



**Feline Conservation Federation**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

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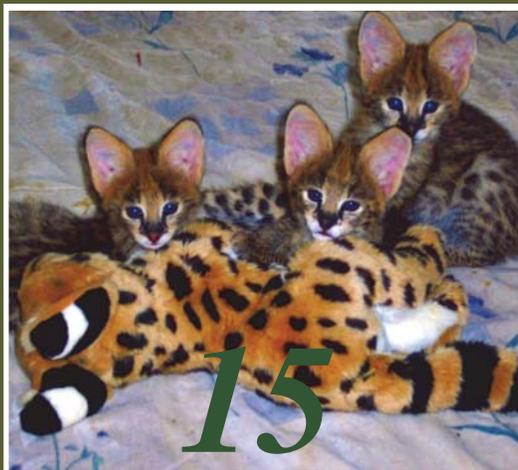
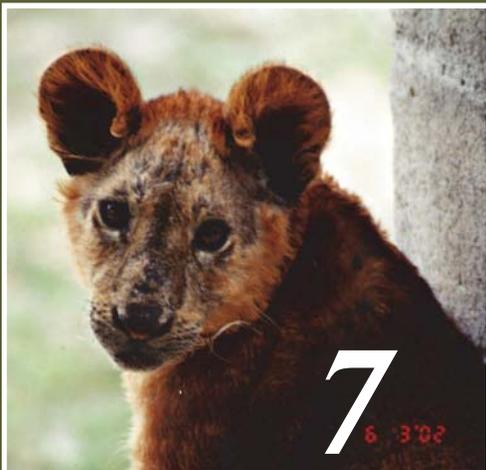
## FEATURES

- 6** Sign, Sign, Everywhere a Sign  
*Jessica Hanline Sanders offers graphic designs for signs to FCF members.*
- 7** Lions in Mexico Transition Well to American Life  
*Terri Werner tells how Tiger Creek took in Cancun cats.*
- 9** My Love of Wild Cats: Spotlight on a Non-Cat Owner  
*Marsha Hague recalls early influence from Esmerelda the serval.*
- 11** A Crying Shame  
*Bernadine Hoffman shares a very personal view of the Zanesville tragedy.*
- 13** Do Your Homework Before You Buy  
*Kelly Brook Allen saves Tigger from metabolic bone disease.*
- 15** Definitely Too Good to Be True  
*Caracal caper that almost caught Daniel Blinder.*
- 22** Cat Lover's Paradise  
*Fred Hood shows us a great reason to visit France.*
- 33** The Barker Boys: Year Three  
*Kim Barker updates us on sibling servals' socialization.*
- 35** Ocelots by Email?  
*Beware of emails from Cameroon cautions Lynn Culver.*
- 42** Inbreeding – Good, Bad or Both?  
*Kevin Chambers examines the effects of close relatedness.*
- 44** Branson's Big Cat Illusionists  
*Lynn Culver reports on the Branson shows.*



## COVER PHOTO:

Please see details about this handsome lion on our back cover.





**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.

**HUSBANDRY**

- 15** The Calcium & Phosphorus Balancing Act  
*Lynn Culver suggests boneless meat supplementation.*
- 17** TASERs in Wildlife Mitigation  
*Larry Lewis, Phil Mooney, and Donald Dawes on the latest in safe capture equipment.*
- 27** A View of Feline Eye Disorders  
*Lynn Culver with stories of coloboma, microphthalmia, and Horner's syndrome.*
- 38** Detect & Treat Feline Enteritis  
*Terri Werner details surgery on tiger Kahil.*

**SPECIES**

- 8** Tigers Losing Ground in Captivity as Well as in Nature  
*Lynn Culver reports on alarming loss of captive habitat.*
- 26** It's No Leopard  
*Himalayan ghost cat in poem by David Madison.*
- 30** Blast from the Past: Stars of the Cat World  
*Robert Baudy's 1970 reprint on the lion.*
- 42** Small Wild Cats: The Animal Answer Guide, a Review  
*Angela Anderson on Jim Sanderson's new book.*

**CONSERVATION**

- 24** Rare Species Fund Celebrates Release of Save Rare Species Stamps

**LEGISLATION**

- 37** Proposed New Legislation in Ohio and New Rules in Missouri  
*Lynn Culver reports on changes in these two states.*

**PICTORIALS**

- 40** Best Shots  
*Photos by Sharon Tolly, Kurt Beckelman, Gene Lucas, Patty Perry, Deb Hendrickson, Sherri DeFlorio, Roger Newton, Michelle McKay.*

**EDUCATION**

- 10** Wildlife Education Course and Cheetahs in Ohio  
*Tricyn Huntsman recommends the FCF course.*
- 45** Basic Exotic Feline Husbandry Course Review  
*Teresa Tiffany, a non-cat owner, is glad FCF teaches this course.*

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**ORGANIZATION**

**4** Letter from the President  
*Kevin Chambers*

**6** From the Executive Director  
*Lynn Culver*

**4** Donations

**34** Registered Handlers

**36** Convention DVD Available  
*Want to relive those convention memories? Order a DVD today!*

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 [lynnkulver@hughes.net](mailto:lynnkulver@hughes.net), or send by postal service to 141 Polk 664, Mena, AR 71953.



Feline Conservation Federation

## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

I am sure everyone has heard about the events in Zanesville, Ohio. Unfortunately, this freak event has been used as a platform for groups wanting to ban all kinds of exotic animals. Seven states are now calling for a total ban on cats. One thing you can count on is that this will translate into lots of new introduced legislation all across the country.

Fighting legislation is a tough job and you are never quite sure if you have been successful until the day legislature closes. We ALL have to become active, or we lose the right to keep cats forever. Just preaching to the choir about how bad a proposed bill is on email chat lists does not cut it; you must get out of cyberspace and into the physical world and get to know your legislator. Make sure they recognize your name, so they know who you are when you have to contact them about legislation.

The FCF as an organization can only do so much. Members within each state do the actual footwork to keep tabs on introduced bills, attend hearings, talk to committee members, etc. The greatest army in the world is only as good as the individual soldiers. The leadership of the FCF can advise you what to do, the chair of the Legislative Committee, Rob Johnson, Executive Director Lynn Culver, and myself all have experience in this field and we are available to guide you. The 2012 legislation season is going to have fires breaking out all over and that is why we need you to become active now and not wait until the last minute. The well-funded animal rights groups have been working on defeating us for a long time. Don't rely on a defense thrown together at the last minute after legislation has already been introduced.

The FCF has recently joined other animal organizations to share use of the grassroots advocacy software program CapWiz, which allows emails to be sent to numerous legislators at one time. The yearly cost of this program is over \$20,000, but joining with other groups allows the use of something we normally could not afford. Animal rights organizations across the nation use this program, and our letters and our positions will offer another view to their extreme agenda. Please remember that sending emails is the least you can do; we need a lot more than the minimum effort by our members to stave off the onslaught coming at us.

The FCF continues to grow and reach out to the incredibly diverse feline community, from sanctuary to pet owner, breeder, zoo, and educator - - anyone who is involved with and concerned about wild felines is welcome to the FCF. Our membership swelled to nearly 900 people before the October renewal cycle began. With all the obstacles facing wild feline owners, it is clear that they are not giving up on the cats, and as long as there are cats in captivity, the FCF will represent the interests of our feline community. Yet, even with so many members, the FCF is still thinly represented across 50 states and 11 countries. I invite every member who exhibits to promote the FCF at their events, every member who has a website to devote a page to the FCF, and every member on Facebook to use this social media to increase awareness of the organization.

One last thing I would like to touch upon is the outrage over the killing of almost 50 animals set loose in Zanesville. The law enforcement officials were not familiar with the individual animals (or exotic animals in general), there were dozens loose at the same time, there was no perimeter fence, it was raining, and nighttime was coming fast. Very few enforcement agencies have personnel familiar with exotics.

The FCF has organized the Feline Urgent Response (FUR) Team, headed by Teresa Shaffer. We want to have this team able to give advice and assistance to agencies faced with the escape of a wild cat. But the point I would like to get across is that you, as the cat owner, are responsible if your animal gets loose and is killed by law enforcement. Do not blame them; they are concerned with protecting the public. You must make sure all of your enclosures are secure. You need to talk to your local law enforcement and let them know what to do and who to contact in the event of an escape. This goes for everyone, whether you care for 100 tigers or a single serval. Most officers do not know the difference between a serval and a cheetah, and see them both as dangerous wild cats. It is up to You to educate on a grassroots level to make sure they do not come out with guns blazing should your cat ever make it out.

Even with all of this looming, I want to wish you all a happy and safe holiday season.

Kevin Chambers

## 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.

### Conservation Fund:

Caroline Alexander  
Woodward Bennett

Cameron Bianchi  
Jill Carnegie

Jamie Fowler

Tina Thompson

### Rare Species Fund:

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The FCF appreciates your generosity and continued support.

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## FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

By Lynn Culver

The FCF continues to excel because of the efforts of our members, volunteers, and staff. The feline community is facing serious challenges, with the USDA's new policy on tiger habitat fence heights, the Fish and Wildlife Service's proposed rule changes affecting conservation of generic tigers, and, especially, the Zanesville, Ohio, tragedy and resulting media firestorm which is sure to spur a flurry of legislation in 2012.

The FCF works hard to educate feline owners, potential owners, members of the public, and the legislators about the nature of felines, their plight in the wild, and especially in captivity. Teaching husbandry and wildlife conservation education courses is the FCF's dedication to education in action. Two more of these important learning events are reported on in this Journal issue. The FCF is constantly gaining in the number of husbandry course and wildlife educators course graduates, and this is good news. Our Handler Experience Registration program is also well received, and as our database of handlers grows, so does the FCF's authority to speak on captive feline husbandry. What the FCF really needs is for feline facilities to take advantage of the accreditation program in 2012. Please visit the members-only site and download the application and make gaining Facility Accreditation your new year's resolution.

Two new FCF programs have been approved this year and are in the process of being organized. The USDA census of felines has gained the FCF valuable data that is being incorporated into feline species registries. To fully implement this program requires personnel and grants to fund the training and operations. The FCF will be focusing on this in 2012. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact me.

The other important program, starting in January 2012, is the new professional member category. Over the years, the FCF has been blessed with countless volunteers who have donated generously to ensure that the FCF delivers on its promises. But as responsibilities mount and the level of professionalism rises, the FCF has turned several tasks over to paid staff. The website, *Journal* distribution, book-keeping, and the executive director's over-

sight of day to day affairs are no longer relying upon the schedules of volunteers, and these bills must be paid. Having a strong FCF organization that operates reliably benefits all cat owners. The new professional membership level recognizes that feline stakeholders have more to lose if the FCF fails and, therefore, can accept higher dues to help finance the continued improvements in the organization. With higher dues will come increased benefits and more responsibilities.

When the Board of Directors concludes its December meeting, they will have established the procedure for professional membership and set the dues. The FCF needs all qualifying cat owners, cat handlers, cat researchers, and educators to step up to the plate and upgrade their membership to professional level in 2012. The current dues do not cover the expense of running a professional organization. I am confident that many facilities and professional members can afford to support the FCF in a greater manner, and we are now asking that you do so.

Finally, I wish to ask all members to consider the FCF during this season of holiday giving. The FCF is unique in non-profits. A donation to the general fund, the Safety Net, our legislator education efforts, or our conservation grants program helps the FCF fulfill its many missions. Your generous gift is greatly appreciated. If the FCF has served you well, if the Journal articles have enlightened you, if the annual conventions provided education, networking, and entertainment, if FCF representatives have helped guide you on legislation or media issues, or if you have graduated from our husbandry or educators courses, then you have benefited from the existence of the FCF. Every event, every program, and every service is priced to break even; the FCF is truly a not-for-profit charity. It is amazing what has been accomplished using volunteers across the country, having no permanent office, and few paid staff. And imagine what the FCF can do if members give generously. With your help, next year could be our best ever!

Having signs up for your visitors to see is something that I can't say enough about. People LOVE signs and, when they're done right, they can really enhance a visitor's experience and their overall take-home knowledge from your facility.

...

I want to up my involvement in the club, and I am donating some designs for signs. \*\*Please note that I cannot donate the signs themselves, or print them for you, but I can help you find somewhere that will print them in your area. I am donating the graphic design for the signs. I will design any sign you need in relation to your cat/facility, be it a legal notice, or something telling your visitors that so-and-so is being treated by a vet, etc. I will either send you the design, or send it directly to the sign printer of your choice.

...

I am designing a few generic signs, such as the "Tampering with this animal... etc Animal enterprises protection act of 1992, etc" notice that I will keep on file that I will give out to any FCF member at any time.

...

I'll be doing free designs for custom signs through January, so if you are interested, send me an email at [jeswise@yahoo.com](mailto:jeswise@yahoo.com) with the subject heading "FCF MEMBER - Sign Wanted" or something similar.

...

Happy holidays, everyone. Below are graphics of a "generic" type signs.

Jesica Hanline Sanders, 817 6th Ave NE, Minot, ND  
58703 [jeswise@yahoo.com](mailto:jeswise@yahoo.com), Cell: 831-917-2286



Tampering with this animal may be a federal offense under the animal enterprises protection act of 1992. Penalties may include, fines, damages, restitution and prison sentences from one year to life.

Continuation No. 18 USC Section 43 Public Law 100-368



## LIONS IN MEXICO TRANSITION WELL TO AMERICAN LIFE

By Terri Werner  
Director, Tiger Creek Wildlife Refuge

In February 2002, Tiger Creek Wildlife Refuge was contacted by a woman in Mexico who was heading up a rescue of eight lions and she wanted to know if we could take them. These lions had been used for photographs with tourists on the beach in Cancun and when they became too big, they were given to a private owner, who quickly realized she could not properly care for them. Eight lions, ranging in ages of four months to a year old were being kept in a small concrete enclosure with inadequate fencing. The lions had gotten out of their enclosure a couple of times and the authorities were threatening to euthanize them if they did not find a new home soon.

We agreed to take four and house the other four until they could be moved to another facility. Paperwork and plans to move the lions were soon underway in Mexico. The rescue coordinator worked as fast as she could to provide crates for each lion, set up the transportation and fill out all the necessary paperwork to move the cats out of the country. However, nothing moves fast in Mexico and it was almost a month later before we could get the lions out of Cancun. Luckily, Continental Airlines agreed to fly the lions to Houston, Texas, for free.

On March 27, 2002, we arrived at Intercontinental Airport in Houston, Texas, to pick up the eight lions. I thought the hard part was over, but apparently, getting these lions out of customs was not going to be a fast process. I really thought with eight angry lions, they would want these animals gone as quickly as possible! The man in charge apparently had not been told the animals were arriving, or he had other things to do and said he would be there the next morning! We all knew this was not acceptable. The cats needed water and food and of course they wouldn't be able to get this until we had them in safe enclosures back at the refuge. After waiting several hours, we finally got someone to process the paperwork and release the lions into our custody. Now we had to load everyone up in the trailer and start our four hour journey home.

When we released the lions into their new enclosures, they were a bit scared, but were very affectionate to us. They



**At the time of their rescue, these cubs were in such horrible health, including severe mange, that they were initially mistaken as hyenas when taken to the vet! Luckily, with proper nutrition and medical treatment, they have grown into handsome, happy adults. Photo courtesy of Terri Werner.**

seemed so relieved to be out of those small crates and in an area they could move around. They drank their water and gulped down their food. They were exhausted and they all huddled together and fell asleep. They could care less where they were; they just wanted to sleep.

By the next day, they were up and exploring the new surroundings. They jumped up on perches, ran around and chased each other and rolled around in the dirt and dried grass. Next course of action was to get the vet to look them over and give them some vaccinations. The older lions were not in as bad of shape, as they were able to fight for more food at their previous home, but the younger ones were malnourished and had almost no hair from mange and ringworm. Scrunches, one of the youngest, had to be dipped twice to get the mange under control. She and the other young female were actually mistaken for hyenas at the vet's office! With their mottled dark skin exposed from lack of hair and their big round ears, they certainly didn't look like typical lions!

It did not take too long for proper nutrition to start taking effect and the lions started growing and looking like normal beautiful lions. Out of the four we kept,

we eventually lost two of them. One male died of kidney failure and a female died of a twisted gut. Today, we have Pepe and Scrunches. They share their enclosure with another female lion, but Pepe and Scrunches are can always be found snuggled together. Pepe is still aggressive over food; he still acts like he's never going to get another meal. He has turned into a big beautiful blond-mane lion. Scrunches has had many problems growing up. We thought she was going to stay extremely small. It took her years to really grow. She is a bit odd looking and when she was a little over a year old, her top canines had to be removed as they had grown too long and were causing problems with her eating and making sores on her lips. She has major joint problems and cannot run. She has been on medication for years, without this medication, she would not be able to walk. It keeps her mobile and pain free and she can even get up on the lower perches.

The lions are now nine years old. We never really knew if they would make it or not. All we could do is give them the best nutrition, vet care and lots of love and let nature take its course. We have been so thankful to have all of these years with them and hope we have many more.

## TIGERS LOSING GROUND IN CAPTIVITY AS WELL AS IN NATURE

A quote from the March 2005 FCF Journal article by Brian Werner titled, "Distribution, Abundance and Reproductive Biology of Captive *Panthera tigris* Populations Living within the United States of America Assessment":

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

Recently, the FCF issued a press release announcing that it has documented just 2,884 tigers alive in America. The population of private sector tigers has been on a downward spiral for more than a decade. In the 1980s and 1990s, dozens of USDA Class A Breeders and Class B Brokers held tigers. Many of these facilities had acquired heterozygous cats for their recessive white coat gene, and each facility bred a line of white and heterozygous tigers for sale. Back then, tiger cubs were in demand for educational outreach, photo opportunities, and public display, and were highly valued as breeding stock as well. Exhibitors often purchased tiger cubs for their use, and then either sold or donated sub-adults to a sanctuary, zoo, nature center, or private owner. Sanctuaries were almost non-existent in the 1980s and only just getting started in the 1990s.

Today, things are very different. Most states prohibit private ownership of tigers. USDA has enacted a strict age limit policy on public interaction, has prohibited declawing of any exotic cat, and has raised fines on non-compliant items to \$10,000 per infraction. Congress passed the Captive Wildlife Safety Act to prevent individuals from obtaining tigers. Animal rights have put circus, stage acts, and zoos out of business. And, most recently, USDA has been demanding expensive upgrades to their fence heights for open topped big cat enclosures, and some of the larger sanctuaries will no doubt be unable to comply and, as a result, go out of business.

The economics of keeping tigers has completely unraveled and most recently, the nationwide economic downturn has reduced audience attendance and donations. Tiger businesses that cannot sustain their economic model are failing.

The FCF census shows that the USDA

controlled population of tigers is almost 100% in Class C exhibitor facilities. Gone are the commercial tiger breeding centers of the 1980s and 1990s. A review of Animal Finders Guide from the 1990s illustrates this point. Tigers used to be bred and regularly advertised for sale in the following states: IN, IL, WI, MN, FL, AR, NC, KS, OH, OK, OR, WA, and MO. These places are gone; their tigers live in sanctuaries or have passed away.

Today, only a handful of breeding tiger facilities, a few zoos, and a couple of large exhibitors are breeding tigers. Tigers advertised on the Internet are scams from Africa and England.

With the average tiger life span in captivity of 10 to 20 years, and the increasing number of adult tigers living in non-breeding sanctuaries or exhibit facilities, more tigers than ever are dying from natural causes.

The population has been declining at a rate of about 300 tigers a year for the past 14 years. What would be the expected annual death rate of the 1997 population of 7,568 tigers? Back then, the population was mostly under 10 years old and the death rate was low. A decade later, much of the population had surpassed the age of ten, and the death rate would increase, and the transfer from breeding habitat to sanctuary for tigers of all ages caused a decline in the birth rate.

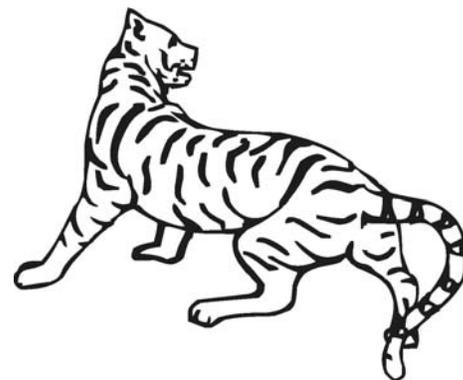
In 2000, publically supported and tax-exempted tiger sanctuaries were a relatively new business model. The number of tigers in these kinds of facilities ranged from a couple animals to a couple of dozen animals. A decade later, as more and more facilities closed, facilities like Exotic Feline Rescue Center, G.W. Exotics Animal Park, Serenity Springs Wildlife Park, Turpentine Creek, and Tiger Haven each hold more than 100 tigers in their sanctuaries. Today, based on the USDA FOIA information, we know that over half the USDA tiger population, about 1,500 tigers, resides in non-breeding sanctuary habitat.

March 2005, the Tiger Missing Link census listed 4,692 tigers; six years later, in March 2011, the FCF census found just 2,884 tigers. The death rate has exceeded the birth rate by about 300 tigers per year. This trend of tiger population decline will only continue, and probably accelerate,

since this aging population is dying more often, and there is little incentive to breed more tigers, and few dispersal options available for offspring.

Why does the animal rights industry continue to lobby against tiger breeding if the population is half what it used to be? Why are sanctuaries still complaining about still too much call of their services? The simple answer is that even with a much smaller overall population, factors discussed in this article are still forcing too many facilities to give up too many cats. Every time a private owner gives up their tigers, or a breeding facility shuts down, or an exhibitor or zoo closes, or a circus or stage act is put out of business, or a small sanctuary has give away their cats to another sanctuary, valuable and seemingly irreplaceable tiger habitat is lost. As each of these locations stops providing habitat, another enclosure must be constructed at the few surviving sanctuaries, putting more financial strain on their budgets. Our tiger population is in grave danger of extinction. And, if not extinction, certainly we are looking at a great loss to tiger genetic diversity.

What can we expect in another six years? If we do not turn around the factors that have brought us to this point in time, the private sector tiger population will lose another 38% in another six years and be at only 1,800 tigers, with 400 of those being in AZA zoos and 1,400 in private facilities. And the wild tiger population will probably be equally reduced. Now more than ever, the FCF needs to be involved in genetic studies, tiger registries, and public education on the value and importance of our generic tiger population.



## MY LOVE OF WILD CATS: SPOTLIGHT ON A NON-CAT OWNER

By Marsha Hague

Esmerelda the serval died on October 10, 2011, at the age of 19. She lived most of her life at what was formerly known as Wildlife on Easy Street, where I stayed overnight on two occasions in 2000. Lots of volunteers and visitors got to know and love Esmerelda over the years, and she loved people. I was in another enclosure when I saw her eager face pop up for the first time; she could hardly wait for the group to come and visit HER. When I stayed in a cabin attached to her enclosure, I fondly remember tossing a pinecone for her to play with, or how she ever so politely stood near me, but aimed her butt towards the enclosure perimeter and daintily marked her territory. I am bothered by some of the comments on her memorial page. Some of the more recent volunteers, though they clearly loved her, wrote of how excited she was when they brought her "operant" meat around or that she was their "operant" cat.

Operant? Like she was some kind of automaton that only responded because of operant conditioning? I am so glad I got to visit before that sort of brainwashing began. They call it "change in direction" or "evolution of thought" there, but operant is such a cold, clinical word. Where is the warmth, the friendliness, and the joy that was Esmerelda in such a word?

I thought back on how my journey to the world of exotic cats began. As a child,

I petted a lion cub that was being bottle-fed at a zoo, but back then they lived behind steel bars on a concrete pad. By age 16, I had written a poem about a tiger in a cage, dreaming of freedom. A few years later, I read of the Long Island Ocelot Club and was fascinated.

These exotic cats were loved and cared for like my own domestic cat. As a young adult, the thought of big cats faded to the background, since home ownership was some distance in the future. I adopted the occasional stray domestic cat, but did enter the exotic world with something small that was more suited to my apartment life - a hedgehog.

Along the way, two books and a movie had a big impact on me. The first was "The Cats of Shambala" by Tippi Hedren. Very educational for anyone interested in big cats, although I disagree with the author's campaign for national laws in recent years. One night as I surfed TV channels, I stumbled on the 1938 movie "Bringing up Baby," starring Cary Grant and Katharine Hepburn and co-starring a spotted leopard. I yearned for my own leopard, but got a reality check from reading the book "Living With Big Cats: The Story of Jungle Larry, Safari Jane, and David Tetzlaff," by Sharon Rendell-Smock.

I have been a "cat person" since childhood, and from time to time, I encountered feral cats, surprising other humans at my ability to approach and interact with them. I came to believe that exotic or big cats were simply the next step in my journey. On a trip to Florida, I decided that an overnight visit at Wildlife on Easy Street would be a good way to learn. Raindance, the bobcat, was my instructor during that first stay. By the



Esmerelda Serval is seen here in some video footage taken on a visit to Wildlife on Easy Street.



Raindance taught Marsha much about bobcats.

time I visited, the cats were no longer allowed inside the cabins, but during the night, I heard Raindance's soft "me-ah" outside the window, perhaps attempting to entice me to ignore the new rules. But she and I only interacted out in her enclosure during the daytime. She ignored her ball toy, but as I watched, she stalked a domestic cat strolling past her enclosure, and then broke into a full run at it. The domestic took off running, but had there been nothing to stop Raindance, her longer and more powerful legs would have quickly overtaken her intended victim. Raindance had a confidence level way beyond any domestic cat; she knew full well that she was higher on the food chain and was not intimidated by humans, as a domestic might be. She tested me to see if she could push me around. She stood up on her hind legs on the chair next to me, with her paws on the fence. Having been told that I should not allow a cat to be above eye level, I stood up. When she revved up her spraying machine, I did as I had been previously instructed, and pushed her tail down. She seemed disappointed, but complied. Another time, she shoved her face between my knees, and then pushed her way up to put her paws on the chair arms to look me in the eye. But my favorite memory was when Raindance was lounging in the chair next to me, and I purred to her. She seemed delighted, stepped onto my lap, and purred back.

For a while, I thought Raindance had cured me of my desire to own a bobcat. Still, I longed for something beyond the domestic feline world. I searched the Internet and learned there were other sanctuaries besides the one I had visited, that the Long Island Ocelot Club still existed, and there was also an organization called the Feline Conservation Federation. I joined both, not realizing that they had been one organization and had split in 2002. I joined several Yahoo discussion lists, read material on websites such as Exoticcatz.com, and began to learn. I attended the 2006 FCF convention, where I took the Basic Wild Feline Husbandry Course. I was thrilled to be

able to play with, pet, and hold a baby bobcat and serval kitten. Those little ones sure got doted on and spoiled by the convention goers! After spending time learning about the various species, I think a serval would be the best choice for me.

I still do not have my serval. The housing crisis in 2008 caused an explosion in the stray and feral cat population, as people left their pets to fend for themselves, some of which were not neutered. I rescued as many as I could handle financially and had space for, but I know there were many others out there that I could not help. I have all I can handle for now. I am a responsible owner and always look ahead to the next 20 or so years.

Strangers tell me that owning an exotic pet is wrong, that mere ownership equals abuse. Some of them have never owned an exotic animal. Others have, but later felt guilty because they screwed up, and decided it was wrong for everyone - why are those always the ones that get new laws introduced? If I cannot follow the same path, how am I to "evolve" in the same way? The truth is, not all who have known an exotic cat in their life will evolve in their beliefs in exactly the same way. So the question becomes, do I listen to a human that changes their mind, that claims to be more enlightened now, or do I listen to my heart? My heart remembers the purrs.

## WILDLIFE EDUCATION COURSE & CHEETAHS IN OHIO

By Tricyn Huntsman

My name is Tricyn Huntsman and my parents and I own Stumphill Farm in Massillon, Ohio. We are a non-profit organization that has been rescuing and rehabilitating animals and educating the public for nearly 30 years. We have a variety of animals ranging from domestics to exotics. I have worked with animals my entire life and have dedicated myself to their care and educating the public about them.

I attended the Wildlife Conservation Educators Course held November 5, at the Cincinnati Zoo. I would absolutely recommend this course to anyone who exhibits any type of animal, not just felines. Even seasoned animal owners and educators can learn new ideas and brush-up on the fundamentals of the business. The speaker was entertaining and knowledgeable, communicating his ideas well, and the interaction of the class was very beneficial. It was nice to be around people sharing the same passion and understanding for what we do.

The puma talk and cheetah demonstration were great examples of the expanding knowledge of what needs to be done to take care of these big cats in captivity. The puma talk went in depth on what is being done to relocate cougars into their natural habitats to help balance the ecosystem and how science and technology are teaching them to not attack farm animals.

When watching the cheetah demonstration, seeing the cheetahs healthy, happy, and doing what they love the most - - running their hearts out - - was quite an amazing sight. Unfortunately, with the decrease in numbers of both species in the wild, because of humans, captivity is becoming the only place for these animals to truly survive and lead a long, happy life. We need to learn all we can to better the lives of these animals and keep improving our knowledge. Courses like this help us to do so. The FCF Wildlife Educators Course was an all-around great experience.



**Ron DeArmond gives an educational talk in front of the cougar habitat at the Cincinnati Zoo the day before the course. His program included showing a cougar pelt so that people can see the actual size of the species.**



**Students were treated to a special exhibition by the zoo's cheetahs, who showed off their running skills in a custom enclosure made specifically for that purpose. Photos by Eden Tran.**

## A CRYING SHAME

*One Individual's Perspective on the Zanesville, Ohio, Exotic Animal Massacre of October 18, 2011*

By Bernadette Hoffman

When I first heard the news Wednesday morning about this incident, I got a lump in my throat and a tear in my eye. I really did not want to listen. I am extremely sensitive when it comes to an animal's death, even more than with people. I vaguely remember the updates thereafter. I found myself explaining to people why Thompson had exotics or was allowed to have them in spite of his criminal record. I had to explain why these animals were shot instead of being tranquilized, and there were questions I could not answer. I defended the many others who have exotics.



**Bernie, with Nala Lion as a young cub, now cherishes the memories that these photos of lost friends bring to mind.**

I guess I should explain to you why people were asking me these questions. I was a zookeeper at Flag Acres Zoo from 2002 to 2008. Since then, I have been working part-time as an educator for the Pember Museum of Natural History and, as a hobby, I created educational wildlife programs (Wildlife Education by Bernie) using common exotic animals and animal artifacts. I recently acquired a Canada lynx in June, for my programs.

As the days progressed, news updates filled the television screen and I numbly listened.

On Friday, I visited a local New York zoo, Ashville Game Farm, to pick up a case of meat for my lynx. I know the owner, Jeff Ash, and expected to meet with him, as we had talked earlier in the week, but a staff person said he was not around. We made small talk and he asked if I had heard about the Ohio incident. Who hadn't? I mean, you would have to be living under a rock not to have heard. Then he told me that some of the animals had come from Ashville. It was like someone knocked the wind out

of me. What do you mean? He said there was an article about it in the Post Star newspaper out of Glens Falls, New York. I do not get the newspaper, so I asked again, "What do you mean?" In that split moment between my question and his answer, my mind started reeling backward to when Jeff was forced to give up his big cats in 2008. Then the answer came, "Mufasa, Tigger, and others." I kept saying, "What do you mean?" because my mind could not wrap around what he was saying. No, it just could not be true. He said Jeff was really upset. I could not stand there another moment and rushed out. As I was going out the entrance, I saw the new zebra looking at me with excitement in his eyes that I might just stroll over to give him a scratch, but I was too consumed with my grief. On the drive home, I tried to remember all of the cats' names and could not. Another realization hit me; if Mufasa was one, then there must have been Nala, too. Once again, I stopped breathing. I arrived home and frantically began searching my computer for photos. There I was in 2004, sitting with baby Nala on my lap and Mufasa playing with Thunder, a tiger I bottle-raised. Tears, and lots of them, followed.

How did I come to have these photos? Although I worked at Flag Acres Zoo, I visited Ashville on my days off. In late 2003, we loaned them our tiger, Thunder, as a companion for their lion, Mufasa. We felt that Thunder would benefit from play-



**Mufasa Lion and Tigger Tiger were having a tete a tete when photographed on this snowy day at Ashville Game Farm in New York.**

ing with another big cat instead of being alone at our zoo with the keepers gone for the winter except for myself. They really adored each other. In 2004, Ashville acquired a cub, Nala. As a volunteer, I would sit with Nala while I was there leash-training Thunder. Thunder came back to our zoo in May. I continued visiting Ashville, but did not think of taking more photos as the cats grew into adults.

I remembered reading on the FCF group message board that names of the animals were wanted in order to honor them. I emailed Jeff my deepest sympathy and asked for his animals' names, and his reply confirmed the loss of darling



**Kamal Tiger enjoyed time lounging on an elevated section of his enclosure.**



**Athaena and Goliath, two of the pumas from the Ashville Game Farm, shown here as cubs, were lost in the Ohio tragedy.**

Nala who had stolen my heart. My loss is minimal compared to Jeff's, his family's, and keepers', but I can truly relate because, as a zookeeper, I had raised several animals only for them to go to other zoos and die. So I know the pain.

The Ashville Game Farm animals lost in Ohio, were lions Mufasa and Nala; tigers Tigger, Shylo, and Kamal; and cougars Athaena and Goliath. All of them had been painstakingly bottle-raised. As anyone who has raised big cats knows, they can be a handful. As adults they were still hands-on with the owner, Jeff Ash.

After great apprehension, I finally decided to Google the incident's images, which people were discussing, and it brought another lump to my throat. My zoo owners retired and closed Flag Acres in the fall of 2007. Most of the animals were immediately relocated, but the big



**Shylo, in a baby photo belonging to Bernie, was yet another tiger who ended up at the Ohio compound.**

cats took more time. In May 2008, our two tigers and two leopards went to Turpentine Creek Wildlife Sanctuary. This is a really nice sanctuary and, although it took the tigers two years to adjust emotionally, I am confident they went to the right place. However, before that, in February, our lions, Simba and Sabu, and cougars, Amos and Kya, were sold to Antler Island Ranch in Ohio. I knew the lions were leaving, but when I arrived to work, the cougars were gone, too. Imagine how I felt! I hand-raised and leash-trained Amos. I

was a bit mortified. I wrote several letters to Antler Island asking for disclosure of their location, but did not receive a response. It was explained to me by the zoo owners that animal brokers keep their contacts private. I only wanted to know in hopes of visiting or sending contributions. For years I have prayed that they are in good homes. Then I saw these horrible Ohio photos and noticed black-maned lions, wondering if Simba was one of them. Alongside the many death photos was a photo taken by a woman of a male and female lion at Thompson's facility pre-incident. It looks like my lions and now I am desperately scanning photos trying to compare them. I have tried contacting the photographer inquiring about the date on which she took the picture, but she has not responded to my emails. Should I let it go? It is difficult to let go when a 500-

pound lion throws himself on the ground exposing his belly, or when a cougar responds to his or her name being called, or lions and tigers greet you with a chuff or rub along the fence to say "hello." You nurture a respectful relationship and become endeared by these magnificent animals. An incident like this pains you beyond explanation.

So, I am praying that my lions or cougars were not among the carnage. I am praying that the broker

did not sell them to Thompson. I am praying for Jeff and others whose animals did end up at Thompson's place. These people are probably too embarrassed to come forward and are now dealing with grief and guilt, too.

I have forgiven those who had to shoot these animals. I have learned long ago to let go of the anger. Otherwise, it just eats you up inside. I know the difficulty of tranquilizing animals from a zookeeper's position. It is easy to under- or overdose



**Bernie, with Max, a Canada lynx, hopes that the remaining Thompson animals will go to much better homes.**

on a good day, even harder to hit an animal properly in low light and poor weather conditions with emotions running high. Dosage and dart size are based on animal weight, and time was not on the responders' side. Everyday, I am explaining this to someone who cannot fully grasp the nature of the event.

Do I think Marian Thompson deserves to get her remaining six animals back? No. I do not believe she is capable of properly caring for them. How can she, if she is in debt and the animal enclosures are substandard? I hope she realizes it and allows them to go to places that can care for them.

I am praying that we, exotic cat owners, are not discriminated against for one man's hateful actions.

I am praying for all of us in the animal community for our hearts to be healed.

May these photos replace those horrible images etched in our minds.

## DO YOUR HOMEWORK BEFORE YOU BUY

By Kelly Brook Allen

I cannot stress enough how important it is to do as much research as you can before you get your first exotic cat. We thought we knew enough, after having a savannah for a year, to take on a six-week-old Africa serval cub. What could be so different about a serval, just raw food, right? I knew I was not really prepared for the new cub, but I could learn as I went. Problem is, you cannot learn fast enough; so I found out the hard way.

In April of 2011, my husband Ron and I got our first serval cub. He was six weeks old. He seemed healthy and happy. He picked us; we did not pick him when we went to choose our cub from the litter. We call him Tigger, just like in “Winnie the Pooh” (Ti-double-gger).

The breeders sent us home with a vitamin supplement, some goat’s milk, and some raw ground chicken. He had a good appetite and ate everything we hand feed him. It was almost like he was not getting enough food. He seemed very healthy running around and playing with our savannah and our Jack Russell. At eight weeks we noticed his appetite was not like it was, and he would not drink any of the milk. He started limping around like his



**Even though Tigger the serval looked to be in perfect health as a kitten, a lack of proper nutrition soon caused the metabolic bone disease that nearly took his life.**

hind leg was sore. Over the next few days it got worse and worse. By about the third day he could no longer even put weight on it. My first reaction was he must have gotten hurt wrestling with the Jack Russell. So we took him to the vet clinic to see what was up.

Now both back legs were sore and the vet was very worried, so we did a set of radiographs to make sure he had not broken any bones. They also did blood work to see how all his body levels were. His blood work came back normal, but his radiographs showed very low bone density and small fractures in the hind legs. Finding a veterinarian who knows about exotics is never an easy task. The vet was doing her own research to find out more information on low bone density. Meanwhile, in my own research, I found an article written by an FCF member and also read other exotic cat sites that had information on

Metabolic Bone Disease. He had all the symptoms of the disease but the age did not match. It is very rare that a cat this young could develop this disease. I contacted the breeder and told her about it and she was devastated. She had bred savannah cats for years, but this was her first litter of serval cubs. She said she was going to up the supplements given to her adult cats and also give them both calcium and vitamin D supplements, too. Over the next few days, I had been back and forth with the vet. She told me to get a calcium supplement and give it to Tigger every day. I am not going to go into the exact amounts the vet told me to use, but it was not enough for what was needed for a growing serval on a high protein diet. My research found that we needed to triple the intake the vet had recommended.

Tigger had gotten even worse and could no longer even lift his head from his pillow. We had him in a crate to keep any of the other animals from bugging him. I started him on the extra calcium and had found a liquid formula that was blueberry flavored that had the proper mix of calcium, phosphorous, and vitamin D. My husband had little or no hope left for the little guy and hated seeing him suffer. He said if we did not see an improvement we may have to face the worst. I was determined to get Tigger back on track. I figured out his body size and what amounts of calcium supplements he needed. I got a small syringe from the pharmacy I got the liquid calcium I needed from, and started syringing it into him once a day. He was also on pain meds which I had to administer to him twice a day. Within a few days, we saw a huge improvement. He started first by lifting his head and then he was finally able to sit up. It was weeks more before he could walk alright and he had a limp for a good month..

If I had to do this all over again, knowing now what I know, I would have gotten Tigger on a high quality wet cat food and a mix of good dry cat food with a milk supplement until I introduced him to raw. The high protein diet is really not the best for these young guys.

We are so happy Tigger has come



**Tigger lounges between his personal guard dogs, Sammy the Jack Russell terrier and Sidney the Australian shepherd.**



**Tigger and a feline friend enjoy a breath of fresh air on a camping trip with the family.**

around. Our first 12 weeks was so hard on all of us. Tigger loves watching TV, and his favorite channel is the Oasis channel when they have wildlife on it. He also loves traveling. He is like a dog when it comes to car rides; he sits up and watches out the windows.

Now Tigger does everything with us. We are retiring this year and our children have all moved out so it is just our horses, cats, and dogs. All of them come with us when we go camping. We go to places that have camping areas for our horses. Tigger loves hanging out at camp. He is great with other animals. One of the couples we ride and camp with has two high-percentage (85%) hybrid wolves. Tigger is fascinated with them, but they are both terrified of him and keep their distance. We have a huge camperized horse trailer that Tigger and our savannah, Kenya, hang out in it when we are out on our rides. At camp with have both cats on zip lines so they can move about.

Tigger also loves going for walks. He has been well socialized, is good around most people, but is very nervous with small children as they move fast, squeal, and make too much noise. Older children he sees as play toys and loves playing hide and seek with them. We take him to horse

shows, camping trips, car rides, as well as walks in the park with all our pets. We live on five acres so there is plenty of room to take him for walks at home. Our home is for sale, so we do not have an outside enclosure yet, but have a 100-foot zip line he can run around in the backyard.

Tigger has been on about five camping trips this summer. He loves it when Ron catches a fresh trout, because he only likes his fish really fresh and prefers if they are still swimming in a bucket. On one camping trip this August, we were camping on a creek that Tigger swam in daily. Ron caught two or three small trout a day and he would

put them in a big bucket of water and let him fish them out. Tigger found this to be a really fun game and tasty rewards, too. On our last camping trip to Lundbom Lake, there was a fishing derby going on and one of the fishermen gave Tigger a nice sized trout.

Tigger is now eight months old. He is healthy, very active, and happy. We now have a good veterinarian that has worked with endangered and exotic cats for years, Dr. David Marlow. He examined Tigger just last month, and he is a normal size



**Sammy the dog is thinking, "What happened? Tigger used to be a lot smaller than me!"**

and body weight for a serval his age. I told the breeder about Dr. Marlow and she plans on taking all her cubs and servals to Dr. Marlow. Dr. Marlow worked for 15 years helping Mountain View Conservation develop a breeding program for some of the world's most endangered cats. Dr. Marlow is owner operator of the Brookwood Veterinarian Clinic. We have Tigger on a mixed high quality canned cat food and fresh raw meat. We feed him WildTrax vitamins mixed on his raw food and still give him his calcium supplements everyday. He has been gaining an average of three fourths of a pound a week for the past three months. He is now just over 20 pounds and getting so tall he can reach the ice cube tray in our refrigerator. Yes he has an ice cube fetish. LOL

If you want to keep up on Tigger's progress, he has own Facebook page "Tigger the Serval." He loves having fans. He is our little miracle baby; thank God he is now healthy!! Also I want to thank the FCF for being there for us big cat owners so we can get the information we need to give the best care for these wonderful animals.

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## THE CALCIUM AND PHOSPHORUS BALANCING ACT

When balancing calcium and phosphorus in a boneless meat diet, two things must be met; minimum amounts of each element and proper ratio. Proper calcium to phosphorus ratio is between 1:1 to 2:1, with 1.5 to 1 being a good target ratio for a young, growing kitten. The target amount of daily calcium for a growing kitten is about 1.6 milligrams of calcium per calorie of food consumed (Veterinary Technician, No Bones About It: Too Little Calcium is too Common in Homemade Diet, Susan Donohues, July 1992). Growing kittens should be fed 10-25% of their body weight in food daily, depending upon how energy dense the meal. Kitten food should contain about 10% fat to allow for more meals a day. The following are some suggestions for balancing a single pound of three different meats that might be fed young kittens after weaning.

Calcium exists in nature only in combination with other substances. These substances are called compounds. Several different calcium compounds are used in nutritional supplements, including calcium carbonate, calcium phosphate, and calcium citrate. These compounds are not 100% calcium, so, when picking a supplement, be sure to read the label and check the amount of elemental calcium listed. I use a product by Equate called Calcium Citrate + D. Each pill contains 315 milligrams of elemental calcium and 250 IU of vitamin D. This form of calcium is more absorbable than calcium carbonate and it has vitamin D already added in the proper ratio.

Boneless poultry, like chicken breast, contains an average of 504 calories per pound (Bitelog Food Diary – [www.bitelog.com](http://www.bitelog.com)). A pound of breast contains 45 milligrams of calcium and 899 milligrams of phosphorus; not enough calcium for a growing kitten.

Crush three and a half calcium citrate pills into powder and sprinkle them into and onto a thinly sliced pound of chicken breast. This boosts the calcium to 1107 milligrams, creating a minimally acceptable CaP ratio of 1.2:1. This additional calcium exceeds the target level, containing 2.2 milligrams of calcium per calorie of food.

Ground turkey is a common choice for feeding young kittens. An average 16-ounce roll has about 675 calories, with 59 milligrams of calcium and 708 milligrams of phosphorus (Bitelog Food Diary). Soak four calcium citrate pills in a small amount of water for 10 minutes to create a calcium liquid that can be mixed into the roll of ground turkey. This will boost the calcium to 1319 milligrams, balancing the 708 milligrams of phosphorus to a CaP ratio of 1.8:1, and providing 1.9 milligrams calcium per calorie of food, meeting targets on both accounts.

To balance boneless red meat, you will need to supplement with additional phosphorus as well as additional calcium. A pound of raw ground beef (10% fat) has 792 calories, with 54 milligrams of calcium and 658 milligrams of phosphorus (Bitelog Food Diary). Add three 315-milligram calcium pills to boost the calcium to 999 milligrams, and get a CaP ratio of 1.2 to 1. However, this beef is more energy-dense than poultry, so less total weight of food will need to be consumed to provide the daily caloric requirement. By simply adding calcium, the diet only provides a little more than two-thirds of the minimum daily calcium requirement per calorie of food consumed. Correct this by adding steamed bone meal to increase the total calcium and keep it properly balanced with phosphorus. Solgar makes a human quality steamed bone meal powder with vitamin B-12 ([www.vitaminshoppe.com](http://www.vitaminshoppe.com)). One rounded teaspoon has 1,000 milligrams of calcium and 600 milligrams of phosphorus. Add one teaspoon of bone meal, as well as three crushed calcium citrate pills. This will provide 1,999 milligrams of calcium and 1,392 milligrams of phosphorus. It will have 2.5 milligrams of calcium per calorie of beef; a CaP ratio of 1.4:1.

In addition to calcium and phosphorus, these diets need additional vitamins and amino acids to make boneless meat a balanced meal. There are numerous wild feline calcium and vitamin supplements which balance everything and are advertised in this *Journal*.

## DEFINITELY TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE

By Daniel Blinder

Breeding and selling exotics is a small but profitable industry. With about a week's worth of proper research, you could have the contact information of every serval breeder in the country. It is imperative that we communicate to prevent situations like the one I was in last week.

For all of us "new-timers," the Internet is the best way to find what we are looking for, or at least find people who are connected. Most of the experienced breeders, "old timers," (not to say that they are old), just call up an old pal, and within a litter or two they will have their exotic.

I am sure everyone has seen ads for cheetah cubs, ocelots, and margays, priced

incredibly cheap. These ads are from scammers based in Africa, and these scams are fairly easy to recognize. Usually there is just an email, and no contact number, and many sue the same stolen photos. I cannot imagine someone falling for this because it has "fake" written all over. Well, the scammers are getting more sophisticated and they almost got me!

I was reading emails, and one was from someone interested in a caracal I was selling. They asked me to contact them, and I emailed my phone number. I received a text message and we began communicating. The gentleman's name was Maxwell and he seemed very knowledgeable. Maxwell wanted to know what bloodline my caracals came from. Maxwell wanted to expand his breeding project. He also

had a litter of caracals and servals and asked if I was interested. Maxwell explained that his caracals were imported from a zoo in South America, and were of a new bloodline in America. Upon hearing this, I became very excited. I told him I would love to see pictures and I was interested in purchasing the entire litter and the serval kitten he had available. I asked him to call me, and he did. My called ID showed it was a California number. Maxwell had a deep Russian accent. We talked for a few minutes and then he asked me for my information. I told him that I wanted to see photos first.

Because of my respect for the "old timers," I called Lynn Culver, Scott and Theresa Schaffer, and also John Babb to let them know of my find of new caracal genetics in the U.S. They were all fairly

excited, except Lynn. Well, she was



**Daniel immediately recognized Teresa Shaffer, FCF director, as the lady holding the pair of serval kittens and then knew this was just another Internet scam artist at work.**

excited, but she was skeptical. I offered a special deal for these cats to these established caracal breeders.

I received another phone call after talking to everyone. Maxwell told me he sent the photos and he did the calculations. It would cost \$500 to ship the kittens and now he needed my information. I told him I would call him back right after I see the pictures.

I opened the photo attachments and the first few pictures were exciting, pictures I have never seen before! Remember, these were of a new bloodline. I was jumping for joy! Then it came. Maxwell had sent me a picture of Theresa with a pair of her serval kittens and then I knew it was a scam. I called Maxwell and gave him a piece of my mind.

The point of sharing this story is that had I never joined the FCF and attended Convention, I would not have known Theresa or recognized her. I might have lost \$9,000 to this newest breed of scammer. It was baffling. I spoke to the man and he had a California number. It is important for breeders to communicate,



**Caracal lynx kitten and Canada lynx kitten photo is stolen from Lynn Culver's website, [www.noahfcc.com](http://www.noahfcc.com)**

interconnected, and communication is key to prevent things like this from happening.

Not only did I almost lose \$9,000, but this has a bigger consequence, bigger than me. The government and the public are under the false impression that there is a surplus of exotics, and these lying scammers do not help our case. Also, we all need to be aware that they are not just offering the rare exotics like ocelots and cheetahs, but are hawking servals and caracals as well. If this helps one person from getting scammed, then it was well worth it. You cannot imagine how embarrassing it was to call Lynn, Scott, and John to tell them what happened.

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**A quick visit to Teresa's web site [www.exoticcat-srus.com](http://www.exoticcat-srus.com) revealed that this photo provided was also stolen from Teresa and is actually her caracal Jagger.**

## TASERS IN WILDLIFE MITIGATION AND CAPTIVE ANIMAL FACILITIES

By Larry Lewis, Phil Mooney, and Donald Dawes

*Larry Lewis is a wildlife technician for ADFG and a Taser Master Instructor; Donald Dawes is a physician and TASER researcher; and Phil Mooney is a wildlife biologist for ADFG.*

Port Armstrong, Alaska, 2010. As part of a multi-year, cooperative research effort between the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) and TASER International, wildlife research team members studying the effectiveness of TASER brand electronic control devices (ECD) for brown bear hazing and aversive conditioning, encountered a large female bear with two cubs as she walked under a boardwalk of the hatchery/cost recovery facility. The facility is a hot bed of bear activity due to the length of availability and sheer volume of food in the form of fish available to these large, coastal brunns. The facility is also a hot bed of human activity due to those same fish and the economic benefit derived from them. The often unavoidable interaction between people working and bears feeding are sometimes less than positive and result in bolder bears, lower safety margins for humans, and less tolerance of bears in and around the facility. There have been instances of human injury and bear deaths. In an effort to haze this bear from the human-occupied area of the facility, an ADFG team member deployed his TASER hand-held X3W ECD causing the sow to fall to the ground with all four extremities locked in extension for 5 seconds. The researcher coupled the effects of the device with loud verbal commands in an effort to cause a human/unpleasant sensation association for the animal. He then turned off the device, and the sow immediately got up and fled down the beach away from the facility, leaving her bewildered cubs bawling under the boardwalk. About 100 yards down the beach, she stopped, rose on her hindquarters and stood waiting for her cubs. Once re-united, they retreated back into the forest and avoided the human-developed area during times of human presence. The results of the team's multi-year bear hazing/aversive conditioning study will be reported in a



**Figure 1. TASER X3W ECD.**

soon to be submitted research paper, but the team can report that the device was highly effective for hazing and aversive conditioning, with an observed 100% flight response, no overt aggression response, and a high degree of human aversion after exposure.

The use of electricity for wildlife mitigation is not a novel concept with electric fences in common use (and even prior work on the restraint of alligators in the 1970's). However, a portable, targeted delivery system is a new concept, and has its origins in human law enforcement. Law enforcement has been using modern electronic control devices (ECD) for the control of aggressive suspects since 1999 with the release of the TASER M26 hand-held ECD. A wildlife mitigation technician working for ADFG first thought of using these devices after a state trooper he was assisting fired his TASER X26 at a moose that was chasing the two of them around a patrol car as they were attempting to free its calves that were trapped in a house foundation at a construction site. Both men were armed but neither wanted to kill or injure the moose which was defending its calves. The moose instantly dropped to the ground but in doing so broke the conductive wires from the device, and fled into the wood line allowing the technician to free the calves. This incident, and several subsequent incidents that were detailed in an article in the *Wildlife Professional* (Spring 2011), led to field trials and the joint

ADFG-TASER research partnership to examine the safety and effectiveness of these devices in wildlife applications. This work led to the development of the TASER X3W device and a training program specifically for wildlife.

The TASER X3W (see Figure 1), like other modern ECDs, uses gas to propel two copper-wire-tethered barbed metal probes to create an electric circuit that causes the firing of peripheral motor nerves that traverse the region between the probes. The X3W delivers pulses of electricity, with each pulse causing a contraction signal in the nerve. With a pulse rate of 19-29 per minute (depending on the setting), muscles are held in a contracted state, over-riding voluntary control of the muscles. Just as motor nerves are fired, sensory nerves are fired leading to aversive stimulation. The effects on the nerves only last as long as the device is delivering electricity. Because the quantity of motor nerves involved is dependent on location of the probes and the spread between them, targeting is important. A wide spread, including the shoulder girdle and the hindquarter, is usually sufficient to cause complete incapacitation of the animal. In Figure 2, a 600 lb. brown bear from the ADFG-TASER bear hazing study is incapacitated by the X3W. The probes can be seen in the left foreleg and left hindquarter. The 5-second exposure was sufficient to cause this bear to immediately flee the hatchery and to create a long-lasting human aversion reaction.

The X3W is a three shot, semi-automatic ECD with a range of approximately 35 feet. Two red lasers indicate the approxi-



**Figure 2. Brown bear exposed to a TASER X3W.**



**Figure 3. An Arizona Javelina exposed to the X3W in the “small animal” setting.**

mate probe placement within two to three inches. The second and third shots offer a back up in case of misses. As long as any combination of a positive and a negative (top and bottom) probe hits the subject, a circuit will be completed. The device employs a new technology called “pulse metering” which keeps the electrical output constant in the face of variable resistances (fur or skin thicknesses). The TASER X3W has several wildlife specific modifications when compared to standard law enforcement devices. The device has two manually selectable settings to allow



**Figure 5. A deer caught in a batting net.**

use on large animals, such as large ungulates and bears, and small animals, like the Arizona javelina (see Figure 3). In addition, most law enforcement devices discharge for five seconds with a single trigger pull. In order to allow hands-free use, the X3W can be manually set to discharge for 5, 30, and 60 seconds, depending on operator selection and need. The device can be disabled at any point by engaging the safety switch to “off.”

The devices have several applications

in wildlife mitigation and captive animal facilities to include: brief restraint for procedures or to facilitate longer-term restraint, hazing, aversive conditioning, disentanglements, and wildlife/captive facility worker safety. While study data is limited, TASER International is currently recommending that exposures be limited to less than 60 seconds, so for procedures expected to last longer than this, other restraint methods should be employed either alone or in concert with the ECD. Because the TASER X3W uses gas as the propellant, it is not a firearm, and does not carry the same legal

requirements as firearms in most states. This, in addition to its significantly lower probability for morbidity and mortality, dependent on laws and regulations, may make this an option for civilians to carry for protection when working around animals. In Figure 4, a Wood Bison bull suddenly becomes aggressive and knocks down a researcher in the pen. In this situation the worker was unharmed; however, further safety protocols were put into place after this event including procedures for safety personnel on site with firearms and ECDs. In Figure 5, a deer is caught in a batting net. Instead of using potentially dangerous chemical restraint and, given the short time requirement for the disentanglement, the wildlife workers opted to use an ECD. The ECD-restrained deer is shown in Figure 6. Wildlife agency staff was able to cut the netting and release the deer in less than one minute with no residual drug hazard for people or wildlife involved.

While current published research pertaining to the use of these devices in wildlife applications is limited, there is a large body of literature in laboratory swine and humans, both in clinical laboratory and field use settings. Swine studies show that since exposures would typically be to the large muscle groups of the flank, back or limbs in wildlife settings, cardiac effects would not be expected. In human field studies of over 4,000 field applications, there have been no deaths attributed to the devices. Injuries of any consequence were uncommon, and those that did happen could be attributed to predictable consequences such as falls due to incapacita-



**Figure 4. A buffalo suddenly knocks down a researcher in a pen. The TASER X3W may be useful staff safety tool.**

tion. In the joint ADFG-TASER International studies, there were no known serious injuries or deaths to any of the moose or bears exposed.

While not specifically designed for



**Figure 6. The deer in Figure 5 restrained by an ECD.**

wildlife, TASER International does have two other platforms that have demonstrated great utility in wildlife: the TASER XREP and the TASER Shockwave. The



**Figure 7. XREP.**



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**Figure 8. Larry Lewis targeting an XREP on a bull moose.**

XREP is a 12 gauge shotgun platform delivered as a stand-alone projectile with effective range up to 100 feet (see Figure 7). Impact energy causes the nose assembly to separate from a tethered cholla tail-piece upon contact with the subject animal creating the spread needed to complete the circuit. Due to the lower voltage of the device due to size and technical limitations, the device did not cause full incapacitation in the bears or moose in the ADFG-TASER International study. However, the device did appear to work well as an aversive conditioning or hazing tool, likely due to the local pain effect from electrical discharge at the nose assembly. This allows the operator of the devices greater flexibility when working with animals at ranges greater than the 35-foot limitation of the X3W. In Figure 8, an ADFG wildlife technician is about to discharge an XREP round at an aggressive bull moose near a home. Other hazing methods used within a continuum of force had proven ineffective or counter-productive prior to the responder deploying the XREP round. Using this device, he was able to effectively haze the animal from the area long-term and was not required to use lethal force methods. The Shockwave (see Figure 9) is an area denial device. It is a stationary, remotely deployed platform, almost like a portable electric fence. The current device has an output similar to the TASER X26, the standard law enforcement device. The ADFG-TASER research team tested this device with two deployments. Because of the targeting design of the equipment (vertical orientation for human targets), deployments were not optimal, however, the probes that did hit subject animals caused localized incapacitation and full flight response and

aversion to the area. Repositioning the device for use on a horizontal target, such as a quadruped, would make this device more useful as a portable area denial device or aversive conditioning tool in wildlife applications.

The ADFG-TASER research team is continuing its work with a planned physiology and stress study in reindeer later this year, and TASER International is working on developing other products to support wildlife and captive animal facility workers. ECDs will not work for all situations, and the research team and TASER International stress the importance of specific training and

consideration of the devices in the context of broad mitigation and emergency response plans.



**Figure 9. The Shockwave.**

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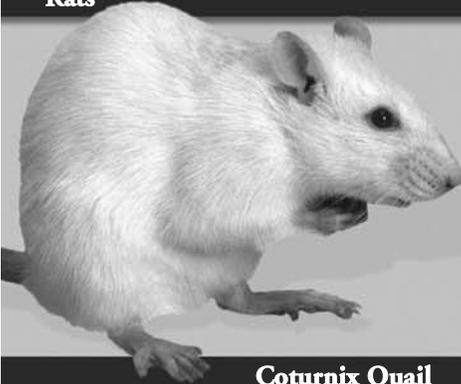
## Mice



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

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

## Rats



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

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

## Coturnix Quail



Less than	500	500	1000+	Grams	Oz.	Count
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

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



## Guinea Pigs

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

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## CAT LOVER'S PARADISE

By Fred Hood

I think it is safe to assume that anyone reading this magazine is a cat fanatic like me. For all true cat lovers, I am happy to report that I have found paradise! This oasis lies about an hour east of Paris, France, and it goes by the name Le Parc Des Felins. Even if you do not speak French, you ought to be able to figure out this means "The Feline Park." And what a park it is!

What is so special about this park? There are two things that set it apart from any other captive facility on the planet: habitat size and species diversity. To put it in layman's terms, they have the biggest habitats of just about any zoological facility and they have more types of cats than any other zoological facility. I mean far more, some of which do not exist anywhere in America.

I will give a description of the park layout and the habitats shortly. But first, let me whet your appetite by listing all of the cats living there (in roughly descending order of size). Are you ready for this?

Tiger (Siberian, Sumatran, Malayan, white Indian), lion (Angolan, east African, white South African), jaguar, leopard (Persian, Sri Lankan, Amur, black), cheetah, puma, snow leopard, clouded leopard, eurasian lynx (European, Siberian), Canada lynx (new acquisition since my visit), bobcat, Asian golden cat, serval, caracal,

ocelot, fishing cat, jungle cat, wildcat (European, African), sand cat, margay, jaguarundi, Pallas's cat, Geoffroy's cat, oncilla (tigrina), leopard cat, and rusty-spotted cat.

For those of you keeping count, that is 26 distinct species, more than two thirds of the planet's 36 cat species. That number does not include subspecies, which are listed in parenthesis. I mean, where else can you see four distinct subspecies of tiger and four distinct subspecies/morphs of leopard? What about lions? How many places have more than one kind of lion? And it goes without saying that their small cat collection is second to none. Unlike most zoos, they do not have just one pair of everything. Many of the small cats have multiple enclosures to accommodate multiple individuals or pairs. Breeding is a priority here and I saw numerous cubs and kittens on my last visit.

The park in its current form is still relatively new, having opened in 2006, on a former country estate of 60 hectares. It was



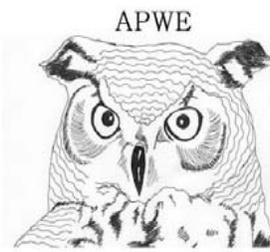
**European Wildcat, the wild ancestor to domestic cats.**

moved here from a much smaller (eight hectare) park that was founded in Auneau in 1998. The current location is near the rural community of Nesles, with the closest village with motels being Fontenay-Tresigny. That is where I stayed during my two visits to the park; one full day in the fall of 2009, and two full days in the fall of 2010.

By purchasing a country estate with a lot of existing woodland, the park founders were able to build an entire wildlife park with minimal expense. They



**Oncilla, small South American feline. Prior to the Endangered Species Act, and CITES, oncillas were imported into the US pet market, along with margay and Geoffroy's cats and labeled as ocelots. Today, oncillas are extinct in US captivity and there is probably no hope of ever seeing this species on display again.**



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simply used the existing vegetation and put fences around it. The parts of the estate that were already cleared of trees are used for the Savannah cats: lions and cheetahs. The end result is a park consisting of 100% naturalistic exhibits without the need for expensive construction projects.

The park is divided into four geographic loops: Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas. (There is also a walk-through lemur island, but don't ask me why it is here!) The Europe trail is not really a loop; it is a short dead-end path that only consists of two habitats: European wildcat and European lynx. The other three trails are true loops, however, taking visitors on extended paths featuring cats from different regions. Since most of the park is heavily forested, you cannot see the other continents when you are on any given path, which I find to be a nice touch.

The cats are really given room to roam,



**Rusty spotted cats are some of the smallest felines in nature, with adults weighing less than 5 pounds. This feline species is not found in US captivity.**

The neighboring fishing cat and jungle cat exhibits are particularly massive, and both feature a small stream in the front.

During the summer of 2010 (just before my second visit), the park experienced a baby boom on their Asia trail. When I was there in September, I was pleased to see the following babies: one

that male cats must be separated from the cubs, but here that is the exception rather than the rule. I can only assume that this is possible due to the large enclosure sizes, where the males can (and often do) stay away from the cubs and have their own space.

I could go on and on about my new-found favorite zoo, but this should be enough to peek your interest. I realize that some readers of this article will be so involved with the care of their own cats that they are unable to travel overseas. But for those of you who are fortunate enough to plan a trip to Europe, a visit to Le Parc Des Felins will not disappoint! If anyone is seriously considering a visit and needs tips on how to get there and where to stay, feel free to send me an email: FelidFoto@hotmail.com.



**Jaguarundi, a South American feline, has a red and brown coat phase and uniquely otter shaped head and body form, but it is all cat.**

which I like as well. The three lion habitats are each about two to three acres in size. The five or six tiger exhibits are each one to two acres in size. Cheetahs can be seen in roughly one acre exhibits both at the front of the park (before the actual trails start) and on the Africa trail. The other big cats (leopards, jaguars, snow leopards, and pumas) have habitats that are between half an acre and one acre in size. Even the small cats fare well here, with some of their habitats being about the same size as what many traditional zoos would use to house leopards or jaguars.

Asian golden cat, two Siberian tigers, four white Indian tigers, one snow leopard, two rusty-spotted cats, and four jungle cats. Interestingly, the tigers (both kinds), snow leopard, and jungle cats were in with both parents. On my 2009 visit, they had three serval kittens and I noticed these were in with both parents as well. Traditional zoo wisdom holds



**The Sri Lanka leopard, is an endangered subspecies of leopard not managed in the US zoo community.**



## SAVE VANISHING SPECIES

**T**he Rare Species Fund proudly announces the release of the first conservation based U.S. postal stamp. Working alongside Congressman Henry Brown of South Carolina, the RSF has helped to pass bill HR 1454. Signed into law by President Barack Obama, the new Multinational Species Semi Postal Stamp Act generates money, through the sale of a premium stamp, to help support five separate wildlife conservation projects. Marketed as “Save Vanishing Species,” the funds generated will be distributed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to help conserve tigers, great apes, rhinoceros, Asian elephants, African elephants and marine sea turtles. After much deliberation about the design of the first stamp, it was finally decided that the image of a tiger would be the most striking and effective means of inspiring the American public to take part in this new program.



*Doc Antle and Congressman Henry Brown celebrate the unanimous congressional passing of H.R. 1454 at the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington D.C. Some of the RSF animal ambassadors were present helping to illustrate the role of captive wildlife in wild conservation efforts.*

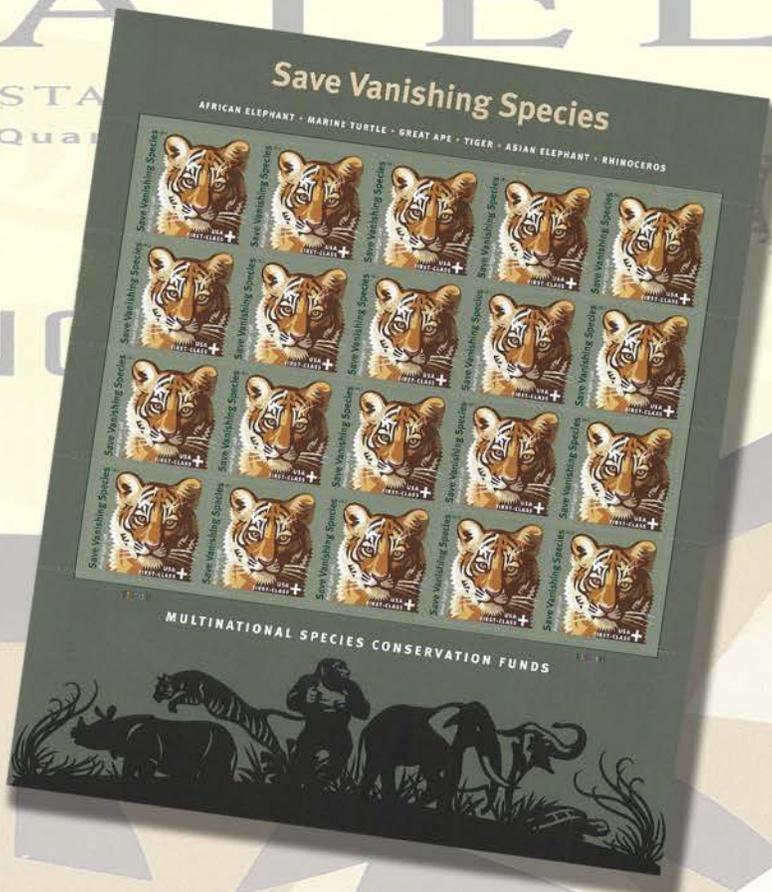


**T**he involvement of the Rare Species Fund did not end with the establishment of the new stamp. As members of the Multinational Species Coalition, and with representatives working directly with legislators in Washington D.C., the RSF continues to help direct the path and the future of this new conservation tool.

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*"As I have shared with you many times, this couldn't have been possible without the help of you and your team at TIGERS and the Rare Species Fund."*

Congressman Henry Brown

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And I couldn't come dearer: one pays for my leap—by the ounce.  
Oh, but Uncia uncia doubles the price of death. Why?  
Well, I thought it was bleeding clear: Uncia bitten, twice shy.  
The first Uncia, that's the first bite I put on you, called death;  
And the second's the death tax, the bite I put on your cold breath.  
I could call it taxonomy—oh, but you'll find it's not true:  
Come to say it quite rightly, the tax will fall squarely on you  
To say UN-see-a UN-see-a. There now, you see what I say?  
Now, just say what you see; you'll be taxed the right name-saying way;  
Which is not quite the same as naysaying, unless the two names  
That you're calling someone are attacks, and the calling defames.  
But taxonomy's not taxidermy; the same they are not.  
They're both taxes, it's true, but the first taxes your name—a lot,  
While the latter's a tax on your life—I should weep when it's snuffed?  
When we're both of us mounted, but you're the one dead—and I'm stuffed?  
But, dear me, you're as white as the snow, and you eyes are engrossed  
In dilating, and looking so wild, like you've just just seen a ghost.  
Yes, you think me cold-blooded, but, come—can you be so surprised?  
I should think that my so-called cold-bloodedness you'd have surmised,  
Knowing I'm chilling out upwards of twenty thousand feet high  
In the mountains of Central/South Asia (I do mystify),  
In the mists of Mongolia, India, China, Bhutan,  
And Nepal, and in Russia, and six countries ending in “stan.”  
Yet, a meat-eater born to the manner, I hope you won't see  
Shearing yours off the bone, steaming, coldly bad manners in me;  
Well, at least not the first bloody gorging, so twitchingly warm;  
Eating that one as coldly as all the rest would be bad form.  
Nothing personal, you understand—it's survival. I trust  
You will see that my lust to stay warm bids me do what I must.  
Surely you'd not begrudge me my first steaming helping of meat  
That I need now to stoke up the fire of my base body heat.  
Well, begrudge me then; my body's stocky, my fur woolly thick  
(Fully five inches long on my belly, my best thermal trick);  
And my ears short and rounded, paws furred on their each underside;  
And my tail thick with fat and fur, beautifully long—and so wide  
That it does itself proud as a muffler to wrap round my face,  
Warmly wrapping my dreams of the kill in a thermal embrace;  
All which keep me from losing that vital core heat I so need  
Just to stay in that warm bloody manner I'm long used to feed.  
So, you see, don't you? I am not really cold-blooded, at heart;  
Yet the heat of my blood has been sorely maligned from the start.  
I may kill a man's livestock (I have to survive how I can;  
I won't try to defend the kill), but I've not once attacked Man.  
And that's not out of yellowness; my eyes are pale green or gray  
(Like my ghostly gray coat). No, in fact, I've the courage to say  
That I've more than a warm spot in heart for my too-human foil,  
And the pluck, guts, and valor to dare say he makes my blood boil  
That he kills me, for food? For my black market bones, and my pelt!  
Can you doubt, then, my ardor for Man is so heatedly felt?  
And there's more ways he's got me all wrong that you can't put your trust in:  
I can't roar or purr (though I do make a sound I call prusten:  
Non-threatening puffing sound made through my nostrils); and my***

*Muzzle's short, and my forehead is domed that, beneath it, might lie  
Oversize nasal cavities, helping me breathe in the thin  
Mountain air; and I will eat the odd grass and twig, with chagrin;  
I'm not social at all; no, I'm so solitary that there  
Is no word for a group of snow leopards, not even a pair;  
I am secretive, true, but I can't keep a secret at all,  
And it's this: I once said I've a long tail (to Vanity's call),  
While the truth is, my tale is this short—oh! and most cautionary,  
Whose moral I'll get to; for now, your ears can't be too wary:  
A hind's smuggest pride was her having the keenest of ears  
That would warn her, "Snow leopard behind you!" her greatest of fears.  
So she blithely walked out in the snow, with no thought she would jeopard  
Her life, heard a sound, said, "Wh-Who's there?" and heard, "It's no leopard."  
"Oh, thank you, dear God, for that life-saving benison. Pooh!  
It's no leopard behind me that's stalking my venison. PHEW!"  
Walking carelessly on, in due course she was eaten, unpeppered.  
Till death her ears held that they clearly had heard, "It's snow leopard."  
The Hind would have none of it, swearing to God she was saddled  
With two faulty ears, while they held the Hind's hearing was addled.  
The Hind's spirit argued she shouldn't be dead, as a rule,  
For she had two good ears on her head, and the Hind was snow fool,  
So could not see the moral for looking: When fear of all fears  
Clearly says, "It's no leopard" behind you, you can't trust your ears.  
Well, you've paid for your death by the ounce; there's no use to appeal.  
And it's good you paid dearly, just when I so need a hot meal.  
And it's good, too, my tale was so short, and in short it was told,  
For I see by the way you've stopped shivering, you're getting cold*

**By David Madison**

If you would like your own copy of the artwork by Teri Zucksworth featured on the previous page, please donate to the FCF's Wildcat Safety Net Fund! Look on the FCF website to find out how.

## **A VIEW OF FELINE EYE DISORDERS**

By Lynn Culver

### **Coloboma**

Colobomas are segmental areas of the eye which fail to develop properly. The word *coloboma* comes from the Greek word for mutilation. Colobomas are not just isolated to the internal eye; all of the structures of the eye are involved. These are the choroid, the retina, the optic disk, the ciliary body, the macula, and the iris.

In a litter of four bobcat kittens, one kitten had an eye that either turned down or crossed, but the littermates appeared normal. During a health examination of the litter, the veterinarian noted the kitten with the crossed eye and believed it would perhaps grow out of it. The other kittens all passed their physicals and each kitten was eventually transferred to its new owners.

The kitten with the initial crossed eye was the last kitten placed and, while still with the breeder, it was examined by a veterinary ophthalmologist and diagnosed

as having a rare congenital defect that the ophthalmologist had only seen twice in his career. He diagnosed the kitten with a congenital defect known as optic nerve coloboma.

Congenital defects can be caused by a number of factors, including virus, systemic infection during pregnancy, exposure to toxins, or even possibly due to a lack in some specific nutritional requirement during pregnancy. The ophthalmologist was of the opinion that most likely the bobcat mother was exposed to a virus or stress during early pregnancy. Optic nerve coloboma causes defects in the optic nerve and, in this case, it caused the kitten's eye to cross.

The breeder received reports from the new owners and learned that the other kittens were also experiencing problems. One littermate had colobomas of the eye-



lid, a deformity of the upper eyelid that prevents the eyelids from fully closing. Eventually, this kitten also developed spinal deformities affecting her ability to walk, and, with heartbreaking sadness, the owner made the difficult decision to have the kitten euthanized.

The male kitten with the crossed eye was purchased by a lady who loves him very, very much in spite of his problems.

He is under the care of the breeder's ophthalmologist and surgery is expected to correct his condition.

Another kitten from this litter developed cataracts and a dermoid on its cornea, which is tumor-like aberrant skin tissue, much like an enlarged blood vessel. The dermoid was removed and that kitten's prognosis post-surgery is very favorable.

The fourth kitten has a single crossed eye and entropion of the eyelids, which is an inversion of part or the entire eyelid margin, which causes frictional irritation of the cornea because of contact with the eyelash or eyelid hair. Surgery to correct the entropion is a simple matter of making a slit above the eyelid and cutting away a small amount of skin and suturing the cut back together. This pulls the eyelashes away from the eye, but still leaves plenty of lid to fully close over the eye.

### **Microphthalmia**

This year, we had a litter of caracals born to a mother with a tendency not to stay with her neonate kittens, and this behavior has necessitated the early removal of her kittens, sometimes between only a few hours or days after birth. She has at times successfully cared for her offspring, so we know she has the skills.

This time, she was once again spending too much time out of her house, so we decided to lock her up and examined the kittens to determine if they appeared hungry or fed and to make a decision of whether or not to pull them. I looked at



**Handsome Winkie Caracal doesn't let his microphthalmia hold him back. At Lynn Culver's, he played enthusiastically with a cat toy on a string along with the other kittens. Photo by Eden Tran.**

their tiny faces and was struck by how thin their faces looked, and I even thought to myself that it looked like they did not have eyes. Their bellies seemed firm and not flabby, so we decided the caracal mother must have nursed them and left them in her care.

Twelve days later, it was time to pull them for hand-rearing, and the two beautiful boys were big and fat, proof that the caracal mother had been a fine caregiver.

I noticed that one kitten had both eyes open, but the other kitten had one eye open and the other still closed. I figured the eyelids would separate in the next day or two, but, an hour later, as I stared at this kitten, I saw that something was wrong. It appeared that if the eyelids were to separate and open, the opening would not be large enough to fully expose an eye and, even more disturbing, as I felt over the lids, I did not feel any round shape, which made me seriously doubt that there was an eye underneath the lids! I thought back to my impression from day one when I examined the kittens, and it must have been this kitten, and this eye, which made me wonder if the kittens had eyes.

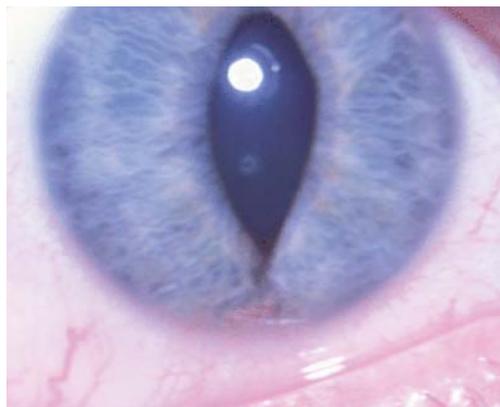
Being born without an eye is not an inherited defect; there is no gene for one eye. It is a congenital defect, which is to say that something went wrong

during the early development of the fetus inside the mother's womb. This is not very common in cats, but not completely unknown either.

The condition is called anophthalmia when the entire globe is missing. A similar condition is microphthalmia, which is an undersized eye, and, in severe cases, it can be very similar to anophthalmia. The only way to tell the two conditions apart is by examining stained tissue under a microscope. True anophthalmia occurs in around one in 100,000 births. Microphthalmia and colobomas occur in around one in 10,000 births; therefore, I believe that this caracal most likely was born with severe microphthalmia, rather than anophthalmia.

I have since spoken with two FCF members who know of similar cases, one being a bobcat kitten born in Ohio, this past year, and the other, several years ago in California, where an ocelot was born with a single eye.

Our little, one-eyed caracal has adjusted to his disability and does not seem to have any other optic anomalies. He does not have depth perception, but I am confident that he will grow up fine. Bart named him Winkie, and he is a loving and gentle cat that lives with plenty of little Geoffroy's buddies.



**Interestingly, in humans, colobomas are sometimes called "cat's eye syndrome" because of the similarity to the feline iris caused by improper development. Photo from [www.eyepathologist.com](http://www.eyepathologist.com).**

## Horner's Syndrome

Horner's syndrome is a sympathetic denervation of the eye. Symptoms include a protruding third eyelid (nictating membrane), a drooping upper eyelid, constricted pupils, or sunken eye. The syndrome can be caused by injury to the sympathetic nerve, spinal cord damage, middle ear trauma, brainstem injury or infection, or it can be idiopathic, meaning that the cause is unknown.

Numerous functions are automatically controlled by the nervous system, including heart and respiratory rates, circulation to different body areas, and pupil dilation and constriction. The part of our nervous system dedicated to these automatic systems is called the "autonomic nervous system."

The autonomic nervous system is divided into the "sympathetic nervous system" and the "parasympathetic nervous system." The parasympathetic system maintains the status quo, a normal, business-as-usual state; the sympathetic system prepares the body for a "fight or flight" situation. Some changes that might be stimulated by the sympathetic system include dilated pupils, increased heart rate, and increased blood flow to muscles. Both systems co-exist in balance in the healthy feline body.

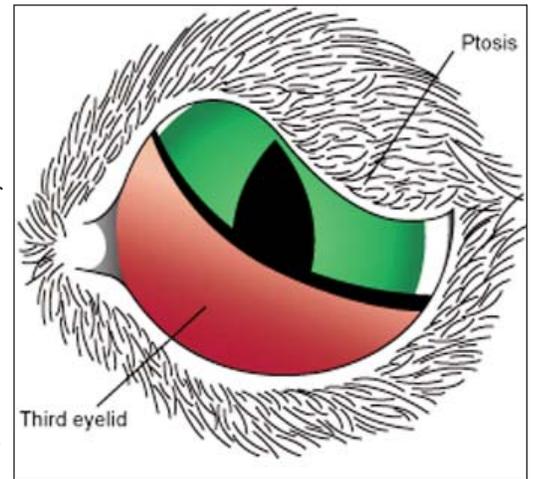
When the sympathetic system controlling one of the eyes is damaged, only the parasympathetic nerves work, and Horner's syndrome is created. That is what happened recently when an older Geoffroy's kitten grabbed a young caracal kitten of mine by the neck. The Geoffroy's canines penetrated the caracal kitten's neck and injured (or at least traumatized) the sympathetic nerve.

The nerves carrying the tiny nerve fibers that provide sympathetic control to the eye originate in the brain stem and travel down the spinal cord in the neck area, exiting just inside the chest at the level of the second thoracic vertebra. The nerves then form the "cervical sympathetic trunk," a bundle of nerves that travels back up the neck, this time outside the spinal cord, to the middle ear. These nerves then connect to new nerves just below the ear and continue their journey to the eye.

The damage to the caracal kitten occurred in the neck area just below the ear. As a result of the nerve injury, the kitten's nictating membrane protruded and covered half the eye. In addition, that pupil was constricted compared to the one in the other eye. When I saw the nictating membrane, I immediately knew it was

Horner's syndrome, as I had one previous experience with Horner's when an adult female cat was attacked by her mate and bitten about the face. She developed Horner's syndrome and the damage was permanent; her nictating membrane remained forever visible.

I was apprehensive, but hopeful, that this kitten would make a full recovery due to it being



**Horner's syndrome is characterized by continual presence of the third eyelid and drooping of the top eyelid. Image by Lifelearn, Inc.**

so young and, considering that if the nerve was not severed, it should be able to re-route or repair. A three-week old kitten will make lots of new nerve cells as it grows. We treated the kitten with clavomox antibiotic drops to prevent infection from the initial puncture wound and we gave him a dose of dexamethasone steroids to help reduce inflammation of the sympathetic nerve. I was cautious in using the steroids, but decided that since I was using antibiotics, I would just watch closely, and if I saw any sign of infection, I would discontinue use. I gave the kitten another shot of dexamethasone for two more days, plus a shot of B complex every other day for a week as well. B vitamins help with any nerve problems.

Recovery can take from six weeks to four months. I was pleased to see a marked improvement in just two weeks with the kitten's nictating membrane receding nearly out of view. During the time the membrane was visible, it varied from covering half the eye to being just slightly visible. If I touched the membrane when it was covering half the eye, it would slide over to cover the entire eye and then slide back, often settling at a more normal position. That gave me hope, since it appeared the membrane would respond to stimulus and was not paralyzed. The kitten was transferred to its new owner at one month old with the condition mostly resolved, uneven pupils being the main symptom still uncorrected. Two weeks later, the kitten was reported to have made a full recovery from its Horner's Syndrome.



**Lynn's caracal kitten with Horner's syndrome exhibited the protruding nictating membrane (third eyelid) in the lefthand eye. Photo by Eden Tran.**

## BLAST FROM THE PAST: STARS OF THE CAT WORLD

Long Island Ocelot Club  
Volume 14 Number 4  
July/August 1970

By Robert E. Baudy, Owner  
Rare Feline Breeding Compound  
Center Hill, Florida 33514

*The author, Robert E. Baudy, is well known in zoo circles throughout the world for his success in breeding the rare species of felines. He is equally well known to the public as a circus performer. Robert and his wife, professionally known as Charlotte Walch, are in demand for their acts: Robert with his huge Siberian tigers, and Charlotte with her leopards, one of which is black.*

### THE AFRICAN LION (*Panthera leo*)

The flamboyant sunset reflected blinding gold sparks off the centurion's embossed bronze chest plate. Reaching the top of the hill, the young officer reined his steed to an about turn, raised his muscular arm and nodded to the herald. The sounds of the horn carried down the endless gray line, reached the next herald who, in turn, transmitted the order further down the strange cortege.

The endless file of ox-pulled, chain-rattling wagons came to a jolting halt. Emerging from within the convoy itself every thousand yards, almost immediately, appeared the feeding carts. Pulled at brisk pace by tandems of dapple-gray Arabian studs, the red-painted vehicles passed along the line while three naked, blood-spattered Numidian slaves, armed with iron tridents, tossed from each cart the sanguinolent chunks of flesh to other slaves standing atop each cargo wagon.

As the teams approached each cart from the rear, the deafening roars of the hungry beasts intensified suddenly. The overall effect was akin to the mighty sound of an incoming raging cyclone. The

air was heavy with pungent wild animal scents and sickening emanation of warm blood and viscera. The whole scene was unreal in sight and gigantic in scope.

The time was in the year 76 BC, 60 days before the Ides of March, late in the afternoon, under the reign of Pompey the Great. The place was somewhere on the Appian Way, a day's march from Rome. The convoy's cargo was composed of 700 recently captured African lions going, under army supervision, to the capital to be used in the forthcoming giant gladiatorial games.

The African lion (*Panthera leo*) has been linked so intimately, for so long and on such a scale to our own history that, rather than to deal in details with descrip-



**An Egyptian statue from the 30th dynasty of Pharaoh Nectanabo, now held at the Vatican Museum.**

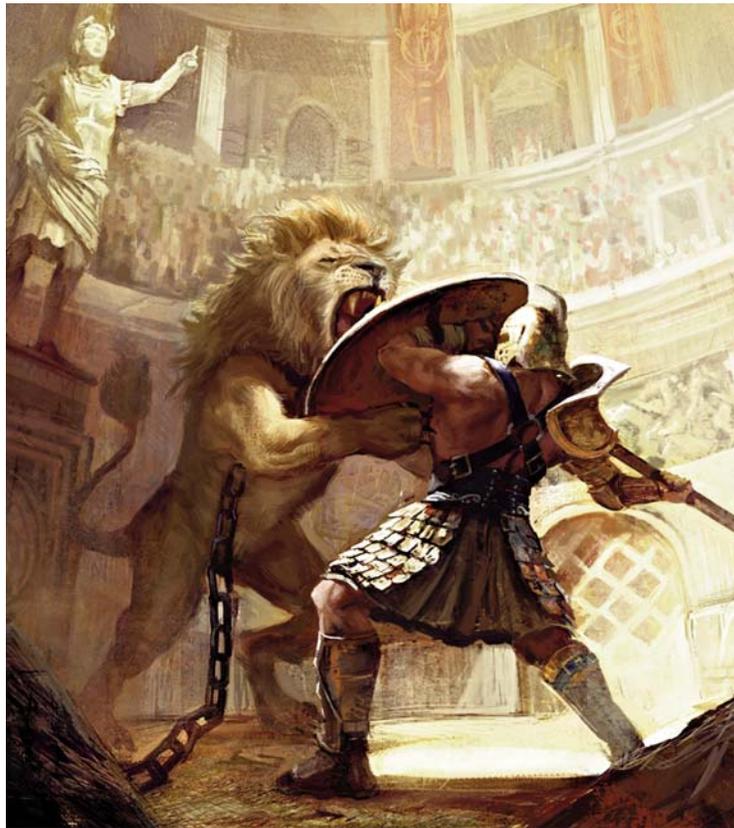
tion of the familiar animal, we will ask the reader to let us dwell on such amazing and unique association.

Evidence of the species being worshipped in a large way by the Egyptians as early as 3000 BC, still exists in the form of stone engravings of the god-animal on many monuments. Temples dedicated to the cult of the five god-beasts (lion, wolf, cat, baboon, and falcon) are known to have existed in Memphis, Thebes, and Lycopolis. In Babylon and Egypt, imperial palace grounds were stocked with tame, adult lions. Pharaoh Ramses II's favorite pet lion was named Antam-Necht and is immortalized on Luxor's famous obelisks.

The amazing cult spread throughout Syria, Chaldee, Greece, and all of Asia Minor, and the stately cat was everywhere to be revered. This was the lion's true golden age, a precursor epoch to another era which was to be of drastically different consequence for the species: classical antiquity.

The range of the lion at that time was extremely large, spanning two continents in an unbroken habitat extending from the southern tip of Africa throughout the whole continent (with probable exception of thick jungle and rainforests), habitable parts of Arabia, Syria, Turkey, Persia, Asia Minor, and deep into India.

The easy availability of the



**Artist Miguel Coimbra's vision of a Roman gladiator battling a lion for the entertainment of the masses.**



**A royal seal of Darius the Great, ancient king of Persia, an area within the original range of the lion. It depicts the monarch on a lion hunt by chariot, with one dead lion under the horses already. From the British Museum.**

animal was certainly a factor in the large numbers of them being used in the cruel form of Roman entertainment. But the "personality" of the lion was also, undoubtedly, another major reason for its downfall.

People wanted lions then just as today the masses demand famous movie or football stars. The majestic demeanor of the great cat, its size and stately mane of the male, its tremendous roar and willingness to use it, made it a "must" in ancient circuses -- just as it is in our own times.

The gladiatorial games were of great political importance to Roman leaders. The well-known people's cry, "Panem & Circuses" (Bread and Spectacles) has not been altered much since, and, contrary to what the reader's probable opinion of the



**Lithograph titled "Lion Tamer," by Gibson & Co. publishers, 1873.**

freedom in ancient Rome may be, the support of public opinion was of foremost importance for the Caesars. And this is where the lion came in.

### **The Spectacles**

No successful game could exist without the beast and the more of them the better. It was the necessary and basic ingredient for the grand and bloody spectacles. And it was, of course, an inescapable necessity for the leaders to constantly surpass previous games in magnificence and in number (especially the ones staged by predecessors or competitors).

Where the dictator, Scioevola, was the first to display (and put to death) 100 full-maned lions, Julius Caesar produced 400 of them in a single game, and Pompey the Great, 600. (A single game would last from three to five consecutive days.)

Eventually, the slaughter of animals grew beyond belief (to be dwarfed only by expendable humans) and there is record of up to 5,000 various animals, (mostly felidae) being dispatched in a single game. Such tremendous use of animal life led to a high development of the wild beast business.

Capture of the specimens was, in many instances, affected by the governments of conquered countries, which had to furnish so many thousand heads of animals to

Rome as part of the peace treaty. In other cases, the well-drilled Roman legions were used. A huge human ring of shielded soldiers converged on suitably located ravines or man-made stockades into which the animals were driven.

Keeping hundreds of recently captured, dangerous animals alive and in good condition for many months prior to arrival at the final

Forum was, as one can imagine, a tremendous task, even by today's standards. It could only be accomplished by very competent supervision and careful advanced planning.

Immediately on arrival at the show-place, the animals were unloaded in the special underground quarters (*vivaria*). These huge basement complexes included prisoners of war and slaves' detention cell blocks, thousands of connecting iron cages for beasts and special quarters including infirmary, morgue, slaughter house, blacksmiths, etc. Best accommodations were reserved for specialized animal handlers.

### **The "Best" Lions**

Not all wild animals were put to death. Many were trained to a degree never duplicated since. Displays of tandem and quadriga (team of four animals) of adult, full-maned lions, magnificently harnessed, sprinkled with gold dust and pulling imperial chariots are on record. Amazing exhibitions of animal control--such as retrieving unharmed, smaller game by lions--was accomplished many times.

"Conditioning" and actual training of the big cats was the responsibility of two very distinct classes of animal handlers. Although all of them had to begin with the "custos vivarii" duty (keeper), they could, after proving themselves, become either "belluarius" (animal subjugator) or "mansuetarius" (animal tamer). Where evidently the former position required substantial strong nature requirements (duties of belluarius included accustoming the animal to human flesh consumption so they would put on a good show in the arena) necessary to learn the art of fighting the animals to death, the latter specialized only in the monotonous, refined training of the animal stars. The charges were happy beasts, carefully looked after and pampered. At least one name of these master trainers reached us: Paulus Superbus from the Gaul Region.

### **Temporary Respite for the Lion**

With the fall of the Roman Empire and the end of classical antiquity, coupled with the emergence and predominance of Christianity, the African lion went through a well-deserved rest period, having been already exterminated from many parts of its former range. The Middle Ages left *Panthera leo* practically undisturbed. The arrival of the modern rifle, combined with jet age travel and cut-rate safaris, is now depleting the species so quickly that hunt-

ing organizations, fortunately, no longer are "guaranteeing your lion within 30 days."

Although not in immediate danger of extinction (the word "immediate" in today's conservation can be quite relative!), it is fair to say that the species will probably be available in the wild state, to our grandchildren, in controlled parks only. The African lion breeds well in captivity, so prolifically, in fact, that lion raising is definitely a losing proposition. A huge appetite (requiring 15 pounds of meat daily for adults), plenty of competition and an average market price of only \$400 per specimen will tell the reader why.

No zoo can operate decently today without lions, and more than the antiquated spectacles could. Contemporary circuses do not dare tour without him and the cat's majestic appearance, continuously featured in movies and television is as well known to our kids as it was to Egyptian kids 4,000 years ago.

#### The Lion in his Natural Home

In the wilds, the fierce looking male is actually a true "bon vivant" who lets the female do the killings for him and has to have his daily afternoon siesta. The temporarily spotted cubs are extremely cute and will, indeed, when hand-raised, make unusually good pets. Their keeping as age creeps on, presents the owner with problems, which the reader can well imagine.

Several instances of lion lovers being affectionately killed by a well meaning, tender swipe of the oversized, clumsy pet are on record. So please keep this in mind and do not sell your ocelots yet!

In complete opposition to the secretive tiger, the lion is a cat of open plain or light scrub habitat. In former times, in fact, the species ranged extensively through true desert areas. A February 1943 issue of National Geographic Magazine features an amazing and very impressive photo of a full-maned male in a



In the 1920s and 30s, Charles Gay bred lions for the motion picture industry. His lion, Jackie, became world-famous as the logo for MGM studios.

typical desert surrounding. The tawny color of the animal (which renders the lion practically invisible when motionless) is a good example of adaptation to sandy habitats. For some unexplained reason, the great cat never penetrates the deep forest, perhaps because its predilection to hunt mostly by sight and daylight puts him at a disadvantage in the forest. The famous stately mane of the adult male lion is doubtless a vestige of much more extensive body insulation, when prehistoric predecessors were roaming European caverns during the Ice Age.

Even today, *Panthera leo* can tolerate without ill effects extremely low temperatures. About 10 years ago, we witnessed,

to our surprise, a wild animal trainer taking his performing African lions from Detroit, Michigan, during the month of January when the current temperature was -20°F. The animals were taken for a 300-mile trip on an uncovered flatbed truck. The voyage, which would have undoubtedly killed southern races of tigers (such as Bengal or Sumatran), was affected without harmful results to the lions.

Although not normally classified as an established man-eater (in comparison with the tiger, which until recently, was claiming a yearly mean of 2,000 human lives in India), the lion can become

a real terror after being accustomed to human flesh. Good examples are the lions of ill-famed Tsavo in Uganda, which held up railroad construction there for 10 months while killing approximately 30 people, including a police inspector who had fallen asleep while stalking the killers.

#### The Working Lion

In today's circus arena, the lion is a "natural" who's quickly aroused nature delights the animal trainers (most of the time!). They can carry out realistic false attacks better than any other cats can, jolt the attention of the most blasé audiences, make little old ladies scream, and scare the kids.

Despite the eternal trophy-room, he-man lust for the unique, magnificent centerpiece, odds are good that *Panthera leo* will continue to coexist with us for a long time to come.

Resilient lions have been intimately a part of our beliefs, fears, joys, legends, and admiration, for so many millennia that I do not believe we could do without them any more than the Great Cat could really enjoy life without the fun of "hamming it up" for the benefit of thousands of park visitors and youngsters who look at his durable splendor in eternal awe and wonder.



The African lion in its modern-day home range of Botswana, published by National Geographic. Photo by Dereck & Beverly Joubert.

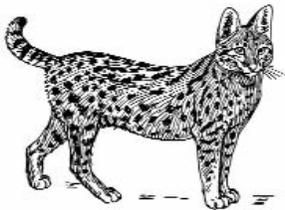


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## THE BARKER BOYS: YEAR THREE

By Kim Barker

This past May, Obi, Sammy, Mojo, and William celebrated their third birthdays. Though they are now adults, they have maintained much of their mischievous antics like most servals at that age do, and still truly enjoy their human friends. Bonds that started and have been maintained since they were cubs have continued to grow and deepen. They have also decided to be open to a few new bonds. Recently, the “boys” experienced a change in their habitat.

A couple of months after their birthday, the boys were moved from an enclosure next to Doug and Mindy’s house into the small compound. At first, the move was a bit frightening for them, but we could tell this was probably going to pass quickly and they would come to love the change of scenery along with the new smells, neighbors, and especially grass. Cookie and Jeremiah Lemur have not been thrilled with the rowdy boys moving in next door, but the servals love watching and stalking their primate “friends.” Just

to be clear, the servals are simply very curious about the lemurs and have not been terrorizing them. We think Jeremiah actually believes that the four boys are no match for his “lemur-ness.” Taz Caracal and Tres Ocelot act as though they could not care less that they have new neighbors, but Sammy has determined that Taz will pay him respect. Taz simply walks to the edge of his enclosure and nonchalantly teases Sammy, occasionally giving him an ear flick.

The move has seemed particularly good for Mojo. He had become increasingly reclusive in the old enclosure and was not very social even with his long-time human friends. We think that Mojo may still have lingering effects from the metabolic bone disease that this group suffered through as youngsters from what we believe was a batch of formula that contained no calcium. Though still very quiet and to himself, he has been more engaged with his brothers and welcoming of attention by visitors. He has also maintained his



**The Barker servals love their time outside, where they can eat grass and enjoy the attention that their mom, Kim, lavishes on them.**

very sweet nature and still quietly purrs for us every now and then when we sit down with him.

Though Sammy is no longer the largest in the group (William has caught up to him), he continues to be the most social. He is quick with a “Meh” when he is spoken to, and loves to give head butts and affection to his human friends. One of our keepers, Carolyn Hinshaw, who is also Sammy’s adopter, spends as much time with him as she can. She has done an excellent job of target training with Sammy and it is evident immediately that these two have a special bond.

William continues to be misunderstood by many because of his personality that can sometimes be interpreted as aloof, but he has become more affectionate with his human friends and relishes playing in the grass, which his new enclosure provides. He is also still very much a clown. He and Obi seem to love nothing more than greeting one of their human friends with a head butt or rub, and then spraying, and sometimes hosing down that human. You can almost see the grin on his face when he is successful.



**Obi and Sammy take lots of catnaps together in their new enclosure. Below, William daydreams on his own.**

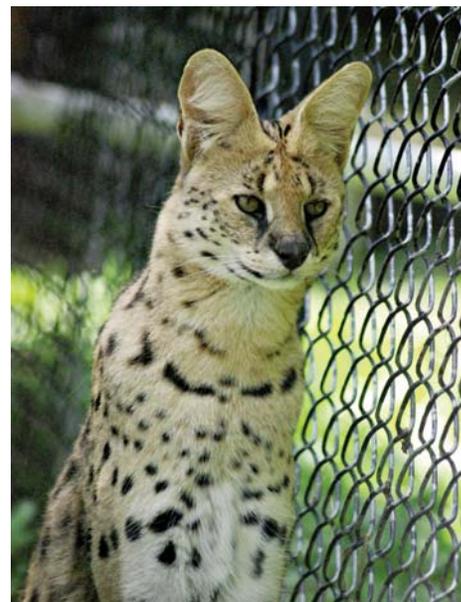
And of course there is Obi. He is still the smallest, yet he is the serval in charge. He and Sammy have maintained their tight bond as brothers and you will often see them napping side by side when the weather is cooler. Though I love all of the serval boys, this little guy has a special place in my heart. Yes, he can be difficult, and, of all the boys, probably takes the most pleasure in spraying visitors, but he has a huge heart, loves life, and, as people have told me and I often see, obviously loves me back.

Being in the compound has also brought a bit more attention to them from

visitors as well as caregivers in the form of interns and volunteers. With this attention has come additional enrichment in the form of giant boxes, frequent “fishing” expeditions in baby pools full of goldfish, and other treats. They love the activity and extra attention. And the people who provide the enrichment as well as the spectators, get to see how much fun these beautiful cats have playing and frolicking in whatever the activity of the moment is. In addition to showing up with a new toy of some sort, scents, or a tasty food treat for them, I have

also found that carrying in a “bouquet” of long grass makes me very popular. I simply sit down in there enclosure holding the grass surrounded by four very happy servals, who are very careful to make sure they are only munching on grass. This, of course, as well as any interaction I have with them, results in a spray. They are servals, after all.

As time goes on, the newness and excitement of a relationship of any kind wears off. But hopefully, what you are left with as that relationship continues, is a deepness and richness of affection. It becomes nearly impossible for either party to imagine what life would be like without the other. I cannot speak for the serval boys, but I can certainly speak for me. I am so glad to know them and life certainly has not been the same for me.



## **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.

**Thierry Plaud – Intermediate**  
**Pamela Kay Tujague – Intermediate**  
**Rebecca Jensen – 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

## OCELOTS BY EMAIL?

By Lynn Culver

John Holm wanted my opinion on the possibility that he could purchase ocelots on the Internet. He had responded to a Website advertisement by Laura Torres. Of course I assured him that such an offer had to be another Internet scam, and asked him for the source of these “ocelots.”

John forwarded me the emails and photos. This Internet scam came from Cameroon, and a pair of male and female kittens was offered at the bargain basement price of \$900 for males and \$1,000 for females. If both were purchased, the price, including shipping, was a mere \$1,800. Not only that, the kittens were socialized, vaccinated, micro-chipped, came with toys and costumes (??), had CITES paperwork, and would be shipped by Express PET freight services from Cameroon, arriving just 24 hours after a down payment. The seller limited the offer to pet owners only, probably recognizing that a legitimate breeder would not fall for this scam. All a buyer had to do was wire a 50% down payment, and Laura would send the ocelots to America.

In the May 2011 *Journal*, Dolly Gluck

reported on an Internet scam offering \$500 cheetah cubs, but it seems newsworthy to highlight a few more of these scams. There is no doubt that persons of other nations see Americans as a potential gravy train, and these thieves have no conscience about stealing. I have seen several of my own website photos used in these scams. These scammers are also stealing words as well, using contract language from legitimate licensed sellers of animals.

The prevalence of these international Internet scams offering to sell anything and everything is so annoying, and in the case of exotics, it helps fuel the false impression that exotic kitten production and sales is rampant. Most recently this false impression was again repeated in the flurry of articles published by mainstream media like NEWSWEEK and TIME after the Ohio tragedy, most stating that buying dangerous animals such as tigers “is just a click away.”

The real kicker in these scams is that photos supplied are often not even the species being advertised. In this case, the “mother ocelot” appears to be nothing more than a spotted domestic cat,

maybe a savannah or some other hybrid, but certainly not an ocelot.

Read on and smile:

From: "laura torres"  
<laura002torres@gmail.com>  
Date: Sep 17, 2011 6:46 AM  
Subject: Ocelots  
To: <lawncareplus.holm69@gmail.com>

I currently have male and female Ocelot kittens for sale now. They are 9 weeks old, perfectly trained, very healthy and come with all health papers and accessories. You will pay \$900 for the male and \$1000 for the female. But if you are if you



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are taking the pair, you will pay \$1800. The following is included:  
Shipping, paperwork, Micro-Chip, Rabies vaccine (rabies vaccine is required for international shipments), Accessories [toys, blankets, litter box, pet taxi, animal nutrition and health manual, sprays and costumes], some more food, and a cage. The kittens will be accompanied by the following documents:

CITES export permit, Veterinary Certificate, certificates of origin, Pet passport, The purchase agreement, Transfer of ownership certificate, parents Pedigree.

The kittens have the following characteristics:

One of the most important aspects of their lives - their first and second protective injections.

Fed best protein and vitamin diet is.

Feeding information for you to follow.

Micro-chipped for your peace of mind.

Fully socialized and mingled with family life.

Fully litter trained.

Kittens are de-flea and wormed.

Fully examined and inspected by a veterinarian once after two months of good health.

A full pedigree certificate describes four parent generation.

We ship our kittens internationally with the help of specialized pet express deliv-

ery firms.

Sales practices:

You will make a deposit of 50% after we must have signed a purchase agreement and an escrow agreement that my husband will prepare and send over to you. After signing both agreements, you will make deposit payment so we can pay for all health and shipping documents will be made at the Ministry here.

We will collect paper from the Minister and send copies of emails, so you can see for yourself. We shall later continue with the shipment booking and send you a copy of Air Way Bill, and Itinerary, so you can see all flight details and tracking number.

You will pay the difference as soon as the kitten has been delivered to your address.

Delivery method: By Express PET freight services

Delivery time: 24 hours max

Origin: Cameroon

Payment Method: Bank transfer and wiring

Payment terms: 50% deposit for the paper and shipping, the balance after delivery.

Shipping is from Douala International Airport.

Have you ever had one before?



Need them for breeding or as pets?

Sorry for these questions. I just want to make sure that our kittens get the best home from a trusted lover pet. We do not sell our kittens for breeding purposes. If you want them as pets, so good. We have sales references in Europe and the U.S. also.

I would like to know the following information about you before we move on

Have you ever had one before?

Is your environment more comfortable for the welfare of these kittens?

See pictures below.

Thanks

Lee and Laura

44 Waza Street

Maroua - Cameroon

## ORLANDO FCF CONVENTION DVDS NOW AVAILABLE!

Convention this year added something special. The FCF wishes to thank Jason L. Liquori, Hocus Focus Productions, for filming the FCF Convention. Hocus Focus Productions is a full service video production and photography company located in Central Florida, producing independent movies, (features and shorts) and assisting small businesses and individuals produce their own high definition videos. Hocus Pocus Productions, P.O. Box 161763, Altamonte Springs, FL 32716 hocfocprod@aol.com, www.hocfocprod.com 407-814-7929

The FCF 2011 Convention video footage is being uploaded to YouTube and will be available online on the FCF website shortly. You can also have a copy of the **2011 Convention DVD** mailed to you by sending a \$10 payment to the FCF at: FCF Treasurer, P.O. Box 31210, Myrtle Beach, SC 29588.

Included on this video montage are:

- Thursday icebreaker social with kittens and other critters
- Friday trip to Dade City Wild Things
- Friday's trip to Joel Slaven's Professional Animals
- Joel Slaven's training demonstration for registered handlers
- Doc Antle's presentation on the recent spotlight on a "presumed pet tiger" and how to effectively deal with interviews by the media
- Jim Sanderson's eye-opening report on small wild cats, specifically the fishing cat and the devastating effect of Thailand's shrimp farms and Borneo's palm oil plantations
- Li Quan's "Riding the Tiger," outlining her commitment to the rewilding of South China Tigers, in South Africa at the Tiger Li Preserve, in preparation for their release back into a nature preserve in China.



## PROPOSED OHIO LEGISLATION & NEW RULES IN MISSOURI

Most states already have highly restrictive laws limiting large cats to USDA licensed facilities. Ohio truly stands alone, in that it is a state that lacks permits, and holds a seemingly substantial population of exotic animals, including felines.

The Zanesville, Ohio, tragedy of the release of lions, tigers, leopards, puma and bears, their deaths at the hands of law enforcement officials, and the suicide of the innocent animals' owner, has the media focusing on the danger of cats, rather than the mental illness of the owner. All responsible owners are paying for the selfish, disturbing actions of Terry Thompson.

**Ohio Update:** The long debate in Ohio over regulation has boiled over. The governor appointed stakeholder committee, which was created to propose balanced and realistic regulation of exotic animals, has been hijacked by high emotions and knee-jerk reactions. Instead of staying the course, Governor Kasich has completely switched tracks, and ordered the committee to convene a month early.

Polly Ward, FCF member, and representative for the Ohio Animal Owners Association, reported on the final Ohio stakeholder committee meeting, held after the Terry Thompson big cat massacre. The stakeholder group met for five hours and Governor Kasich sat in on the meeting via telephone. About halfway through the meeting, he informed us he wanted

**Important things FCF members can do right now. Call the people below, whether you live in Ohio or not:**

**Call Senate Ag committee chair Sen. Cliff Hite at 614-466-8150.**

**Call House Ag committee chair Rep David Hall at 614-466-2994.**

**Call Gov. Kasich at 614-466-3555.**

**State you are opposed to a ban of exotic animals in Ohio. State whether you are a stakeholder or constituent, or whether an out of state breeder, exhibitor, or sanctuary that will be effected by such a ban. Point out the economic losses to Ohio from loss of millions of dollars spent annually on animal food, building materials, and vet care. Point out that the Humane Society of the United States has too much influence on the regulation of animals.**

humane conditions for animals, perimeter fencing, significant permit fees, succession planning (where the animals go upon the owner's death or incapacity), and prohibitions against pets, and exotic animal auctions, and he did not want zoos to be located on private property. The Governor was adamant in his comments, and barely stopped short of shouting.

The Ohio legislature is the authority that will pass any new laws. There is doubt exotic animal regulations will be on a fast track, unlike most bills fought in the past. Before the Zanesville incident, Ohio animal owners were in a much better position.

The proposed regulations define restricted feline species as lions, tigers, leopards, cheetahs, lynx, cougars, caracals, servals, and subspecies and hybrids of these cats. Bobcats are regulated by the state Department of Wildlife

Class I Restricted Species Licenses will permit the possession of Class I restricted species held on the date the new law takes

effect. Licenses are good for three years and are renewable for the life of the animals. License fees are tiered to the number of animals.

Restricted Species Propagating License will be restricted to USDA licensed facilities that operate as part of a Species Survival Plan. License is good for one year and is renewable and fees are also tiered to the number of animals.

Restricted Species Wildlife Sanctuary Permits are for nonprofit refuge organizations that do not conduct commercial activity, including breeding, selling, and exhibiting to operate.

All licensees must have \$250,000 to \$500,000 liability insurance, based upon the number of animals. Animals must have microchip or tattoo. Husbandry, animal welfare, public health and safety, and transport rules will be drafted. Physical contact with the public is prohibited. Owners will have to keep records and develop plans for animal escapes, natural disaster and owner death.

**Missouri Update:** Last year, Missouri passed Senate Bill 795, known as the "Large Carnivore Act." The FCF has been involved in the MO legislative process, with FCF members making the trek year after year to testify in committee hearings against blanket bans, to propose FCF language, and to promote the concept of equal registration of all big cats, with no exemptions, and the inclusion of husbandry and caging standards, and to set affordable permit fees.

**After four years of battling Humane Society agenda supporting bills, on the final day of the legislative session, SB 795, was inserted into an Omnibus bill for an all or nothing vote, and that is how the Large Carnivore Act, stopped in committee by the FCF, was successfully voted into law.**

Passage of a bill is not the end of our responsibility to stay involved and protect our interests and ensure fairness and proper regulations are drafted. FCF members need to follow the drafting of regulations that administer the intent of legislation. This past August, the Missouri Register published proposed rules to implement Senate Bill 795. Citizens had 30 days to submit written comments. The rule committee then has 60 days to review all comments, make any revisions, and finalize their rules. The official regulations are

then published and include a start date for enforcement.

J.B. Anderson, FCF Missouri State representative, worked with me to review the proposed rules and identify departures from the actual bill language. The regulations failed to exempt USDA licensed facilities. The permit fee was not based upon numbers of felines, but on facility use – exhibitors being charged \$2,500 and non-exhibitors \$500. And the regulations added a prohibition against allowing felines outside enclosures, which was not

part of the legislation passed. JB and I submitted written comments to the Department of Agriculture, the Missouri State Veterinarian, and the Rules Committee. We believe the final rules will provide a USDA exemption and permit fees tied to the number of felines, \$250 per feline, up to \$2,500. The Rules committee claimed they had the authority to add the prohibition against animals outside of enclosures, and it remains to be seen if this does become part of Missouri regulations.

## DETECT AND TREAT FELINE ENTERITIS

By Terri Werner  
Director, Tiger Creek Wildlife Refuge

On Saturday, October 29, 2011, our male golden tabby tiger stopped eating and was not moving around. He had watery diarrhea and a 104°F temperature. We had fed him some hog meat with bones a couple of days before, so I was afraid he might have an obstruction. We called the vet out to do an exam, but she could not feel any obstruction. She took blood and a stool sample and gave him an injection of Convenia antibiotic. We ran several different tests, including giardia, pancreatitis FPL, CBC and a chemistry

panel, which all came back normal. Sunday morning, I checked on Kahil and he would not move, but now he also had bloody diarrhea and was vomiting. Our regular veterinarian was working at the emergency clinic and could not see Kahil. Since the clinic cannot take exotics or large animals, I called our other veterinarian, who was thankfully on call and agreed to meet us at his clinic. (If possible, always try to have a backup vet that will work on your exotics!) We first took X-rays, but nothing showed up, so we tried the ultrasound and saw a mass of some sort. Exploratory surgery was needed to determine exactly what was going

on. Once we pulled out the small intestine, we could see about 14 inches of inflammation. It was getting to the point where it would start dying. The lymph nodes were also enlarged, so a biopsy was taken. The vet did not think it would be okay to cut out that much intestine, so we put Kahil on several days of antibiotics and anti-inflammatory medicine.

Monday, Kahil was still lethargic and still had a high fever, but the vomiting and diarrhea had stopped. By late Monday night, the fever finally broke. Tuesday morning, he moved around a bit and was somewhat interested in food, but still did not eat much. On Wednesday, he ate a couple of pounds of food and from then on progressively got better.

No one knows what caused this episode. Both of our veterinarians said that a piece of meat could have stayed in his gut too long, a bone could have nicked the intestinal wall, or something else might have caused it. The lymph node biopsy came back normal. The enlargement appears to be related to the enteritis.

Note: Convenia is a fairly new antibiotic that is long lasting. Generally, only one injection is needed. In this case, we gave the regular dose, followed by a couple of small doses over the next two days, along with dexamethasone-SP. As with all antibiotics, there is always a chance of severe side effects. If your animal reacts to penicillins or cephalosporins, then Convenia should not be given. This drug can stay in the system for 65 days, so if the animal does have a bad reaction to the drug, it can be life threatening and treating the reaction can take a long time.



For a \$50 donation, choose one of three thank you prints by artist Teri Zucksworth. These 18" by 24" colored-pencil drawings are ready for matting and framing. Pick the black leopard "Hanging Around," the lounging white tiger "Paying a Visit," or the snow leopard "Standing Guard."

For a \$30 donation, choose a notecard set. Each collection contains a gorgeous array of different wild cat photos and artist depictions.

Go to the FCF Website to donate & choose your gift today!

Do your part to help transport captive felines out of harm's way -- support the FCF Wildcat Safety Net with a donation today.





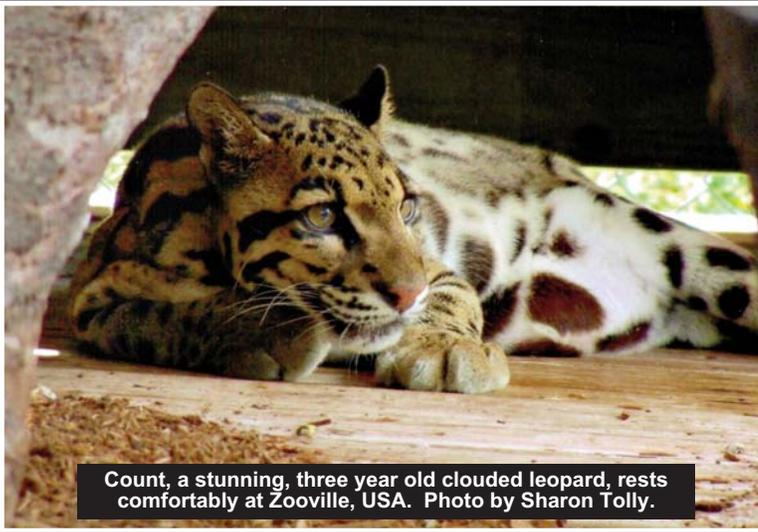
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Count, a stunning, three year old clouded leopard, rests comfortably at Zooville, USA. Photo by Sharon Tolly.



Max the cougar kitten says, "Hey, Mom, I think you need to add toilet paper to your shopping list!" Photo by Patty Perry.



Bug, an elderly serval, peeks out of the grass as if she were back in Africa, but she lives in Oklahoma. Photo by Kurt Beckelman.

# YOUR BEST SHOTS



Amaya and Avery Lucas take their young caracals, Simba and Nala, for a day by the shore. Photo by Gene Lucas.



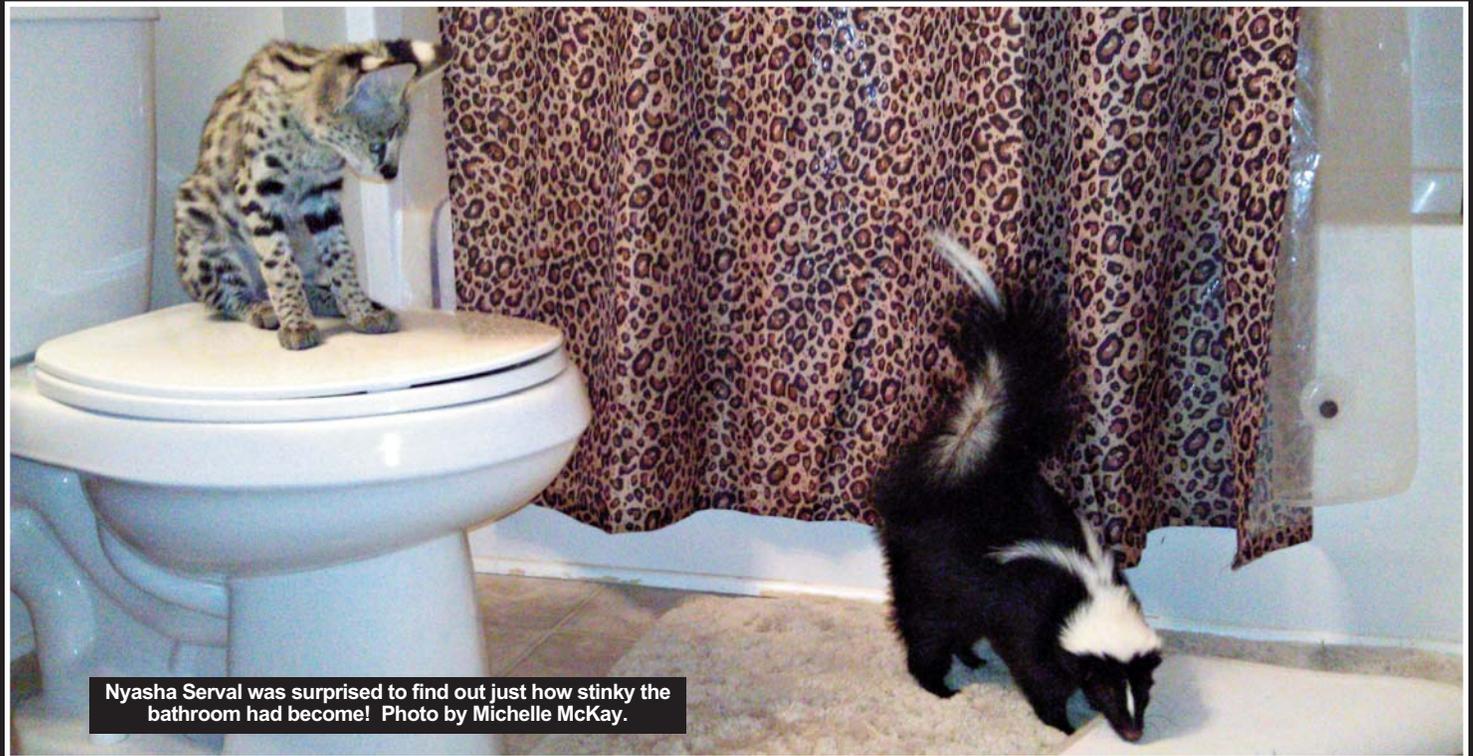
Tuckered out Tasha, a six week old, female Bengal Siberian cross, has crashed on her "stuffed mom." Photo by Deb Hendrickson.



Midori, a young Geoffroy's cat, is "Midorable!" Photo by Sherri DeFlorio.



Amadeus gets caught in the act. His mom hopes he remembers to put down the lid! Photo by Roger Newson.



Nyasha Serval was surprised to find out just how stinky the bathroom had become! Photo by Michelle McKay.

## SMALL WILD CATS: THE ANIMAL ANSWER GUIDE, A REVIEW

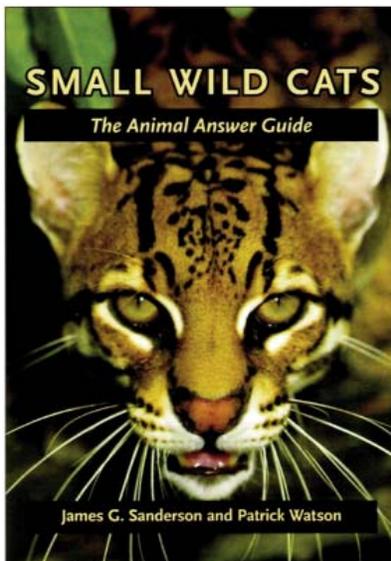
By Angela Anderson

*Small Wild Cats: The Animal Answer Guide*, written by James G. Sanderson and Patrick Watson, contains eighty-five questions and answers in twelve chapters. As the authors explain in the “Introduction,” “... features of the small cats allow us to ask and answer many of the ‘why’ questions that make biology fun. We have tried to select questions that we believe you have, such as; Do small wild cats socialize and live in groups? How rare are they? What do they eat? How do they hunt? And what can I do to help them?”

The question and answers range from “... origins and evolution, classification and lineage, ... biology and behavior ... form and function, reproduction and development, contact with humans, and the likelihood that they will make it through the twenty-first century.”

Each question and answer is a self-contained unit, full of interesting facts about small cats, well written, and easy for a layman to read. Each one can stand alone as a topic for a wildlife educator or as an article in a newsletter. In “Can small cats see color?” the authors explain why animals have eye shine in easy-to-understand text: “The small cat’s retina receives a second pass of light, thus increasing the small cat’s ability to see in dim light.” (The complete answer begins with “Yes, but not like humans can”, followed by a thorough explanation on how the eye works, and ends with Jim Sanderson observing, only with the help of his night binoculars, a guiña in Chile catching a moth on a moonless night under a thick canopy of trees.)

The question and answer format enables the authors to describe all the small cats and the individual species at the same time. The questions are about all the small cats. The authors quickly answer their question and then describe features that are unique to some or even one species. In “Where do small cats sleep?” part of the general answer is “All small cats seek shelter ... in a protected or easily defended place. Small cats don’t dig so do not excavate their own burrows.” One of the specific examples is about the Andean cat, who “... seeks out well-protected caves with sandy bottoms. Often these caves have many tens or hundreds of Andean cat feces. The Andean cat appar-



ently uses its den as a latrine. Why would the Andean cat do this? ... the Andean cat might also be taking advantage of the warmth of its decaying feces.”

The book starts off with a bang with its first question “What are small cats?” The answer describes everything that makes a cat unique, such as being an obligate carnivore, how its teeth and skull enable the cat to hunt prey, retractable claws, and their senses.

“How are small cats classified?” groups the small cats by their molecular analysis into eight lineages or familial relationships. Each lineage has unique characteristics that are memorable. The puma lineage contains the puma, cheetah, and jaguarundi. All three species have relatively small heads compared to their bodies. The caracal lineage contains the African golden cat, the serval, and the caracal. This family contains exceptional jumpers. The section “What characterizes the major groups of small cats?” gives more details about the lineages. The leopard cat lineage contains the two most aquatic cats, the flat-headed cat and the fishing cat. They do not hesitate to put their heads underwater, unlike the tiger, jaguar, and other cats.

“How are small cats kept away from people, livestock, and poultry?” describes the benefits and problems humans face with small cats. Putting a fish net over the grounds of free-range chickens keeps the small cats out since they are not diggers and will not bite through a net. But keeping the cats out may give rodents

increased access to the chickens. But then again, it is easier for a small cat to catch a chicken than a rodent.

“How can I become a better observer of small cats?” and “How do I know whether I have small cats in my backyard?” give tips on how to see a small cat in the wild such as placing catnip in a rotten log, relax, read a book, and wait, or how to set up trail cameras.

“Do small cats get sick?” explains that “A cat’s purr happens at the precise frequency that aids the healing of broken bones, whose slow healing might result in a greatly weakened individual more susceptible to diseases.”

“Are small cats endangered?” includes an overview of the IUCN Red List and their nine categories ranging from “Extinct” to “Least Concern,” “Data Deficient,” and “Not Evaluated.” Criteria for these classifications include estimated rate of population decline, estimated population size, geographic distribution where the species lives, and habitat fragmentation.

The book has a color picture of all the thirty small cats in alphabetic order, and many black and white photographs, and drawings by Patrick Watson. FCF members provided some of the photographs.

The personal observations of Jim Sanderson, abbreviated as “JGS,” are very interesting. “Where do mother small cats give birth?” contains the following: “In 2004, JGS and his colleagues observed an Andean cat female and kitten in a well-hidden cave on the top of a cliff face in the Bolivian Andes. Held securely by his colleagues, JGS was able to hang over the edge of the precipice to view into the dark cave. The floor of the cave was sand. Though it was about noon and the sun was high and bright in the sky, he had to use a flashlight to peer into the cave. Two sets of green eyes stared back at him – an adult female Andean cat and her kitten. This was one of the most incredible experiences he had ever had – to be no more than 3 m (9 ft) away from so rare and beautiful small cats.”

The book shows that some small cats have never been studied in the wild. The authors explain how they often have to interpolate, make educated guesses, based on the small cat’s size and environment to determine what a small cat eats or where it sleeps. The “Small cat diet/prey species”

table has data for all the small cats but with disclaimers such as “possibly” and “probably.” The chart has “Mole rats, small birds, frogs, lizards, and insects,” for servals, while the marbled cat has “possibly birds, thought to take squirrels, rats, and frogs.” However, the “Small cat gestation, number of young, and den site” table cannot be derived from the cat’s environment. This table has a lot of question marks for “No data available” and asterisks for “Figures shown from captive cats.” The bay cat, flat-headed cat, Andean cat, and guinea have no data available.

Many answers in the book are due to the accessibility of “captive” small cats. In “Do small cats make good pets?” the authors do not say “no;” instead they emphatically explain to their readers (who

have learned how small some of the small cats are) that a small cat, even a tame small cat, is nothing like a domestic. One photograph in the book is a young lynx pouncing on a toy in a living room. In the acknowledgments, “JGS thanks ... all his colleagues and friends of the Feline Conservation Federation...” And an ocelot is on the cover.

In the introduction, the authors wrote, “... we now know enough to provide answers to many questions both the scientist and the naturalist have been asking.”



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*Protecting Your rights  
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**Polly Britton**  
Legislative Agent

(Emphasis added.) A book with this much information about small cats might not have been possible several years ago. It is the dedication and hard work of many people, especially Jim Sanderson, which made this wonderful book possible.

## INBREEDING - GOOD, BAD, OR BOTH?

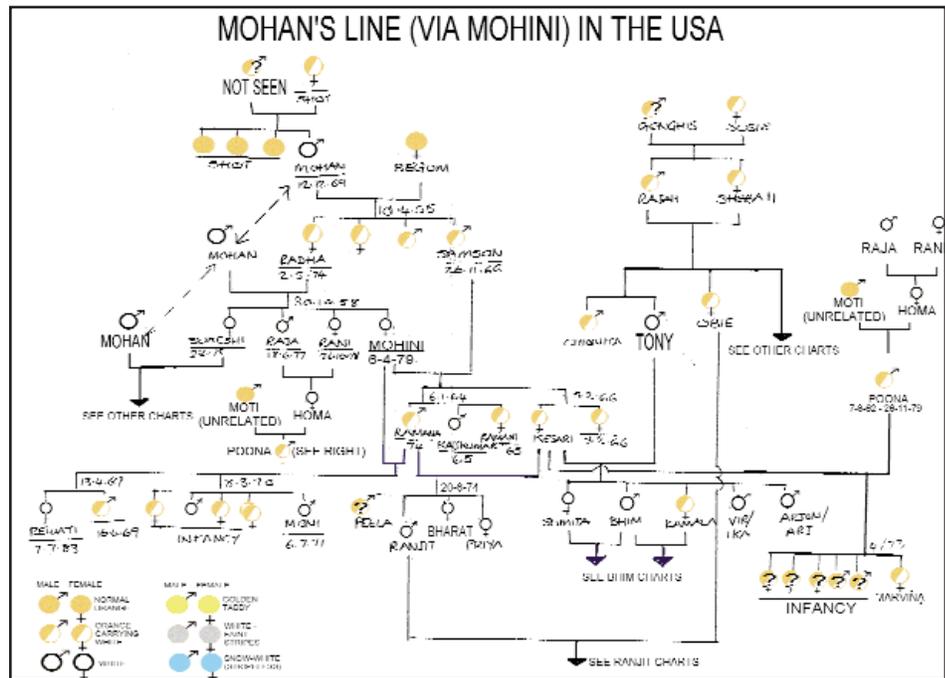
By Kevin Chambers

We often hear about inbreeding, but do we really know what it is or what results it can bring? Usually, we hear of inbreeding in a negative light, as if it is a forbidden practice. Some people will blame any problem on inbreeding if they cannot identify another cause. Are they right? The best that can be said is, “possibly.” It cannot be proven right and it cannot be proven wrong. It is the perfect answer, since hard evidence cannot be given to prove or disprove it. But inbreeding is not always bad. Without inbreeding, new species would never evolve.

Simply put, inbreeding is the mating of two related individuals.

The gene pool is the total number of genetic possibilities in a group of animals. The more possibilities there are, the greater the gene pool is. Inbreeding can reduce the number of possibilities, since an animal’s ancestors pass on genetics. The closer the relationship, the more common traits are inherited, both good and bad. When inbreeding occurs, the more dominant characteristics become prominent, while the other possibilities are lost as inbreeding continues.

In the case of felines, probably the most notable examples of inbreeding are related to coat colors. Recessive genes for the white coat pattern in Bengal tigers have been inherited by many in the current tiger population. The white coat mutation and



**Genealogical chart of early white tiger breeding in the U.S. Image from [www.messybeasts.com](http://www.messybeasts.com).**

even rarer coat mutations, snow white and tabby, are generally believed to be traits inherited from just a couple of founder tigers, namely Mohini and a female Bengal tiger called Susie. Susie’s pedigree is unknown, except that she was bred to Genghis, a Siberian tiger at the Sioux Falls Zoo. Her sibling offspring were purchased by Baron Von Uhl, who bred them together, producing Tony, a white Bengal/Siberian tiger. Tony was then lent to

the Cincinnati Zoo to breed with Kaseri, a descendent of Mohini. Early inbreeding to produce white tigers revealed a multitude of health problems, such as strabismus and spine deformities. Today, however, white tigers are generally a very healthy population, perhaps due to the incorporation of so many outside genes from normal orange tigers, and certainly from efforts by professional breeders to remove cats with genetic defects from

their breeding programs.

Geneticists use the term “genetic drift” to describe when a small group of individuals becomes isolated from the majority of individuals of a species and the small group genetically drifts from the rest of the species. Because genetic drift is random and a smaller group will drift more rapidly than the larger group, it is possible that, given enough time, a small group will become different enough from the large group to have evolved into a distinctly different species. Genetic drift can only be caused by inbreeding.

Is having fewer genetic variables good or bad? It can be both. In fact, it is only through inbreeding that the refining and restriction of the gene pool continues to the point that a species (or in domestic animals, a breed) is formed. The process can begin when one individual has the right gene, or a new mutated gene, that gives it an edge in competition over the other members of its species. As a result, this animal thrives and has more surviving offspring than animals without the advantage. This is the theory of “survival of the fittest.” The animals that possess that gene are all related to some extent. This is a process that takes many generations, until all members of that species, or breeds, have those common genes.

Another mechanism that brings about evolution is isolation due to geography. One of the most recent discoveries of a new feline species is the Borneo clouded leopard. DNA testing has determined that this is not just a uniquely darker colored clouded leopard, similar in idea to the white coat of the Bengal tiger, but, instead, this very clouded leopard-looking feline is actually a completely distinct species, which most likely evolved from a sub-population of clouded leopards which were cut off from the main clouded leopard population 1.4 million years ago.

It is true that inbreeding can make bad traits more prevalent in the resultant offspring. Nature weeds out the bad traits, because the individuals possessing the bad traits do not survive to reproduce in the wild. By the same method, the good traits are encouraged by nature by allowing the individual to thrive. However, if animals bred in captivity are given

medications and surgical and therapeutic assistance which enables flawed animals to reach reproductive age and breed, then the bad traits brought out through inbreeding are inherited and eventually these negative traits could become established. It is critically important when inbreeding in captivity, that the breeder be vigilant to cull the poor traits and not breed an animal showing them. Any review of medical problems associated with domestic dog breeds illustrates the tendency for inbreeding to be performed improperly, allowing genetic defects to be inherited and carried in the population.

There are many examples where entire breeds or species have endured high amounts of inbreeding and thrived. Some documented cases where extreme cases of inbreeding have resulted in healthy, thriving, and sustainable populations are shown below. Many other species, such as the whooping crane, California condor, bison, wandering albatross, and countless others, have endured the same, yet still survive.

**Santa Gertrudis cattle** - This breed originated in Texas at the King Ranch. The founding bull, which possessed the desired characteristics, was named “Monkey” and was born in 1920. Every one of the 700,000+ Santa Gertrudis cattle alive today descend from this bull.

**Morgan horse** - In 1788, a stallion was born in Massachusetts, which possessed remarkable traits for speed and strength despite its relatively small stature. This horse, “Figure,” was later renamed after his owner, Justin Morgan. “Justin Morgan” was particularly strong in passing along his good attributes to his offspring, which resulted in the creation of the breed known as the Morgan horse. Today, there are over 102,000 living registered Morgan

horses, all which trace back to this one individual.

**Black-footed ferret** - Presumed to be extinct in 1974, a wild colony was discovered in Wyoming, in 1981, which contained 130 individual animals. By 1987, this colony had been reduced by disease and predation to just 18 animals, all of which were taken into captivity in an effort to save the species with a captive population. Since these animals were all taken from the same colony, it can be safely assumed that there was a substantial amount of inbreeding that had already taken place in the wild. Of the 18 animals captured (seven males and 11 females), 16 reproduced (six males and ten females). It was determined that of the 16 reproducing animals, only seven (three males and four females) were “founders.” This means that 11 of the original 18 animals captured were the offspring of these seven founders. Calling these seven “founders” is based on the assumption that they were unrelated; their ancestry could not be determined, since they were born in the wild. The odds are extremely high that even these seven founders had some degree of common ancestry. As of 2010, more than 7,000 kits have been produced in captivity and an additional 1,000 ferrets have been born in the wild from released captive animals.

**The Syrian (or golden) hamster** - One of the best known and most popular pocket pets is also one of the most highly inbred species known. In 1930, Israel Aharoni, a zoologist and professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, captured a female hamster and her litter in Aleppo, Syria. These animals were bred at the university as laboratory animals. Some hamsters escaped and the wild Syrian hamsters in Israel are believed to be descendants of the originally captured female and litter. In 1931, some of the captive-bred hamsters were sent to Great Britain to the Zoological Society of London and the Welcome Bureau of Scientific Research. They bred extremely well and, in 1937, offspring were made available to private breeders and were exported throughout the world. Recent mitochondrial DNA studies have proven that all golden hamsters in North America are descendants from one female,

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obviously the one captured in 1930, despite the fact that new stock was imported from Syria in 1971. Today, there are tens of thousands of golden hamsters bred for pets and research animals, all descendants of the one female.

Pere David's deer - It is not known when the Pere David's deer became extinct in the wild. When discovered by Westerners in the nineteenth century, only the Chinese emperor, in park-style settings, was keeping them. A few were exported to Europe before the Chinese captive population was destroyed during the Boxer Rebellion. In 1898, Great Britain's Duke of Bedford collected the last 18 living in Europe and placed them as a single herd on the Woburn Abby grounds. The herd did not receive assistance in breeding, but was left to make natural selections, as they would in the wild. This herd produced several hundred offspring, and all Pere David's deer alive today can be traced back to them. All Pere David's deer in North America are descendants of four animals from the Woburn Abby herd that came to the US in 1946. There are several hundred in North America today.

Cheetah - Mitochondrial DNA research by Stephen O'Brien and Warren Johnson

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has shown that cheetahs underwent a bottleneck in their population about 10,000 years ago. The data shows that all cheetahs were descendants of a single female from that time. In other words, the cheetah has been inbreeding for 10,000 years! The result is practically no genetic variation within the species. They are so genetically similar that a skin graft from any cheetah can be put on any other cheetah and not be rejected. Ten millennia of close inbreeding have not gone entirely without negative impact on the species. Male cheetahs have a very high percentage of both misshapen and low motility sperm. This does not prevent cheetah from breeding, but does lower the conception rate. Cheetahs have also inherited

other genetic problems, such as lowered resistance to many diseases and soft palate problems.

Where does this leave the FCF, the captive feline owner, and exotic feline breeder? The total population of many feline species is declining. The availability of ocelots, jungle cats, Asian leopard cats, and Geoffroy's cats, (even species as ubiquitous as caracal, serval, lion, and tiger) is facing a future with inbreeding issues.

Endangered species especially face genetic bottlenecks by legislation and regulation. The importation of Appendix I species is next to impossible, unless it is for a recognized breeding program with established ties to enhancement of the species in nature, which certainly rules out any breeding for pets, personal collectors, or even educational display.

The FCF has embarked on a studbook registry project to help manage our genetics. By locating the current population of cats, then attempting to identify relatedness in the population and potential genetic defects that could impact health and fecundity, such as heart conditions like hypertrophic cardiomyopathy, we can improve our genetics, even while inbreeding selected felines.

## FCF MEMBERS VISIT BRANSON

After touring the 250-acre Wild Animal Safari on Sunday morning, several of us drove to Branson that afternoon to see the Fercos Brothers' "Untamed Illusions" magic show at the Branson Mall Music Theatre. The matinee performance was an exceptionally entertaining show. Tony and Ferdinand are originally from Czechoslovakia, and are sixth generation performers, being part of the family show business tradition since they were both five years old. The multi-talented brothers pull off amazing illusions that involved a black leopard, a male lion, and several tigers. Tony is also a world-class juggler who showed off his Guinness Book of World Records ping-pong ball juggling, using his mouth to launch seven balls into orbit. The show has plenty of special effects, like sound and lighting, pyrotechnics, smoke and fountains, aerial rope climbers, and choreographed, beautiful safari and jungle themed dancers. It

incorporated home movies of the brothers interacting with their beloved tigers in their Nevada habitat complete with swimming pool and plenty of running room, which made the whole experience very personal and rounded out the entertainment.

Afterward, we visited behind-the-scenes, where the black leopard, lion, and tigers reside when not on stage. Tony and Ferdinand Fercos's felines are within Hollister city limits, and, due to rules passed by the city board, the big cats remain behind the Mall Theater during the day, but are moved to a climate-controlled warehouse in Hollister Industrial Park each night. The entertain-



**Master illusionist and big cat trainer Tony Fercos poses with Lynn Culver, Teresa Shaffer, and Chris Comstock.**

ers brought portable chain-link panels for instant feline enclosures. An eight-foot perimeter fence made opaque with plastic



Husbandry course students and instructors took a side trip to Branson, MO, to see two Illusion acts. Pictured here in front of stock photo at the Kirby Palace, is (l to r) back row, Holly Needham, Michael Tovar, Lynn Culver, Kathrin Stucki, Chris and Roy Comstock, front row, Teresa Shaffer and, sitting, Scott Shaffer.

and topped with barbed-wire surrounded the cat area. Housing was therefore adequate, but rather limited in enrichments, and I am sure the cats will be happy to return to their spacious habitats in Nevada, when the show concludes. There was no doubt the brothers are 100% committed to the welfare of their felines. We had a nice visit with the brothers, who graciously shared their time, expertise, and experiences with us.

That evening, we attended the Kirby VanBurch magic act. Held at the Kirby VanBurch Theater, the show featured many of the same illusions performed by the Fercos, as well as plenty of other unique offerings. The dancers and music were more cosmopolitan to appeal to a broader audience, and, for me, were not as appealing as the Fercos

dancers. Kirby also uses a black leopard and orange and white tigers in his illusions. Kirby's finale is the appearance of a full sized helicopter on stage!

We also visited the behind-the-scenes tour of Kirby's felines. Housed completely indoors, the hallway we walked, between the rows of cat cages had bullet-proof glass panels installed to give unobstructed views of the cats. Each feline had clean, moderate sized enclosures with platforms and rubber floor padding. The building walls were lined with black plastic, so that urine spray could be hosed off. This is a permanent show, and I assume this is where these cats spend 100% of their time, which was rather environmentally impoverished in my opinion. I would much appreciate if Kirby would build them outdoor enclosures in addition to their indoor environments.

## BASIC EXOTIC FELINE HUSBANDRY COURSE REVIEW

By Tamara Tiffany

My name is Tamara Tiffany and, over Halloween weekend, I attended the FCF husbandry class offered in Springfield, Missouri, at Wild Animal Safari. I do not currently have any wild or exotic felines, but was invited by a friend who does.

The first day, our small class went through the handbook and power point slides with the guidance of two great instructors. The course is set up to teach basic care, safety, and law for the owners or potential owners of these animals. As the only non-owner in the class I can talk from the perspective of an inquisitive neighbor. I did not realize that there are so many regulations surrounding the ownership and sale of these animals, the

course spends quite a bit of time explaining these regulations. I am glad that there is a standard for how these animals should be kept legally, as a "neighbor" it is reassuring to me to know that most owners are acting responsibly and working to preserve the safety of the public and the animals in their care. There was too much discussed to go into great detail about, but I would recommend this course and a membership with the FCF to

anyone wanting to, or currently owning, a wild or exotic feline.

The FCF is very involved in the safe handling and preservation of these animals. Knowing a facility is a member of the FCF will give me confidence that not only are they following all regulations but that they have gone above and beyond even federal standards to keep all parties safe.



Tamara and other students were entertained by an overly friendly camel while at Wild Animal Safari!

I would like to thank the instructors, students, and host facility for a wonderful weekend. After the day of class, we were invited back to Wild Animal Safari to tour the facility. It was a great day and the animals were amazing. We got to walk through the compound with the lead keeper and hear about the animals there. Once I was successfully dragged away from the tiger enclosure, we took a bus tour of the property where all the hoof stock and a few other big predators are kept. Both tours are available to the public and the facility's workers are open and friendly. The weekend was great, I learned a lot, and even got to kiss a camel.

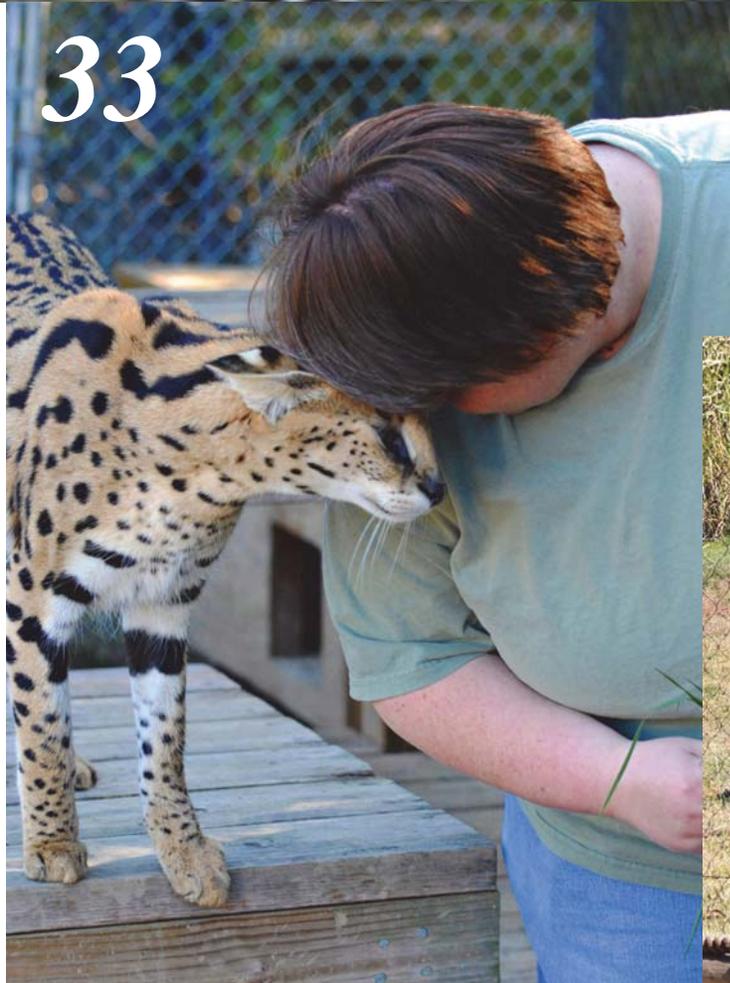




22



13



33



38



10



## Feline Conservation Federation

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Cover Photo: Pepe, a stunningly handsome seven year old male lion, was photographed by Jennifer Chellette, Tiger Creek Wildlife Refuge's Director of Animal Care. Pepe was born in Mexico and arrived in the U.S. as a cub, along with seven other young lions, all in very poor condition. Tiger Creek's veterinarians and professionals medicated and nursed the young lions, restoring them to good health. (Read more in Terri Werner's story on page 7.)

Dakota, a young bobcat kitten, explores his snow-white world in Massachusetts. Debi Willoughby, founder of Jungle Encounters, which offers outreach educational shows focusing upon the plight of small cats, says the rambunctious native feline is being conditioned for his role as good will ambassador. Photo by Debi Willoughby.

