



Feline Conservation Federation
July/August 2011 • Volume 55, Issue 4



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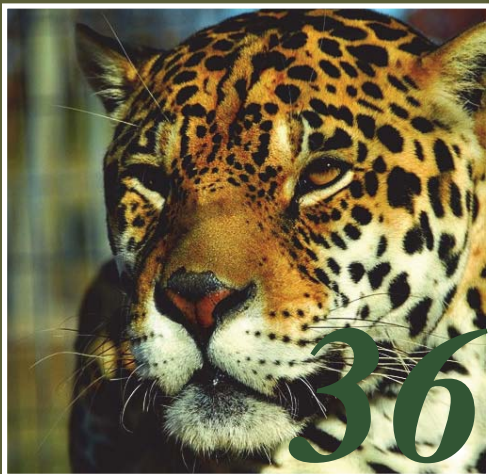
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TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE FCF JOURNAL AND JOIN THE FCF IN ITS CONSERVATION EFFORTS

A membership to the FCF entitles you to six issues of the *Journal*, the back-issue DVD, an invitation to FCF husbandry and wildlife education courses and annual convention, and participation in our online discussion group. The FCF works to improve captive feline husbandry and ensure that habitat is available. The FCF supports the conservation of exotic felines through captive and wild habitat protection, and it provides support for captive husbandry, breeding programs, and public education.

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The Feline Conservation Federation publishes the *Journal* bimonthly. The FCF is non-profit, (Federal ID#59-2048618) non-commercial, and international in membership, devoted to the welfare and conservation of exotic felines.

The *Journal* publishes articles on exotic feline conservation and husbandry, management, and regulatory and legislative issues affecting ownership for our members. The author's point of view does not necessarily represent the point of view of the organization. Reproduction of any material in the *Journal* may not be made without the written permission of the original copyright owners and/or copyright owner FCF.

Letters to the editor and guest editorials are also published.

Display advertisement space is available at the following prices: \$10 business card, \$25.00 quarter page, \$50.00 half page, and \$100 full-page ad.

Submission deadline for articles and advertisements is the 10th of even numbered months. Please submit all photos and articles to the Journal Managing Editor. High Resolution photos and articles may be emailed to lynnculver@hughes.net, or send by postal service to 141 Polk 664, Mena, AR 71953.



Feline Conservation Federation

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Kevin Chambers

The 40th Annual FCF Convention was an overwhelming success! 163 people from 25 states, plus France, Morocco, Canada, China, and Costa Rica, all converged on Orlando, to make this the second largest convention ever.

A huge thanks is in order to the convention chair, Erin Patters. Until you've been there, you can't imagine how much work goes on behind the scenes to plan and arrange for everything to go smoothly. Erin did a fantastic job, and it is such a shame that she had to miss the actual convention because of having to move to Germany to be with her husband, Cody, who is in the armed forces. It takes real dedication to put that much effort into planning, knowing that you are not going to be able to join in on the fun. Others who were indispensable in putting on such a good convention were Michelle McKay, Lauren Bean, Kurt Beckelman, April White, Jean Slosberg, Teresa Shaffer, and Debi Willoughby. I'm sure I've left out others, but be assured that even if I left off your name, your help was greatly appreciated.



“Tiger Madonna,” a mixed media portrait donated by Malaysian artist Hoeyyn Ngu, showcases Save China’s Tigers’ matriarch and was a highlight at the live auction this year. Our editor was the winner. Proceeds benefit both the FCF and Save China’s Tigers.

Next year, convention will be in Cincinnati, Ohio. Plans have already started, with a visit to the Cincinnati Zoo to see the recently renovated cat house and greatly expanded cheetah run, and, of course, meet with the cheetah lady, FCF

member Cathryn Hilker.

The FCF continues to grow and become stronger each day. As of mid-July, 560 memberships constitute 841 members. At this time last year, we had 534 memberships with 771 members. Please encourage others to join the FCF, because the larger it is, the more influence we will have on feline matters.

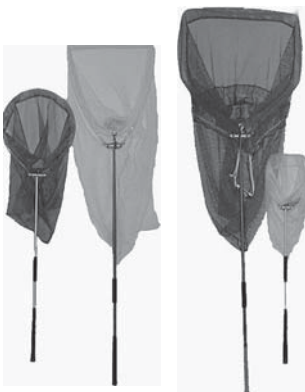
It is time for renewals to be sent out. Everyone with email has already received a 90-day notice, and on August 1st we send out the 60-day notice. You will find a renewal form enclosed in this issue. Please help us out by sending in your renewal information and check. The earlier you get these in, the easier it is for our volunteers to get everything processed.

Esther Stockwell, CPA, from Maryland, counted the constitutional amendment ballots. There were 121 votes cast, requiring 81 “yes” votes to pass. The voting results were 109 “yes” votes and 12 “no” votes. The board will be working over the next few months to formulate definitions and corresponding bylaws. We hope to have these done and ready for implementation by January 1st.

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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Lynn Culver

The FCF must represent all feline stakeholders. The renewal form in this Journal is also a new membership application. If you have already renewed, share it with someone who cares about cats. If you received this Journal as a complimentary sample, please fill out the application and join today!

Members approved a constitutional amendment that creates a professional membership category. In the next few months, this board will develop the standards and procedures, set dues, and develop programs to benefit professional members.

The Journal contains a full Convention report. Photographers and writers have

contributed images and accounts of our speakers and events. Each year, Lotty recipients award this organization's highest honor at the Saturday night banquet. This year, Dr. Bhagavan "Doc" Antle joins the exclusive group for his outstanding commitment to the FCF, his mentoring of the next generation, his education of the media and the legislators, and valuable conservation contributions of the Rare Species Fund.

I gave a talk at the Convention on the FCF project to identify all cat stakeholders and census the captive population. In this Journal, I have updated the census numbers.

Every Journal contains a historical arti-



cle. This Blast from the Past is a reminder that, in the early 1960s, the common cat was the ocelot. In a time before the Endangered Species Act and CITES, mother ocelots were trapped for the fur industry and their kittens were captured for export. The Long Island Ocelot Club was founded to help new owners properly care for their ocelots. After only a few short years, the focus switched. LIOC members pioneered captive breeding of ocelots, margay, oncilla, and jaguarundi. Half a century later, however, the private sector population of these South American cats is nearing extinction. A strong FCF is needed to reverse this trend. Extinction is forever!

In this Journal we celebrate incredible captive breeding success with Fernando Vidal, who writes of his historic first-ever captive-born guíña. This Journal also publishes Yvonne Rijdsijk's article on the captive breeding and behavior of fishing cats. Pat Callahan's report on this year's AZA Felid TAG shares good news about our private sector tiger genetics. Photographer Fred Hood reports on the new Wild Cat Research and Conservation Center at the University of Arizona. The FCF shines the spotlight on another FCF member facility; this time, Christine Janks tells the story behind Carson Springs Wildlife Sanctuary. David Madison has graciously offered the FCF the right to publish poems from his soon-to-be-released book, and in this issue we open with a delightfully fun one on the jaguarundi. Finally, Lea Jau-nakais teams up with her veterinarian, Dr. Juston Schmidtke, to conclude her informative three-part medical series on outbreaks.

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CONVENTION SPEAKERS: INFORMATIVE, ENLIGHTENING, & FUN!

By Dr. Kristie Karima Burns, MH, ND
Wildlife Behavior Anthropologist and
Staff at Red Rock Wildlife Education
Center of www.PellaWildlifeCompany.org

The diversity of speakers at the FCF conference this year provided beginners with a comprehensive education on managing their own felines and provided inspiration and lively discussion among experienced handlers and facility owners. Doc Antle started off the sessions with an essential discussion of how to deal with the press. Following Doc, Jim Sanderson shared "Don't Eat the Shrimp," a story of three small cat species around the world and what people can do to help in the conservation efforts of these cats. Jean Slosberg then shared a small cat success story

Positive Image: Wildlife & Wild Media. Are You Thriving or Barely Surviving?" If you were not fortunate enough to attend this year's conference, I highly recommend purchasing a set of DVDs of the event. The speakers were not simply entertaining and enjoyable to listen to; what added extra value to all the sessions was that diverse topics were covered in depth and offered many specific action plans members can use immediately and in the long-term to improve their feline experience, relationships with their cats, or their facilities.



"Doc" Bhagavan Antle used the story of Felicia Frisco and her tiger, Will, as an example of when it's necessary to reign in the wild musings of the media and put a positive spin on the situation.



Fellow speaker Dr. Jim Sanderson introduces Ms. Jean Slosberg, who traveled all the way from Central America to share her unique experience and video with convention attendees. Photo by Tim Stoffel.

with everyone in her presentation, "My Life with an Amazing Wild Margay." Li Quan, the keynote speaker, shared stories, pictures, and videos of her brave and unique efforts to rewild the South China tiger. Lynn Culver spoke on "The Future of FCF and Cats in Captivity."

Michelle Skurski then visited members from Disney's Animal Kingdom to talk about "To Catch a Tiger by the Tail: Husbandry & Medical Training of the Felids at Disney's Animal Kingdom." Dan Stockdale closed the sessions by inspiring everyone with his lecture on "Presenting a

Doc Antle's presentation on how to deal with the press was an essential lecture that all owners of wild felids should hear. He shared his insights into how the press works, his past experience with the press, and how to create an action plan for dealing with journalists. The most important tips he highlighted were that owners need to have their own agenda when speaking with journalists, they should be aware that the press is always seeking negative news, and that journalists will always bring in an opposing viewpoint. He provided many suggestions and examples of how to deal with the press, suggesting that everyone "write down a conservation, private ownership message of love and trust and understanding, and say it 5 different ways every time they talk to you."

Jim Sanderson talked about his travels and conservation efforts with wild felids around the world and shared with us the "Tale of Three Cats," their specific challenges, and what members could do to help in the conservation efforts. His presentation brought to light the plights of some of the lesser-studied cats and highlighted the important role wild feline owners can

play in creating more awareness of conservation issues concerning felines. His introductory remarks set the tone for his presentation when he stated, "As a scientist, I present people with the facts and I hope they do the right thing, and as our political elections show that doesn't work... I've changed my message here and I am going to tell you what to do... I'd like to say if you do these few simple things you will be involved in the conservation effort, but actually you won't. The truth of the matter is you will be back to neutral." His presentation delivered as promised; everyone in attendance went home with an encouraging list of things they could do to easily help in the conservation of wild cats around the world.

Jean Slosberg's complementary video presentation on a margay she "rewilded" provided rare insight into the world of a



Audience members were captivated by Tika, the mother margay starring in Jean Slosberg's wonderful home video.



Keynote speaker Li Quan, founder of Save China's Tigers, spoke passionately about her efforts in South Africa to breed previously-captive South China tigers in a safe, open environment, where she hopes they will learn the skills necessary to return to the wilds of their homeland sometime in the future. Photo by Eden Tran.

wild margay through the eyes of Slosberg, who witnessed the reintegration of a cat into the wild, its hunting and climbing skills, and success in raising two kittens - all in her backyard and surrounding wild habitat.

past eight years, (a) battle to save the most endangered tiger in the world - the South China

Finally, Li Quan, the keynote speaker, shared pictures, videos, and excerpts from her book, *Rewilded*, which provided "a summary of a long journey that has lasted the

tiger." During her lecture, she talked about the process of rewilding the South China tiger, which was the first step in her efforts to save the tiger. Her unique and innovative approach to rewilding the tigers provided all cat owners with new information and insights into possibilities with their own cats' behaviors, breeding, and conservation efforts. Quan spoke



Chinese tiger brothers X and Y enjoy a relaxing snooze together, an opportunity given to them through the unusual approach which Li Quan has employed in "rewilding" her tigers. Photo courtesy of Save China's Tigers.

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Michelle Skurski of Disney's Animal Kingdom, not far from the hotel, gave a riveting lesson about the techniques her staff employs when training and conditioning their big cats to cooperate for medical check-ups and procedures. Photo by Tim Stoffel.

about a number of controversial techniques she used with her tigers, such as bringing the cubs back to stay with the mother after being separated, putting two brothers together, using a previous "pet tiger" with one testicle as a breeding stud,

and teaching tigers who had lived their entire lives on concrete slabs in zoos to hunt in the wild. Despite the lack of initial support she found for her pioneering efforts, she persevered because, as she put it, "During the course of investigation on the South China tiger project, I discovered that... despite the hundreds of millions of dollars going to India and Russia, the tiger numbers have continued to decline, and therefore there was a need to do something different. And that was what we decided to do."

Michelle Skurski visited from nearby Animal Kingdom to talk about how her staff integrates health-care concepts into the training of their animals to help minimize their exposure to invasive, traumatic experiences in health-care and first aid. Her talk focused on the importance of planning ahead with a feline and how this planning can help prevent future trauma to the cat. She shared a myriad of slides showing postures taught to the cats at Animal Kingdom and described how the staff went about teaching the cats each of the postures. Skurski also noted the importance of emergency training and how her staff accomplished that with a large number of big cats. Her examples were both fascinating and thought-provoking.

Dan Stockdale closed the ses-

sions by motivating everyone with his speech on the importance of a positive and professional public reflection. The main point he made was how critical a polished image is to a facility and even to a private owner. Stockdale gave numerous examples of how to create this professional image, as well as anecdotes of unprofessional staff and facilities he had worked with in the past. His presentation was enhanced by everyone's memories of visiting two professional facilities the day before, Dade City's "Wild Things" and Joel Slaven's "Professional Animals."



"Wildman" Dan Stockdale of Fox News's "Wild America" showed us exactly how to be professional with his outstanding public persona as a motivational role model during his enlightening talk. Photo by Tim Stoffel.

GRAB SOME POPCORN FOR "POPPER'S PENGUINS!"

By Patty Perry

This movie just might have a favorable message for us struggling private owners of captive wildlife... If you haven't yet seen "Mr. Popper's Penguins," I recommend spending the ten bucks.

Jim Carrey stars in this perfectly predictable, but feel good family film that leads itself to a delightful message about how a relationship with six flightless helions in tuxedo suits can change one's world.

Carey plays Tom Popper, a powerful New York City real estate magnate, who is challenged to seal the deal of a lifetime with Manhattan landowner, Angela Lansbury. His family life has been fractured as a result of his career. He is a divorcee with

two beautiful children who would rather die than only see him every other weekend.

Popper takes delivery of a package dispatched from Antarctica by his always absent explorer father, who is now deceased. The contents of this frozen package turn his life into a frenzy. Six rambunctious, engaging penguins waddle their way into the hearts of his children and estranged wife (Carla Gugino), as they become the center of Popper's world.

His twenty million dollar Manhattan penthouse becomes a perfect and playful habitat for these spirited creatures that transform Popper, as he reunites the family and changes his priorities. All the while, he must battle the various animal control and wildlife agencies over owning

the penguins. The ultimate villain turns out to be the director of the New York Zoo. And the battle begins!!

The zoo is portrayed as an establishment with a less than honorable agenda regarding the animals. Through an action packed and hysterical mission to rescue the seized penguins, Popper wins back his family, the animals, and the heart of Angela Lansbury's character. The underlying message to all this chaos is that animals are better off in a loving, nurturing environment, rather than a detached situation with ulterior motives.

I don't know about the average moviegoer, however, to anyone who might be conservation-minded, this movie delivers a positive message for private owner interests.

FCF members should remember Fernando Vidal, one of two international guests who spoke at the 2007 convention in Dallas. Fernando's work was so important to FCF members that they donated the funds to fly Fernando to the 2008 convention in Myrtle Beach. At that convention, the FCF board awarded a \$2,000 grant to Fauna-Andina to build and improve caging for the captive breeding of guiñas, under the guidance of Fernando Vidal. Four years later, we are publishing the Fernando family's report on the world's first captive guiña birth. Fauna-Andina can be proud that they have provided all the necessary environmental qualities that are conducive to reproduction. The FCF commitment to conservation of endangered felines and support of managed breeding programs in some small way helped this process along.

FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME...

By Fernando Vidal

It was in 2000, when, as a family group, we started working on the conservation of several species native to our country (Chile) and this region. It was hard starting out, since we had nothing done in terms of a facility and the place was a little bit small, only one and a half hectares.

Most of the work was focused on native deer and felines: pudú (*Pudu pudu*), Patagonian huemul (*Hippocamelus bisulcus*), puma (*Puma concolor puma*), and guiña (*Leopardus guigna*), wrongly named kodkod.

We soon discovered the reality in terms of the situation that many of the above-named species were going through. Illegal hunting and trade was negatively affecting these species and very little research was being conducted to learn about and understand basic aspects of many Chilean native species.

When we start browsing the information available on some species, we discovered that there were no guiñas or Patagonian huemul under captive programs for conservation and research, even though both species are at risk of extinction. Puma ecology information was almost unknown, except for that coming out of North America or as far south as Patagonia.

It was shocking for me to realize how limited the knowledge and conservation efforts were for Chilean wildlife. We were not even able to answer the basic questions asked by small children regarding guiña biology. So how could we teach them to care about an unknown species?!

Also, we discovered that it was hard to obtain permits for working with huemul. All captive husbandry attempts in the past had failed, resulting in deaths of all the animals involved in those programs. This is the animal found on the coat of arms of my country, the main conservation symbol for the whole country. Only about 1,500



May 5, 2011, Fernando Vidal holds Kalki's kitten, the culmination of six years and five months of captive husbandry dedication.

individuals survive in both Chile and Argentina.

We started working to convince the government to give us the chance to work mainly on huemul, pumas, Darwin's fox, pudú, and guiñas, among other species.

To obtain the permit for working with huemul took more than two years of meetings and talks about the project. But eventually permits were granted. Actually, the project now has nine animals, having started with just two, and this includes the loss of one female shot by poachers. I personally believe in God and "He" had a present for me in the spring of 2005. I found the first fawn of a Patagonian huemul born in captivity! Describing the emotion of finding something that no one had ever seen before, it was much more powerful than I thought. I was absolutely alone when the event happened. There are no words to explain my feelings; it is for sure a moment that will remain in my mind forever.

In addition to working with the huemul, we also had the chance to start a research and protection project with pumas in the region. We named the project "Puma Araucano," on behalf of the old subspecies (*Puma concolor araucana*). The project started with the first pumas to ever be put under telemetry surveillance in the region, providing us with important knowledge about the threats puma face and the ecology of this majestic feline in the region. The information gathered represents an important advance in research and has helped to change the perception of wildlife officers and common people about the negative impact of puma on livestock and the real effect of translocations practiced in the country.

We also included camera traps to gather more data for our research. This allowed us to put all the species and their interactions together in the same scenario. In the mean time, we convinced the government to let us rescue every guiña that was in any kind of trouble.

As it dealt with an endangered species, it was not easy to gain government permission for this work. Many of the researchers and scientists involved with this species are absolutely against putting guiñas in captivity, even when they are individuals in need of help, such as orphans or trap victims. To be honest, I never expected that working with guiñas would be such a challenge to undertake in captivity.

It was funny how some professionals reacted. As soon they knew there were animals under the control of the government, they started working hard to have them released before we could gain access to them. Some animals were released in places that they did not belong, with no plan for monitoring, while some others were released as juveniles, not yet old enough to have a good chance of survival.



One of the debilitated wild guíñas that came to Fauna-Andia for rehabilitation.

Fighting against the united group of specialists, we managed to rescue six animals from the south to central zone, a total distance of 1,500 kilometers over the whole area.

From the beginning, we were in over our heads. All of the animals were handicapped either physically or mentally. After talking with people doing the same type of work with the highly endangered Iberian lynx, we knew that it would not be a good idea to work with these compromised individuals, since breeding them would be even more difficult than if we were using healthy individuals.

Without even realizing how much time had passed, we had been working with guíñas for almost six and a half years. We had left behind the small, inadequate center where our work had begun and moved on to one covering 150 hectares (about 370 acres). Camera traps did their job, letting us know that the new property was habitat for at least four free-roaming guíñas! For sure, our “jewels,” both melanistic and spotted felines, were in our own backyard! Maybe the best thing was the knowledge that the survival of those tiny, wild felines depended mainly on our decisions and, as a family group, we are defending them to the best of our abilities.

Everything was going fine, except... we were having no kittens, no reproduction. The new enclosures that we built at the bigger facility were in the middle of peaceful country; the animals had come here from the older center two years ago in 2009.

Our enclosure design is a habitat approximately 36 feet by 36 feet, with

wire walls about eight feet tall. At the top of the wall is a horizontal metal rod about three feet wide. This metal guard has proven to be effective at preventing climb-outs. Inside the habitats are trees that let the guíñas climb up and stay up. There is a hollow log on the ground and plastic containers filled with wood shavings. Each habitat has a shelter six feet off the ground, with an enclosed room that blocks the wind and prevents eye contact with the cats.

One breeding season passed without any results. Honestly, I was concerned, wondering what we were doing wrong. I always thought back to the pessimistic words of the Iberian lynx expert.

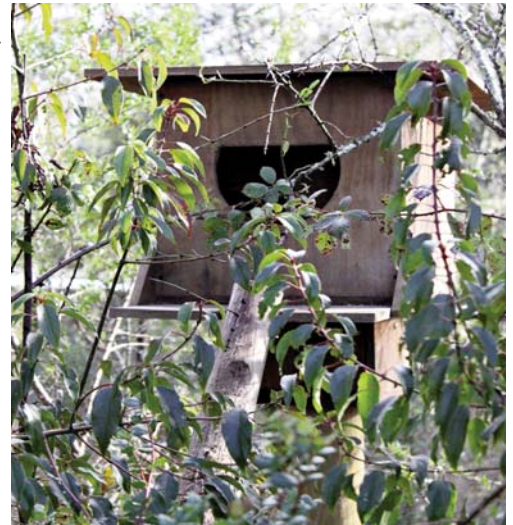
We learned that the orphan guíñas we were rearing would swim, so they needed big water pools. Each of the enclosures had a large pool of water during the breeding season of 2010. Also, we included shelters on the ground, as well as high shelters close to the trees, since the books and literature mentioned a possibility of them making arboreal “nests.” We did not know what else to do, so we had to wait for whatever God had in store for us.

Thinking back on my youth, I have to mention that, as a kid, I had wanted to raise guíñas and pumas. My mother almost went crazy hearing about my dreams every day. I always laugh when I wonder what she would say if she could see me now.

I started to realize why the Chilean



Fernando provides large, open areas for the guíñas, and keeps them confined with an ingenious use of horizontal, metal roofing that attaches to the top of the welded wire mesh walls.



Inside each guíñas habitat is an assortment of hiding places, including these elevated wooden shelters that provide privacy and protection from rain and wind.

zoos had not succeeded in their past attempts to breed guíñas. It was not easy. On the older property, we always had dogs barking and neighbors making all sorts of noise.

This mating season, I started seeing that the animals were more active, that they were reacting positively to the stress-free environment. I smelled something different in the air, and one of the orphans (actually an adult female) that had been very friendly to me, started avoiding me and being more aggressive and active. I did not want to even think or mention that I expected something to happen. But it was different this time.

For all the cat breeders, I must mention that our felines, both male and female, stay together year round. This pretty young female was sharing an enclosure with a very old male of unknown age and no teeth at all. So what could we expect?

Time was running out and I became sad. I was thinking about changing the cats' diet for the next year. These guíñas had been fed chicken five days a week, plus red meat the other two days. From time to time, I gave them rabbits or birds that were hunted especially for them.

Also, the enclosures are open at the top, so birds would enter from time to time, plus some rodents passed through the fence. I provided vitamins for the small cats as well... What more could they need?

To add to my pressures, specialists were complaining because we had had no

reproductive success with the cats in six and a half years. They said the project had no meaningful activity and, therefore, no reason to exist!

One day when I entered the enclosure to check on the guíñas, I saw something that might have been an illusion -- motion on the female's abdomen. She did not let me touch her; she was not my cat anymore. Some days later, her teats started growing. I could not get near her anymore. I was excited, but still did not want to hope too much.

Three more days and the lady came for food, but disappeared by one of the logs. The next day, I made her climb the fence to have a better look at her teats and, to my surprise, I could tell that some living creature had been suckling! She went back to the log, not letting the male approach her.

I was so happy, but as yet had no evidence to mention the event to the world. I was witnessing the reproduction of one of the most cryptic and unknown cats in the world. The information coming out of this event could answer most of the simple questions regarding the biology of the species. We continued feeding the guíñas as usual, but the female was different. I could briefly touch her when she came for food.

March 17, 2011, was an unforgettable date. God gave me one more present. A new conservation tool was born, plus new information about a mystery... the guíña! Personally, I was once again facing something never seen.

On April 8, the moment finally came; it was pretty early in the morning when I saw the first guíña kitten born after six

and a half years of work. Honestly, I was shaking and could not believe my eyes. I held the creature and we looked into each other eyes. The mother did not complain. After some time, I could touch her like the old days. It was a sunny day, unusual for the season. Later, my wife came to see the miracle and get the kitten's weight. We also we took a picture of my daughter with the small cat. Maybe one day she will take over the center and keep our projects running.

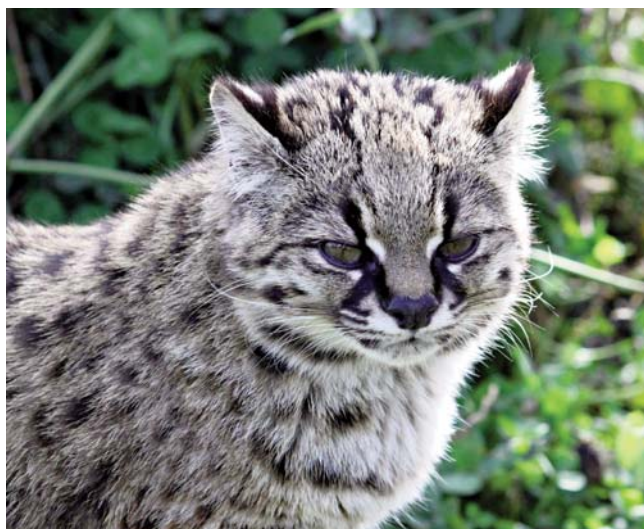
We know that the guíña mom, Kalki, chose to deliver on the ground in a log. Her kitten was first seen in trees and high places at about 70 days old. In the beginning, Kalki did not let the male enter the nesting area. However, what is happening now is really funny. The father plays with the kitten and he never attempts to take his food. It is incredible to watch. The father and mother will fight over food, but neither bother the kitten when it is eating. In fact, I have found the three of them sleeping together in the shelters during storms or heavy wind. Father and son play peacefully, and we have seen the father on his back with the kitten jumping on his belly, biting and scratching him!

The reintroduction process of the guíña is one day closer. This cat does not behave like the other animals. He does not come close to me or rely on me. When we approach him, he climbs the trees as an escape route. He is a wild cat, not a pet. He is perfect for being part of the next generation of breeders.

Today, as part of the educational component of the project, we are working together with the government on a contest to name our newborn guíña, with small children from rural schools competing for the honor. All the kids



Florencia Vidal, the next great conservationist, holds the guíña kitten.



Kalki, the mother of the guíña kitten.

live in guíña territory, so this process will help raise awareness of the need for conservation of the species. The winners will get to come here and experience the guíñas up-close, especially some ambassadors of the species. During their visit, they will learn about the basic biology of the species, plus some ecological aspects, all information generated from the project. Additionally, they will have the opportunity to observe the many other endangered species present at the center. They will also be invited to lunch by the youngest worker on the project, our daughter.

From this experience, we can state a few preliminary results. The guíña gestation lasts about 78 to 85 days, they seem to have a mating season in the spring, and litters may not be as many as five individuals, as mentioned in the books.

I would like to especially thank all the members of the FCF that support our work. Jim Sanderson, actually a personal friend and colleague, is always helping our projects; Gregory Breton of "le parc des felines;" Patrick Callahan; SAG members of the Chilean government who believed in our work; and Bruno Behn and Camila Bentjerodt of Fauna Andina.

ORLANDO HUSBANDRY COURSE REVIEW

By Lenard M. Hughes, MD

I have had a deep appreciation for wildlife since I was less than one year old. My father used to bring me everything from baby caimans, to many varieties of snakes, lizards, and other animals. I have owned various reptiles, including most recently a rather large black throat monitor lizard, several ball pythons, some corn snakes, and a few others.

Since I was very young, I have really wanted a black panther because of their beauty and sleekness. I have not yet accomplished this goal, but I did manage to obtain a young female serval at nine weeks of age. She is now going on ten months and turning into a beautiful animal with a very nice personality. I recently joined the Feline Conservation Federation to meet other people with small and large cat experience to expand my knowledge and provide my serval with all her needs and keep her healthy.

I recently took an exam on exotic felines with the Florida Wildlife Department and realized that I needed to do more than just read textbooks about these cats. I had been looking for a feline husbandry course and I finally found one close to my home. I was excited about taking the course and meeting other people with sim-



Mindy Stinner takes a break from teaching husbandry to practice her own skills on Lynn's bobcat kitten. Photo by Kim Pyne.

ilar interests who could share their experiences with exotic felines.

I thought the feline husbandry course was well organized and that the presenting speaker was knowledgeable about the topics. I was especially thrilled about getting to hold and interact with some of the kittens present for the FCF convention. I was slightly disappointed that there were no tiger, lion, or cheetah cubs brought to the conference or course. We got some-

what behind schedule in the class because of audience interaction, which at times got a bit off the beaten path. I still have some confusion about regulatory agencies. I could use more personalized advice about owning these animals in the state of Florida at the county level, which I know we could not cover in a one-day course. Housing was adequately covered, as was nutrition. Being a medical doctor, I would like to have covered more about feline physiology and disease states encountered. It would be great to have had a veterinarian with exotic feline experience present. I would like to have covered behavior and taming these animals in more depth, especially from those more experienced than myself.

I am a pediatric surgeon by profession, near the end of my career, and I would like to move on to a life more focused on wildlife, especially cats and reptiles. Animals are so much more loyal, caring, and forgiving, and return their love more unselfishly than most humans, except for very young humans.

Overall, the course enriched my knowledge, but the best part was interacting with other exotic cat owners and the kittens. I would like to take a more advanced course at a later time to further advance my knowledge and skills.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIALIZATION

By Carol Cochran

In the Encarta® World English Dictionary ©, the word "socialize" is defined as: 1. To take part in social activities, or behave in a friendly way to others, or 2. To train somebody to be social: to give somebody the skills required for functioning successfully in society or in a particular society, such as, socialize a child. No, I am not an English teacher, but I am an animal owner and socialization is just as important for our animals as it is for our children.

When an animal is born, whether the parents are domestic or exotic, wild or tame, it learns from its mother, sometimes the father, and from anyone else that has a part in their growing up. Now, most everyone reading this knows all about the necessity of socializing, but there are always a few people who may read this

article that are brand new at being owners (parents) of new kittens, puppies, or any other type of young animal. This article is written to help those people raise their new babies into adulthood to be sociable.

When you first get a kitten, puppy, or other baby animal, you must start to socialize it immediately. To do that, you have to make the baby aware of your voice, your touch, and your smell, by handling it and talking to it. Be gentle, pet the baby lightly, and let him hear your voice. Most of us give our pets names, so start by using the name you choose every time you talk to him.

You can pick the baby up, cuddle him, and hold him close to you, so that he becomes accus-

tomed to being held and gets used to your odor. That is how baby animals identify



Making a new kitten comfortable with human touch and caressing is part of the socialization process. Here at the FCF convention, a baby Canada lynx gets cuddled.



An admiring group of convention attendees take turns petting the tiger cub. Events like convention expose young animals to a variety of sights, sounds, smells and can help condition the feline to its future life co-existing with people.

their mother and siblings, by their smell. In the past, when Indians had to depend on horses so much in their daily existence, they would get the newborn foal or wild horse they caught used to their odor by gently blowing their breath into the horse's nostrils. That imprinted the human smell into the horse's memory and made it easier to work with and train the animal, as it associated that odor with the one person who was teaching and handling it.

Many times, people will be unfortunate enough to obtain an animal that has not had much, if any, handling by a human. That is sad, because, without early handling and socialization from birth, the animal will not be accustomed to human contact and voice, but will instead have a fear of humans.

Let me relate a personal experience to illustrate what I am writing about. Back in the early '70s, we purchased a Siberian husky pup, about five or six months old, from a large kennel. We got her home without much incident and took her into the house. The pup had not been handled much, we could tell, but we never

never seen the inside of a building before, had never seen children before, and was completely freaked out! We worked and worked with her and were finally able to bring her around to be a fairly decent pet with fewer fears than when we got her, but she was never totally calm with strangers or noises. That is an example of what happens when a domesticated animal is left to be reared by its mother for sever-

stopped to think that not everyone handles and teaches young animals from birth, so we were in for a rude awakening. She had slept most of the way home, and when we carried her into the house and set her down on the floor, all hell broke loose! The pup sat there for a minute, looked around, jumped up, and actually climbed the walls! She had


al weeks, then thrust into the world of humans, noises, new smells, and a different way of life. The experience can be even more dramatic with an exotic feline, which is a naturally wild animal.

When you start socializing your new exotic feline, start slowly, be gentle, and do not talk loudly or yell. With each step you advance in teaching and socializing, if you make a mistake, you fall back three steps, so go easy, but be consistent. As mentioned before, stroking and gentle petting, talking, and holding him close to you is just the beginning. As the feline grows and learns, it will need to learn to be calm in many, many different situations. Take the feline to a pet store, friend's house, the veterinarian, and any other place you can go with an exotic feline, so that he can become accustomed to other people, animals, sights, and sounds.

If you have a litter of kittens, the best way to alleviate any fears before they start and begin proper socialization is to handle each one a couple of times a day from birth, as I mentioned before. Then, from the time their eyes open and they turn about three or four weeks old, have a few people come over, including children old enough to take directions and be gentle with animals. Put newspaper on the floor and, after everyone has removed their shoes and washed their hands, have them sit in a fairly tight circle, so that they form an enclosed ring for the babies to be in. Have a few toys compatible to the type and age of the animal in the ring, then, one by one, put the litter of kittens into the center of the ring. They will sit there, bewildered, and look around for a minute or two, then start exploring.

Let the kittens wander around sniffing each person, toy, and area. When the babies have investigated their surroundings for a couple of minutes, have each person pick one up and hold him, while talking to and petting him. If the baby struggles, stay calm and do not put him down, since that will only teach the baby that struggling and crying will make the human leave him alone, and that is not what you want. After each person

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has held their first little one for five to ten minutes, pass the babies to the right, or left, just as long as a new person gets a new baby after each pass and that every person has handled every baby before the session has ended. One thing that is very important is to not let the puppy or kitten hide. What I mean is, some babies in a litter will be shy and afraid. Those are the ones that need this teaching the most. When you are holding the baby and he hides his face in your arm, clothing, under your leg, or anywhere that seems secure to him, stop him by turning him to face the center of the circle. There he will see other people and his brothers and sisters. This is extremely necessary in the socialization of the little ones to keep them from being afraid. Always face them forward into the circle and make them aware of the activities going on. They can be passed around to each person and, when put back into the circle, enticed to play with the toys.

In dealing with older animals, they may have weeks, months, or sometimes years of fear instilled in them, but they can also be brought out. With adult cats, it is a little harder, as they use claws, teeth, and flight to avoid human contact, so the circle trick with people is not going to work. If you or your facility obtains a non-socialized, or under-socialized, adult exotic

feline, you can start out by having one person visit with, sit by, talk to, and feed the fearful cat. When it becomes used to the attention, have a second, third, and fourth person do the same thing. Over a period of time, the cat will accept the presence and interaction of

different people and most will learn to enjoy it. Now there are some animals that will not accept all humans. It sounds silly, but it is true. We have an F3 Bengal queen that does not like to be held and does not want my husband, Pat, near her at all. She stays as far away from him as she can, but cuddles up to me and hugs me continuously. She is constantly cussing him if he gets near her. I do not speak Felinish, but I am sure that is what she is doing! My two-year-old serval does not like men at all, including Pat. Unless she is in heat! Then it is a different story! So, working with cats is a one-on-one project and, with patience and determination, you

can win.

The different things I have described for socializing animals work with the exotic felines, and results can be seen as early as the second or third session. Do not be disappointed if you do not see improvement in the first five minutes or even the first day. It does not work that way. You have to build confidence and trust with the animals, both young and old. They have to learn that you are there to protect them, not harm them, love them, not destroy them. You need to work with them and show them you are their friend.

If you follow these rules, you will have developed a beautiful, trusting, loving feline that will be your friend for life. It just takes patience, time, work, understanding, and most of all LOVE!



Oni, a five-month-old Geoffroy's kitten, is harnessed up to walk among convention goers. Oni is a goodwill ambassador for the species and enjoys human company.



Vianna von Weyhausen came from Morocco to attend convention and interact with our kittens. Here, a young bobcat is being introduced to new people as part of its socialization training.

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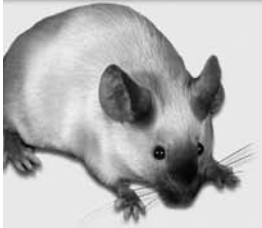
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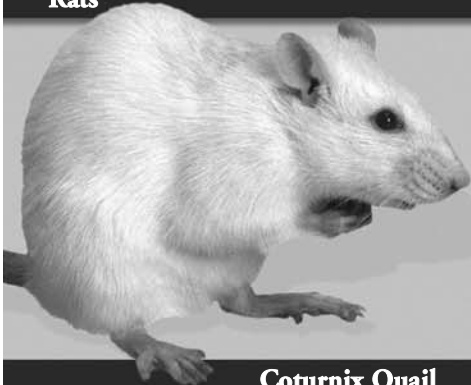
Mice



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



Size	Less than			Grams	Oz.	Count
	500	500	1000+			
1 Day:	\$0.39	\$0.34	\$0.29	7.50 - 10.00	.25	100
1 Week:	\$0.69	\$0.64	\$0.59	30.00 - 40.00	1.0	25
2 Week:	\$0.89	\$0.84	\$0.79	50.00 - 75.00	2.5	10
3 Week:	\$1.14	\$1.09	\$1.04	100.00 - 125.00	4.0	10
6 Week:	\$1.44	\$1.34	\$1.24	130.00 - 150.00	5.0	5
8 Week:	\$1.54	\$1.44	\$1.34	155.00 - 185.00	6.5	5
10 Week:	\$1.74	\$1.64	\$1.54	190.00 - 225.00	8.0	5

* We offer combined quantity discount quail pricing.

Rabbits



Size	Our Price	Weight (lbs.)	Count
X-Small:	\$5.00	0.50 - 0.99	1
Small:	\$6.00	1.00 - 1.99	1
Medium:	\$7.00	2.00 - 3.99	1
Large:	\$8.00	4.00 - 5.99	1
X-Large:	\$9.00	6.00 - 7.99	1
XX-Large:	\$10.00	8.00 - 9.99	1
XXX-Large:	\$11.00	10.00 - 11.99+	1

Chicks

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



Guinea Pigs

Size	Less Than			Inches	Grams	Count
	500	500	1000+			
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	5
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
XXXX-Large:	\$2.29	\$2.24	\$2.19	13.00 - 15.00	601.00 - 900.00+	1

* We offer combined quantity discount guinea pig pricing.



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CARSON SPRINGS: TO PROTECT, EDUCATE, & CONSERVE

By Christine Janks

In the summer of 2001, I decided not to wait another year to follow one of my dreams. I am a Thoroughbred racehorse trainer and breeder by profession, and my husband Barry was a jockey agent and farm manager. My whole life, whenever anyone asked me what my favorite animal was, I would answer cheetah. That usually evoked a shocked question as to why it was not horses. Cats have always been my thing. I love dogs and horses, but in my mind as well as Barry's, nothing is as special as a cat, any cat.

My dream was to go to Africa and pet a cheetah. Sounds very simple and very complicated all at the same time, but looking back, that was the only detail in my plan. I did a lot of research that summer of 2001, and decided the place I needed to go was The De Wildt Cheetah Center near Pretoria, South Africa, and, as a backup, a secondary cheetah location in Hoedspruit, South Africa.

We paid for the tickets the day before 9/11. Of course, our immediate reaction was to cancel and try to get our money back, but with a day of reflection, we decided that no terrorist event was going to deny me my dream. So mid-October, off we went to Johannesburg.

Our driver could not find DeWildt, and we arrived on Sunday to find the tour

already off and running, but they graciously got us with the group and we saw cheetah, lots and lots of cheetah. After the tour, as we were deposited at the gift shop, I looked around for anything I could do to get close to a cheetah.

I saw that we could "adopt" a cheetah, so I asked Barry to give them money for the exclusive adoption. Then I asked to see my adoptee and was told it does not work that way. It was then that I looked up the hill in the restricted area and saw Ann van Dyk. Over the low fence and up the hill I went at a rapid jog, with the guide, Marilyn, hot on my heels. I ran up to Ann and, as quickly as I could, told her I had come all the way from Chicago, Illinois, and my dream was to pet a cheetah and I would do whatever it took, and by then I was in tears, and I am not a crier. She took my arm and, along with Barry, led us into a king cheetah enclosure and sat us down with Nkosi, and I got to pet my first cheetah. We spent several more hours with her and the staff and were invited back the next day when the public facility was closed to observe medical procedures. I had brought along a book in which I was featured as one of the top women in racing, so I could show that, despite my unbridled enthusiasm and fence-jumping bravado, I was not some nut, just a little nutty.

The survival of cheetah as a species is dependent on sufficient land and protection for them in various African countries. The ability to breed them in captivity has been largely solved, with much of the credit going to Ann van Dyk. In my opinion, the largest obstacles exist in the African countries. Laurie Marker's work in Namibia is legendary, but cheetahs may not be bred in captivity there.

Ann and I kept in touch and, the following summer, when her assistant came to America to raise money, Ann asked us to help. Despite never having done any fundraising, we hosted a successful event and so began a close friendship



Christine Janks poses with her mentor and good friend, Ann van Dyk, founder of the De Wildt cheetah breeding program.

with Vanessa DuPlessis, who now works for The Endangered Wildlife Trust. Over the years, we have sponsored many cheetah conservation efforts, held fundraisers, and hosted Vanessa every year when she gives her special presentation. There are usually very few dry eyes in the group when she tells her stories of successful rescues and conservation efforts.

Ann and Barry and I were partners in a farm near The Waterberg, where we gave educational tours, housed rescued cheetah, leopard, and African wild dogs, and raised the young cheetah born at DeWildt, which was a smaller facility and close to town. I became a trustee of the De Wildt Cheetah Trust, a position I still hold. Ann was able to breed cheetah so well that the Trust was not able to place all that were born, and so they languished in cages. Friends and former colleagues, Deon Cilliers and Kelly Marnewick, are cheetah heroes in South Africa. Again, in my opinion, cheetah adapt very well to a captive environment, as they have for centuries, and the more people can see them and interact with them, the greater chance they have for the future. Quoting Baba Dioum, "In the end, we will conserve only what we love. We will love only what we understand. We will understand only what we are taught."

A few years ago, Ann decided to leave



Christine interacts with cheetahs from De Wilt in South Africa.



Matt hardly looks like the fastest mammal on earth as he lounges around during a summer afternoon at Carson Springs Wildlife Sanctuary.

the Trust and go into commercial breeding, and we sold our half of the farm and decided to build our own facility here in Florida on our 275-acre horse farm. That was the beginning of Carson Springs Wildlife Foundation and Sanctuary.

We have scaled back our day-to-day racing involvement and now live full-time at the farm. We got our first "rescue," a serval in need of a proper home, in 2007, and we have been slowly building ever since. Carson Springs Wildlife Foundation and Sanctuary is a sanctuary, educational facility, animal park, and a rehabilitation facility, along with the Thoroughbred racehorse breeding business housed on our property. Carson Springs Wildlife Sanctuary is providing lifetime homes for exotic cats in need. I also hold a rehabilitator license, so we have in residence non-releasable native animals as well. Also, to



Sheena, a lucky rescued bobcat, perches high above her home at Carson Springs.

round out the group, we have Grace, the giraffe, an African antelope, and seven wonderful lemurs.

Carson Springs Wildlife Sanctuary is especially fortunate to have Matt, a cheetah originally imported by Panther Ridge Conservation Center founder Judy Berens. Matt is an important educational ambassador at Carson Springs, raising awareness of the threats facing a

wild cheetah's survival. He has a one-acre enclosure and is given lures to chase and whole prey. The resident peacocks jump into his cage, though he is mostly afraid of them. He was born in captivity to captive-born parents, and Matt does not think food should come with fur or feathers. He loves to be hand-fed.

Barry and I have spent the past ten years raising and donating several hundred thousand dollars to cheetah conservation in South Africa. We literally carried ourselves and two lure machines, which were the first to be used in South Africa and at De Wildt, to do "cheetah runs," which were and still are used to raise money for cheetah conservation. Our farm in South Africa was used to rescue and rehabilitate injured cheetah to be released later in safer places. We do at least one annual fundraiser with Vanessa DuPlessis (formerly Bezuidenhout) of The Endangered Wildlife Trust (formerly of De Wildt). Vanessa gives an educational conservation presentation that literally moves people to tears. Most of the people see a live cheetah for the first time and, from then on, are moved to support cheetah conservation. We give free school group tours and have group volunteers who are given educational materials about all predators, but par-

ticularly the plight of cheetah.

The goal of Carson Springs Wildlife Foundation is to provide as much education as possible for every visitor. We are working with local schools and closely with the University of Florida vet school. We get excellent volunteers. We plan to develop educational tools similar to those we have used in South Africa, so that students can learn different lessons with conservation and animals as examples.

We currently have two tigers, a cheetah, two servals, a bobcat, two caracals, three cougars, seven lemurs, a giraffe, 2 beisa oryx, 3 sitatunga, 2 gray foxes, 2 barred owls, and 3 sulcata tortoises. We would like to expand to have other cat species.

We believe in responsible private ownership, even though several of our cats were Fish and Wildlife confiscations from inadequate homes. Some of the others at our facility came from people who thought they should have an exotic cat for a pet and later realized that they could not handle them.

My feelings about breeding exotic cats and private ownership have evolved over the years. Joining the Feline Conservation Federation has been educational, enlightening, and rewarding in meeting so many wonderful people.

We give private tours by appointment and tours to school and camp groups. Carson Springs Wildlife Foundation and Sanctuary can be found on www.facebook.com.



Christine gets Sunflower the tiger to show us that she stands more than seven feet tall.



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2011 CONVENTION FIELD TRIPS WERE WILD!

By Nicole Ammon

The Friday of the FCF Convention, in Orlando, was filled with animal fieldtrips, one scheduled at Joel Slaven's facility and a surprise additional trip to Wild Things in Dade City. Two full buses began the one-hour drive to Dade City, to visit Kathy and Kenny Stearns' 22-acre botanical and wildlife park. They turned an historic sink hole into a winding path of animal enclosures, including curious snow, rhesus, and bonnet macaques, brown lemurs, and even very large baboons! The tours are guided, because you get very up-close and personal with the animals, being only

full advantage of the steep incline with ledges for them to climb and jump on. The black bears enjoyed their hilltop view and pool, and various small mammals lined the path back to the picnic area. The park was filled with birds chirping and lush vegetation nestled under tons of shade trees, which all of us enjoyed on such a hot Florida day! The facility provided a delicious, vegetarian-



Kathy Stearns brought a little bit of Dade City's Wild Things to convention with her, a juvenile Japanese macaque named JaJay. He thought Lena Tran looked like a good perch. Photo by Eden Tran.



After the long bus ride, everyone was relieved and refreshed by getting to mingle and have a cool drink in the jungle-like atmosphere of Joel's gigantic screened room complete with manmade waterfalls and koi ponds amid colorful and exotic landscaping. Photo by Tim Stoffel.

a couple feet away. The animals were very interactive and curious about the three large groups of animal lovers winding up and down their sink hole home. Cat lovers watched as the male and female African lions enjoyed the enrichment toy made by FCF members the night before. Politely, ladies first, as the female checked it out, but the male quickly stepped in and took the toy to the top of his den box to enjoy and show off. The jaguar pair also enjoyed their new enrichment toy, but with a lot more hesitation! Florida panthers basked in the sun as the western cougars hid in their two-story den box.

Along the trail, we met a very playful river otter that gnawed on chicken just like a big cat! The deer's enclosure took

foxes for photo opportunities. It was a great way to start the day! The only suggestion I had was instead of us getting a "typical tour" that the general public hears, it could have been more focused toward husbandry or training or what works or doesn't work with their exhibits, since most of us are well educated on the animal facts, since we all sing the same praises. It would have been interesting to get a little more "behind

friendly lunch of pasta, veggies, and salad (plus meat for the carnivores). Handlers shared some of the babies from the nursery as they walked around with a fallow deer fawn and two beautiful

the scenes" info, but just a suggestion!

After lunch, we loaded up for the long drive to Joel Slaven's facility. Videos of Lynn Culver's cougars played on the bus and we enjoyed a DVD about T.I.G.E.R.S., Doc Antle's preserve, to make to ride seem quicker, but most people were fast asleep after all the excitement. No thanks to GPS, we did eventually get there! Passing horses grazing in the field, a golf cart met us and we parked near a large barn full of dogs and parrots! The house was beautiful, to say the least, with high ceilings, large windows, and a



Joel Slaven's Professional Animals facility had just about everyone in awe of the sheer size of his enclosures, such as this aviary containing a large collection of macaws. Photo by Eden Tran.

lot of natural rocks and vegetation. The landscape was full of colorful flowers and lush plants. We were led to the open patio and huge, screened-in, nature-inspired pool with waterfalls between two koi ponds. My son asked me if “this is where the Bachelorette was filmed?” which I thought was funny, but very comparable! Drinks were offered and everyone caught up with old and new friends and enjoyed the scenery. Our group was divided into airboat riders and private tours, so everyone got a chance to explore. The airboats sounded like jet engines as they glided out on the large lake in search of alligators. I anxiously awaited the tour!



John Finlay, Joe Exotic, and Paul Rowe get ready for a ride on one of the airboats at Joel Slaven’s house. It turned out to be a pretty popular activity during the afternoon. Photo by Tim Stoffel.

The enclosures were all huge and obviously had the animals’ well being in mind.

The first habitat was beautifully designed, with an almost four-story rock/wood cabin and its own stream and pool with a jungle gym array of ropes and wood for the lemurs to climb and explore. The enclosure had held many different species, but the black and white ruffed lemurs found their paradise! Many of us would have moved in, too! I did not know Joel rescued so many parrots. I think there were over 50 large parrots housed in pairs, trios, and a whole flock in one of the largest enclosures for parrots I have seen! Small bush baby pairs enjoyed their slumber as rare rescued owl monkeys enjoyed



Could binturongs, like this one we saw at the Slaven facility, be the true key to Orville Redenbacher’s worldwide success? Photo by Sandra Stickler.

their new haven in another very large, almost 20 foot tall enclosure lush with Florida vegetation. The ambassador animals were housed in adorable tiki style huts, including tiny common marmosets and cotton top tamarins. The area had its own kitchen to prepare food, and everything was immaculate! Foxes, pine martens, and Geoffroy’s cats! The last critters were the active binturongs that started to make everyone hungry for popcorn! Not dinner time yet, we had to visit the cats! We walked toward the dog barn while the emu curiously followed our every move. The large adult red kangaroo slept as the little wallaby groomed itself in the shade. Joel’s shows include domestic animals as well as exotics, so there were also many dog and cat stars onsite. Joel’s done an amazing job of rescuing homeless dogs and cats. The exotic felines included servals, a Siberian lynx, and a young caracal, all living it up in large tiger size enclosures with personal tiki huts on stilts! The lynx was hamming it up for photos as the crowd gathered.

We made our way back onto the patio as the professional handlers were introducing some of their animal ambassadors. A young red kangaroo hopped along and posed for pictures, a gorgeous red ruffed lemur greeted fans, and my favorite, the tamandua, made his appearance, along with various parrots and macaws, plus the curious cotton top tamarin surprised guests as it jumped from shoulder to shoulder for a welcomed ride! Unknowingly, photos were being taken and graciously given out at the end of the event for precious keepsakes! Joel and his staff were very welcoming and professional in allowing us

into their piece of paradise. For the lucky registered handlers, we got to listen to and learn from Joel’s 40 years of expertise working with various species in the private training session. Joel exhibited clicker training with his yellow lab, as it showed off some of the many commands. Joel explained how to start training an ani-



Patty Perry, Robert Johnson, and Jarod Miller had time for a siesta in Joel Slaven’s hammock after a long day of animal tours and good food! Photo by Teresa Shaffer.

mal for a routine or series of commands. The Q&A involved participants in discussions of movie work and shows, but also included the importance of training for daily husbandry duties and physical exams. It was such a pleasure and gracious opportunity to be part of their world, even just for the afternoon. Simple tips can be applied to any animal we are working with, but you have to get registered to participate, so that next time you will not miss anything! The evening wrapped up

with a BBQ dinner served alongside the lake, where people and animals socialized with each other. These trips made me miss my animals, but the ideas and tips we learned will benefit our captive “pets” and ultimately help to save their wild counterparts!

Fred Boyajian was pained to say farewell to a new friend when it was time to depart the Slaven home. Photo by Robert Johnson.



WILDLIFE EDUCATORS COURSE IN ORLANDO

By Deb Kaprive
New Wildcat Conservation Educator
and Registered Certified Handler
Deb@elmiraswildlife.org

My name is Deb Kaprive and I am, first and foremost, a volunteer at Elmira's Wildlife Sanctuary, a 501(c)3 non-profit. In addition to two work days “in the field,” I serve as volunteer coordinator and am on the board of directors. Our mission is twofold; to provide continuing care, life management, and enrichment to wild and exotic animals in need of a home, and to provide educational opportunities to increase community awareness of the needs of these animals. Until now, and coinciding with the FCF convention, our existence has been extremely insular in that we were involved with a relocation

and reconstruction of our facility and an extensive rescue of 13 animals from a sanctuary shut down by state authority.

Now that the dust has settled and USDA has given their stamp of approval, it is time to get serious about our responsibility as FCF members. The time and place of this year's convention was written in our stars and perfectly in sync with the second part of our mission and the next phase of our development. We are implementing a tour program now that we are open to the public, and we'll be actively pursuing community outreach within the coming months.

Although it created a hardship to have our contingency of three (Darlene Williamson, Sally Haase, and myself) to be absent from field duties for four days, the overall investment was well worth the return in priceless resources that we acquired during classes and presentations.

Our main objective had been to successfully complete the Wildlife Educators Course. Mission accomplished! Ron DeArmond is an engaging instructor and what I would consider an excellent role model. His presentation of course materials is concise and his passion for his work is apparent. His professional and common sense approach is universal and he set us all up to succeed. What impressed me most was that this educator from Iowa had arranged for this rural Florida resident of 12 years to see an endangered Florida panther for the first time. A point so well taken that took me out of our modest “backyard” facility to the bigger backyard of our state, connecting to the Andean cat in Chile, the South China tiger transported to Africa, and so on... And my epiphany was that we are global through association with the FCF!

My only aside comment would be regarding the course workbook which

included 57 pages of info on wildlife other than the 47 residents in our care, which are mostly felines. It would have been great to come away with some endorsed resource material, i.e. reference books, even if only available at the vendor tables for purchase. I would appreciate any referrals here.

I came away from this convention prouder of our affiliation with FCF, empowered to move forward, and willing to follow up on Mr. DeArmond's advice to join the Association of Professional Wildlife Educators. After all... “Wildlife education connects us all.”

The beautiful artwork used to illustrate David Madison's poetry on the facing page was created by Mr. Robert Dallet (1923-2006), a prolific wildlife artist born in the Normandy region of France. He began drawing and painting at an early age with no formal training, and his works can be found in countless publications, galleries, and natural history museums worldwide. He even collaborated with fashion industry giant Hermès on multiple collections, ranging from scarves to fine china. Many of his illustrations depict felines from around the globe, a special interest of his. Later in life, he spent much time in Africa to get a more personal view of his models. His immense collection of works and legacy has been handed down to his son, Frederic, who resides in Paris. All rights to the works of Robert Dallet are reserved, and partial or total reproduction is strictly prohibited. The FCF thanks Frederic Dallet for graciously allowing us to include this work in the *Journal*.



After the educator's course, Ron DeArmond gives an exotic felid talk at the Orange County Public Library, mainly on the Florida panther, but also introducing several ambassador cats to the crowd, including this young serval. Photo by Eden Tran.

Canadian-born David Madison lives in Belize, Central America, where he is currently writing *Cat o' Thirty-Nine Tales: The Wild and Not-So-Whiled Cats of the World*. Believing that "Music Hath Charm to Save the Salvage Beast," and consequently writing in verse, he is out to save the world's wildcats (many of which are all but whipped) singlehandedly, one tale at a rhyme. Even if he is perceived to be liting at windmills.

A lifelong cat lover, Mr. Madison has set aside his well-along "jungle book," *Isn't That a Howler? The Animals of Belize in Verse Proportion to Their Sighs*, in order to focus his unique poetic voice on the plight of the world's wildcats. When asked, "Is it difficult to write upon the tragedy of extinction in verse?" he replies, "Not nearly as difficult as it is to reverse it."

Everybody out of the Gene Pool

By David Madison

Look here! I'm not a jaguar; I've got sundry
Features that make me—coatimundi?
Don't insult me, please—a jaguarundi:

Short of leg—look, pal, don't get me wrong;
I've four; my body and my tail are long,
As you to hear my jaguarundi song.

Hear! [purr, chirp, wah-wah, whistle, scream] my call.
Why [chatter, yap, hiss, gurgle] I've more gall
Than Bengal tiger—thirteen sounds in all.

Look, I'm a great deal bigger than a house cat;
Stronger, more ferocious than a mouse cat
[Splash] I swim. What Tigger's such a douse cat?

Fish? Well, you should see the ones I've caught,
Not even in my favorite fishing spot.
What, one upon my body? Hmmph! I've not.

My coat's one color: blackish/brownish gray,
Unless it's somewhat red; and let me say
The base and tip of every hair is way

Way lighter, so I'm really "ticked," a beauty;
But if you dare say my coat's "agouti"
(Big rat!) I'll be really ticked, and snooty.

I've no contrast color on the back
Of either ear (short, rounded)—total lack.
Who wouldn't be an egomaniac?

So, no, I'm not the least bit spot/stripe jealous;
Hunters, for my lacking them, aren't zealous
To be hunting our ticked lot to sell us.

Sexy chromosomes? I've thirty-eight,
Two more than smaller cats than me. (Some fate!)
I shouldn't wonder they don't get a date.

I've strong scent glands between my hinder toes.
I do a sort of moonwalk—down scent goes,
And each knows I have been this way, each nose.

Yet some toplofties say (I'm most unfat)
I look more like a weasel than a cat;
An "otter cat" of all things. I like that!

Still others say I look like, by God's grace,
A cross between a cat and (bat-blind racel)
A mossy tree—but never to my face.

No, that's because they call me leoncillo,
"Little lion," one big ticked-off leo
Known to roar with lusty, big-cat brio.

Big head? Small, triangular, and flat;
My brown eyes small, set close together. Pat
Me; you'll see I'm a special big-nosed cat:

I'm Puma yagouarundi, and, as such,
Related closely to the cougar. Touch
Me, and I'll give your hand a goodbye clutch.

I live in lowland brush near running water;
Birds are my prey largely (quite the plotter,
I'm notorious for poultry slaughter).

How you jest! Me make myself a home?
I take them as I find them: grass or loam;
Beneath leaf canopy or cavern dome.

The truth is I will live most anywhere
There's water, food, a little warmth, and air.
Why, just say "jaguarundi" —I'll be there.

I hunt by day, yes, mostly on the ground,
But I will go against type with a bound
Up-tree—and oh! don't I then monkey round;

But not so much I don't look out to see
If larger feline's up the food-chain tree,
And looking to make one such out of me.

But there's no looking out for evolution
That, by way of my gene diminution,
Looks to do that by its stock solution:

Gene pool. Far below the brim in it,
The genes so low I'll soon not swim in it
—Oh dear! and soon not her-and-him in it,

What good will my sex chromosomes then be
When there's no jaguarundi he and she
To put them in, no jaguarundiry?

Fast off the line, I surely would have run
So slowly I might never have been done,
Had I known it was the ancestral one.

Man! if I'm doomed with all my sundry features,
Plus heart of a lion (you could eat yours),
What hope for you lesser lyin' creatures?



P. Patel



Global Programs

The Rare Species Fund supports projects such as the following:

The Rare Species Fund (RSF) is a non-profit grassroots organization that provides financial support and practical training to in-situ wildlife conservation initiatives.



1



2



3



4



Massachusetts /

Tale of the Tiger (**Carver**), a thirty-year-old annual wildlife event

South Carolina /

TIGERS Preserve (**Myrtle Beach**), home to 100 rare and endangered animals; receives more than 3 million visitors annually

Florida /

Jungle Island (**Miami**), daily wildlife education programs

Brazil /

Jaguar conservation and indigenous persons education (with the **Smithsonian Institution**); mitigation and reimbursement for livestock lost to predators

Chile /

Andean mountain cat conservation (with the **Small Wild Cat Conservation Foundation**)

Namibia /

Cheetah conservation (with the **Cheetah Conservation Fund**)

This direct-to-end-user approach places RSF among the world's more effective conservation agencies. The RSF contributes to those efforts that have shown themselves to be the most viable in real world conservation of wild species populations. By putting essential money and equipment directly into the hands of people implementing the programs, RSF ensures the greatest value for every dollar spent.



5



6



7



8

England /

Optimum Population Trust
(with Sir Richard Attenborough)

Kenya /

Orphaned elephant and rhino care (with the **David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust**)
elephant conservation (with the **International Elephant Foundation**)

6, 7

Zimbabwe /

Lion, leopard and cheetah conservation (with **WildCru**); leopard and cheetah relocation (with the **Matabeleland World Wildlife Heritage Site**)

3, 4

South Africa /

Cheetah conservation and public education (with **Cheetah Outreach**); black-footed cat research and relocation (with the **Black Footed Cat Working Group**); black-footed cat repopulation and public education (with the **Cat Conservation Trust**); eagle research and protection (with the **Raptor Research Project**); predator conflict avoidance and problem animal relocation (with the **Endangered Wildlife Trust**)

Thailand /

Tiger conservation, Khao Yai National Park (with Dr. Jo-Gayle Howard, the **Smithsonian Institution**); Asian fishing cat conservation (with the **Fishing Cat Research and Conservation Project**)

Borneo /

Orangutan conservation and environmental reforestation (with **Orangutan Foundation International**)

5

A "TIM'S-EYE VIEW" OF CONVENTION 2011

By Tim Stoffel

Another year, another FCF convention has come and gone. I have been writing a recap article about the convention each year since at least 2004. I have every year proclaimed that year's convention "the best ever." I am going to depart from that tradition this year, because there was something profoundly different about this year's convention. Something which I really hope will be the "dawn of a new era" for the keeping of captive wild felines. This is not to say that it wasn't a "good" convention-- it was a very good convention. But I also think it marks a turning point for the organization. So, I will therefore proclaim this year's convention as "the most important ever."

It looked for a long time like I was not going to be able to attend, due to tight finances. Since I think attending the convention is a really important part of my professional development as a cat keeper at our zoo (and other places), it is a priority for me to attend if at all possible. Therefore, I started getting things lined up to attend, just in case things happened to work out. Better late than never! As it turned out, this waiting was a good thing, because a combination of circumstances reduced the overall cost of the trip by 30 percent. Lesson: It is never too late to consider attending if you have otherwise cleared the hurdles that prevent your participation!

I arrived in Orlando at 5:30 AM on Thursday morning, having taken the red-

eye from Reno. I took the airport shuttle to our hotel, the Sheraton Safari Orlando. Even though it was just 6:30, the people at the hotel let me check in waaay early (and they didn't charge me, either). This was a real blessing, as I was able to get a solid hour of sleep before the board meeting began. This sleep made all the difference in the world for what turned into a long day.

The board of directors' meeting was pretty straightforward. But there was much talk of an important new initiative that I will get to when I talk about the general members' meeting. This was my first hint that the FCF has a good plan for the future.

After the meeting, I went out to lunch with my friend, Mindy Stinner, and the



This eight-week-old caracal kitten was one of a kind at Convention!

contingent from her facility, the Conservator's Center in North Carolina. This after-board-meeting lunch has also become a tradition at the FCF convention. The afternoon registration was a busy time in the FCF's meeting space in the hotel. Kittens and foxes and little primates were showing up, each of them draw-



Sandra Stickler poses with her new bobcat buddy at the Thursday evening icebreaker mixer.

ing crowds.

A number of us participated in building enrichment toys for some of the animals at Dade City's Wild Things. It is always interesting to see how animals react to the toys you make. I made one for a "mystery big cat." I would have to wait until the next day to see what the mystery cat was.

Just before dinnertime, we were blessed with the appearance of a tiger cub. The cub was courtesy of Doc Antle, and this especially fine little tiger loved all our attention.

The general members' meeting followed dinner, but, unfortunately, a lot of people chose to continue with their private conversations. This was especially disappointing, because there were some important things discussed, such as the newest initiative of the FCF, a project to establish an accurate census of captive wild felines.



Convention-goers make unique enrichment toys with cloth, burlap, hay, ribbon, and enticing scents, which later were given to the big cats at Dade City's Wild Things. Photo by Tim Stoffel.



Li Quan snuggles with the Beckelmanns' young Geoffroy's cat, Ahni. Photo by Robert Johnson.

This will eventually lead to the development of studbooks and other resources needed to ensure that the private sector has sizable, healthy populations of captive wild felines not only for our generation, but also for our children and our children's children. The importance of this initiative cannot be overstated. In addition, the FCF has developed a plan to recognize people who are stakeholders in the wild feline world, creating "professional" memberships that reflect the serious commitment of such people. These two programs will be very important in the future, helping the FCF fulfill its mission to "preserve, protect, and propagate our wild feline species." Properly implemented, the FCF can develop a strong hand in dealing with the animal rights folks and government officials who want to regulate everything into oblivion. I did ask a lot of questions at the general meeting, to get a feel for how these initiatives will be implemented.

We all gathered the next morning for our facility visits, elated and excited about the adventures of the day ahead. After an hour-long bus ride, we arrived at Dade City's Wild Things. It is somewhat like a zoo and somewhat like an education center, or even a sanctuary. Located in a wooded area, the various animal enclosures are scattered around. We saw a variety of animals, including cats, primates, birds, and bears. There was also an observation gazebo that had been built with the boom of an old crane as the support.

The three guided tour groups converged at the lion enclosure to see the lions get their enrichment toy that had been made for them the previous day. While I was busy, focused on watching the lions, I did not notice the jaguars behind me, playing

with the enrichment toy I had made the previous day. I did finally get to watch them play for a while.

A nice catered lunch was served in a picnic area among the trees. The Wild Things staff brought out small animals for us to see, including a couple of foxes.

After a looong drive, we arrived at the next facility, Joe Slaven's Professional Animals. Joe's place was amazing. Everything was perfect. We spent most of the time inside a giant screened room. (This IS Florida, so there are lots of bugs there. But the bugs apparently took a vacation that day.) There were several waterfalls and a rather unusual swimming pool inside this screened room, and the children took advantage to cool off.

There were airboat rides, and this was a lot of fun. I sat in front with the pilot. There were moments when I thought I was going to get soaked, but did not. The airboat rides were very popular, and ran all day, until just before we left in the evening.

Mr. Slaven keeps a variety of animals in his facility, including primates (such as lemurs), small mammals, small cats, and birds. He also works with domestic animals, like dogs and cats. The caging was extremely well built and set in amongst amazing and beautiful landscaping. Few zoos anywhere could match this facility!

After a bit of confusion about where and when we were meeting, we had the training for the registered handlers. There was a lot of anticipation about what Mr. Slaven was going to show us, and this resulted in a lot of new people signing up to be registered handlers. The anticipation

was worthwhile. Mr. Slaven used his personal pet dog to do a dramatic and illustrative presentation on how you train animals for various purposes. It was a very educational presentation, perhaps the most comprehensive one I had seen since my initial feline husbandry course way back in 2001. But the real star of the show was Mr. Slaven's dog. This was his "untrained pet," and this dog put on a simply amazing demonstration of what can be done with good



Joel Slaven demonstrates training techniques with his dog Journey for the registered handlers. Photo by Robert Johnson.

training. It helps, of course, that Joe and his dog are best friends. In any case, I will remember this presentation for a long time!

After the training presentation, it was time to eat. A very nice barbecue dinner was prepared for us, and the food was outstanding. Obviously, the people who were not registered handlers must have agreed with me on how good the food was. While we were in the presentation, they ate first and ate up all the ribs! But there was still plenty of delicious pork loin left to be had. If you went away from that dinner hungry, it was your own fault!

After a final opportunity for airboat rides, we boarded the bus to head back to the hotel. Someone got the idea to get a bunch of ice cream, which we enjoyed eating in the patio area just outside the pool. A group of us, including Doc Antle, conversed with a young person who wanted to get started in the cat world. We have all been there, so it is always nice to encourage (and admonish!) new people to get involved however they can. Doc Antle produced a new toy he had, a tiny, battery-powered video projector (I had heard of these, but never seen one). I was wearing a light-colored shirt, so Doc used my big belly as a projection screen. That was a very fun night.

After a hearty breakfast Saturday morn-



Joel Slaven's "Florida room" was a botanical garden complete with giant boulders, water falls and pools filled with beautiful, giant koi. Photo by Eden Tran.

ing in the hotel's restaurant, it was time for lecture day. I did not get a chance to see the wildcat seminar for the children who were attending. This sounded like a lot of fun and I wish I could somehow be involved, but my real place is listening (and running AV) in the adult seminars.

The first presentation was supposed to be given by Andrew Hintz from Taser International. However, he was unable to make the convention. So, on short notice, Doc Antle gave a presentation that addressed the significance of what the FCF is doing and why it is important for everyone to be involved. Doc also showed us a couple videos with his nifty mini video projector, showing that this battery-powered device could adequately light up a 6-foot screen.

Dr. Jim Sanderson gave an interesting presentation entitled "Don't Eat the Shrimp," which illustrated how destructive fish and palm oil farming are in destroying wild feline habitat in the Far East.



Doc Antle shows off his well-deserved Lotty Award. Photo by Tim Stoffel.

The next presentation, given by Jean Slosberg, was entitled "My Life with an Amazing Wild Margay." Jean showed an incredible video of a margay going about its day-to-day life and raising kittens in the Central American jungle. This was truly one of the most fascinating and revealing videos I have ever seen at an FCF convention, and it shows what can be done with modern camera equipment--and a very good cat!

The keynote presentation was by Li Quan and was entitled "Riding the Tiger." It was a stem-to-stern look at the Save China's Tigers program currently under-

way in South Africa. Although there have been some challenges along the way, the program has been "wildly" successful. As tiger rewilding is a new concept, a lot has been learned, including some things that were counter-intuitive. This presentation was completely worthy of the hype it was given prior to convention!

Before lunch, Lynn Culver gave her usual annual presentation, this year's entitled "The Future of FCF and Cats in Captivity." This presentation described her analysis of the data obtained from the USDA on the populations of captive wild cats in the U.S. Although very much a work in process, there were some interesting highlights. For instance, the information shows that there are some 9,783 wild cats in USDA records, of which some 2,200 are in AZA zoos. This shows that the vast majority (well over 3/4) of wild cats are in non-AZA facilities, many of which are associated in some way with the FCF. This underscores how important the role of the FCF is becoming and how important it is for all of us to be serious about what we are doing.

Michelle Skurski, of Disney's Animal Kingdom, gave a presentation entitled "To Catch a Tiger by the Tail: Husbandry and Medical Training of the Felids at Disney's Animal Kingdom." Plenty of video clips depicted the high degree of behavioral training that the keepers at Disney's Animal Kingdom have achieved in caring for their cats. Discussion that followed addressed getting keepers to work together consistently to achieve this high degree of conditioning.

The last presentation, by Dan Stockdale, was titled "Presenting a Positive Image: Wildlife and Wild Media. Are You Thriving or Barely Surviving?" Dan showed us what we must pay attention to if we are to create a positive image of captive animal husbandry.

The banquet this year was very special. After dinner, we were treated to a performance by "Mbay Louvouezo du CONGO," which is apparently the house band for Disney's Animal Kingdom. Garbed in authentic African dress, playing authentic African percussion, this group put on quite a show! At times, they had various groups of people up and dancing, much to the delight of everyone in the room. This was a unique performance, and I cannot ever remember anything like



Jarod Miller acts as auctioneer, along with assistants Mercedes Munser and Heather Hatton. Photo by Tim Stoffel.

it at any other FCF convention!

Next, the Lotty award was presented. This is the highest award that the FCF gives, and this year's recipient (long overdue, in my opinion) was Doc Bhagavan Antle. Congratulations, Doc! You really deserve this award.

The last item of business was the live auction. Like last year, Jarod Miller was the auctioneer. In a kind of return to the past, and a sign that things are improving, the live auction raised a lot of money this year. The top item was a very special trip to South Africa to visit the Save China's Tigers project up-close and personal. This is extra special, as it is very rare for outsiders to get to see the facility. This item sold for \$3,500, to Bill Boyajian and Mary Roberts, the couple sitting across the table from me.

An announcement was made about the location of next year's convention: The FCF is once again returning to Cincinnati. We will get to see the Cincinnati Zoo's new in-the-park cheetah run, as well as the all new feline house and puma habitat. This should be extra special, as every convention held at this venue has been first-rate.

Most of you know that I wear a kilt to the banquet each year. I got into quite a conversation with another couple at my table (not the ones that got the trip), and we found out we had a lot in common. We talked about swords, armor, fighting, and other things medieval. It turns out that they make chain maille items and they had a maille shirt that would fit me. They were also local to the Orlando area. To make a long story short, I ended up buying a handmade, armor-grade chain maille shirt, which you can all see at next year's convention!

USDA CAT CENSUS - HAIR-RAISING STATISTICS

By Lynn Culver

The FCF has embarked on a nationwide survey of all captive wild felines. This project involves filing Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests to the USDA-APHIS office and all state wildlife or state agriculture agencies. By systematically inventorying all the cats, the FCF will develop an accurate picture of the available habitat, as well as the viability of the feline species held by the private sector.

By locating all cats and all licensed cat holding facilities, the FCF will be able to reach the starting point for species studbooks. AZA studbooks begin by downloading the records held by the International Species Inventory System (ISIS). These listings are used by founding studbook keepers, who take a systematic and comprehensive approach to developing the pedigrees of each listed animal, including birth location, birth date, sex, parentage, transfers, reproduction, and death.

By knowing which facilities hold which species, each studbook keeper will know whom to contact for additional information. This will require a long-term commitment from the FCF and its appointed studbook keepers. But this project is critically important to private sector cats and is the best hope for their survival into the next decade. There is a crisis in sustainability for most feline species in captivity, and only by making informed pairings and managing breeding, and combining it with a strong educational program for regulators and elected officials about the need for private sector populations, can we hope to have our children and grandchildren see these cats.

The USDA-APHIS answered the FCF's FOIA request with data that is, in my opinion, deliberately dysfunctional. Instead of answering our request for the most recently known inventory of cats held by USDA-licensed facilities, we received, for most facilities, multiple inventory results. In fact, the raw data from the

USDA-APHIS totaled over 49,000 cats! But once I began to pour over the data, I realized that at least 20,000 of these cats were domestic cats (many held by research companies and universities).

We refined our FOIA request in mid-March, requesting the inspection dates for each inventory result, which will enable us to correctly remove duplicate censuses. However, the USDA has yet to comply. Working with what I had, I began the long process of paring down 30,000 wild felines into a more realistic number in preparation to give a talk at convention. The USDA data was a combination of species-specific inventories and two generalized categories – “large felids” and “small felids.” It appears that at some point the USDA became more precise on inspection reports, but the results I had contained both kinds of data.

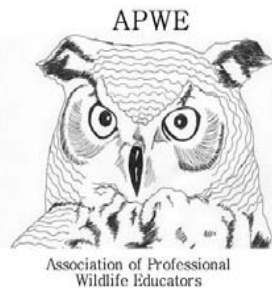
Raw data on NOAH, my own facility, contained three inspection results. There were five entries – large felids 8, large felids 3, small felids 49, small felids 45 and small felids 42. Since I have a combination of large and small cats, I believe my cougars were considered “small felids” by one inspector as part of the 49 small felids. Some facilities had species-specific and large felid and small felid totals. For instance, Turpentine Creek, a large sanctuary in Arkansas, has 14 list-

ings consisting of: 9 bobcats, 1 caracal, 104 large felids, 103 large felids, 12 small felids, 8 small felids, 15 small felids, 5 leopards, 2 leopard cats, 9 lions, 1 Northern Eurasian lynx, 19 puma, 3 serval, 65 tigers, and 2 tigers. Here's how I dealt with that information. First off, I compared the large and small felid listings to the individually named felids. There are 100 large felids by species and 15 small cats by species. Since it was so close, I removed all the large felid totals and small felid totals, and kept the species specific listings.

At convention I gave preliminary results. It takes many reviews of the USDA data to catch all the duplicates, and since convention I have found and removed more domestic cats and more duplicate listings. For example, the raw data from USDA listed Frasier Fur Farm in MT four times: 280 small felids, 400 small felids, 250 small felids, and 95 small felids. For the convention presentation, I included both the 95 small felids and the 250 small felids. I have since removed the 95 small felids and settled on 250. Considering that I have never heard of this USDA facility, I tend to believe that, sadly, most of these cats do not contribute to our live population.

Here are some sobering results on the number of cats and species and facilities providing captive habitat. My revised calculations add up to 9,227 wild cats of all species held in USDA licensed facilities. According to the AZA Felid TAG data, AZA zoos hold approximately 1,876 cats. The USDA-licensed private sector population of 7,351 cats is more than three times as many cats as the AZA zoos hold.

The USDA-licensed private sector habitat consists of educational outreach facilities, sanctuaries, breeding centers, dealers, nature centers, museums, and zoos that are not AZA members. Keep in mind that USDA licensing is required to breed and sell feline offspring and it takes at least two cats to breed, so the number of facilities that listed a single animal is significant.



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In fact, only about 5% of USDA-licensed facilities are breeders or dealers, and over 95% of the licensed wild feline habitats function primarily as public exhibits.

Several states, like Massachusetts or Michigan for example, do not even allow private sector breeding unless it is for the AZA Species Survival Plans. This year, California Fish and Wildlife stopped issuing new breeding permits for wildlife. A significant portion of the tigers, lions, leopard, and puma in the private sector is located in sanctuary habitat, and therefore

will not be contributing to future gene pools unless they are transferred back into managed breeding plans for species survival.

Things are not much better for the AZA. The entire combined holding capacity for felines in this 200-member zoo association is so minimal that the feline SSPs must rely upon periodic infusions of new genetics taken from the wild to undo the ill effects of inbreeding. AZA Feline Species Survival Plans, as implemented, are still a net drain on nature and

will remain so into the future. The truth is that AZA Species Survival Plans are not intended to repopulate nature, or save species from extinction in nature, but are plans trying to ensure that wild species will be available for AZA-member zoos for the next 100 years.

It is no surprise that Florida has the most cats, followed by California and Texas. Here is a breakdown of the states with *more than 100* wild felines of various species:

Florida	1,150	Pennsylvania	283	Georgia	191
California	852	Wisconsin	278	Michigan	191
Texas	768	North Carolina	269	Missouri	172
Indiana	403	Arizona	254	Minnesota	165
Ohio	309	Kansas	237	South Carolina	157
Oklahoma	352	Arkansas	214	North Dakota	156
Montana	332	Illinois	213	Alabama	154
Oregon	313	New York	198	Louisiana	111
Colorado	298	Nevada	192	Virginia	107

And these are the states with *less than 100* wild cats of all species. Remember, this is both the AZA and the private sector:

Tennessee	93	Nebraska	53	Alaska	16
South Dakota	89	New Mexico	49	Connecticut	12
Massachusetts	88	Mississippi	45	Hawaii	12
New Jersey	83	Utah	44	New Hampshire	10
Iowa	74	West Virginia	38	Delaware	4
Maryland	64	Kentucky	30	Rhode Island	2
Washington	64	Idaho	26	Wyoming	1
Maine	56	DC	20	Vermont	0

The USDA database consists of the following feline categories: large felid (a generic term to cover nine species and a hybrid): tiger, lion, puma, leopard, cheetah, snow leopard, jaguar, clouded leopard, liger; and small felid (a generic term to cover 17 possible species): bobcat, serval, Canada lynx, caracal, ocelot, Northern Eurasian lynx, Spanish lynx, leopard cat, Geoffroy's cat, jungle cat, fishing cat, Pallas's cat, sand cat, black-footed cat, Asian golden cat, margay, wildcat, and African golden cat. Of these listed species, I doubt the existence of the African or

Asian golden cat, or the Spanish lynx, as they are probably misidentified species.

Some inventories listed felines by species, and some inventories only listed large or small felids. In the charts below, I took the total of the generic felids and divided these numbers according to the known species ratio of large and small species, then made a few adjustments to take into consideration known populations of rarer cats, such as cheetah, snow leopard, and clouded leopard. Had I used just the ratio formula, the number of cheetah would be less than the AZA inventory and

the private sector would have a negative inventory, which won't work, so I adjusted to correct for this. The first column contains the cats according to the species; the second column combines the additional cats of each species derived from the generic large felids total; the third column is the number of cats held by AZA-member zoos according to the 2010 Felid TAG report; and the fourth column has subtracted those AZA cats from the total USDA inventory and is the private sector cats of each species.

Large Felids	USDA	USDA w/ Large Felids Added	AZA Zoos	Private Facilities
Tiger	2,014	2,621	244	2,377
Lion	795	1,024	331	693
Puma	673	880	119	761
Leopard	436	562	96	466
Cheetah	180	270	259	11
Snow Leopard	118	170	150	20
Jaguar	107	141	93	48
Clouded Leopard	60	88	65	23
Liger	24	32	0	32
Large Felids (unspecified)	1,381	0	0	0
Totals	5,788	5,788	1,357	4,431

<u>Small Felids</u>	<u>USDA</u>	<u>USDA w/ Small Felids Added</u>	<u>AZA Zoos</u>	<u>Private Facilities</u>
Bobcat	822	1,257	50	1,207
Serval	542	829	97	732
Canada Lynx	286	438	48	380
Caracal	119	192	44	148
Ocelot	108	166	95	61
Eurasian Lynx	95	145	20	125
Leopard Cat	32	49	0	49
Geoffroy's Cat	53	81	0	81
Jungle Cat	40	61	0	61
Fishing Cat	38	62	42	20
Pallas's Cat	37	56	47	9
Sand Cat	31	47	29	18
Black-Footed Cat	23	35	45	0
Asian Golden Cat	8	8	0	8
Margay	5	5	2	3
Wildcat	5	8	0	8
African Golden Cat	1	1	0	1
Small Felids (unspecified)	1,185	0	0	0
Totals	3,430	3,430	519	2,911

So much of the national media is focused on the tiger population in the U.S., and speculation that it exceeds 10,000 animals. The truth is that most states have less than 50 tigers. Here are all the states with more than 50 tigers listed (AZA and private sector) and the number of USDA-licensed facilities holding these tigers. For this chart, I did not add any of the uncategorized "large felids."

<u>STATE</u>	<u># tigers</u>	<u># facilities</u>	<u>STATE</u>	<u># tigers</u>	<u># facilities</u>
Florida	227	35	South Carolina	91	5
Texas	259	33	Illinois	67	8
Oklahoma	164	10	Wisconsin	66	12
Indiana	158	10	North Carolina	66	9
Colorado	141	4	Ohio	60	9
Arkansas	83	5	Kansas	59	11
California	80	22			

And what about those Texans and all their tigers and other big cats? Here is a breakdown of the large cats living in Texas, in USDA-licensed facilities, by species. Again, I have a column for the inventory of each large cat species and one that is the combination of the uncategorized large felids proportioned out according to the same ratio of named large cats and the species-specific totals:

<u>Texas Large Cats</u>	<u># Listed</u>	<u>Total w/ Large Felids Added</u>	<u>Texas Large Cats</u>	<u># Listed</u>	<u>Total w/ Large Felids Added</u>
Tiger	259	325	Leopard	30	37
Lion	76	95	Clouded Leopard	5	6
Puma	53	66	Large Felids (unsp.)	116	0
Cheetah	41	51	Totals	580	580

As you can see, there are not 5,000 tigers, and there are not "more tigers living in Texas than in India." There are between 259 and 325 tigers living in Texas. And this USDA inventory includes Wild Animal Orphanage, which is shutting down, with most of the 60 large cats there have since left the state of Texas, so that the Texas population numbers are actually lower than what is published in this article. Are there lots of non-USDA tigers in Texas? No, and I will cover the status of non-USDA-licensed habitat in the September Journal.

And what is going on in Florida? We know there is a very vocal termagant in Florida, who is heading a national campaign to bring about the extinction of all captive feline populations. She is terrorizing the citizens of this state with outra-

geous fear-mongering claims that their neighbors' wildlife will escape and kill them.

Florida is the fourth most populated state, behind CA, NY, and TX, and has a population of over 18 million people. Florida Game and Fish has been regulating captive wildlife through a permit system since the 1970s. In 2005, I requested the current Florida state feline licensee list from the Florida G & F and received 323 names. In 2008, I requested another list of Florida feline licenses, and it contained just 298 names. In 2011, the FCF request returned a current list of just 230 Floridians who are licensed to hold felines. That's one wild feline owner for every 78,000 residents; hardly an epidemic, and definitively a phony issue. Shame on the person standing on that soapbox scream-

ing so loud.

The total wild feline population derived from both the Florida G & F and the USDA census is 1,487 cats. Indeed, Florida has more captive habitat and is definitely the most cat-rich state in the country, but when we take into consideration the number of citizens who COULD be participating in responsible captive husbandry, the numbers are frighteningly low. The next most feline-populated state, California, has just 90 USDA facilities. This state does not allow non-commercial possession, so this is the total captive habitat available for cats. Texas has just 63 USDA licensed facilities, and of that, 13 are AZA zoos and only 50 are private sector facilities.

A FISHING CAT FAMILY DIARY

By Yvonne Rijdsdijk

Although various studies of the fishing cat (*Prionailurus viverrinus*) have been done and are still ongoing, a lot of its behavior and habits are yet to be discovered. It is not easy to get a grasp of this reclusive cat in the wild, or in captivity



A pair of young fishing cats belly up to the "milk bar." Photo by Y. Rijdsdijk.

either (in this short study, a zoo). Fishing cats can be found throughout Asia; Bangladesh, Bhutan, Cambodia, India, Indonesia (Java), Laos, Burma (Myanmar), Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Vietnam. Malaysia and China not confirmed, and it is probably extinct in Pakistan.

Habitats – In the wild vs. captivity

As their habitat consists of mangroves, swampy areas, dense riverbanks, reed beds, and tidal areas, in captivity these conditions are not always met, be it total or at all. However, it seems that fishing cats are usually quite content in a captive enclosure if it offers vegetational cover, some view points, resting places which offer a sufficient feeling of security and safety, and of course water, like a pond or small stream. An inside enclosure for overall shelter is mandatory and also well appreciated by these cats.

Method and circumstances

During a period of 14 weeks in 2009 (July 5 to October 9), a fishing cat family was observed on Sunday afternoons, in their enclosure in a zoo, always from around 1:00 PM to 6:00 PM (the zoo's closing time). During the course of the

visits, several hundred pictures and over 40 small video clips were taken to be able to review body postures and facial expressions in order to determine behavioral patterns. At the beginning of the observations, the female had given birth to three kittens that were about five weeks old at the first visit. During the survey period, the female and her kittens occupied the inside enclosure, which was separated from the outside enclosure via a sliding glass door. This was necessary because, in 2009, the births occurred midway through June (much later than in previous years) and the weather was cold and rainy. Due to this, the male stayed in the outside enclosure on his own, but was able to have contact with his family, visually through the glass and a round fenced opening measuring about 60 cm (# inches). This 2009 survey was the third survey in which kittens were observed growing up. The previous years were 2007 and 2008, both from the beginning of April (with kittens aged about five weeks) up to the end of September. In these two previous studies, the male was reunited with his family when the kittens had reached three months of age.

General behavior

Due to regular visits over the last four years, the overall behavior of this fishing cat couple has become fairly predictable. Both the male and female have several resting places of their own, which they use during the day. As with most zoo animals, they do not respond to tapping on the window, calls trying to lure them, or screaming children. Most of the day, they doze and sleep, but their ears give away that they still pay attention while dozing. Later in the afternoon, both male and female walk around, drink from the pond, and groom

themselves and each other. Their bond is strong and they show affection towards each other through grooming, rubbing side to side with the tails jumping up, and soft, undefined sounds. They seldom wade through the water, but, when they do, the tail is held above the water horizontally with the tip slightly up.

Family behavior: Date – week – age of kittens

July 5 – no. 1 – 5 wks

This was the first day of the survey. For the most part, the kittens slept and nursed, but every now and then they woke up and wobbled around a little. Not one of the kittens pushed or shoved for a favorite nipple. They seemed very content with the one they had. It is unknown if there had been any such behavior in the first four weeks, since the kittens could not be seen prior to this fifth week. It was striking how the female had an overall blissful look in her eyes and no effort was too much for her in taking care of the three kittens. Although very young and small, signs of stalking and hunting behavior (at each other) were already starting to show. Around 4:00 PM, the female began looking through the window. The male showed up, walking by the window, and every now and then he sat down and looked inside at the female and kittens. The female responded to this by rolling over and stretching her front legs out to him, while looking at him through the window.

July 12 – no. 2 – 6 wks

The kittens looked bigger and, although they were still sleeping a lot, the



In addition to being the "milk bar," Mom makes a nice pillow, too. Photo by Y. Rijdsdijk.

overall activity had increased. All playing behavior that is known with domestic cats at this age could be seen and differences between the kittens were becoming clearer. Two of the kittens were now bigger than the third and smallest kitten (they turned out to be two males and one female). The two males had several white toes. In contradiction to the female kitten which behaved a little passively, the two males were very inquisitive. Also, early signs of rivalry between the males could already be noticed. They would stare at each other for minutes to impress one another while claiming food (usually chicks and rats) already in their mouths with firmly gripped claws. As on the previous Sunday, the adult male came by around 4:00 PM. When looking at the kittens through the window, the black part of his lower lip could be seen (Fig. 1) and the ears were slightly bent down. Although this is known behavior in domestic cats (having cats of my own, I have come to recognize this as an anxious feeling where underlying jealousy and insecurity can play a part as well in various gradations), it is not sure whether or not this would convey the same meaning in fishing cat behavior. This was the first and only time the male showed this kind of behavior. From the reaction of the kittens, it was clear they recognized "a cat" on the other side of the window.

July 19 – no. 3 – 7 wks

Ranking between kittens is taking shape; the bigger males were eating first, chasing the female away to eat last. Her behavior was opposite that of the males. As they quarrelled over food, the female patiently awaited her chance to get what she wanted. She would stare at the object (meat) of her desire and, as soon as the

attention of her brothers weakened, she went for it, although this sometimes took several hours! A small water pond was placed in the enclosure and the kittens could not stop playing in it. Dragging bits and pieces of wood and food into the pond, they would then catch it with paws and claws outstretched. The male visited the window as before, showing a lot of interest. His face no longer showed anxiety and the dark part of his lower lip did not show. Later, he would lie down in front of the window, grooming himself. The response of the female was as in the previous week.

July 26 – no. 4 – 8 wks

The kittens had grown fast in one week, and their snouts were starting to grow longer to resemble the typical fishing cat snout. Not only the size of the kittens, but also the markings on their little foreheads distinguished them clearly from one another. The routine in the enclosure was the same as in the previous week, but the overall "blissful" look on the female's face had somewhat diminished. When the male walked by at the usual time, he now suddenly stuck his head and upper body into the round "visiting" hole and called to the kittens with a vocalization sounding like, "crouwerouwrouw." Immediately, the kittens ran toward him, staring through the fence that separated them. The male walked away, but repeated this behavior several times. The female seemed totally at ease with the male behaving this way and she showed no signs of hostility or



A startled female fishing cat kitten and the male outside, July 12, 2009. Photo by Y. Rijdsdijk.

anxiety whatsoever.

August 2 – no. 5 – 9 wks

The kittens were playful and inexhaustible, and the female regularly jumped up to a higher positioned resting place to escape them for a while. The kittens were still too small to climb the tree that led to this higher resting place. While observing the kittens, all kinds of playing behavior that is known with domestic cat kittens at the age of 12 weeks can be seen, only much rougher. Clearly they develop much faster than domestic cat kittens. On this Sunday, the male did not show up, since he was dozing on his own regular resting place in the outside enclosure.

August 9 – no. 6 – 10 wks

The fluffy fur of the kittens had slowly started to change into a sleeker coat and the overall body shape was beginning to look much more like the recognizable adult, with the long snout, short tail, and somewhat short legs. They also started to climb the tree in the enclosure. By now, it was very clear that all three kittens had totally different personalities. The bigger of the two males had a very curious nature, whereas the other male was more suspicious. The female kitten was by far the most patient. The adult male walked by as usual, looking totally at ease knowing the kittens were there.

August 16 – no. 7 – 11 wks

As in the previous week, the bodies' of the kittens had grown (elongated) a lot; the feet and claws had grown much big-



The presence of raw meat excites one kitten to hiss at his sibling, declaring the feast to be "all mine." Photo by Y. Rijdsdijk.

ger. Climbing the tree in the enclosure was no longer a problem for them. All kittens were noticing the zoo visitors outside that were looking through the thick, almost sound proof, front glass window. Their reaction was careful and hesitant, where the tail slowly drops down and curiosity sets in.

The kittens' playing had become even more serious than in the previous weeks, and body posture showed they meant business when it came to food or lying at their favorite place with their mother. The smaller of the two male kittens and the female kitten were constantly testing the boundaries toward each other.

August 23 – no. 8 – 12 wks

The female called regularly to her kittens. The call could be heard even through the thick glass window and it sounded like a loud “miouwwwr-rourw.” Although the kittens had previously played mostly with each other and pieces of wood and leaves, they were now occupied with the bits of meat that could be found all over the enclosure. They tossed them high in the air and jumped to retrieve them with claws totally stretched and whiskers pointed forward. The serious squabbling behavior between all kittens that was going on in previous weeks had almost disappeared. Every now and then they lashed out at each other, but it is clear that each of them knew their place. As always, the male turned up, only this time late in the afternoon. As he had done before, he stuck his head and upper body into the round “visiting” hole and called the kittens to him with his usual call, to which the kittens responded in the same way as before (note that in 2007 and 2008, the kittens were already in the outside enclosure by this time and this behavior of



The female kitten goes from suspicion (left) to curiosity (right), August 16, 2009. Photo Y. Rijdsijk.

the male was not observed). This week, the male stayed in front of the window that separated him from his family, and he lay down with his face toward the window. The female reacted to this the same way as the male had in the second survey week (July 12), by showing the black part of her lower lip and having her ears slightly bent down. Then the female's body posture changed and she hissed at him, but the male maintained his position, looking comfortable and totally at ease. His ears and head moved slightly, following the female's movements. Since the male was only a short distance away (about 2 meters or 6.5 feet), it was clearly visible how he squeezed his eyes at the same time to comfort her, so that slowly the female relaxed and laid down right next to the window and fell asleep.

August 30 – no. 9 – 13 wks

The family was behaving in the same way as the previous week. The male was not seen.

September 6 – no. 10 – 14 wks

The kittens had grown much in the last week. Their still grayish fur color seemed to show more brown variations, and they were starting to look more and more like adults. The food that was placed in the enclosure was grabbed quickly, and any attempts at stealing among the kittens and mother were immediately cut off by a quick, fierce hiss and stare. Most of the white on the toes of the two male kittens had disappeared, as had the blissful look that was previously seen on the adult female's face. The male walked by and lay in front of the window looking at the kittens.

September 20 – no. 11 – 16 wks

The kittens looked still bigger, the fluffy fur was almost totally gone, and their bodies had elongated a bit more. Although they still played with each other every now and then, they mostly kept to themselves. As on most Sundays, the male walked by, sitting down at the window to look at the kittens. They came close to the window to peer back at him. He called to them through the round hole with his usual call and the kittens responded. After 20 minutes, he retired to his resting place on a tree branch in the back of the outside enclosure, which offered him a view to the window.

September 26 through October 12 – no. 12-14 – 19 wks

During the final visits, the kittens looked like small adults, showing all typical fishing cat characteristics. The food presented to them during these last weeks consisted of whole rabbits. The female plucked her prey before eating it. The kit-



The female is anxious due to the male's new behavior, August 23, 2009. Photo by Y. Rijdsijk.

tens would then quickly grab it and the female would begin plucking the next rabbit and so on, until everybody had their share. During these last weeks, the family's behavior did not change much. The kittens still played, but mostly separately. They even chased their own tails, taking the tips in their mouths. Individual ranking was determined around week 8 (at about 12 weeks of age), and gameplay was no longer fierce in nature. The male visited as always with his usual vocalizations, to which the kittens responded in kind, and the female was totally content with this.

Conclusion

During the short 2009 survey, it seems that the male was determined to be a part of the family, and it seems clear that he wanted the kittens nearby. The kittens had never shown any reaction that indicated fear of the male other than on the first survey day. Behavior of the male and female clearly indicated their strong bond, although they were separated during this

survey. This is confirmation of information gained during previous years of observation. As fishing cats have distinctive facial features, it seems that the different faces and facial expressions reflect the nature of each individual more clearly than with other cat species. The markings on the forehead and on both sides of the nose can perhaps be used in the wild to distinguish individuals. During play, the exceptionally long toes and ability to spread the claws out widely were noted,



Fishing Cat love. This pair is not the Netherlands couple from the article, but residents of the Smithsonian National Zoological park. Photographer and animal keeper Courtney Janney says the only thing that'd make this pic sweeter is a few kittens snuggled in there, too...

as well as their playfulness and overall gentle and friendly nature.

MINUTES FROM FCF'S SECOND QUARTER MEETING 2011

By Kevin Chambers

The FCF Board of Directors held their second quarter meeting on May 15- 31, 2011, on the forum section of the FCF website. Those participating were: Kevin Chambers, Patty Perry, George DeLong, MariLin Antle, Robert Johnson, Pat Callahan, and Teresa Shaffer.

Treasurer MariLin Antle gave the first quarter treasurer's report with a breakdown of income and expenses. The FCF had a net profit of \$6223.79, for the first quarter.

Minutes of the first quarter were given by Secretary George DeLong and approved as corrected.

Rob Johnson presented some proposed changes for the FCF accreditation process. After some discussion, it was decided that the board should address this at convention.

Pat Callahan made a motion, seconded by Rob Johnson, that the FCF board vote yes or no on funding via the regular Conservation Grant process. The amount of \$1,500 was approved for Javier Pereira, in Argentina, doing education outreach to the communities about the problem of feral dogs and cats causing serious damage to wildlife, and vehicle traffic outright

killing wildlife when simple caution can prevent it. The sum of \$800 was approved to Marianela Velilla, in Paraguay, doing a census of cat species using non-invasive fecal DNA testing, with follow up work which the FCF may or may not fund. Marianela will need to reapply. Motion carried 5-0.

Pat Callahan reported that he has not had a chance to start on the FCF caracal studbook.

George DeLong reported that he has filed the renewal for the FCF Corporation. George reported that no Articles of Incorporation change is needed because of the constitutional amendment reducing the number of directors.

George presented a draft of an updated mission statement. Some discussion took place that it needed further refinement. No actions were taken.

Robert Johnson moved, seconded by MariLin Antle, that the FCF Programs and Policies be amended to add the

following: "# 15. All members of the Feline Conservation Federation are expected to behave in a kind and courteous manner. The public defamation of individual members, the board of directors, or the organization at large, whether in person or electronically, may be considered grounds for expulsion from an event and/or the organization. The board of directors shall review such actions by members and determine appropriate responsive actions on a case-by-case basis." Motion carried 6-1.

The meeting was adjourned on May 29, 2011.

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This is the third and final installment of a very important three-part series by Lea Jaunakais. After explaining how to prevent an outbreak of illness by vaccinating your big cats, then isolating and controlling the spread of disease that's already been detected, Lea now shares the final chapter of her personal story and what should be done to help avoid similar results at your own facility.

DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT OF AN OUTBREAK

By Lea Jaunakais, President and Founder of Tiger World (www.tigerworld.us) and Dr. Juston Schmidtke, DVM

Tiger World's outbreak of the parvovirus began on Friday, January 14, 2011. Our 22-week-old baby jaguar, Diego, had diarrhea. To cat owners, that's not too unusual, and in regards to our baby jaguars, we had already made several visits to our veterinarian for treatment of bacterial infections. The first illness was when young Diego was only a few days old and had contracted an infection through the umbilical cord. The infection was so severe it propagated seizures by affecting his brain and causing severely low blood glucose levels. We weren't sure he was going to survive, but, surprisingly, he pulled through. Dora, Diego's littermate, shared many similar clinical signs with Diego, though her illness was mild and she remained robust. At 12 weeks of age, Diego had another bacterial infection. Symptoms were vomiting and diarrhea, this time originating in his bowl secondary to attempts to transition from bottle to meat. Poultry for our jaguars was not well tolerated and red meat was the preference. Again, we almost lost him, but with 24-hour care, antibiotics, and maintaining hydration via subcutaneous (SQ) fluids, he survived. The primary reason the jaguars had been so susceptible was that they were never able to receive any milk from their mother. Their mother, Tia, had developed mammary cysts and was unable to nurse the babies. It is vital for newborns to receive the mother's first milk, also called colostrum. Colostrum is comprised of vital nutrients and antibodies that the babies absorb to build their earliest immune systems via the maternal antibodies.

That Friday, in January, Diego had diarrhea and began vomiting. Immediately, we sought help from one of our local veterinarians, Dr. Juston Schmidtke. He took blood and stool samples, then analyzed them to determine what was wrong. Once

analyzed, multiple vets were consulted and a presumptive diagnosis of small intestinal bacterial overgrowth and parasitism was made with history and clinical signs. Considerations were made for possible obstruction. Diego was treated for parasites (round worms) and an apparent infection noted from his blood work. Diego's treatment included pyrantel pamoate (Strongid) for the round worms, antiemetics (Cernia) for vomiting and nausea, bowel coating agents (Kaopectate), injectable vitamins, and subcutaneous fluids. Sadly, within 36 hours of his first symptom, Diego passed away. With his diagnosis, there was no concern of it being contagious; therefore, no quarantine procedures were implemented at that time. We ran blood panels on Diego's cage mates, his sister Dora and their friend Mohan, a white Bengal tiger, to ensure they were well, and blood work indicated everything was normal. Then, two days later, Dora became disinterested in food, but had not developed vomiting or diarrhea. We immediately took her to the veterinarian, and, although the diagnosis was again upset stomach secondary to small intestinal bacterial overgrowth (SIBO), I knew there was something else unresolved.

In the three days since Diego's death, I had done a lot of independent research, including internet searches and contacting other zoos and facilities about potential similar experiences. I came across an article published by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "Feline Host Range of Canine Parvovirus: Recent Emergence of New Antigenic Types in Cats." The article cov-



Lea Jaunakais with young jaguar siblings Diego and Dora. Photo by Mike McBride.

ered the topic of canine parvovirus (CPV) emerging in cats, including big cats, and the rapid mutations occurring that are jumping species. The CDC article identified that a common test used in canines to identify canine parvovirus, a SNAP ELISA, would be useful in identifying the presence of canine parvovirus or feline panleukopenia virus (FPV) in felines, since they are similar versions of the parvovirus. This finding prompted me to ask my veterinarian to run the SNAP test on Dora, which quickly became positive for parvovirus and indicated either CPV or FPV. After the SNAP test was positive, we sent samples for analysis to Antech Labs. Their results indicated Dora was negative for FPV and positive for CPV,



Cagemates Diego, Mohan, and Dora. Photo by Mike McBride.

therefore, our treatment was based on that diagnosis. It was not until we sent the samples to Cornell University for DNA analysis via PCR (polymerase chain reaction), that we learned FPV was identified as the culprit, although it was mutated and did have primers from CPV. Once parvovirus was diagnosed, we instituted quarantine protocols as described in article two of this series, "Outbreak, Now What? Quarantine!" We also consulted with our local animal control and learned of an outbreak within our county where up to ten animals were dying from parvovirus each day. Furthermore, we discovered an article published only a few months prior, where an apartment complex near the zoo had over 130 animals (cats and dogs) die in a three-week period from parvovirus. Though we suspect a correlation between the outbreaks, no actual connection between these events has been made.

Diagnosis (most aspects of this section written by Dr. Schmidtke)

To achieve an accurate diagnosis, several criteria are needed (in no particular order):

- Clear and detailed communication between the zoo owner/handler and veterinarian.
- History of the patient.
- Early diagnostic testing for baseline values and in the face of illness.
- Close routine observation of patient and its behavior/attitude, including food

intake and bodily eliminations.

A sound veterinary client relationship (VCPR) is one in which the veterinarian and owner/handler both have a clear understanding of the patient, their needs, and what is expected of each person involved. A trusting relationship is vital. Knowing the patient's history is also crucial; take for instance Diego and Dora, who were inevitably predisposed to disease and infection at an early age due to their lack of colostrum at birth. Keen observation and intimate knowledge of normal activity and behavior are also



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Dr. Juston Schmidtke, DVM, is a graduate of Auburn University. He is currently employed at Rowan Animal Clinic, in Salisbury, North Carolina. He practices both small and large animal medicine and surgery, as well as exotic animal medicine and surgery. Dr. Schmidtke is pictured with Diego the jaguar the day before Diego passed away.

essential for definitive diagnosis. Routine baseline blood work aids in early detection of disease states and can be utilized as a point of comparison when a patient is ill, which was valuable in Mohan's case. You can also obtain normal blood values for individual species from the International Species Information System (ISIS). When Diego and Dora became ill, blood work was utilized to evaluate organ function, white blood cell counts (WBC), indications of bacterial or viral infections, and protein concentration. At the

onset of the outbreak with Diego, thoughts of a bone marrow disorder (myelodysplasia), indicated by a low white blood cell count, was considered since Diego was being treated with a medication for ringworm, a type of fungal skin infection, which can cause such an event. However, low on the list, other viral disorders like panleukopenia was considered, since the WBC count also drops significantly in infected patients. The chart identifies the changes in the WBC of parvovirus infected patients Dora, Diego, and Mohan.

The rapid advancement of clinical signs made adequate treatment difficult with respect to Diego, however, with Dora, Mohan, and Malia, we had a chance. In Dora's case, thankfully, Lea was performing outstanding detective work, thoroughly exercising her communication and networking skills and thus was able to help us. The use of the SNAP test identification of parvovirus infection provides reasonable accuracy and speed, thus testing became a "SNAP."

The SNAP test allowed us to test daily for the presence of feline panleukopenia

virus (FPV). The parvovirus SNAP test from Idexx was utilized once again when Lea noticed that one of their rarest tigers, Malia, began to display signs of malaise and lack of appetite; though initially negative, Malia later tested positive on the SNAP test, too. Ultimately, if one suspects FPV or CPV, early testing is highly recommended. The most common clinical finds with parvovirus are:

- reduced appetite
- lethargy
- nausea
- vomiting (frothy, bile, foam)
- diarrhea (smells distinctly different)
- abdominal discomfort (identified by palpation)
- fever or sub-normal temperature
- hovering over the water bowl for extended periods
- malaise – change in behavior, not their normal self
- low white blood cell (WBC) count
- low to low-normal total protein or albumen (blood protein)
- increased alanine transferase (ALT) (non-specific indicator of cell turnover in the bowel; can indicate liver function)
- increased lipase (non-specific indicator of cell turnover in the bowel)

Treatment (most aspects of this section written by Dr. Schmidtke)

Initially, an alternative presumptive diagnosis of intestinal parasitism and small intestinal bacterial overgrowth (SIBO) were being treated with anti-helminics, antiemetics, antibiotics, and gastroprotectants, as well as injections of vitamins and subcutaneous fluids. Starting treatment early with supportive care will aid in the attempt to provide the best possible outcome. There is no cure for parvovirus, so only the symptoms can be treated. The antiemetic (antivomiting/nausea) medication utilized was Cerenia, which although is labeled for use in dogs only, was noted to be extremely effective in controlling nausea and vomiting in our big cats, especially in Malia's case. Common gastric coating agents, such as Kaopectate, can be utilized safely when possible to administer orally. With hydra-

DONATIONS

The FCF Board of Directors thanks the following individuals who have made donations to FCF projects since the last published *Journal*. These generous donations provide additional funding for special projects such as creating educational materials for members and legislators, helping support feline conservation, and improving captive feline welfare.

We appreciate each donation, no matter the amount, recognizing that it is the many small gifts that, when combined, add up and make a difference in the effectiveness of the FCF. We encourage everyone to follow this example and donate funds for projects that interest you.

Rare Species Fund:

Wildlife & Environmental Conservation

Special Projects:

Tiger Missing Link Foundation

General Fund:

Mirjam van Dalum

Capital One

The FCF appreciates your generosity and continued support.

tion being a key factor, several routes are plausible, but intravenous administration is by far the best. An intravenous indwelling catheter may allow for less stressful and inconspicuous administration of fluids if the patient allows – long extensions would be suggested. Fluids under the skin help, but are a bit less than ideal, and oral fluids also help, though they may be neither well tolerated, nor easily administered in a nauseated, combative patient. Nausea must be “controlled,” which for Malia was successful with SQ injections of Cerenia administered once daily (do not use for more than four days). This allowed us to administer a liquid diet and medicine orally (force-fed by syringe). Malia was being given the antibiotic Clavamox every 12 hours, crushed up and mixed with Rebound for secondary infection, injections of vitamins B, C, A & D, and SQ fluids of Ringer's solution. Re-feeding is essential to nourish the already severely damaged gastrointestinal tract. Prepared diets, such as “Rebound,” “Clinicare,” or “Ensure,” can be utilized. Solid food like ground poultry is usually well tolerated, also.

You want to minimize the use of sedatives when at all possible. Since the handling of big cats depends on the animal and facility, based on your capabilities, do whatever you can to keep stress to the animal at a minimum. Excessive sedation serves only to further stress the already compromised systems of these patients.

For Malia and Mohan, we were able to perform all treatments without sedation. Malia was not fond of the SQ fluids and it was a challenge to keep her sedentary, but we were able to get some needed hydration to her. After two days of administering a liquid diet orally, we additionally forced her a few turkey meatballs and, within another two days, she was eating ground turkey on her own. After each time administering liquid/food orally, we would wait and observe her for two hours to ensure she kept it down. We could clearly see she was still

nauseated, but the Cerenia made the difference in keeping medicine, food, and liquid down. The sooner you can get them back to eating, the better it will be to help with the repair of the gastrointestinal tract. In emergency or dire situations, blood products can be utilized in an attempt to stabilize protein levels. Besides antibiotics, canine plasma with CPV antibodies and albumen was employed in treating Dora. Both of these treatments helped, as seen with the changes in her white count on the last day, but the effects were short lived due to the already extensive damage of the bowel. A feeding tube was also tried for Dora, but in the end, no matter the treatment, we were unsuccessful at saving her life. Before giving any blood products, if time permits, one may consider performing a minor cross-match to ensure full compatibility and no reactivity between the blood products and recipient. Close and thorough observation during all of the above-mentioned treatments by a qualified competent veterinarian is necessary.

In conclusion, without the relationship we have developed with our vets and the ability to work with our cats without sedation, we may not have been able to save Malia or Mohan. It was critical to continually test and identify the disease early on, which made the difference in the outcome.

In loving memory of Dora and Diego... they will be forever in our hearts!



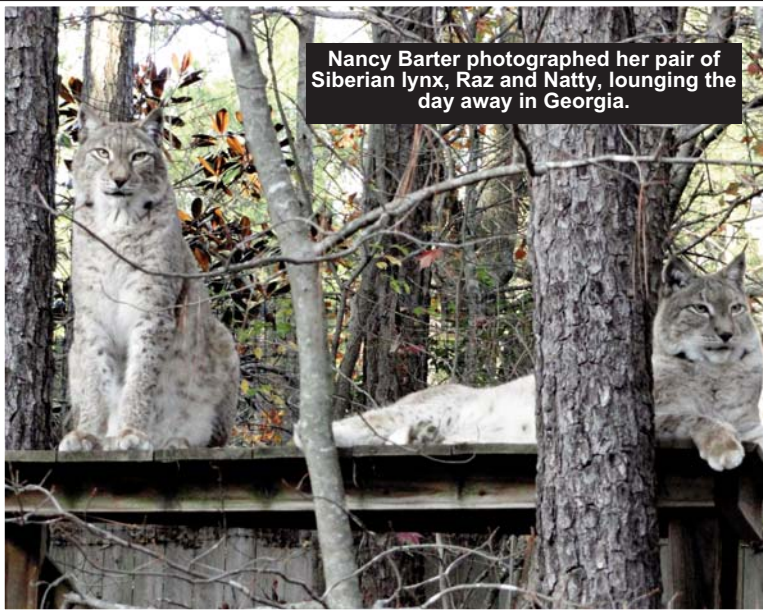
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Nancy Barter photographed her pair of Siberian lynx, Raz and Natty, lounging the day away in Georgia.



Gretchen Mogensen shot this adorable one of Tavo tiger cub nibbling bamboo at the Natural Bridge Zoo, in Virginia.



Mohan white tiger is sandwiched between Dora and Diego jaguars at Tiger World, in North Carolina. Photo by Mike McBride.

YOUR BEST SHOTS



FCF webmaster Chuck Bunnell, makes sure Mocha the puma gets her greens. Photo by Chuck's wife, Karen.



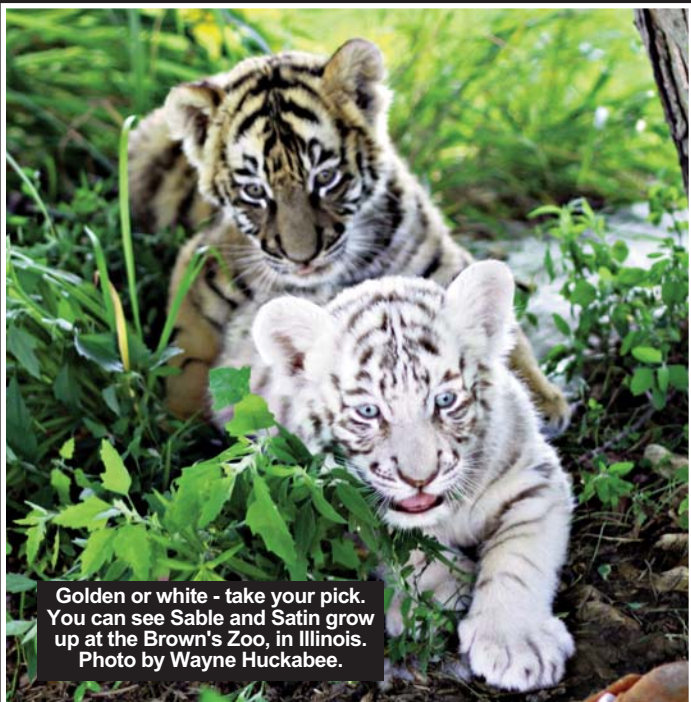
Kathleen Lamke caught snow tiger Arthur in a pensive mood at the Conservator's Center, Inc., in North Carolina.



Ahniwake, Kurt Beckelman's Geoffroy's cat, was as popular as she is pretty at the FCF convention. Photo by Tim Stoffel.



Siberian lynx Natasha, at Bear Creek Feline Center in Florida, looks tired from rolling her big bowling ball around. Photo by Alexandra Brielmayer.



Golden or white - take your pick. You can see Sable and Satin grow up at the Brown's Zoo, in Illinois. Photo by Wayne Huckabee.



Little lion cub Ngala makes the purrfect accent in a bouquet of purple flowers. Photo by Teresa Shaffer.

BLAST FROM THE PAST: LETTER TO THE QUEEN OF SHEBA

Long Island Ocelot Club Newsletter
Volume 8 Number 2
March/April 1964

Don L. Williams
21952 S. Hansom
Torrance, CA 90502

Dear Sheba:

It has come to our attention since we moved into our new home that you have been behaving in a most unladylike manner - -

1. When guests enter the house, instead of greeting them as a young lady should, you run and hide.
2. We don't know what is so appealing about eating on top of the refrigerator; however, we will go along with you on that point if you will stop "dropping" your chicken necks to the floor and then meowing for someone to return them to you.
3. When you want to exercise, you must find some means other than climbing door jams and going for a run on the mantle.
4. We know how dearly you love our toes and ankles, but if you don't stop nibbling at them, there won't be any left for you to shower your attention on.
5. We appreciate your homemaking tendencies, but your opening the cupboards and drawers and rearranging the contents to your satisfaction is hampering the efficiency of our kitchen.
6. Last but not least, the children have registered a complaint that you want the largest portion of the bed at night, and when they move you over a little bit, you voice loud disapproval.

We trust you will take the necessary steps to better your behavior, but if your little ocelot heart is against it, please be assured we will continue to love you nonetheless.

Your family,
Dad, Mom, Rex, Richard, and Janie

New Members

David J Adans, 1183 Curtis Ave., San Jose, CA, is the new owner of a 12-pound two-year-old female margay named Sheba. She has been declawed and defanged and, to the disappointment of the new owner, also spayed. Sheba is very vocal and is quite impressed with Miss Dodie Wilson, soon to become Mrs. David Adams. Sheba has had two previous owners, but transfer has not hurt her loving and gentle personality. (It was suspected at the Feb. 2 meeting of the No. CA branch of LIOC, that she might be a *Felis chati*.)

Mr. & Mrs. Vahan Aijian, 5344 Locust St., Philadelphia, PA, also have a "Sheba." This cat is a six-month-old, 15-pound ocelot. Judy and Vahan brought Sheba to the 1/15/64 meeting of LIOC in Brooklyn.

Mr. & Mrs. Henri Batisse, 350 S. Wakefield St., Arlington, VA, recently lost two adult ocelots that died having been impounded in an Arlington animal shelter.

Mrs. R. A. Bosse, 197 Conshohocken State Road, Bala-Cynwyd, PA, owns, with her son, a 25-pound ocelot, Maharajah.

Drew Bosse, 197 Conshohocken State Road, Bala-Cynwyd, PA, helps keep Maharajah (mentioned above) and the many other animals in the Bosse home "zoo." Rajah's dearest animal friend is a woolly monkey, Bimbo, who grew up with him. Their favorite mischief is to wait at the slot for the mailman to deliver and then run off with the mail. A great dane, collie, new woolly, a six-foot boa, a parrot, and doubtless many others at the time this newsletter goes to press, com-

plete the Bosse family.

Mr. & Mrs. Ralph Curtis, 8704 S. Dalton Ave., Los Angeles, CA, own a very beautiful, 50-pound, four-year-old ocelot, Tolecto, who goes fishing with his owners, loving the water and swimming well.

Mr. & Mrs. Leonard DiGiovanni, 212-21 42nd Ave., Bayside, NY, are the proud owners of Shalimar, a baby ocelot imported, according to the importers, from the rainforest of Brazil.

Mike Dougherty, 86 Valley St., Daly City, CA, is a former ocelot owner who is now interested in getting a jaguar as soon as the opportunity presents itself.

Lee DuBray, 3524 Carlyle Ave., Cleveland, OH, is not sure whether her new cat (six pounds at five months old) is truly an ocelot, although "Martyr" was sold to her as an ocelot from Brazil. Marty loves Lee and Lee loves Marty, whatever her species.

Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Duprey, 793 East St., Lennox, MA, have taken into their home and hearts little Zapata, a three and a half-pound, eight week old ocelot. Little Zapata is thinking of inviting LIOC to picnic this coming fall in Lennox.

Mr. & Mrs. Richard English, 3717 Los Feliz Blvd., Los Angeles, CA, own the *Felis chati* called Chatty-Cat, whose story appeared in the January '64 Newsletter, and Gabby, who is a cross between a bobcat (*Lynx rufus*) and an "ordinary" cat (*Felis catus*).

Jerry Fogleman, 119 Beverly Pl., Greensboro, NC, owns El Rey, a seven-month-old North American puma that weighs about 60 pounds.

Mr. & Mrs. Randall Franks, 576 Garland Ave., Fortuna, CA, have a new, tiny ocelot kitten named Maya. At six or seven weeks, Maya measured 12-13 inches from nose to tail and weighed less than two pounds.

Mr. Felton Jarvis, 4016 Wallace La., Nashville, TN, advises that his five-month-old ocelot weighs ten pounds and is "doing great!"

Mr. & Mrs. Otis Keith, 7666 Le Berthon, Tujunga, CA, have had misfortune with two bobcats which died. They now are debating whether their next venture will be a pair of caracals or a female puma.

Adr. V. Kleef, Leidseweg 50, Utrecht, Holland, owns two ocelots which he hopes will breed; Pardel, a two year old female, and Moloch, male, one and a half years.

Shane O'Neill, 1431 - 41 Ave., San Francisco, CA, has acquired ownership from Betty Harris of Milpitas, a full male ocelot, Ginger. He tips the scales at about 35 pounds. Although shipped from Peru, Ginger was born in Brazil.

Jack Meyer, 262 E 167 St., Bronx, NY, has a tiny female ocelot, Cheena.

Wesley A. Russell, 2850 Hillcrest Dr., Los Angeles, CA, has a neutered 13-month-old male ocelot, which he bought (of all places) at Sears Roebuck & Co., in Santa Monica.

Mr. & Mrs. Earl A. Sparrow, 1140 Via Enrica, San Lorenzo, CA, have not, as far as we know, yet named their baby ocelot.

NEW CENTER FOR CAT CONSERVATION IN ARIZONA

By Fred Hood

Everyone reading this magazine is well aware of the fact that wild cat numbers in the wild are declining. While a few species, such as the bobcat, are in good shape, the overall picture is somewhat bleak. I think we can all agree that any effort to save these magnificent cats is worthwhile. Therefore, I am happy to report on the formation of a new, international cat conservation organization, the University of Arizona Wild Cat Research and Conservation Center.

This new center is headquartered in Tucson, at the University of Arizona. The center is the brainchild of Lisa Haynes, a former Arizona Game and Fish Department biologist. Since the UA sports moniker is The Wildcats, she figured this would be a perfect fit. The University of Arizona is also a major research university with several well-respected science departments, offering a range of resources. The center has been given office space to operate on campus through the School of Natural Resources and the Environment. It should be noted, however, that the center is not a funded UA department. All of their operating expenses come from grants and donations.

That is where I came in. As a wild cat photographer (www.FelidFoto.com), I was pleased to donate several images to the center for use in their first fundraiser, a photo exhibition. The well-received exhibition ran from early April through mid-May, 2011, at a gallery in the Student Union. This was a way to officially introduce the center to the public. After two small mini-openings earlier in April, a large official opening was held on April 30th. This was accompanied by a Power-Point lecture from Lisa Haynes and Ashwin Naidu.



Lisa gave a brief introduction to the center, while Ashwin gave a talk on the Hyderabad Tiger Conservation Society, a group he helped form in his native India. Ashwin is a graduate student at the University of

Arizona working on a doctoral dissertation on mountain lion genetics.

The crowd at the April 30th event seemed very interested, and a few of them purchased either hanging prints or photo notecards. Lisa's talk included a brief introduction to several species of cat, primarily the lesser-known small cats. The two species that received audible "aahws" of adoration from the crowd were the clouded leopard and the Pallas's cat. Another image that was well-received featured Jim Sanderson holding a sedated Andean cat in Chile. Most FCF members are familiar with Jim Sanderson, founder of the Small Wild Cat Conservation Federation. A highlight of the April 30th event was the announcement that Dr. Sanderson has been secured as an official part-time faculty member and advisor to the UA Wild Cat Center.

One facet of the center's work is monitoring local cats and wildlife. The exhibition featured two sets of photos portraying this. One section was called "Backyard Bobcats" and showcased photos that local individuals had submitted of bobcats literally in their backyards. I have a feeling that Tucson, Arizona, may be the best place in the country to see wild bobcats. I even saw one at close range myself while riding on a bike path near the Tucson Mall! The other photo display on local wildlife showcased images from remote trail cameras set up in the Tucson Mountains. These included a mother mountain lion with two juvenile cubs. That photo was particularly exciting for Lisa, because there has been a fear that the mountain range had become too isolated by urban sprawl and no longer contained a breeding population.

Another part of the exhibition included some exciting remote sensor camera images. These were from the border area, both on the Arizona side and the Sonora (Mexico) side. There were four large collage prints, each representing a different



Ashwin Naidu, of the University of Arizona spoke on the threats and conservation of tigers.

conservation group's work in the area. The four groups are: Borderlands Jaguar Detection Project, Northern Jaguar Project, Sky Island Alliance (Cuatro Gatos Project), and Asociacion para la Conservacion del Jaguar de la Sierra de Sonora. In addition to mountain lions and bobcats, all four collages featured jaguars, and three of the four featured ocelots. In fact, the Sky Island Alliance collage featured the first ever photograph of a live ocelot in Arizona, which was taken in 2010. (A second ocelot, or perhaps the same one, has been seen again, in 2011.)

This exhibition was a good start for what looks like a great organization. Their multitude of tasks will include training wildlife biology students from overseas here at the University of Arizona, providing trail cameras to cat projects worldwide, teaching local citizens in the greater Tucson area how to live peacefully with bobcats, mountain lions, and other wildlife, gathering samples from wild cats for analysis at the UA genetics laboratory, collaborating with national and international cat conservation organizations, and much more. As I mentioned, they receive no regular funding from the university (other than donated office space). If you would like to help this fledgling organization, donations of any amount will certainly be put to good use. You can make a check payable to the University of Arizona Foundation and in the memo line write "Wild Cat Center." Please mail donations to: UA Wild Cat Center, Bio-Sciences East 325, University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona 85721. For more information on the Wild Cat Center, visit their website, www.uawildcatresearch.org.

NOTES ON THE 2011 AZA FELID T.A.G.

By Patrick Callahan

I was again asked and was pleased to represent the members of the FCF at the mid-year meeting of the AZA Felid Taxon Advisory Group, in Omaha, Nebraska. This meeting is open to any interested parties and combines zoo people, the private sector, researchers, and government representatives such as U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and USDA folks. Our own Jim Sanderson was there, as well as Mike Carpenter from the U.S. F&WS Permit Office. Various talks and formal papers were presented, and opportunities abounded to "button hole" people or later socialize with them and "network."

My job for the FCF was to report on our grantees' projects, the FCF's conservation grants, and the Rare Species Fund support. In this way, your support of important conservation projects gets noticed!! And it does get noticed, believe me! As I did last year, I passed out back issues of our Journal and this year also passed out, to selected attendees, the DVD *An InCATvenient Truth*. Thanks to Lynn Culver for getting that stuff shipped to my hotel.

Of note, a talk by the genetics GURU, Dr. Stephan J. O'Brien, indicated that his testing of captive tigers of unproven (aka generic) origin, including many in private hands, held a stunning surprise. Namely, no pun intended, many of those tigers "fell out" (named) as true Siberian/Amur tigers. Dr. O. told me later that some were in better genetic shape than some of the tigers still roaming the Russian wilderness, as they had better genetic diversity! He also said that people are going to have to "stop throwing s**t" on those "generic" cats, since they may be good news for captive breeding programs genetically. He felt that the owners/breeders of these cats had obviously selected for those (Siberian tiger) traits. Others may have started with say, Bengal types, and bred for those traits. This testing is ongoing - I recall he had done about 145 cats dating back to 2008. See "Current Biology 2008" via AOL Search. A paper is currently under review on similar findings and also relates to the "extinct"

Caspian tiger per Dr. O., which could be revived by back-breeding.

More talks by Dr. O. and Dave Wilt covered topics like speciation of cats, evolution, and even domestication of cats. Briefly, house cats arose, no surprise, from the wild *Felis silvestris* group. However, it did not happen in Egypt as formerly thought, but in even older times, in the fertile crescent area of Mesopotamia, today's Iraq! There was some talk that "of all the domesticated animals, the cat provided no benefit to Man." Well now! Radiation (spreading) of modern cats began when the *Panthera* lineage gave rise to the clouded leopard and the full *Panthera* (roaring cats) genus. See "The Late Miocene Radiation of Modern Felidae" by Warren Johnson et al, in *Science* vol.311 6 Jan 06.

Lastly, let me mention the Florida panther. As you know, the USFWS has recently declared the eastern panther extinct. The Florida subspecies was given a genetic boost in 1995, when eight female Texas cougars, *Puma concolor stanleyana*, were introduced to the wild to reverse indications of depleted genetic diversity such as poor sperm quality, crooked tails, etc. It really helped! The population expanded by three times, while diversity and heterozygosity doubled! However, there are so many obstacles to the Florida cats' survival that prognosis remains poor. See "Genetic Restoration of the Florida Panther," Warren Johnson et al, in *Science* vol. 329 24 Sept. 10.

Other articles Dr. O. suggested are:

- "The Near Eastern Origin of Cat Domestication" by Carlos A. Driscoll et al, in *Science* 317 519 2007
- "The Taming of the Cat" by Carlos A. Driscoll et al, *Scientific American* June

2009

• "The Evolution of Cats" by Stephan O'Brien and Warren Johnson, *Scientific American* July 2007

• "What is a Tiger? Genetics and Phylogeography" by Shu-Jin Luo et al, *Tigers of the World Second Edition*, Ed. by Ron Tilson, Noyes Series, 2010 (this book is expensive but may be available used) and Luo et al in *Current Biology* (date unknown but recent)

Try your search engines, AOL, Google, etc., on any of these authors; you will get good cat-related scientific to highly scientific articles. Check out the Felid TAG website at www.felidtag.org. Proceedings of this year's annual meeting will be available online. Think about attending the TAG in April 2012, in Salt Lake City. There is a husbandry course, but the FCF one is equal or better, except that AZA has a great vet section, taught by our own Kristi Krause, DVM, and the excellent vet pathologist, Dr. Karen Terio, whom I pester for articles for the *Journal* and tell that private animals are available for data collection.

Finally, some AZA related news. You may recall that last year Mike Carpenter challenged the AZA to open up to the private sector. "You (AZA) can not do it alone!" he said. Well, this year, Jack Grisham, Cheetah SSP coordinator, talked about a "pay to play" cheetah breeding program based on the San Diego Zoo, St. Louis Zoo, White Oak Plantation in Florida, Fossil Rim in Texas, and others pending. It is called S2C2, and its selling point is that these places all have rather vast areas to devote to cheetah breeding (hoofstock, too). He explained that it costs almost \$9,000 to "produce" a cheetah in a zoo, and people are willing to import them

for much more than that. So, by joining a consortium-like group, cheetah would be available for less money and members would get priority on genetics and females, etc. Another big cheetah breeder, Cincinnati Zoo, has so far declined to join. I do think the idea has some merit. Namely, several of these very successful cheetah breeding facilities have chronic money problems, and this would help stabilize them, a good conservation goal



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Legislative Agent

in my opinion. Jim Sanderson and I asked Jack if the private sector was eligible for this group, he stammered a "YES," and events are still unfolding on this...

A quick note on AZA openness Part 2 is that, under the new SSP guidelines, there are now three levels, GREEN and YELLOW SSPs, and RED Studbook Programs. The yellow SSP replaces the old PMP (population management plans), so that now former PMP species caracal, Canada lynx, and serval, are managed under a Yellow SSP and are open to non-AZA accredited facility participation to enhance genetics and holding spaces. Only one of the felid "old" SSPs qualifies as the Green, or highest, level, and that species is the African lion. Green level SSP means AZA accreditation is required to participate. I congratulate SSP person Hollie Colahan of Houston Zoo on this. The lions managed by this SSP are numerous enough and genetically strong enough to get this rating and are on course to have 90% genetic diversity 100 years from now.

Sadly, I report that it is a sign of not enough cats or AZA zoo interest that causes the lack of any other Green SSPs. The other cat species are Yellow level, or, if there are less than 50 individuals, the dreaded Red Studbook Program levels. Here is where the private sector, using proper husbandry and record keeping practices, of course, stands ready to help. Especially with small cat species, which

Registered Exotic Feline Handler Program

The FCF board of directors congratulates the following individuals for being accepted into the Registered Exotic Feline Handler Program since the past *Journal* issue.

Emily Dice – Basic	Sally Haase – Basic
Heather Hatton – Basic	Michelle McKay – Basic
Mercedes Munser – Basic	William Munser – Basic
Debra Kaprive – Intermediate	Bill Robbins – Intermediate
Gerhea Robbins – Intermediate	Randy Stearns – Intermediate
Darlene Williamson – Intermediate	Teresa Adebahr – Advanced
Jarrod Davis – Advanced	Felicia Frisco – Advanced
Christine Janks – Advanced	Lea Jaunakais – Advanced
Loretta Jones – Advanced	Tonya Lowe – Advanced

The three levels of FCF Feline Handler registration are: *basic* – at least one year of experience, *intermediate* – at least five years of experience, and *advanced* – more than ten years' experience handling exotic felines.

Be sure to update your registration in the members-only website when you obtain additional handling experience or new species experience. If you believe your experiences qualify you for an upgrade in registration status, make a request with your updates and the secretary will process the registration.

The online registration form can be filled out directly in the members-only section of the FCF website and the \$30.00 registration fee can be made through PayPal.

The board further challenges all FCF facilities to apply for accreditation by the FCF Accreditation Board. The overview, basic standards, and accreditation application are on the FCF members-only website.

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

George DeLong, FCF Secretary

all are held in low numbers by the AZA zoos. Being FCF accredited is a major step toward this. We will see what the year brings, eh?

Again, fellow FCF members, I was glad

to represent you at the Felid TAG. Maybe I will see you there next year?

Opinions expressed are my own and may not always jibe with FCF policy.

2011 FCF CONVENTION BOARD MEETING MINUTES

By Lynn Culver

The FCF Board of Directors met at the Sheraton Safari Hotel in Orlando, Florida, at 9:00 AM, June 9, 2011. Present were FCF directors President Kevin Chambers, Vice President Patty Perry, Treasurer Marilyn Antle, Legislation Director Robert Johnson, Director Teresa Shaffer, and Executive Director Lynn Culver. Absent board members were Secretary George DeLong and Conservation Director Pat Callahan. Members of the FCF were also present in the audience.

Minutes from the May 15-30 meeting held on the FCF Forums were read and approved.

Treasurer's report showed FCF finances are about the same as last year. Marilyn Antle gave an expense projection for 2011 of \$60,000. Current FCF assets are

\$120,389. First quarter income was \$21,801.48, and first quarter expenses were \$15,577.69.

Robert Johnson presented several recommendations made by the Accreditation Committee for changes to the FCF Facility Accreditation Policy and discussion followed. Changes included:

- Facilities may not become accredited while under investigation by state, federal agencies.

- Accreditation renewals require written details in changes in protocol, facilities, and programs.

- The accreditation process time is extended to a maximum of 6 months, after requesting and receiving all required materials.

- An annual visual inspection may be required by a 2/3 vote in favor by the 5-member accreditation committee.

- Applicant must mail 5 copies of their application, photos, and dvds to all 5 members of the accreditation committee directly, mail accreditation processing fee payment to the FCF treasurer, and mail the original copies of the entire accreditation package to the FCF secretary.

- Facility accreditation does not cover any traveling exhibits. That requires a separate accreditation application and approval.

- Accreditation can be suspended or revoked by the accreditation committee when under investigation or litigation by state or federal agencies.

Under the Application Procedure, add:

- Might have to have initial inspection.
- Facility accreditation does not extend to any travel or activities conducted off the accredited facility.
- Traveling exhibits must be accredited

separately. Applicants for accreditation of traveling exhibits must also hold current FCF facility accreditation. A separate application and inspection is required for traveling exhibit accreditation.

- Bi-annual renewal fee is the same as the facility accreditation rate.

Robert Johnson moved that the accreditation policy changes proposed be approved. Teresa Shaffer seconded. Motion passed 5/0.

Robert Johnson moved that accreditation processing fees be raised to \$100 for facilities with up to 10 cats, and \$200 for facilities with more than 10 cats. Teresa Shaffer seconded. Motion passed 5/0.

Teresa Shaffer moved that Lynn Culver be chair of Marketing and Public Relations Committee. Robert Johnson seconded. Motion passed, 4 approved, 1 abstain.

Lynn Culver reported that the U.S. feline census is moving forward. USDA inventories have been entered into THE database. Discussion of creation of feline studbooks followed, and Mindy Stinner, from the audience, informed the board that Frank Pyne has written a program that serves as a registry or studbook that is currently being used at Conservators Center, Inc., for tracking and pedigrees of binturongs and New Guinea singing dogs. Mindy offered this software program to the FCF for utilizing into a feline studbook and offered Kim and Frank Pyne's services.

Lynn Culver reported that the USDA inspections of tiger containment fencing are still ongoing and inconsistent. The Eastern sector has cited non-compliance to section 3.125 to some facilities with fencing, and written reports are asking for 12 feet in height and either a three-foot or four-foot kick-in, or 15 foot tall fences without a kick-in. Lynn reported receiving reports from licensees, and she has spoken to USDA big cat representative Laurie Gage twice on this issue. Laurie indicates that the anticipated meeting she had told Lynn about between the Eastern and Western sector heads and herself never transpired. Laurie still recommends for facilities cited to file appeals and she will most like-

ly be involved in the review process, and she indicated that she is trying to be reasonable. Lynn has also been following inspection reports on the USDA website and reported that mixed enforcement is still ongoing.

FCF Treasurer Marilyn Antle reported she has located a local accountant, David Lewis, in Conway, SC. Mr. Lewis will be contracted to do FCF transaction posting in QuickBooks online. Cost for this service is donated and will not impact FCF funds.

Election policy changes proposed for counting of incomplete ballots was tabled for future discussion.

Future Husbandry course locations were discussed. Jeremy Hinkle said his park, Wild Animal Safari, in Springfield, Missouri, would host a Husbandry Course in October. Lynn Culver proposed a Massachusetts Educator course in September or October, in conjunction with the King Richard's Renaissance Faire. This would be a three-day event and include demonstrations of big cat handling and conditioning and proper preparations for public presentations by Doc Antle, as well as the Educator Course, and include a day at the faire with live animal performances.

Lynn will follow up with this event. Lynn noted that Ohio is being targeted for new restrictions on legislation needs and an Educator Course scheduled in the fall. Lynn will discuss with Pat Callahan the possibility of the Cincinnati Zoo classrooms as a possible location for the course and will follow up with event planning.

An updated Mission Statement proposed by George was discussed. No action was taken.

The current supply of FCF brochures is gone. The board discussed and approved ordering 5,000 more FCF brochures. Lynn Culver will conduct a review of the current brochure text prior to ordering, and, if necessary, any changes proposed would be made by Robert Johnson, who can also lay out a new brochure if changes are extensive.

Robert moved to allocate \$3,000 from the annual FCF budget to the Conservation Grants Fund. Teresa seconded. Motion passed; 4 yes, 1 abstain.

Pat Callahan submitted a written request for reimbursement for travel and lodging at the Felid TAG to give an FCF presentation and be the FCF representative. Marilyn moved that Pat be reimbursed \$500 in expenses, after receipt of receipts and submission of dazzling report for publication in the FCF Journal. Robert Johnson seconded motion. Motion passed 5/0.

Erin Patters, who was convention chair this year, has moved to Germany. Erin will continue on the convention committee.

Possible convention locations for 2011 were Out of Africa, Arizona, and T.I.G.E.R.S. Preserve, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, somewhere in Texas, the Chicago Zoo in Illinois, and the Cincinnati Zoo in Ohio. Cincinnati Zoo has replaced its original small cats house with new construction, has a new, large puma habitat, and has greatly expanded the cheetah run. Marilyn Antle moved that the 2012 convention be held in Cincinnati. Patty Perry seconded. Motion passed 5/0.

Meeting adjourned at 11:30 AM.

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43 Small Wild Cats



Jungle Cat (*Felis chaus*)
range: Africa & Asia



Jaguarundi (*Puma yagouaroundi*)
range: N & S America



Geoffroy's Cat (*Oncifelis geoffroyi*)
range: South America



Leopard Cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*)
range: Asia



European Wildcat (*Felis s. silvestris*)
range: Europe



Rusty-Spotted Cat (*Prionailurus rubiginosus*)
range: Asia



Pallas' Cat (*Otocolobus manul*)
range: Asia



Feline Conservation Federation

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Cover Photo: Peering out at the world is the world's first ever guiña born in captivity. The tiny feline, native to Chile, was born at Fauna-Andina, an endangered species breeding and education center. Facility founder and photographer, Fernando Vidal, says the kitten is being mother raised and cohabitates peacefully with the father cat, too.

A cherished tradition of every FCF convention is the opportunity to interact with exotic kittens. Early socialization helps build confidence in young felines, and pictured here is Phyllis Parks holding an 8-week-old bobcat kitten brought to Orlando by Lynn Culver. Photo by Tim Stoffel.

