course, Saturday, August 22, 2009** at Holiday Inn Express, 2809 N. 14th St, Ponca City, Oklahoma. 8:00am-5:00pm. Registration form inside this journal. Course host is A1 Savannahs.

**Tour, Sunday, August 23, 2009** Husbandry course students are invited to tour A1 Savannahs in Ponca, City, OK at 10:00am.

**Outreach, Saturday, October 3, 2009** The Feline Conservation Federation will set up a booth at the Wildlife Conservation Expo Day at the Mission Bay Conference Center in San Francisco, CA. 10:00am-6:00pm. Special keynote speaker: Dr. Jane Goodall, DBE. Meet conservation heroes, visit conservation exhibits, and purchase wildlife art and crafts. Admission: \$60, students with ID \$30. Caroline Alexander is coordinating the FCF booth. Need FCF members to assist. Contact Caroline at 501-304-0031 or email her at [cello33dolly@yahoo.com](mailto:cello33dolly@yahoo.com)

