



Feline Conservation Federation

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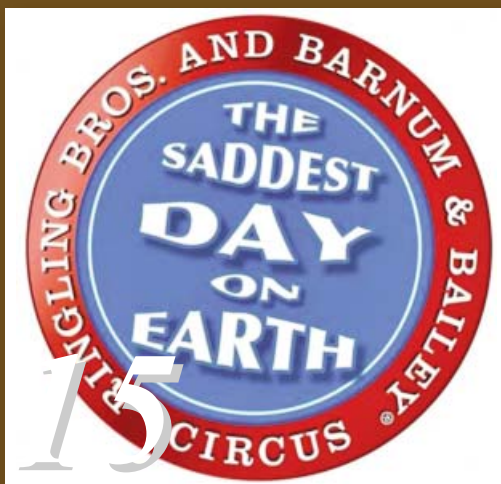
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JOIN THE FCF IN ITS CONSERVATION EFFORTS - WWW.FELINECONSERVATION.ORG



The FCF supports conservation of wild felids by advocating for qualified individuals to own and to pursue husbandry of wild felines, providing expertise and material support to ensure the continued welfare and viability of these populations, contributing to research, and funding protection programs that benefit felids living in nature. Send \$35 annual dues (\$40 Canada, \$50 international) to FCF, 141 Polk Road 664, Mena, AR 71953.

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The FCF is a non-profit (Federal ID#59-2048618), non-commercial society devoted to the welfare and conservation of exotic felines. The FCF publishes the *Journal* quarterly.

Members are encouraged to donate older copies of the *Journal*, with permission of the resident, to vet offices, dental or medical waiting rooms, or public libraries or public officials, to increase awareness of the FCF, its members, and mission.

The author's point of view does not necessarily represent the point of view of the FCF. 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.

Display advertisement space is available at the following prices: \$10 business card, \$25 quarter page, \$50 half page, and \$100 full page ad.

Submit articles on husbandry, conservation, current events, editorials, and photos for publication to the managing editor, Lynn Culver, at lynn culver57@gmail.com.



Feline Conservation Federation

From the Executive Director

By Lynn Culver

The FCF has a new board of directors, but it still needs a treasurer. I have remained in this position only until the board appoints a replacement. Our candidate had to step down before the election, leaving this position unfilled. An FCF treasurer should possess some basic accounting knowledge and proficiency in QuickBooks, or another similar program. The FCF does business with two banks, has savings and checking accounts, and PayPal. It also accepts credit card payments. All of this needs to be tracked and accounted for. I hope that an FCF member will contact the president or me to ask questions and consider serving in this capacity.

This year, the FCF will be publishing a quarterly *Journal*, a change from a 60-year history of bi-monthly publication. Hopefully, we can still get information into the hands of our members in a timely manner, especially with the majority of our members linked to the internet and receiving communications through email, Facebook, or Yahoo groups. Communication is a two-way street. Every member is encouraged to contribute articles and photos to our *Journal*, share links and stories on our Facebook group, and post questions online with our members-only Yahoo group.

This issue of the *Journal* unveils our Convention plans. We'll be staying at a very nice hotel; the Hyatt Regency Sarasota is a four star venue. It's going to be a great event and, for many, a super vacation as well. We're on the marina, and we have free shuttle access to the beach. The FCF group can use the hotel's paddle boats, swimming gear, and fishing gear at no charge, so arrive early, invite your friends, and

bring your family.

Just as we have in past years, exotic kittens will be on display that Tuesday in the hospitality suite. Florida is a regulated state and, if you are not already licensed by Florida, you cannot bring in a kitten without meeting the licensing requirements for the species you wish to bring. The out-of-state annual exhibiting license fee is \$150 annually. You need to apply early, and then also apply for an import permit for the FCF event. Fortunately, Florida has plenty of members with felines and several breeders, so we expect a variety of kittens to be part of our convention agenda.

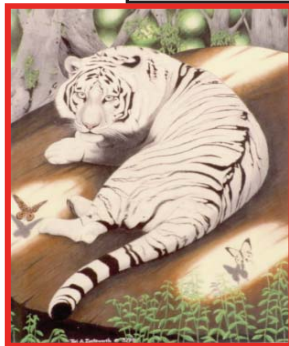
Our field trip this year will be to Big Cat Habitat, a very fine FCF member facility that has hosted a Wildcat Weekend in the past. Kay and her son Clayton are gracious hosts and, having already visited during the FCF Wildcat Weekend, I know what we are in for and it is something special! Read all about it in this issue and join us July 25th through 27th for Convention. Come early to take the Husbandry Course or the Wildlife Educator's Course being taught on July 24th.

We have a new political climate out there and it is untested waters. Is the new administration, with its emphasis on business and focus on reducing government regulation, going to pass on enacting more ban laws? Or do some things never change? Please get involved; talk to your representatives before it's too late. This is legislation season again, and Amy Flory has updated us on several pending bills before state legislatures in an article on page 28.

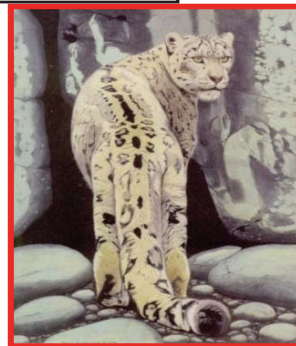
I am disturbed by what I am hearing and reading about concerning the direction this county is taking to heat up the economy. We need to be vigilant, because bills being introduced will weaken and demolish environmental protection. There is talk of selling American lands, especially our national parks, to companies wanting to extract resources and despoil those lands. The regulations designed to safeguard natural habitats and our finite natural resources are under attack for depressing economic growth. We cannot have nature if we don't leave some clean water and some wild lands for wildlife. It's up to the citizens to voice their opinions on these matters. It's up to our wildlife educators to make the case for nature, to speak for creatures that cannot speak for themselves, and to get their audiences to fall in love with animals and be motivated to protect them and the habitats they need. I am sure I am preaching to the choir here.

In closing, I would just like to share my sympathy to Alice and the Schoebel family for their loss. I have worked in coordination with Alice and Mark to oppose ban legislation introduced into Wisconsin in years past. The state has lost a great advocate for private ownership and a great animal person.

FCF NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT



Meet the
Wildcat
Safety Net
Challenge!



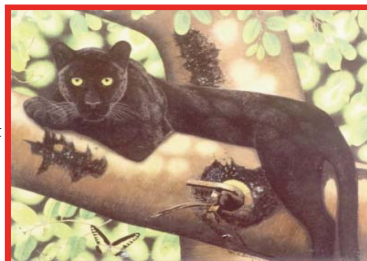
The FCF Safety Net Fund awards grants to transport felines in need to available facilities with the space and staff ready to provide lifetime care.

For each donation of \$30 or more, choose one of three thank you prints by artist Teri Zucksworth. These 18" x 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."

Go to the FCF website to make a donation with PayPal today. Or call the treasurer at 479-394-5235 to use your credit card and support this worthy cause.

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



FCF Member Mark Schoebel Passes Away February 23, 2017

A great friend and animal advocate, Mark Scott Schoebel, passed away February 23rd, while undergoing open heart surgery. Mark always had an engaging, warm smile every time he met you. He was a dedicated husband, wonderful parent, and awesome friend. Mark seemed to have vitality and drive that few could keep up with. He was quick-witted, loved an intelligent conversation, and always had time to share ideas and plans for the future. He actually had become a legend in his own time in the animal industry.

Over the years, he designed, built, and operated several wildlife parks with his loving wife, Alice. In the past few years, he and his wife and son, Matt, designed, built, and operated Mark's dream zoo, called Timbavati Wildlife Park, in the Dells, Wisconsin. He belonged to numerous organizations, including the Zoological Association of America, Wisconsin Zoo Association, several fair and festival associations, and the Feline Conservation Federation, just to name a few. He was a strong voice for private animal ownership, going to bat for us all against different animal rights groups.

Mark was truly a man's man and an inspiration to us all. He will be greatly missed by all those who knew him. However, Mark will always live on in our memories and in our hearts for as long as we take a breath.

Kurt Krebs



Letter from the President Secretary

By Rebecca Krebs, FCF Secretary

With the passing of Mark Schoebel, an absolute icon in the zoological field, it is a reminder that all of us are here on this earth but for a short while. However, the information that we learn about the care of a species and the conservation that we do, can last for generations to come. There are several people who I consider to be *the greats*, *the pioneers*, in the zoological field today. These gems have so much to share and teach to the rest of us. Trouble is, these people are usually so busy caring for the animals they have a passion about, that getting one-on-one time with them can be quite a challenge.

Well, there is a terrific opportunity awaiting you, the upcoming FCF Convention! The FCF Annual Convention is a great time to connect and learn from some of the forerunners of captive animal and feline care. At the convention, you will get the opportunity to have on-on-one time and form lasting bonds with individuals who have so much knowledge to share. Prior to attending an FCF Convention, I often wondered what the conventions were all about and why I should attend. Well, after attending a few FCF Conventions, I have found that this is where bonds and friendships are made and strengthened. There are some great classes and lectures to glean from as well. However, the real purpose, in my mind, is to connect with others who share our pas-



Mark Schoebel with one of the white lion cubs born at his Wisconsin facility.

sion and learn from one another. Together, we can make the lives of the animals in our care better, lobby for the privilege of ownership of captive exotics, and do

conservation in great ways. "United we stand, divided we fall." Don't miss this amazing opportunity to connect with some of *the greats* of our generation. Attend the FCF Convention and meet them, share some laughs, learn a lot, and possibly get a beach-kissed suntan while you are at it.

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.

Katie Crane - Basic

Lenard Hughes - Intermediate

Basic Feline Handlers have documented at least one year of experience, Intermediate level is at least five years of experience, and Advanced handlers have more than ten years experience. Update your registration when you obtain additional handling experience or new species experience.

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

Being a registered handler is the first step to becoming a Professional Member. Professional Membership application is also online on the Members-Only website.

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

Rebecca Krebs, FCF Secretary

Wild Cat Research in the Tropical Rainforest of Belize

By Debi Willoughby

As I step off the plane onto the tarmac, the warm tropical air hits my face and I realize that my last three years' worth of research and planning has finally come together as we start our hands-on field research project! What an amazing feeling to finally get to work on years of preparation and anticipation!

I have often dreamed of doing wild cat research in some faraway, tropical location, but I never thought it would become a reality! So how did this project come to be? Using my dreams and desire to make a direct impact on wild cat conservation, I spent hundreds of hours scouring the internet to study up on potential location sites, read hundreds of wild cat research papers, spoke with many people working in the conservation community, and I set up trail camera research locally, all before making numerous visits to our target site in Belize, to pave the path that formed our conservation project.

Belize is a Central American country about the size of my home state of Massachusetts, and five species of wild cat (jaguar, puma, ocelot, margay, and jaguarundi) are native there. It is an English-speaking country, has an international airport, and is relatively safe for travelers. The vast majority of the local human population is contained in three main cities and along its coast, leaving the interior sparsely populated. Belize is experiencing some negative impact on their lands due to the local people slashing and burning the jungle so they can plant crops to make money and provide for their families. The lush jungles are being depleted and there is a need for alternate plans so Belizeans can utilize better conservation practices and still earn an income. That is one of the main areas we are encompassing our project around; developing conservation methods that are mutually beneficial to Belize's wildlife and the local villages.

Belize has a beautiful mountain range called the Maya Mountains, which covers about one million acres of central/southern Belize, and most of that land is protected. It also serves as a wildlife corridor for animals to travel between southern Mexico, through Belize, and into

Guatemala. This protected area is where we are performing our research. The slash and burn method is being used illegally along the edges of these protected areas and provides us with a great location to study animal behavior in truly protected areas, as well as areas that are being encroached upon by villages.

The basis of our project is to gain a better understanding of wild feline ecology and behavior patterns both in protected areas and in areas of human encroachment. Our objective is to determine the activity patterns of wild felines between the two types of land use, based on the number and temporal distribution of photographs from trail cameras, and to determine habitat use, based on the presence or



Group photo of the Belize adventurers in front of Mayan ruin in the heart of the jungle.

absence of wild feline species at camera locations. Trail camera image data will be collected over a ten-year time period and continuously be analyzed to determine the different behavioral patterns exhibited in wild felines between the two types of areas.

After doing a lot of research about Belize to select a couple of target location sites, my husband and I visited one of them last year to do some "due diligence" and set up a few trail cameras to scout out the area. We needed proof that the location we picked for our project was actually inhabited by wild cats. We were pleasantly surprised at the number of wild cat images we captured on our cameras within a short one-month time span! Due to the human encroachment factor along the edges of this area and the plentiful feline activity, we chose this existing research center called the Belize Foundation for

Research and Environmental Education (BFREE) as our main focus, and we also chose a second location about a two-hour drive away, with similar attributes, at the Toucan Ridge Ecology and Education Society (TREES).

So back to my opening paragraph of "the warm tropical air on the tarmac;" after we were processed through the airport, we had two phases for our trip. The first phase was visiting tourist destinations with a group of friends (two of them being FCF members Mark & Shelleen Mathews). This is something we have done for the past few years, gathering a group of people to take down to Belize to share what we love about this beautiful country and show them the magnificent sites. We will be offering group trips in the future for anyone who is interested; just drop me an email or Facebook message, or pick up the phone.

On this particular trip, we first stayed at a lodge in the jungle and visited a major Mayan ruin site, then along the way to our Caribbean coast resort, we spent a day hiking and river tubing in the jungle at the jaguar preserve known as Cockscomb Basin. Once at the ocean, we enjoyed snorkeling and swimming at the second largest barrier reef in the world and relaxed on the picturesque and sparsely populated beaches! Everyone had a great time, with lots of laughs and many memories to take back with them to the states.

During one of our nights in the jungle resort, I had a meeting with Bart Harmsen, who works at the University of Belize in the Environmental Research Institute department. He also is in charge of the trail cameras for Panthera at the Cockscomb Jaguar Preserve. We discussed his work, our project, and how we can work together toward a common goal. Bart is in the forefront of trail camera research in Belize, and is a great asset to know and work with. I am happy to say that after that meeting, Bart contacted us to see if we wanted to be directly involved in one of his projects, which we gladly accepted!

After we dropped everyone off at the airport, my husband and I put on our researcher caps and headed deep into the Mayan Mountain jungles. Our first stop



Debi and Ed stayed at one of BFREE's cabanas, with three of the four walls being screen, and one wall being made of wood.

was at TREES, which is nestled between two mountain ranges and surrounded by lush, tropical jungle and a myriad of brooks and streams. We met with one of the owners, Mathieu, and then planned out where we would set up a few cameras to get a sampling of the wild cat population along the foothills of the mountains. It was super-hot and humid that day, making hiking a bit uncomfortable, but the views were spectacular and worth the walk! The trail cameras will stay in place for a few months gathering data, then on our next trip down we will analyze the data and determine what direction to expand our trail cameras into on their property. Mathieu was very accommodating and excited to have us at his facility! We are looking forward to working with him in the future.

After spending the day at TREES, we drove south down the winding mountain roads until we got to the entrance of BFREE. BFREE has a six mile long driveway that crosses the Bladen Nature Reserve before entering into BFREE's land. The driveway consists of clay and mud, making the drive adventurous! I must admit that every time we visit, we get the vehicle stuck in the mud and spend time getting covered in the thick, pasty mud trying to get the truck out! With that said, I am grateful that BFREE offers pick-up service on the main road and that it is not my vehicle getting stuck!!!

As you approach the end of BFREE's driveway, you have to cross a river to get to the compound. Depending on the time of year, that crossing could be in the truck or holding your luggage above your head and wading across, or if the current is too strong, you have to holler to the guards

across the river to bring you a canoe. Like I said, getting to BFREE's remote location is always an adventure!

Once at the compound, the facilities are nice, but rustic. We stay in a newly built, raised cabana, with three of the four walls being screen, and one wall being made of wood. This gives you the feeling of sleeping right out in the jungle without being pestered by bugs. There is a sink in the cabana, but no bathroom. BFREE is ecofriendly and uses solar panels for electricity and filtered rainwater/river water for cleaning/drinking/cooking purposes. With that said, there is an open-air shower stall and a shared composting toilet (glorified outhouse),

which are both a short walk away from the sleeping cabanas. Down the path from the cabanas is a bunkhouse where student groups can sleep. They also have a general meeting building that consists of a kitchen, eating area, and lounge hammocks, with books nearby. BFREE maintains trails that you can use to walk through the jungle and they have erected a lookout tower that you can climb to see above the tree canopy; it is a great location to watch the sun rise and the jungle wake up. Bird lovers enjoy the above-the-treetop view.

After unloading our supplies and luggage, we headed up to the eating/lounge area to rest and discuss our plans for the next few days. After lounging in hammocks and eating dinner, we met with our designated field assistant, Canti, who is a head ranger and tourist guide. He works at BFREE patrolling their territory and guiding people through the jungle. He and two of his rangers assisted us with programming the cameras and getting our equipment ready to put out the next day. Once we finished, we headed back down the trail to our cabana using a flashlight to light the way. At this time of year (January), it gets dark around 6 pm and the sun comes up around 5:30 am, making for long, dark nights. There are no TVs at

BFREE, our phones do not work there, internet is only available for a short period of time in the morning (if you are lucky), and you do not want to keep your lights on at night, because they attract bugs. So, once we retire to our cabana for the night, we lay on our bed surrounded by darkness and the sounds of the jungle. There is a constant hum of the cicada bugs in the background and off in the distance, and we could hear two different troops of howler monkeys calling back and forth to each other. What often sounded like an animal walking across the roof of the cabana was just the gentle breeze brushing the tall fern trees against the roof, and occasionally you would hear an animal pass by on the jungle floor and would wonder what species it was. You would not have your answer until the next morning when you looked for its tracks! How exciting it was to find tapir tracks right along the edge of our cabana in the morning!

After a good night's sleep and a protein packed breakfast, we loaded our backpacks up with our equipment and headed down the jungle trails with Canti and his rangers to disperse our cameras. We have strategically decided to set our cameras up at one end of BFREE's property and slowly move them across the property over time. With that said, we started at one end of the property and set up cameras at predetermined distances along (or near) the trails. We also fastened camera covers above our trail cameras to help protect them from the heavy rains and humidity. Each camera was marked with its location, and the location was entered into a



These cabanas give you the feeling of sleeping right out in the jungle without being pestered by bugs.

GPS device so we know where to find them when we return. As a side project, we wanted to determine if the local species of wild cats were attracted to scent lure, so on half of the camera locations we added a wildcat scent lure to the area. It will be interesting to see how the local wildlife reacts to this scent! By lunchtime, we had dispersed a total of 20 cameras at ten location sites, so we headed back to camp to eat lunch and relax during the heat of the day.

The next day, my husband decided to accompany one of BFREE's employees and Canti to survey an area near the river that had been affected by a recent flood. Due to the river swelling, it had carved a new route through the jungle. The river had been the border of BFREE's territory, and now that the river had a new path, it looked like BFREE had lost quite a bit of land. When this happens, BFREE has to document the changes and submit them to



Setting up camera traps in the Mayan mountain jungle.

the local government so that they can reclaim their land; otherwise they will lose it. While they were off surveying the damage and looking for wild cat signs, I decided to take a walk through another part of the jungle and survey the area for wild cat activity. Being alone in the jungle allowed my other senses to heighten and I started to smell different animals along different parts of the trail. It also gave me some time to quietly observe different areas and make note of wild cat activity, like paw prints in the mud and scratch activity. I spent a few hours focusing in on areas that looked like prime jaguarundi and margay habitat. I was not lucky enough to see any wild cats on my walk, but I did find some cross paths that the cats use to get to a watering hole, and I located a few potential margay resting areas. Exciting locations to move the

cameras to at a later date!

We spent the later portion of the afternoon regrouping and getting to know our field assistant, Canti, better. We compared our views of Belize, our hopes for this project, and our overview of how we can work with the local villages and help preserve wildlife. This conversation was invaluable to the goals of our project and we were all happy to be able to have the time to discuss everything.

On our last day at BFREE, we walked the trails to check our cameras to make sure they were set up correctly and working properly. After maintaining our cameras, we left BFREE and headed toward civilization again, where our phones would work and we could find Wi-Fi hotspots to connect to the world! Oh, and using flushing toilets again was a wonderful thing!

As we boarded our plane to head back to the States, I was overwhelmed with a sense of accomplishment. After three long years of researching and planning out this project, we finally got on the ground and got the project up and running! It was an amazing feeling and we are excited to get back to Belize to continue the field work. Now that we are back in the States, we are focusing on fundraising, networking, and spreading awareness about this project. These tasks will keep us very busy until we head back down to Belize in the late summer months.

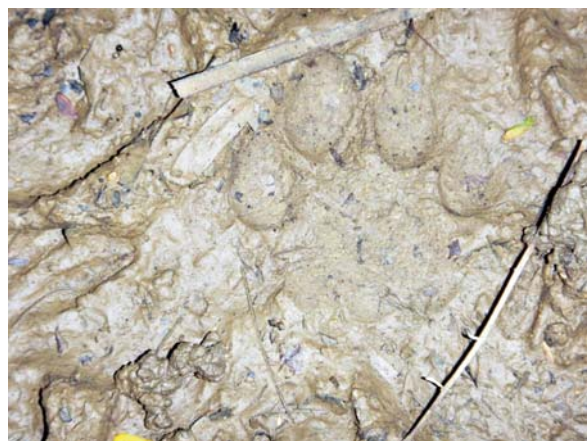
So what is the next step? Canti will maintain our cameras and keep them working until we get back down there in late summer to analyze the data and move the cameras. We will also be working on another group trip that we will offer to the general public to show them the sites of Belize; the trip will be sometime between December 2017 and March 2018. In addition, we will be offering an opportunity for people to come down and help us with maintaining the trail cameras, allowing people to get hands-on experience in field research. There are many other branches to our project that you



The group visits Cockscomb Basin, a jaguar preserve made famous in Alan Rabinowitz's book "Jaguar."

may find interesting or may want to be a part of. You can learn more about this project on our website, www.JungleEncounters.org/conservation, or on our Facebook page, Belize Wildcats. This project is run solely on donations and they are greatly appreciated to keep the project moving forward, and we try to update our sites consistently to keep our followers up-to-date with how the project is progressing.

Looking back over the past three years, have there been bumps along the way? – YES. Were there hurdles to overcome? – MANY. Is the path now smoothly paved? – NO WAY! This project is extremely valuable to Belize's wildlife and a constant challenge to keep running smoothly and effectively, but the efforts are extremely rewarding! We feel blessed for the opportunity to be surrounded by lush jungle life and be a part of ensuring Belize's wildlife remains wild and healthy!



While Debi and the group did not see any jaguars, there was still plenty of evidence of the big cat, like this print in the mud.



Chadwick the Lion —
Santa Barbara Zoo, Santa Barbara, California

**For zoos big
and small**



Speedy the Turtle — Allison's Bedroom, Lexington, Kentucky

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The Three T's of Training Your Pet®

By Carol Cochran

The three t's of training your pet are simple. It works on all types of pets except one. I could never figure how to make it work with goldfish. The three t's are "talk," "touch," and "teach."

Talk is the first part. You must talk to your pet as much as possible, even before you ever touch him. He has to learn what kind of person you are by your voice and the way you speak. Always use a soft, but firm voice, not monotone or boring, but pleasant and with a smile in your voice. Talk to him about the pretty grass, trees, flowers, Uncle Harvey, or anything that comes to mind, using the pet's name frequently. He does not understand the words, but will understand your personality by hearing your voice.

Touch is the second part of training. Once you have talked to your pet and gotten him to relax by using your voice and his name, then you start touching him. Extend your hand, palm down, and let him sniff and examine your hand to learn your smell and be comfortable with the fact you are not going to grab him. When he is relaxed, with your hand being near him, touch him gently, all the while talking to him and using his name. Rub him on the head, behind the ears and on the chest. Rub, do not pat. Patting an animal initializes aggression or nervousness. Rub gently along the back from head to tail a few times and start rubbing his stomach, gently, then each leg, and the tail if he will let you. Let him look forward to your touch and voice and always make it enjoyable.

Do this petting technique until he is comfortable with you touching and rubbing every part of his body.

Teach is the third step. When you are talking to your pet, then touching and petting him, you are teaching him from the beginning, but there is a lot more to teaching. Show him what you want him to do with each command by using the command, which should be one word (such as sit, down, stay, etc.), and putting him in the position with your hands, gently but firmly. When he gets into the position you want, either by putting him there or on his own, then praise him, but do not get loud and boisterous with your voice or he will jump up, thinking you want to play. Praise him by scratching his chest or behind his ears and telling him he is a good boy. Do this with each command, always letting him know you are proud of him for doing right, but

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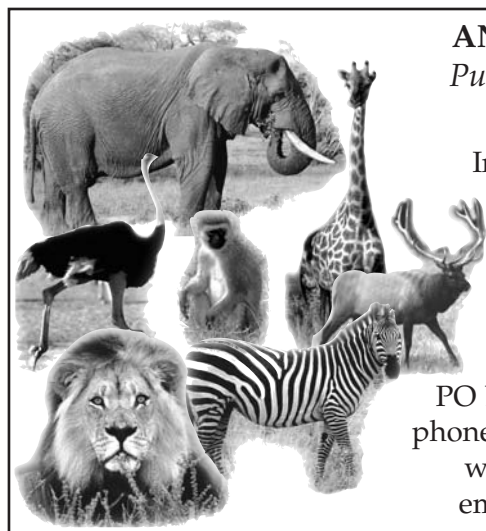
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never, ever scolding or yelling if he does not do it right, as he does not understand what you want. He will be fine if you take things slow and if he messes up or things do not seem to go right, stop and go back to the last command that he did correctly; work that one again so that he performs that with no errors, then stop until the next training session.

Always start a training session off with working the commands he knows and can do well and not starting the session off with a brand new command, and at the end of the training session, have him perform a command he knows and does well so that you end the session with praise.



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A Day in the Life of Kazuma

In the July 2012 issue of the FCF Journal, we published a couple of articles about Kazuma the lion, who was imported to Tigers for Tomorrow at Untamed Mountain from Guatemala, where he had spent his entire life in a traveling circus. Here's a nice update on his cushy life in the U.S.

By Sue Steffens

Life here at Tigers for Tomorrow at Untamed Mountain is pretty cool for a lion; where they built my enclosure, I get to watch the sunrise every morning. I like to roar out to the other lions and tell them that our day has begun. A little while later, one of our keepers comes by to do security check on the entire preserve. They say good morning to me every day. I am very special and one of the only animals who gets my own fan in the summer and a heating blanket in my den box in the winter.

Next, I wait and listen for the diesel of the Kubota to start; this means my keepers are on the way with a truck full of meat. There are many of us that live here. I hear that we go through about 900 pounds of meat a day. I like that I get to eat first. Not only do I get to eat first, but when my keeper Sandy greets me in the morning, we have a game that we play every day. I race her to my holding area, an area in which I've been conditioned to go so that my enclosure can be cleaned, and my water can be cleaned and filled, and a bucket of meat can be put on my feed rock. I like the words that she says every day; it's kind of like a song - one for the money, two for the show, three to get ready - and sometimes I just go, instead of waiting for the end the song. I can't help it; I get so excited that I'm going to eat.

Once housekeeping has finished moving my toys around to make them look enticing, moving any of my waste, and

making sure that my den box and jungle gym are clean, my chef enters my enclosure and puts my food on my big feed rock. My feed rock is about 2.5 feet long and about ten inches high, which makes it easier for me to eat when I don't have to bend down all the time. I used to be in a traveling circus in Guatemala, and my legs were very unsteady. I was not very strong since the muscles of my legs had atrophied from being in a small space for so long. Wilbur and Sue

immediately started me on good vitamins and supplements to make me strong. Wilbur hand-fed me every day for the first three months; he would put the sweet jelly stuff inside my meat and he said it would make me strong, so I agreed to eat it. My jungle gym is built on two different levels, but each level is low to the ground. In order to get back in shape and make my legs start working as they should, Wilbur and Sue would walk me around my enclosure, then make me get up and down on my jungle gym every day. Now I'm so strong that I could run across the enclosure and jump on the jungle gym if I wanted. My mane was also a big mess, so every day for a short time my people would work on cutting the mats off my mane through the gate, and little by little I started looking GREAT!

There are other lions that live here in the preserve, and each of us have our own area to overlook. I live in a very special area; I live close to the commissary and across from the black leopard, Benny. He was the first animal Tigers for Tomorrow rescued and he gets a lot of respect and love. I like to roar out multiple times a day and tell all of the



Kazuma arrived in the U.S. after spending his life in a traveling circus in Guatemala.

other lions what is going on. I have multiple toys in my home that I played with. One is a big, plastic red egg, and I have a blue barrel I like to bite. When I first got here, my new toys were frightening. I did know what to do with them. Then, I figured out quickly if I started batting the toys around and throwing toys in the air, people would all come to watch me play. I've been here for years now and it still works! I play with a toy or toss a plastic egg around and

all the keepers come over to watch and clap and cheer me on. On fast days, I like that we get some beef bones to chew. I like to show off in front of people, especially when Sue is around. She is the person that did all the paperwork to help me get to the preserve. I have a new game that I like to play with her now that I feel better and I'm healthy. I like to hunt and stalk her. I make myself look very big, and then I run at her and jump at the fence. I like to pretend that I am going to get her. It's like hunting a small rabbit; I run up to wherever she is and jump up and down and hit my tail on the ground. It's pretty funny, so I don't know why she takes it so personally! I am just acting like a lion... that's what I like around here, that I am allowed to be who I am.

A few days a week it's quiet, and all the other animals like it that way; it gives us some time to rest. Sometimes, a school group will come through with a lot of little ones. Our preserve teacher will always stop at my enclosure and talk about my past and how important it is to give animals their dignity and respect. They always talk about how brave I was, and how I made a long plane trip to get to my new home. One of the most important things they talk about is how animals always forget the wrongdoings that human



Visitors to Tigers for Tomorrow watch Kazuma celebrate his birthday.

beings inflict on them. They say that my happiness and playfulness are proof of my big heart and love that I still have life within me.

I always know when it's the weekend, because everyone scurries around and gets ready to open to the public. For the next few hours, people come past my home and stop to look at me. They read the sign about my story and admire how handsome I am, of course. I like to lie upside down

on my jungle gym. Visitors think that's funny; they say I've got the life. If they only knew what I went through to get here. My job here is to be an ambassador for my species, as there are not very many of us left in the wild anymore. When Wilbur gives his tours, he talks about how there could be less than 20,000 lions left in the wild. It's important for people to understand wild animals and who we are, not what we are, so I don't mind being an

ambassador for my kind. Lions need a lot of help these days getting the word out that our future in the wild is in jeopardy.

At the end of every day, night checks are completed, the keepers say goodnight to us, and the preserve belongs to the animals. Dusk is a great time for us lions to communicate about the doings of the day, and then we all settle in for a night of relaxation. Life is good!

Landry's Ordered to Pay ALDF \$450,000

In the last issue of the FCF Journal, I reported on this defamation lawsuit filed by Landry's against the Animal Legal Defense Fund, in response to their September 2016 written notice that if Landry's did not give up their tigers to a suitable sanctuary within 60 days, ALDF would file suit alleging the white tiger exhibit harms and harasses an endangered species in violation of the Endangered Species Act. Landry's defamation suit was thrown out by the Harris County District Judge. Landry's is an AZA-accredited exhibit that is now facing the same kind of legal harassment that smaller, independent zoos have suffered. ALDF will be filing their ESA suit and Landry's will be appealing this defamation ruling. — Lynn Culver

By Craig Malisow
Reprinted from Houston Press

The restaurant empire had sued the Animal League Defense Fund and two individual advocates last November, over their allegations of mistreatment of white tigers on display at Houston's Downtown Aquarium.

Judge Steven Kirkland dismissed Landry's suit with prejudice and wrote that the sanctions were necessary "to deter Plaintiffs from filing similar actions in the future." Kirkland also ordered Landry's to pay more than \$170,000 in legal fees.

The California-based Animal League Defense Fund last year threatened to sue Landry's over the tigers, which the group claimed were largely confined in concrete

rooms and barely allowed to see sunlight. Landry's accused the advocates of "essentially extorting" Landry's "into giving up the tigers, taking them from the only home and caregivers they have ever known, and sending them to a 'sanctuary.'"

Landry's argued in its lawsuit that ALDF and advocates Cheryl Conley and Carney Anne Nasser "defamed the good name of a well-established business with deliberately false accusations of animal mistreatment and criminal conduct in an attempt to impose a fringe social agenda on a law-abiding business."

Landry's further argued that the "tigers are held and exhibited in complete and full compliance with all applicable laws, federal or state."

But the animal advocates argued that, for 12 years, Landry's has "confined four adult tigers in indoor, concrete pens beneath a seafood restaurant. Landry's does not allow the tigers outdoors; they live behind bars and glass and have never experienced nature. Because there is a resin-covered skylight nearby, and the tigers sometimes get 'sod and wood chips,' Landry's calls this treatment humane."



White tiger on display at the Houston Downtown Aquarium.



The Aquarium owns four white tigers and only one is on public display at a time. The other three wait their turn inside their night shift housing.

In a January press release, Animal League Defense Fund Executive Director Stephen Walls called Landry's defamation suit "a blatant attempt to silence free speech," and the group's Houston attorney, Adam Milasincic, argued that the company and its owner, billionaire Tilman Fertitta — the star of reality show *Billion Dollar Buyer* — are public figures and fair game for public discussion.

John Simpson, an attorney for Landry's, stated in an email that the ruling "does not impact the white tigers at the Downtown Aquarium. Naturally, we are surprised at the Court's ruling prematurely dismissing the defamation lawsuit. It is unfortunate when false allegations are made against law-abiding citizens. The Court's ruling, including the sanction award, will be appealed and should be overturned."

2017 FCF Convention Courses

We get lots of inquiries throughout the year asking when the next husbandry course is. When will we teach wildlife conservation education again? Well, the answer is Monday, July 24th, at the Hyatt Regency Sarasota Hotel in Sarasota, Florida! The teaching of these two very valuable classes kicks off our annual FCF Convention. Each has been taught many times and continuous revisions and improvements make these classes even better today.

The FCF Basic Wild Feline Husbandry Course was developed in the 1990s to help novices get a start and, just as importantly, to broaden the base of knowledge of those who already possess or care for wild felines. The course has been described by many attendees as information-packed and of great value.

Course instructor Mindy Stinner is a teacher by profession, and her skills of

communication, her vast understanding of the subject matter, and her many stories and antidotes add to the student's learning experience. Course content includes feline history, overlapping laws that regulate private ownership, cage design and construction, hand-rearing and adult husbandry, veterinary medicine, and contingency planning. Each class is unique, as students are encouraged to share experiences and ask questions.

Have you ever thought about making a difference in the lives of children, adults, and grandparents by sharing your animals and your love of exotic felines and other wildlife in live performances? It's an important part of wildlife conservation. So many communities lack a municipal or even private zoo. But USDA exhibitors fill in the gap, traveling to nursing homes, libraries, parks, nature centers, and schools, with trained animal ambassadors to bring the "zoo to you."

How do you get started? What's the step-by-step procedure? You have the cat, the love, and the desire, but you need direction, guidance, and confidence to take that leap of faith. The Wildlife Conservation Educator's Course is the answer. It will provide step-by-step instructions so you can build your dream into a reality - gain the necessary permits, licenses, insurance, and business plan that will make you part of the conservation movement.

Right now it is more important than ever. With the new government's emphasis on "business growth" and the lessening of environmental protections, the future of threatened and endangered species is at risk. Education of the public is the only hope.

Studies show that audiences listen closer to a conservation message when an animal ambassador shares the stage. Good ambassadors are the product of careful choosing and behavioral conditioning. Effective conservation presentations incorporate messaging that relates to the audience, such as - How does saving wildlife benefit society?

The FCF Wild/Exotic Feline Husbandry Course will be taught Monday, July 24, 2017, at the Hyatt Regency Sarasota hotel, in Sarasota, Florida, at the start of the FCF Convention. Broaden your horizons, keep up with the latest in feline healthcare and husbandry, and gain an understanding of the laws, regulations, and government agencies that oversee private captive husbandry of wild felines.

Topics Covered Include:

Natural History of Wild Felines
Regulatory Agencies & Permits
Facility Design
Handling Equipment
Diet / Nutrition
Health Care Basics
Disposition & Handling
Behavior Conditioning
Contingency Planning

How can individuals make a difference for nature? What can people do to help wildlife in their communities and backyards?

This year's course is taught by Michelle McKay and Kim Barker, seasoned guides, keepers, and educators at the Conservator's Center in North Carolina. They will be sharing the stage and combining their knowledge to make sure students have all the understanding and resources they need to build a business, or to be more knowledgeable and effective educators in their capacity as docents, volunteers, or employees at established zoos, sanctuaries, and nature centers.

Both courses will begin at 8 am, at the Hyatt Regency Sarasota Hotel, and will run all day until 5 pm. Students receive a text book for future reference, take a multiple choice test, and receive a certificate suitable for framing upon successful completion of the course.

Sign up online at the FCF website or use the registration form included with the *Journal*.



Ocelot ambassador, Chochi.

- Topics Covered in the Wildlife Conservation Educators Course:**
- What permits you need to become an exhibitor and the laws you need to abide by
 - What it means to be a professional wildlife educator and how you will impact your community and the animal industry
 - How to form a wildlife education business, establish a professional image, and maintain credibility
 - How to choose wildlife ambassadors and basic animal husbandry
 - Animal training, enrichment, and safety techniques
 - How to develop educational shows that flow smoothly, capture your audience's attention, and raise conservation awareness
 - How to market your business and shows
 - Valuable tips to improve your show and set yourself apart from your competition
 - How to speak with a variety of people in a professional manner, from the media to your audience
 - How to maintain and grow a healthy business

The Saddest Day On Earth – Just The Beginning

By Karen, contributor at www.ProtectTheHarvest.com

January 14th was the “saddest day on earth,” as Ringling Brothers Circus announced the closure of a 142 year-old tradition. This is just the beginning of increasing trouble from animal rights extremist groups. If you have followed the story of Ringling Brothers in recent years, it is easy to track the events that lead to this.

The attacks on Ringling Brothers are many and varied and come from a number of animal rights extremist groups, including the Humane Society of the United States, PETA, the ASPCA, and others. The Humane Society of the United States has a lobbying machine pushing to create laws and regulations that suit their extremist agenda. There are animal rights sympathizers in politics, working to change city ordinances that have made it impossible for the circus to perform in those markets. There have been frivolous lawsuits based on false charges that have lasted years in length. There was the counter suit filed by Feld Entertainment, the parent company of Ringling Brothers, against the Humane Society of the United States, the ASPCA, and other co-defendants, for bribery of false witnesses and racketeering (RICO Act). Then there are the ongoing protests and general, constant harassment. Despite the HSUS, the ASPCA, and other co-defendants settling the RICO suit to a combined amount of \$25 million, this closure is a very big win for these extremist groups. They are celebrating. They are charged up.

Joylon Jamison, a French mother of two

young boys, reported an alarming experience when attending the circus the other day in Colmar, Alsace, France. Joylon and her children are frequent circus-goers. She said that in the past it would be common to see three to four animal rights protestors at a circus. On this day, after the Ringling Brother’s announcement, she saw approximately 50 protestors holding banners. They were lining both sides of the road outside the entrance to the circus. She feels the sudden jump in number of protestors is a direct result of the Ringling Brother’s announcement, because it proved that constant harassment worked to close the World’s Greatest Show.

In the minds of animal rights extremists, no animal should be owned, used for a purpose, or exhibited. **THEY MAKE NO DISTINCTIONS.** It does not register with them that Asian elephants used in the circus have worked among people for thousands of years. According to Wikipedia, the first historical domestication of elephants was recorded in Harappan times; “The earliest indications of captive use of Asian elephants are engravings on seals of the Indus Valley civilization dated to the third millennium BC.” These extremists disregard the fact that in their native lands, Asian elephants still work and live with people. Elephants are used in logging, agriculture, as transportation, and in the military. They are also ignoring the fact that Ringling Brothers has the largest herd in North America, and are actively involved in conservation at their Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Center for Elephant Conservation. There they perform ground-breaking research in assisted reproduction in Asian elephants.

It is in this same way animal rights extremists also disregard the domestication of other animals, for example, dogs and horses. Draft horses and Shetland ponies were designed to plow the fields and work, pulling heavy loads. The Arabian horse was bred for beauty, endurance, and the desert environment. Dogs were bred to pull sleds in the snow, to find people, to work as guardians, to hunt, and so on. None of this is relevant to these extremists. It does not matter. They want to end animal ownership. Those of us who exhibit or compete with animals are among their many targets.

Animal rights extremists have a skewed view of reality and what is in the best interest of animals. They are trapped in ideology. The real truth, science, and facts mean absolutely nothing to them. They have no care or thought for the consequences of their actions. They are not concerned about how domesticated animals, who rely on humans, will survive once they “set them free.”

The extremists that have been attacking the circus are interconnected groups. Don’t forget that these very same groups are the ones attacking carriage horses, pony rides, horse shows, rodeos, dog and cat breeders, animal agriculture, and more. They feel righteous and now they believe their actions are vindicated by the closure of the circus. This closure will impact animal owners everywhere. It could be a rough ride for us in the coming months. Please help support animal owners and the organizations that are fighting back against their attacks.

We need to stick together to protect our way of life, our rights, and our heritage.

Big Cat Habitat and Gulf Coast Sanctuary

By Nancy Nallin

Big Cat Habitat and Gulf Coast Sanctuary, located in Sarasota, Florida, is the permanent, loving home to over 150 animals. Among the residents are fifty big cats ranging from bobcats and servals, to lions, tigers, ligers, and even a tigon. In addition, there are a multitude of other animals that were in need, such as fourteen bears of many varieties, small and large primates, exotic and domestic hoofstock, birds, small exotic mammals, and

more. There is even a beautiful manmade pool full of Japanese koi fish, whose prior home was destined to be filled in with concrete within days of their rescue by B.C.H. staff and volunteers.

The founder and president of the sanctuary, Kay Rosaire,

Kay Rosaire grew up around animals and, in the 1970s, she began performing with big cats, like Munchie pictured here.



hails from generations of animal trainers and entertainers. The Rosaire family is

known worldwide for their special connection with all animals and their lifetime dedication to the care and training of animals using positive reinforcement techniques. The “new revolution” of this



Outdoor habitats give the cats plenty of room to run, keeping them healthy and happy. Clayton visits his best buddy, Handsome.

type of training is not new to Kay or any of the Rosaire family, as they have always had a kind and gentle way of handling and training animals.

Having grown up with a variety of animals and working with her family in the entertainment field for many years, Kay had an affinity for big cats. In the 1970s, Kay began training and performing with big cats of all varieties. Her love for these beautiful animals and her special talent with them led her around the world, and she has won many awards recognizing her



This manmade watercourse is constructed inside the serval habitat.

special ability with them.

While not on tour in 1973, Kay acquired property in Sarasota to house her family of large felines and, in 1987, started offering a safe and permanent home to other big cats in need. Over the years, the need for rescue increased and, by necessity, the Big Cat Habitat had to grow with it.

Increasing costs for housing, care, and feeding brought about the need to become a 501(c)(3) "Not for Profit" in order to meet the needs of the ever increasing animal population.

At present, the Big Cat Habitat and Gulf Coast Sanctuary has become one of the premier animal attractions in Florida, and has touched the hearts of a multitude of visitors through their free "edutainment" performances with the animals. These programs highlight the importance of the human/animal connection and help educate the public on the important differences between "animal rights" groups and "animal advocates." Part of the sanctuary's mission is to encourage people to become proactive in the protection of animals in captivity and in the wild, while still maintaining the ever important bond that humans have with animals.

In following their mission to promote the human/animal bond, B.C.H. added an amazing opportunity for visitors with a "Walk on the Wild Side." This shaded walkway allows the public to stroll safely between the outdoor habitats of the big cats. They can be just feet away from the fabulous felines while they are playing in their pools or lounging contentedly in the sun.

Often the tigers will begin a rousing game of tag to the delight of their visitors. In other areas of the facility, visitors can actually take the opportunity to feed a tiger or a bear a treat in a safe and fun way. These types of interactive experiences are not only beneficial to the animals in the form of enrichment, but bring an even greater appreciation for animals to those who participate. The hands-on petting zoo also reinforces the public's regard for animals.

Kay Rosaire's son, Clayton, is the chief operating officer and is hands-on with the daily care, feeding, and maintaining of the animals and the ongoing care of the facility itself. Perhaps his most important role is in the training demonstrations, where he

has the opportunity to inspire the audience to truly care for all animals. His relationship with the big cats he presents and his comedic approach bring a new respect for the need to preserve these amazing big cats. Clayton's lovely wife, Danielle, handles the group tours, and their two adorable children, Ella and Clayton Junior, although youngsters, are eagerly waiting in the wings for the time they can carry on the family tradition.

The animal demonstrations also include an ever-changing program of animal species presented mainly by other members of the Rosaire family, including Kay's sister, Linda, with an exotic bird



Big Cat Habitat lives up to its name, providing large, enriched environments for its residents to enjoy.

show, niece, Dallas, with super-talented rescued dogs, and frequent visits from "Chance the Chimp" with his human mom, Pamela Rosaire. All members of the family are involved in the sanctuary, as animals are a lifetime commitment for all of them. Ellian Rosaire takes time away from her riding academy to provide physical maintenance (deworming, etc.) for all the hoofstock, including the camels and zebra. No family has ever been more deeply involved with the hands-on care of animals than they are.

With the close involvement of the Rosaire family and the responsible and dedicated group of professional animal caregivers the sanctuary employs, the animals are in the best hands and the visitors are always in a safe and family-friendly environment. With the additional help of many volunteers, the facility is always a clean and happy place for families, school groups, and animal lovers from all over the world to visit.

FCF ANNUAL CONVENTION MEETS AT HYATT REGENCY IN SARASOTA, FLORIDA!

Join with other caregivers, conservationists, and feline admirers Monday, July 24th, through Thursday, July 27th, 2017. Florida, the premiere vacation destination, is also the setting for this year's FCF Convention. Discover the beauty and energy of Sarasota, a beautiful bayside city, during your stay at the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

We've stayed at a lot of nice hotels over the years, but this year will top all other experiences! With a dramatic bayside setting and modern amenities, the Hyatt Regency Sarasota hotel is eco-friendly and the perfect start for the very best that Florida has to offer, from natural wonders, to unique culinary surprises and cultural discoveries. It's the perfect blend of a beautiful waterfront setting, welcoming service, and the comforts of home.

The award-winning Hyatt Regency Sarasota overlooks a private 32-slip marina. Take a swim and soak up the Florida sunshine in its lagoon-style pool with tropical surroundings, or relax and soak in the 12-person whirlpool spa.



The sparkling white beaches of the Gulf of Mexico are just 20 minutes

away, and Hyatt offers daily shuttles to Lido Beach, downtown Sarasota, and St. Armand's Circle.

Enjoy dining at one of Hyatt's restaurants. The Currents is a tranquil, one-of-a-kind experience offered by the lagoon pool and beautiful sun-deck, with stunning views of the marina. Indulge in great drinks and delicious food in this inviting atmosphere.

Or savor a tropical cocktail at the Hurricane Hut as you relax beside the luxurious pool, surrounded by cascading waterfalls, lush tropical plants, and waving palm trees.

Hyatt Regency knows how to spoil its patrons, and FCF members attending Convention can enjoy the following complimentary perks and premium amenities that will make you want to arrive a

day early on Sunday, and treat yourself to some personal R & R.

Daily cold towels and popsicles poolside will keep you hydrated and cool.

Pool toys, including water floats, snorkel, fins and masks, will add a splash of fun to your afternoon.

Watersports, including kayaking, paddle boarding, and paddle boating, are available right at the Hyatt Marina and connect you to Sarasota Bay.

Use of bicycles and helmets are offered so you can bike the hotel grounds and the Sarasota nature trails.

Use of fishing poles and bait are available so you can catch a big one swimming right off the marina.

20% discount off greens fees at IMG Academy Golf Club for your day off.

Every spacious guest room has amazing views of the marina. Immerse yourself in the comfort of well-appointed, stylishly designed 390-square-foot bayside accommodations. The contemporary décor exudes a casually sophisticated "Florida chic" feel. These spacious accommodations feature deluxe amenities to enhance your stay; a king or two double-sized Hyatt Grand Beds®, a generous work desk, safe large enough for a laptop, 47-inch HD TV, alarm clock radio, complimentary wireless Internet access, and redesigned bathrooms with designer tile and deluxe Portico bath products.

The FCF special room rate is only \$110 a night double occupancy, \$120 triple, or \$130 four people. Self-parking is complimentary for FCF attendees. Be sure to book your room now before the FCF block is full. This special FCF Convention rate ends





July 10th. This discounted rate is good from Sunday, July 23rd, through Thursday, July 28th. Come on Sunday to take advantage of the many local recreational activities available.

Hyatt Regency is a pet friendly hotel and our exotic kittens (under 20 pounds) are welcome for an additional fee of \$25 per room. Pets will enjoy a cat scooper and treats. These will be placed in your first floor room upon arrival. Inform the hotel you'll have a pet (or pets) staying with you at least three days in advance of your arrival. For further information, please contact the hotel directly at 1-888-421-1442.

Florida Wildlife and Fish Department requires out-of-state exotic cats can only be brought into Florida by persons holding a valid Florida class I, II, or III wildlife license and, additionally, you will need to apply for an import permit. A Florida exhibition license fee is \$150 annually. Import permits have no fee. Licenses require documentation of 1,000 hours experience, and take about two months to process. Your import permit application should be applied for six weeks in advance.

FCF HEADS TO SARASOTA FOR SUMMER FUN!

Plan your summer vacation around the 2017 FCF Convention at the Hyatt Regency Hotel, located at 1000 Boulevard of the Arts, Sarasota, Florida!

Monday, July 24th, kicks off this feline extravaganza with the teaching of two valuable continuing educational courses at the Hyatt Regency; the Basic Exotic Feline Husbandry Course and the Wildlife Conservation Educators Course. Each course is 8 hours, beginning at 8 am.

Tuesday, July 25th, at 9 am, the annual board meeting of the FCF Directors is held. Members are welcome to attend and listen. Convention registration opens at 2 pm, in the FCF Hospitality Suite. Drop off your donated items for the silent auction, spend the afternoon networking with old friends and new, and interact with exotic kittens on display. Enjoy libations from the cash bar, followed by a delicious buffet dinner. The annual FCF membership meeting concludes the first day of convention.

Wednesday morning at 9:30 am, we board the bus for Big Cat Habitat, one of the premier animal attractions in Florida. We'll have the place to ourselves in the morning and watch a special showing

of their 'edutainment' performances with the animals. This program highlights the importance of the human/animal connection and explains the differences between "animal rights" groups and "animal advocates." Clayton Rosaire will perform with lion, tiger, and liger, demonstrating their athletic abilities and big cat sense of humor. Big Cat Habitat is home to plenty of big and smaller felines, as well as bears, birds, primates, and petting zoo animals. Each species has specially constructed enclosures with plenty of space and enrichments. After touring the animal habitats, we'll conclude our visit by attending the "Parrots in Paradise" show. Amazing parrots will display intelligence and strength in this educational talk.

Then we board the bus for our second field trip of the day, the Ringling Brothers Circus Museum, a top-rated Sarasota attraction. We'll have two and a half hours to explore three different exhibits:

The **Circus Museum** is a must-see. Walk the wire. Squeeze into a clown car. Snap photos with a ferocious (faux) tiger. Thrill to it all; the parade wagons, the posters, the glittering costumes, and the cannon that shot daring performers through the air. Wonder at the must-be-seen-to-be-believed 44,000-piece Howard



Clayton gets a raspy tongue kiss from Handsome, one of the stars of the Big Cat Habitat shows.



Raj is a rare liger, part lion, part tiger, and incredibly beautiful.

in Sarasota's tourist attractions before we gather again Thursday evening for cocktails and a banquet dinner. The annual fundraiser auction, featuring donated items from FCF members and sponsors, is a light-hearted and funny conclusion to the convention. Be sure to donate something for the auction and then get out your credit card and start bidding!

Convention Registration is \$200 a person before July 14th, and \$235 after. Children under 12 are free and kids ages 13 to 18 are \$150. Register online and pay with PayPal at: http://www.felineconservation.org/convention_registration_form.html

Hotel Reservations can be made online by using the direct link to the FCF Group rate on the FCF Hotel Information webpage at: http://www.felineconservation.org/2017_convention_hotel.html



We'll have a couple of hours to explore the "Greatest Show On Earth" museum, The Ringling, which will be the only reminder of a century-old family favorite.

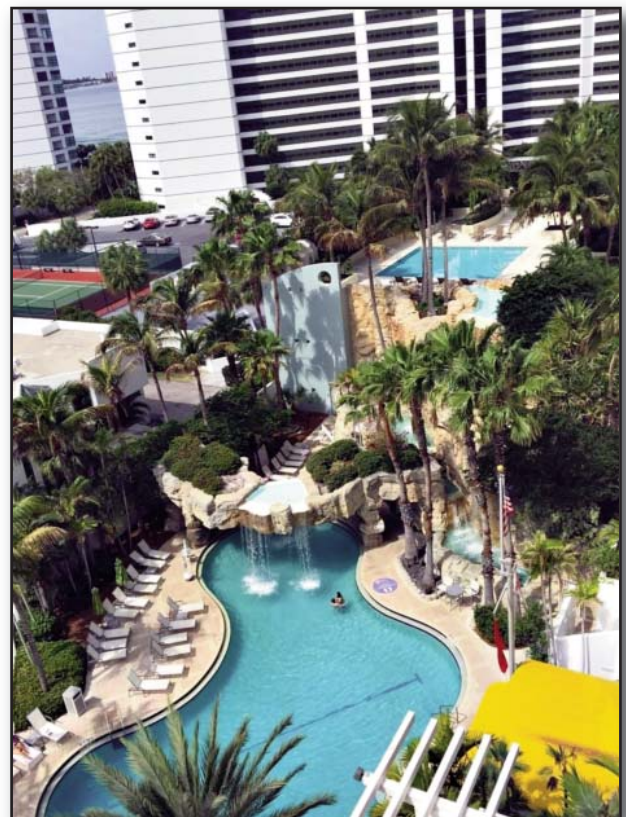
Bros. Circus Model and the Greatest Show on Earth Mural, celebrating the entertainment that has delighted packed houses in great cities and small towns across America for generations.

Bayfront Gardens is a living treasure. Take in Mable's Rose Garden. Enjoy the shade of majestic banyan trees. Delight in the whimsy of the Dwarf Garden. Be refreshed by cooling breezes that blow along the Bayfront Promenade and Millennium Tree Trail.

The **Ringling Museum of Art** is a collection of fascinating exhibitions from around the world and classical sculptures that fill the grand courtyard.

Our bus will bring us back to the hotel around 5 pm. You have the evening free to explore Sarasota, the beaches, or hang at the Hyatt's tropical waterfall at the pool. Then make dinner plans on your own.

Thursday morning starts with educational speakers covering everything from conservation to feline husbandry. You'll have the afternoon free to relax or take



Free time at the Hyatt means time for soaking up the sun and swimming under the waterfalls of



Danny Waldo's bobcat, Gibsy, stares at the cameraman.



Cat and dog face off. That's Max and his buddy, Milo the Rhodesian ridgeback at McCarthy's Wildlife and Environmental Conservation Center. Photo by Patty Perry.



Gioranni is gi-normous! Anne-Laure Michelis took this photo of the standing tiger at McCarthy's Wildlife Sanctuary.

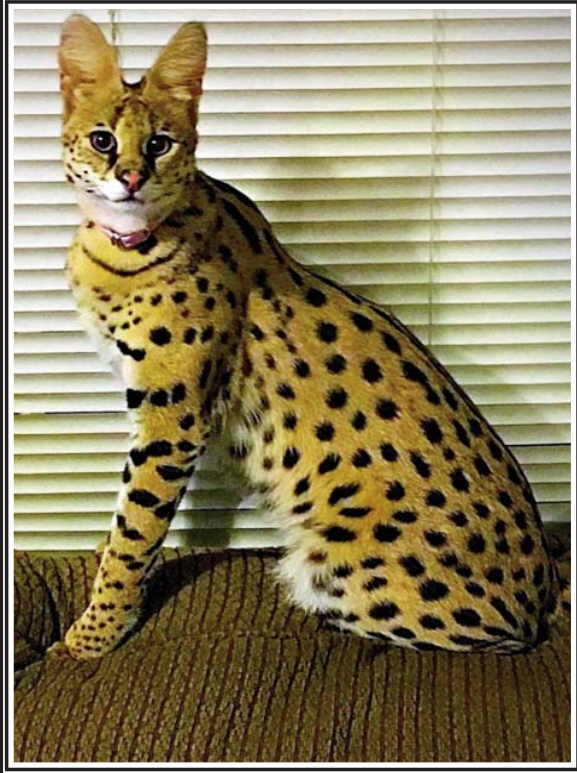
Your Best Shots



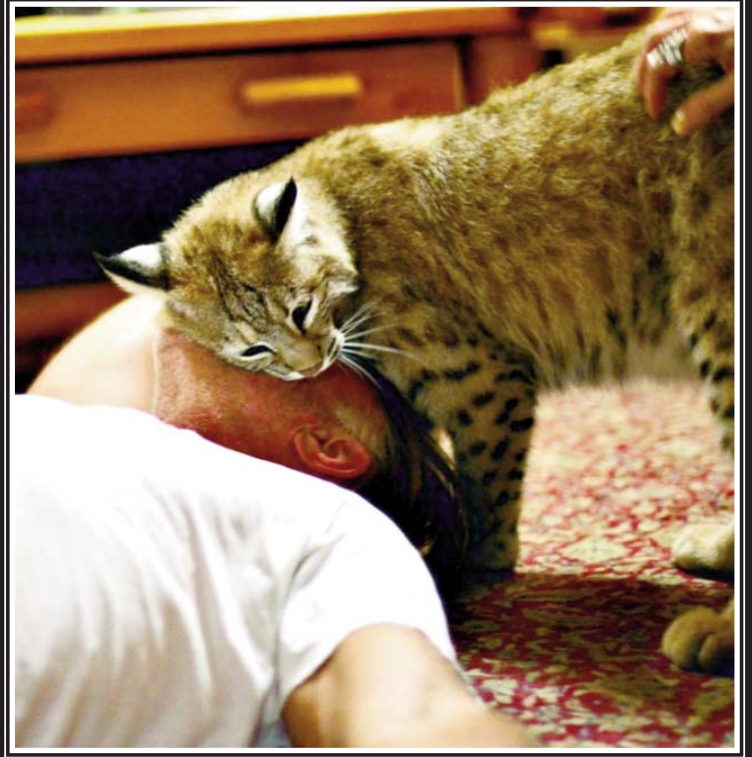
Anne-Laure Michelis photographed Bella jaguar relaxing on her stone couch at Panther Ridge Conservation Center.



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tion.



Ursula is a beautiful serval. Photo by her owner, Shelby Harrison.



Liberty rubs faces with her owner Doug Kildsig.

S!



Olivia, the melanistic Geoffroy's, lives with Chris Berry.



Courtney Frenchak takes a selfie with Eurasian lynx Kitty Pat, who's all grown up now.

River Legacy Park Bobcats

“I could have touched wild bobcats a half a dozen times.” -quoted from Facebook

By Lynn Culver

An FCF member gave me a call and wanted me to check out YouTube videos of River Legacy Park bobcats. He said it appeared they were self-taming, and he thought it would make an interesting *Journal* article for FCF members. I did, and I found plenty of evidence of these trusting bobcats, with videos, photographs, and personal testimonies all posted online. I contacted each person I could by email and asked if they would let me interview them and publish photos. Here is what I learned from my investigation.

Stacey Halpin Taylor is a regular at Legacy River Park. An avid cyclist, she visits as often as she can and sees bobcats almost every time in the spring, summer, and fall, and about 65% of the time in the winter. She told me that one of her first visits was about two years ago. She came upon a bobcat and a coyote lying next to each other in the bike path. Concerned, she decided to turn around, and when she came upon another cyclist, she warned him of the wildlife ahead. He assured her it was no problem and, bolstered by his confidence, she followed him back where they stopped and watched the pair. Turns out he was a Missouri native, as was

Stacey. Stacey noted to me that the unlikely pair of cat and dog species was the catalyst for a chance meeting of Missouri natives.

Stacey didn't know anything about why these bobcats seem so tolerant of the humans in the park, but she has noticed that they do have a sense of personal space and, while they will allow people to approach, or stop and watch, should someone come too close, they will hiss and tell you to keep your distance. Her latest visit this February produced a couple of photos of a female she recognized as the same one she has seen with kittens in previous years.

Ross Beckman visited by phone with me and gave me some background to the River Legacy Park. Ross attended the grand opening in 1991. Ross recalled that grass seed had been planted for the event; however, high winds blew it all away and when the park was opened, it was just dirt. The park does not have much woods; it is actually an eight mile long bike path along the Trinity River, which runs from Dallas to Houston. But the park borders a large natural area called the Viridian Preserved Land.

He personally began sighting bobcats about five years ago. He does not recall there being any sight-



January 28, 2015 - Check out this beautiful bobcat picture a park user sent us today! It's a great reminder that we share the park and trails with a variety of wildlife! If you are so lucky to see a bobcat in the park - do as this park user did - enjoy the sight from a distance; take a picture if you can; and then let it pass or go by slowly without cornering or bothering the animal.

ings back around the time of the opening. Then Ross let me in on a little known detail; one of the main reasons these bob-



Ross Beckman has been visiting River Legacy Park since its grand opening and this is just one of the many bobcats he has photographed over the years.



Stacie Halpin Taylor watched this female bobcat walk the hand rails on her latest visit this past February.

cats are so commonly seen according to Ross, is that a retired veterinarian feeds them raw chicken. Ross had the veterinarian's name and phone number because he used to frequent the park, and the veterinarian asked him to keep track of sightings and report back to him. Ross wrote on the calendar every day he saw bobcats and it added up to 28 sightings in a year. Ross says in one out of every three visits, he would see a bobcat. The most bobcats he ever saw were a group of five that strolled by his bike on a day when he did not bring his camera or camcorder! Last spring, the Dallas area experienced serious flooding, and Ross believes that might have killed some of the Legacy bobcats.

According to Ross, the story behind the veterinarian is that the good doctor found a mother bobcat shot dead with an arrow, with her lone kitten nearby. The veterinarian foster-raised the orphan and released her back into the park as a young adult. This veterinarian has monitored this bobcat's progress and he knows when she delivers and has kittens. According to Ross, he has seen the veterinarian make his bobcat calls and bobcats will acknowledge this vocalization and walk up to him.

So apparently, if this information is cor-



Ross Beckman photographs one of the park's bobcats as it strolls along the bike path.

rect, and I have no reason to believe otherwise, there are some extenuating circumstances to the apparent "taming" of a population of wild bobcats. Though I asked Ross to contact the veterinarian and give him my contact information so I could speak with him, I have not been called, and I suspect the vet is declining to come out of the shadows.

During an interview with another park visitor named Chris Jackson, I was told that some folks have reported seeing raw chicken laid out in the park, so, if not left by the veterinarian, then others are feeding the carnivores. Unfortunately, habituating wildlife to food handouts can lead to a disaster if some bobcat ever decides the food is not forthcoming fast enough or if some jerk ever decides these are domesticated bobcats and tries to catch one for a pet.

Ross told me of one guy he knows who drives a three-wheeled bike and he stopped videoing the bobcats because it was so common nobody wanted to see them anymore. And another lady he spoke with on the bike trail told him she had her camera knocked out of her hand by a bobcat. So far, according to Ross, the only reported incident is one case of a bobcat chasing a lady's Chihuahua dog. Fortunately, a man heard the lady screaming and he got the dog away from the bobcat. After

that, to appease the lady, park officials set up some bobcat traps and signs explaining what they were for.

But, for the time being, visitors to this unique urban refugeum in the heart of the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex are seeing bobcats and even coyotes that are unfazed by the presence of humans. It is possible that the original bobcat kitten has grown up and reared her offspring to tolerate humans, and they have grown up and taught their offspring to tolerate humans. If this veterinarian's fostering occurred around 2005, by the time Ross began seeing the bobcats in 2011, and reporting them to the veterinarian, they could have been third generation offspring, and

this would support the theory that this learned behavior is continuing to be picked up by each successive generation and is seemingly spreading throughout the River Legacy Park population.

I spoke with another park visitor, David Randall, who is familiar with the area and has been visiting since high school, which is prior to it even being designated as a park. Randall says the section where bobcats are sighted regularly is the eastern part of the park. Randall shared one account, saying, "My wife and I were walking the trail and it came out of the bushes and followed us. Crossed the trail, checked us out, and continued to the



Keeping peace between man and beast requires some respect for the wildlife that call this refuge home.



Delbert Olsen caught this bobcat carrying her dinner in 2008.

water.” He also told me he saw a mountain lion once.

Lots of Visitors see Bobcats at River Legacy Park

By 2008, it was already pretty established that visitors might see wild bobcats, so the park developed signage and information to educate visitors on proper bobcat etiquette:

Bobcats are typically solitary animals, but are most likely to be seen during early morning or late afternoon feeding times. They are usually well camouflaged and avoid human contact, so you are privileged to see this remarkable animal in its natural environment at River Legacy Park. If you do catch a glimpse of one of the park's resident bobcats, enjoy the experience and keep these three things in mind:

1.) Quietly watch the animal from a distance.

2.) Make sure the bobcat has an "escape route" and do not try to corner it.

3.) Never approach a mother bobcat that has cubs. She will try to protect them if she feels you might be a threat.

And you can always learn more about bobcats and other native animals by visiting the Living Science Center and checking out the exhibits and displays.

Legacy River Park website has a bobcat blog with visitor accounts. I have copied a few to illustrate these special experiences with bobcats.

Chuck Barron gave this May 24, 2008 account:

I was riding my bike through the park and straight ahead a female (I think, she was small) was strolling right



Chris Jackson got this nice close up of a young bobcat during his March 2012 visit.

down the middle of the trail. As I passed, she gave me a slight glance and strolled on by. I had my camera phone so I turned around and caught up to her, pulled up right next to her and took a picture. She gave a glance as though to say, "Are you done?" and continued her stroll. This is the sixth time I have seen a bobcat; only once have I seen a male (He was at least five pounds heavier than the female.). They don't seem to mind us at all and they are totally non-aggressive. I was amazed by how beautiful they are, and as a cat lover (I have two); I look forward to seeing one or both of them each time I go to the park.

Delbert Olsen relayed his experience on June 24, 2008:

I was riding my bike on the east trail around 7 pm. I had just passed under Collins headed east when an approaching cyclist announced she had just passed a bobcat. I slowed down and came around a bend in the trail. Down the trail, I could see a bobcat walking in my direction. I stopped and got out my camera. The bobcat was too far away for a decent photo, so I just stood there and watched. As he approached, I could see he had a very large rat hanging from his mouth. To my surprise, he continued to walk toward me and passed within two or three feet. I took pictures as he approached and after he had passed.

Matt wrote this about his July 6, 2008, sightings:

There is a real bobcat family. The one that walks along the east trail just past Collins towards the park-



Brad Barrick saw this brightly spotted bobcat in the fall of 2008.

ing area has about nine kittens. I watched all of them cross the trail right in front of me Saturday morning around 7am. She hunts east of Collins and has a den just west of the Collins Bridge. There are going to be ten big kitties in that park and they don't seem to mind humans at all.

Brad Barrick reported in October 2008, he was on the east trail walking south-southwest from mile marker 5 about half way to mile marker 4 (just before the trail turns westward):

It would actually have been quite easy to walk right on by and not even notice the female bobcat, even though she was lying only inches from the trail. In the dappled sunlight, her camouflage was startlingly effective.

She certainly didn't seem too concerned about me or my fellow walker standing next to me at the time. Even more surprising was her complete indifference to the bicycles whizzing by now and then. Thankfully, no one came by/through with any dogs though. I somehow doubt she would have been quite so accepting of them.

After "hanging about" for almost nine minutes from the time I had first walked up on her, our furry lady-friend decided that she had had enough and strode imperiously off into the brush.

A month later, on November 19, Bradley Borougerdi believed he may have sighted the same bobcat as Brad:

It was around 10 am, while my son was in Nature School at the Living Science Center, I was jogging in the park. I began from the entrance where the exercise equipment is and continued right, passed both bridges, and went a little further across the West Fork Bridge. On my way



Bradley Borougerdi followed a bobcat for at least a quarter of a mile before approaching within three feet where the two shared eye contact. He says his close contact was “truly an experience that cannot be described.”

back, I began a light jog, until I came upon a bobcat that looks very similar to the one Brad has on his posting of Oct. 21st.

The bobcat was about ten yards in front of me, and I followed it for at least a quarter mile, until someone came from the other side of the trail and forced it to go into the woods. I stayed for a while, hoping it would return, which it did, only to be sent back into the woods by a bike rider a few minutes later. I stood there, eagerly awaiting its return, but gave up hope after about ten minutes and continued back to the West Fork Bridge, where I usually stop to gaze down the Trinity for a while.



In October of 2012, Chris Jackson noticed a bobcat was following a dirt road near the east pumping station several hundred yards from his position.

A few minutes into my meditations, a rider from behind called out that there was a bobcat behind me. I turned, and the bobcat was drifting towards me. As it approached within three feet of my side, we came into complete contact with each other. As I looked into the cat's eyes, it briefly glanced back, and then went on its way, unperturbed by our meeting. I couldn't believe how close it came! As the cat approached, I stood still and watched its every move. The most interesting aspect of the encounter

was that it didn't seem to worry about my presence, which puzzled me.

I hope others who are fortunate enough to have the opportunity to stumble upon a magnificent experience such as this are wise enough to treat the animal with interest instead of fear. If we respect their territory, then we will be able to enjoy their presence for years to come. It is truly an experience that cannot be described.

January 11, 2009, the Sanborn family reported the following story:

My family spotted at least three bobcat cubs, maybe four, playing just off the bike trail near mile marker 5 around 5 pm. The fourth cat may have been the momma cat, but it was too far away to tell. My 9-year-old son who has keen eyesight was the first to spot them. The cubs were just frolicking in the grass and tree stumps next to the trail. They stopped occasionally to look at us curiously, but then went about their playing and romping. We also spotted several armadillo and an opossum during our Satur-

day bike ride. It was a great day to be in the park.

July 23, 2009, Virginia Lowe had this experience:

Today as we were hiking, we spotted Mama bobcat with one of her babies in her mouth crossing the path! At first I thought I was hallucinating! It was a wonderful sight I will never forget!

Chris Jackson founded the website DFWUrbanWildlife.com. He shared two bobcat accounts. His observation of a wild bobcat starts out with a March 14, 2012, red-tailed hawk sighting. Chris writes:

I began the morning by taking a walk in our neighborhood's Greenbelt Park. The park follows a creek which winds its way through the subdivision. The creek is bridged by residential streets at three different locations in our neighborhood alone.



Chris Jackson sighted two bobcats during his October visit; the second was carrying a freshly killed rat.

As I approached the Flowers Drive Bridge, I noticed a red-tailed hawk perched on the roof of the house nearest the creek. I had my camera with me and wanted to take pictures, but the weather was overcast, the light was poor, and the distances were too great, so I didn't even try.

Still, there was something about the hawk that intrigued me. The big bird seemed to be studying something down in the creek bed and out of my line of sight. I decided to move in closer for a look. If there was something interesting going on down by the creek, then great. If not, then I hoped to at least get close enough to take some pictures of the hawk.

Well, the hawk didn't cooperate. Red-tailed hawks get antsy easy, and this one flew away before I had even made it to the bridge.

Plan B was to try and find whatever it was in the creek bed that had the hawk's attention. So, I crossed the Flowers Drive Bridge and walked over the waist high stone wall that ran along its length. Quietly, I leaned over for a look.

There in the reeds, just beside the slowly flowing water of the creek, sat a young bobcat! The cat had its back turned to me and was unaware of my presence. Furthermore, the bobcat's attention was focused on

the reeds in front of him. There was some kind of prey animal, possibly a small bird, in a tangle of vegetation, and the bobcat was focused on it at the exclusion of all else.

That then is the comedy of this situation. The song bird was being sized up by the bobcat, which in turn was being eyed as a possible meal by the red-tailed hawk! Bird < Cat < Bird. The bobcat was small, only slightly larger than a house cat, but even so he probably did not have much to fear from the hawk. Still, I got the very real impression that the hawk was giving the bobcat some serious consideration. Well, distracted as he was, the bobcat gave me plenty of time to bring my camera to bear. I was very excited. This was my first encounter with a wild bobcat that amounted to more than just a fleeting glimpse. I started taking pictures, and it was only after this that the bobcat became aware of my presence. Alerted by the sound of the shutter, the bobcat turned and looked right into my camera's lens.

We continued like this for nearly 30 seconds before the bobcat decided he didn't appreciate my admiration. Casually, the bobcat moved into the reeds and brush as I desperately tried to keep the camera on him. After just a short while, he had completely vanished.

And on October 16, 2012, Chris Jack-



One of the Legacy River Park bobcats rests on the bike path and yawns. Photo by Stacey Halpin Taylor.

son tells of bobcats observed at the Village Creek Drying Beds in Arlington, Texas:

Strangely, I spotted the first bobcat just minutes after photographing a coyote in one of the drying beds. The bobcat was following a dirt road near the east pumping station several hundred yards/meters from my position. At this distance, it was hard to tell for sure what kind of animal I was seeing. There was a white Ford SUV parked nearby, and at first I assumed he was a dog belonging to the owners of that vehicle. It wasn't until I had a look through my telephoto lens that I was able to recognize that it was a bobcat I was observing.

The cat continued down the road for the width of a drying bed, and only ditched into the grass because the white SUV had



On May 14, 2015, Jon Snow videoed an encounter between a bobcat and a coyote in broad daylight.

moved onto the road behind him.

A close look at this bobcat shows that he possesses a vividly spotted coat. This effectively differentiates him from a second bobcat I saw on this day, which had fur of a much more uniform color.

I came across the second bobcat several hours later as she patrolled along one of the dirt roads that runs near the east side of the property. As I watched, this cat moved down into one of the drying beds and began hunting in the tall weeds along its perimeter.

It wasn't long before she came back out holding a large rat in her mouth.

The bobcat then carried the rat across two of the drying beds before stopping in a clearing. There, she set the rat down and then began calling out. Sometimes she would walk over to this or that other nearby clearing and start mewling again. I interpreted this as her trying to call her cubs to dinner.

I watched for a little over a half hour, but unfortunately no other bobcats appeared. Eventually, the bobcat picked up the rat and carried it off away from my position. I could still hear her vocalizations as I walked away.

River Legacy Bobcats on YouTube

The bobcats are still making themselves visible to visitors. There are plenty of videos on YouTube where you can watch these amazing felines strolling casually among the cyclists and hikers. One such video was shot by Neil Houters on September 22, 2013, showing him and other cyclists paused next to a sitting bobcat, discussing the feline.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D2yr8OfqmEA>

There's even a video that Jon Snow shot on May 14, 2015, of a meeting between bobcat and coyote. Fox 4 News ran the video on their nightly news show. After the bobcat challenged a coyote in the mid-day, he strolled right up to cyclist Jon Snow, who had dismounted and had to use his bike to keep between him and the curious cat.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gGtni-jq6C7o>

The Belize Zoo and Tropical Education Center

By Shelleen Mathews

Each cold and rainy winter in Washington State, my husband, Mark, and I need to get away for a short time to somewhere warmer and tropical. The past couple of winters we have visited the jungles and beaches of Belize. Belize, formerly British Honduras, is a country on the eastern coast of Central America. Belize is bordered on the north by Mexico, on the south and west by Guatemala, and on the east by the Caribbean Sea. Its mainland is about 180 miles long and 68 miles wide.

This January, we definitely wanted to include the Belize Zoo and Tropical Education Center in our trip. They are located some 29 miles west of Belize City, on the Western Highway. Set in 29 acres, the zoo was founded in 1983, by Sharon Matola. It is home to more than 175 animals of about 48 species, all native to



One of 18 jaguars labeled “problem animals” and brought into zoo captivity for safe keeping.

Belize. The natural environment of Belize is left entirely intact within the zoo.

Upon arrival at the Belize Airport, we were greeted by an employee of the Tropical Education Center, where we had reservations for the three days we had set aside for our zoo visit. The Tropical Education Center(TEC)/Zoo Lodge was developed on the premise that education and awareness are fundamental to wildlife conservation, and therefore provides tourists, students, and researchers the opportunity to lodge in the “wild” savannah environment of the Central Belize Biological Corridor. The TEC main building is equipped with a



The Belize Zoo has plenty of native cats, including this ocelot.

classroom/lecture hall, a library, kitchen, and dining area. TEC has dormitories where large groups of visiting wildlife specialists can stay. When we visited, there was a group from the Milwaukee Zoo who were training and working with the staff at the zoo. It also boasts several private accommodations for visitors like us. We stayed in one of the Pond Houses, built over a natural pond inhabited by fish, turtles and “Pirate Pete,” a one-eyed crocodile. The surrounding jungle teemed with birds, reptiles, and amphibians.

The next day was our zoo day. The dense, natural vegetation is separated only by gravel trails through the jungle. The Belize Zoo and Tropical Education Center receives over 68,000 visitors annually, with 15,000 being students, teachers, and parents. It focuses on educating visitors about the wildlife of Belize, through encountering the animals in their natural habitat. The aim is to instill appreciation and pride, and a desire to protect and conserve Belize's natural resources. In 1983, a filmmaking team, headed by cinematographer Richard Foster (who later became a resident of Belize), came to Belize to create a documentary entitled “Selva Verde” (Spanish for green forest). Sharon Matola accompanied the crew as an assistant and animal caretaker. At the end of filming,

funds were exhausted and there was debate over what to do with the now tame animals. Releasing them into the wild was out of the question. When the film crew left, Matola remained with the 17 animals (an ocelot, a puma, a jaguar, and several exotic birds) and started a makeshift zoo, using the animals' enclosures as exhibits, to generate funding for their care. It became apparent that Belizeans were largely unfamiliar with the native animals of Belize, and had many misconceptions and superstitions about them. The zoo's focus then shifted to educating residents and visitors alike about the native wildlife of Belize.

After garnering local support and both local and foreign donations, the zoo was relocated to its present 29-acre site in 1991. Keeping to its goal of bringing visitors closer to Belize's natural heritage, the zoo only houses native animals. No zoo animal has ever been taken from the wild. Zoo residents were either people's pets, donated to the zoo, injured and brought in for healing and rehabilitation, born at the zoo, or sent to the zoo from another zoological facility.

Our wonderful day at the zoo included several hours with founder Sharon Matola. Her connection with each of the animals was astounding and heartwarming for us. Being “cat” people, it was especially rewarding to meet the two jaguarundis, two margays, two ocelots, two pumas, and many jaguars - not that hand-feeding tapirs, macaws, and toucans wasn't fun, too!



Sharon Matola founded Belize Zoo after a film project concluded and 17 animal movie stars were now tame. She's feeding treats to a large tapir.

Latest Legislation in the States

By Amy Flory

The following states have introduced bills pertaining to felines in 2017.

GENERAL BANS OR BAN ON PUBLIC CONTACT

ALABAMA

HB 172 Animals, required rabies vaccines for Canidae or Felidae, further provided for, possession of certain Canidae or Felidae, possession of certain large Felidae or wolves, prohibited under certain conditions, penalties

Description: Allows Felidae and Canidae if there is an FDA approved vaccine instead of just USDA, adds further restrictions for those exempt from the current law as it pertains to large Felidae (tiger, lion, leopard, snow leopard, clouded leopard, jaguar, cheetah, or cougar or hybrids) and wolves.

Status: Had 2nd reading in House 2/23.

INDIANA

HB 1332 Dangerous Wild Animals

Description: Bans dangerous wild animals (non-human primates, lions, tigers, leopards, clouded leopards, snow leopards, jaguars, cheetahs, mountain lions and hybrids, wolves, bears, hyenas, and aardwolves) except research facility, certain wildlife sanctuaries, incorporated nonprofit animal protection organizations, vet, law enforcement, agency, temporary transport, or zoological parks or circuses that meet requirements.

Status: FAILED committee deadline and likely dead.

KANSAS

HB 2276/SB 162 Dangerous regulated animals

Description: Adds non-human primates and pure wolves to the list and revises the current grandfather requirements.

Status: HB 2276 – Referred to Federal and State Affairs.

SB 162 – Referred to Agriculture and Natural Resources.

NEVADA

AB 238 Enacts provisions relating to the importation, possession, sale, transfer, and breeding of dangerous wild animals

Description: Bans breeding, possession, sale, transfer, and import of dangerous

wild animals [cheetah, clouded leopards (both), jaguar, leopard, lion, mountain lion, snow leopard, tiger and hybrids; certain bears, certain venomous snakes, crocodilians, non-human primates, gray and red wolves, hyenas, and aardwolves] and bans direct public contact. Exemptions are zoos and circuses that meet requirements, research facility, certain wildlife sanctuaries, vet, law enforcement, game warden, temporary transport, and animal shelters.

Status: Introduced and referred to Natural Resources, Agriculture and Mining 2/24/17.

SOUTH CAROLINA

H 3531 Large Cats, Apes, and Bears

Description: Bans possession, sale, breeding of large cats (lion, tiger, leopard, jaguar, cheetah, snow leopards, and clouded leopard), non-native bears and non-human great apes, but removes ban on public contact with animals with no USDA vaccine. Exemptions are incorporated nonprofit animal protection organizations, agency, animal control or law enforcement, veterinary hospitals and employees, research facility, USDA A/B/C, circuses, temporary transport.

Status: Passed House 2/1/17. Referred to Senate Agriculture and Natural Resources 2/6.

TEXAS

HB 2274 Relating to registration and regulation of dangerous wild animals; providing penalties, creating a criminal offense, and authorizing a fee

Description: Bans cheetah, clouded leopard, cougar, jaguar, leopard, lion, snow leopard, tiger, hybrids, bears, and great apes, AND repeals current law (Subchapter E). Exemptions are government agencies, research facility, USDA A/B/C, certain wildlife sanctuaries, veterinary hospital, rehabilitators, current college or university mascot that does not allow direct contact, animal shelter.

Status: Introduced 2/23/17.

BAN ON TRAVELING ACTS

MASSACHUSETTS

S 490 An Act relative to wild and exotic animal performance prohibition

Description: Bans performances of any wild or exotic animals, which are any ani-

mals other than domestic animals or farm animals.

Status: Referred to Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture 1/23.

NEW JERSEY

A 2591 Imposes civil penalty for the exhibition or use in performance of a living bear, elephant, lion, or tiger

Description: Bans performances with those animals.

Status: No action this year.

NEW YORK

S 276 Restricts the use of exotic and wild animals in traveling circuses and shows

Description: Prohibits using wild or exotic animal in animal act if the animal was traveling 30 days prior.

Status: Referred to Agriculture 1/4/17.

PENNSYLVANIA

SB 248 An Act amending Title 18 (Crimes and Offenses) of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes, in riot, disorderly conduct and related offenses, providing for the offense of use of live animals in traveling exhibitions

Description: Prohibits using exotic animals or exotic wildlife (all non-native wild animals and hybrids) in animal act if the animal was traveling 15 days prior.

Status: Referred to Judiciary 1/27/17.

OTHER BILLS

INDIANA

HB 1550 Exotic animals and endangered species

Description: Allows captive breeding of foreign endangered species if not dangerous or invasive.

Status: FAILED committee deadline and likely dead.

MAINE

SP 91 An Act To Require Permits for Wildlife in Captivity and Notification of the Escape of Exotic Wildlife in Captivity
Description: Revises certain laws to apply to exotic wildlife, requires them to have global positioning device and requires notification of escapes to the department and all landowners in the area the animal could travel to.

Status: Referred to Inland Fisheries and Wildlife 1/31. Hearing 2/28.

Miami, January 2017
Dear Mrs. Culver:
The children of OTTO Regalado
would like for your organization
to have these Long Island Ocelot Club
newsletters, which date back to the
1970's for whatever historical
value they may represent to the
FCF.

The LIOC newsletters I received from the children of Otto Regalado were those of the 1970s. Cherished by Otto for more than 40 years, they are added to the historic collection of LIOC newsletters. That Otto saved these newsletters for nearly five decades is a testament to the importance of information shared in LIOC newsletters, providing husbandry knowledge in the days before the Internet. In honor of this thoughtful gift, I have chosen to reprint an article from Otto's personal collection.

Otto was born and raised in Cuba, and came to the U.S. in 1970. As a young man in Cuba he raised lions and trained them for circus acts, etc. Large cats were always dear to his heart!

Otto passed away on December 31ST at the age of 80. The LIOC Club and these newsletters must have meant a lot to him since we found them carefully put away amongst his personal papers.

Thank you for receiving them, and we wish you + FCF continued success!
Fernando, Ana Maria,
Alejandro + Andris
Regalado

Blast from the Past: Peggy and Pussy – Unintentional Mothers

Long Island Ocelot Club Newsletter
Volume 2 Number 3
May/June 1976

By Heidi Fahrenholz
Rinqweg, Germany

I never wanted to breed. In Germany, the special circumstances rather require good homes for the unwanted exotics or the kittens that are still imported. So I decided not to block any space I had available with domestic-born kittens, as I knew that I could never part with one of my cat's offspring.

My first exotic cat was a rescue. "Once" the oncilla came to me at the age of about one, and had already had five "homes" before that. He had never been tame, but was extremely fearful, shy, and suspicious. But with love

and understanding, he has turned into a loving, trusting creature, and we got very attached to each other in a short period of time.

I lost Once in December, 1975, to anesthesia. He was bitten on the leg, which was broken by an ocelot I boarded. The leg needed resetting several times and would not heal. He was eight years old when he died. I miss him terribly.



Heidi Fahrenholz holds her ocelot, Herbert, and margay, Ocel.

Ocel, my wild-born male margay, now 18 pounds, and Herbert, a domestic-born male ocelot, now 40 pounds, who was rescued from a fur farm, are the only ones that I got as babies. They are very close friends, Herbert being a bit difficult with my hus-

band and strangers, Ocel being the perfect, good-natured, and completely tame one. He indeed is so ideal that I hesitate showing him to other people inquiring about exotics, since they might think all exotics are that way.

The other cats in our family are Ali, a wild-born male (N) margay, discovered in an animal shelter in 1974, and Vince, a wild-born adult oncilla that came shortly afterward. Vince is very unusual looking and very much like a margay, as his markings are margay, as is his long tail. His color is a very intense rust. On photographs, he was classified by Professor Leyhausen as being a very rare margay from Argentina. But since his hair grows down his neck and not up, I know he is an oncilla. Dr. Leyhausen visited last summer and confirmed this and said he had not seen this subspecies before.

Pussy, a wild-born female margay, was the first girl to join our boys. I had seen her in a pet shop window where she was displayed. For three years she had been living in a cage two feet square and three feet high. Being the founder and head of FEW, Freundeskreis Exotischer Wildkatzen, a society devoted to the well-being of exotic cats, I informed the responsible authorities. With their help, Pussy came

to me in August of 1975. She could hardly walk or climb, but was otherwise healthy, and she soon caught up with the others and is now the fastest of them all.

Next came Willie, a five-year-old intact male. Someone had declawed him front and back. This always seems a shame when I see him carefully climbing or leaving a tree when the others just dash up and down. I had hoped to keep all my margays together, but I soon had to abandon this idea since Willie was not compatible with the others. He had developed a tendency to bite the other cats and all became very afraid of him.

Ali, a cat that was never easily frightened and who is much larger, urinates and defecates at the sight of Willie, so Willie is housed on his own now, which is sad. Ali and Pussy are very close friends, sleeping together, washing each other and playing together. It is nice to see them playing together in the garden, after thinking of what their lives were like a short time ago.

Pussy got very attached to me in a short period of time, as did Willie, and I always try to spend some extra time with him.

When Dr. Wolff, a LIOC member, gave up her exotics when she went to Africa for an extended trip, Peggy, an 11 year old oncilla, and her three year old daughter Olympia came to join Vince in the oncilla house of the garden.

All my cats except Willie and the oncillas live in our house. Ocel margay and Herbert ocelot have the run of the house. Ali and Pussy live in a room of their own. All the cats have large outdoor places with lots of grass, bushes, trees, and wading pools where they can go day or night as they please.

I separated Olympia when she came into heat in order to prevent possible kits, but I never bothered to do this with Peggy. I thought that, at 11 years old, a change of ownership, a new male, and a new home would make it unlikely that she would conceive. She had had several litters which all did not live as the male, Tao, was not separated. When Olympia was about to be born, Tao was separated and died during that time.

I first noticed Peggy was pregnant when she was climbing a fence to greet me and I could see that her nipples were enlarged and rosy. I thought it must be an error on her or my side and left her with the others. But soon afterwards, Peggy began getting rounder, until finally one day she was so



Pussy margay gives birth to a single female kitten named Jeanie.

fat that she could hardly jump up and down a chair. I think life in the jungle must be pretty tough under such circumstances and I wondered how she could have hunted and defended herself in the wild having become so clumsy. It was obvious she was to have more than one baby.

Pussy margay came in heat every four weeks since I got her. Ali did his best, but Pussy was obviously suffering. I decided to make a final try with Willie to see whether he would get along with her when she was in heat. Pussy so thoroughly disliked Willie that I never dreamed she would conceive under the circumstances. His idea was that copulation might change her too frequent heats into more healthy intervals. On the January 11, I allowed Willie into Pussy's outdoor place and let him be there for only 20 minutes. Then I found it to be too dangerous for Pussy and took him back to his place. After three weeks, I noticed the same symptoms in Pussy and again I could hardly believe my eyes. Pussy was also expecting. I separated Ali from Pussy three weeks prior to birth and, now, the future mothers were on their own.

It is hard to believe, but both cats gave birth on the same day. The first to arrive was Peggy's son Dume, on April 3rd at 6 am. The next was Jeanie, Pussy's daughter. Dume's sister arrived 24 hours later. We named her April.

All kittens were perfectly healthy, except that April was only half the size of her brother. Both cats are exemplary mothers, taking good care of their babies. Pussy margay had two nipples functioning and Pussy oncilla three. But Dume was always fighting his sister away from the nipples and it was obvious she was not getting enough to eat. As soon as Peggy would let me touch the babies, I started giving April additional food. I gave her

human mother's milk substitute with calcium. They were only three weeks old when I could start feeding her and she was only one third the size of her brother and looked like a kitten from another litter. But she was healthy and active, her eyes opened on day ten, one day after her brother's, but her teeth came through three days later. While Dume (they

are all five weeks old now) looks like he should, April looks like a two week old kitten. But she is playing and enjoying herself. I plan to remove Dume at six weeks and let Peggy look after April a bit longer and hope that she gets a chance to catch up with the others.

Peggy developed a bladder weakness due to enlargement of the uterus. She could not keep her urine and kept wetting her bedding in the box. I used baby's paper napkins (diapers) in the boxes, and I had to disturb Peggy and her babies about three times a day to change the bedding. I think it is astonishing that this cat has never been a pet, and has always been kept under zoo-like conditions, but would let me do all this without getting upset as to hurt her babies. In fact, I can take the babies out as long as one stays with her.

Dume first showed interest in meat (a freshly killed mouse) when he was four weeks old. Both oncilla kittens get meat now in tiny pieces and Dume produced his first bowel movement at the age of 4.75 weeks. Perhaps Peggy is not too keen on potty training him now that he has eaten meat.

Peggy is alright now; the condition stopped and she uses her litter box as before. The babies are tame so far, and I hope she will forgive me if I take her babies much earlier than she would want at the age of six weeks.

Pussy margay is a very touching mother. She is so fond of her baby that I do not think I can bring myself to take her baby that early. While she allowed me to touch Jeanie in the first two weeks, she would not allow me any more access since Jeanie is crawling about. She jealously watches my movements and I leave her alone with the baby mostly in order not to upset her.

When Jeanie was about three weeks old, I had made a mistake and allowed several strange people to see the baby on

the same day. While Peggy oncilla did not mind, Pussy got upset and began pulling out the baby's fur. Pussy had never pulled out her own fur; neither have any of my cats. When I came back, harmony was restored, but the kitten looked like a trimmed poodle. But this sad event also brought me some news. Where I expected to see the naked skin of the baby on its back, there was a very short haired coat sleek and shining showing all the markings of the future adult coat. While a baby margay's coat gives only a slight idea of how the adult cat will look, much unlike an ocelot kitten, I always assumed

that the baby coat falls out and the adult coat grows in. I had never detected on any margay kitten that the adult coat was present underneath the wool-like baby fluff. I would therefore be interested to hear if anyone has made the same discovery in a margay kitten. I regret that I did not make a photo of this, but I did not want to disturb Pussy further. Now, at five weeks, some of the baby fluff has grown back, but one can still see the beautiful markings Jeanie will have when she grows up.

Pussy has moved into another box with her baby since the incident and is now her old self again. Jeanie is a beautiful kitten, looking much like her father, Willie. She is light colored, while her mother is very dark. She is not interested in meat, whereas the oncilla kits crave it. All three kittens are perfectly healthy, well-cared for, and loved. The mothers are proud and healthy, and the only thing that dis-

pleases me is that I got advice from all over the world that I have to take the babies from their mothers at six weeks or they will not tame for the rest of their lives. As Peggy has twins, it was easier to take Dume away, who looks like his father, also being a deep rust color, while April is only a little rust-colored on the head.

I think I will leave Jeanie with her mother a little longer, hoping that a margay's naturally good disposition will make it possible to tame her. I think it is unfair to take a baby from a mother who has had so few good things in life, who has been so terribly mistreated, and who is just about to enjoy life and all the things connected with it.

For those interested, I feed my cats, apart from regular prey animals (such as mice, guinea pigs, and pigeons), baby chickens, whole chickens, beef, beef heart, rabbit, and, for those who like it, cream and prawns. All get one egg yolk per day. They have plenty of grass in their outdoor spaces. Additionally, all get multivitamins daily and extra calcium when needed.






Peggy, an 11 year old oncilla, gives birth to a male kitten named Dume and, 24 hours later, another female kitten named April.



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Cytauzoonosis

By Karin Möstl
From www.abdcatsvets.org

Cytauzoon species are apicomplexan hemoparasites (family *Theileriidae*) of wild and domestic cats, transmitted by ticks. *C. felis* is the main species, with numerous strains or genotypes, producing infection and severe disease in domestic cats and in U.S. captive wildlife collections. Species including lions, tigers, leopards, lynx, and Pallas's cats have succumbed to this tick-borne disease.

Cytauzoonosis has been documented in native wild felids such as bobcats, Florida panthers, and Texas cougars. The first cases in domestic cats were documented in 1976. For many years, cytauzoonosis in domestic cats was only reported in North America (Southeastern and central states, and mid-Atlantic regions) and South America; in recent years, the infection has also been documented in Europe.

It has been hypothesized that infection in domestic cats was the result of a host species jump from bobcats, where the infection prevalence may be high. The disease shows a seasonal incidence from spring to early fall, associated with peak activity of the tick vectors. There is a significant association between infection and outdoor access, and with feral cats in areas where vector ticks are prevalent. No association with gender, breed, age, or retroviral status has been found. In some areas in the U.S., cytauzoonosis has been increasingly diagnosed in the last decade and is considered an emerging disease.

Vector ticks ingest merozoite-infected red blood cells from the natural reservoir host (bobcat, lynx, or domestic cat). The parasite initiates a process of sexual replication (gametogenesis) in the tick gut and salivary glands. This leads to the formation of sporozoites, which are the infective form and can be transmitted if the tick attaches to a domestic cat. Sporozoites infect endothelial-associated mononuclear cells and undergo asexual replication within the macrophages that become a large structure known as schizonts – large enough to occlude blood vessels, especially in the liver, spleen, and lungs. Widespread dissemination of schizonts results in parasitic thrombosis, circulatory impairment, tissue infection, and severe systemic inflammatory response, which

can lead to multi-organ dysfunction, failure, and death within three weeks after infection. When schizonts rupture in the circulation, large numbers of merozoites are released, infecting red blood cells and additional mononuclear cells. This is the late-stage with erythroparasitaemia (piroplasma structures within red blood cells), which can be readily observed in blood smears and may lead to haemolytic anaemia and erythrophagocytosis.

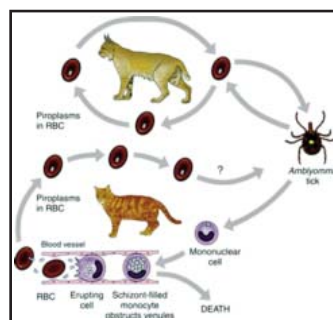
Clinical signs are nonspecific and consist of depression, anorexia, high fever, icterus, dyspnoea, tachycardia, generalized pain, and vocalization. Signs of haemolytic anaemia are frequent (pale mucosal membranes, pigmenturia, splenomegaly, and hepatomegaly). Some cats may present or evolve to late stages with neurological signs (ataxia, seizures, nystagmus), hypothermia, moribund state, and coma. Many cats die within one week after the onset of clinical signs. Veterinarians practicing in an endemic area must suspect cytauzoonosis in front of any cat with an acute, severe disease.

In clinical practice, diagnosis is usually obtained by identification of *C. felis* in blood smears and/or fine needle aspirates from the liver, spleen, and lymph nodes stained with quick Romanowsky-type stains used in practice.

Historically, cytauzoonosis has been considered a fatal disease with mortality nearly at 100%. With the recent advances in treatment and/or differences in strain pathogenicity, this is no longer true, although the prognosis remains guarded.

Supportive and critical care treatment (intensive fluid and oxygen therapy, anti-thrombus formation drugs like unfractionated heparin 200 U/kg SC q8h, blood products, antibiotics, and analgesics) are extremely important to keep the cat alive while the antiprotozoal drugs and immune system do their work. Many cats get worse during the first days and often die, but if they survive, a gradual improvement is seen over the next days.

Imidocarb has been the drug of choice for many years, although it was not known if it provided any advantage over supportive care alone. However, an open-label,



Life cycle of *Cytauzoon felis*. The parasite is maintained in bobcats (top), which are subclinically infected. The importance of domestic cats as a reservoir for infection of ticks is unknown. Image and description from Veteriankey.com.

randomized prospective clinical trial demonstrated better survival rates (60 % versus 26 %) with the combination of atovaquone (15 mg/kg PO q8h) and azithromycin (10 mg/kg PO q 24h), compared to imidocarb (3.5 mg/kg IM once) in 80 cats with acute disease. Mortality was high (41/80 cats). Most cats died during the first three days after presentation, with

only three cats dying after the third day of treatment. Supportive treatment was the same in all cats, including fluids, heparin, and supportive care. This study suggests that this treatment combination plus supportive treatment is the current treatment of choice.

Cats surviving the acute infection may become chronic carriers for life with piroplasms within the red blood cells. These cats act as reservoirs and may transmit the infection through tick vectors. There is currently no vaccine against *C. felis*, although first preliminary studies are being conducted.

Prevention is based on living indoors or the use of effective tick treatment in outdoor cats. Efficacy on the prevention of *C. felis* transmission using an acaricide collar (imidacloprid 10 % plus flumethrin 4.5 %) has been proven in a controlled prospective clinical trial. Two groups of cats (cats with and without collar) were exposed to ticks (*A. americanum*) infected with *C. felis*. No cats with collar versus 90 % of the cats with no collar were infected.

Prognosis should be considered guarded to fair, if proper intensive care is provided and atovaquone is available, in cytauzoonosis in the U.S. It has been suggested that different *C. felis* strains may vary in pathogenicity to domestic cats, having an influence in survival as some cats have survived after not receiving antiprotozoal drugs. Anyway, it is recommended to treat cats in well-equipped hospitals where the best supportive treatment can be provided.

Cytauzoon Felis (AKA "Bobcat Fever")

Danny Waldo shares a detailed account of bobcat fever treatment success in a domestic cat. Bobcat fever is a serious disease that threatens not only domestic pets, but most wild feline species held in captivity in Southern states, where ticks are a problem. Improvements in treatment protocols should be followed in any wild feline exhibiting the symptoms of cytauxzoonosis.

By Danny Waldo

Apparently, my wife and I love our cats. We have a bobcat, Gibsy, and a housecat, Buddy. I mean, of course we love them. That is a no-brainer. But when Buddy was diagnosed with bobcat fever, a tick-borne illness that at the time we knew nothing about, LOVE was an understatement.

There was nothing we would not have done to guarantee his survival.

The problem with that was, there was no way to *guarantee* much of anything. So, it came down to mostly judgement. Better or worse judgment? Who knows! All I do know is that Buddy made it through this and is back to his old, bouncy self. And we love him even more, if that is possible. And, even though he is on the counter right now licking my sandwich, I am better than okay with that.

I am not going to get into *what* bobcat fever is. Most of you already know and, if not, there is Google for that. It is bad though. You may hear or read that improvements in treatment protocol have increased the survival rate from near zero to as high as 60%. But that 60% comes from cats that had the best chance of survival already, and those cats got 24/7 care because they were part of a study. Timing is important, so if the symptoms were noticed a day too late, the cat was turned down and was not part of the study.

I think it a safe assumption that the actual survival rate is far lower than 60%.

Buddy lay around and didn't eat Tuesday or Wednesday. I figured he ate a mouse or something that did not agree with him. I thought, "He'll be okay. No need to take him to the vet."

Since we were going out of town Friday, I made a last minute decision on Thursday to run him by the vet. Sort of a now or never decision. I mean, what if something really was wrong with him?

Thursday at 3 pm, my vet took his temperature, which was an alarming 105.5°F. He looked him over, then gave him a shot of imidocarb dipropionate and diminazene

diaceturate. The vet handed me a bottle of cherry-flavored azithromycin and told me to administer orally for ten days. I was told Buddy had bobcat fever and that he was leaving town. He said to bring Buddy back in ten days for a follow up shot and "good luck."

Things took a turn for the worse a couple of hours later (maybe due to one of the shots). By this time, I was a Google expert on bobcat fever and had figured out the drugs Buddy was given had a much lower rate of success than something newer ("A&A"/azithromycin and atovaquone).

I also had a whole range of emotions to go with this drama to boot. I loaded Buddy up and headed three hours north to an emergency clinic that was reported to deal with bobcat fever constantly. They were considered experts at treating bobcat fever, and with better than average results. We arrived Thursday at 9 pm. I will just

was so low that adding fluids via IV would have been dangerous, as it would have reduced his packed red cell volume even further. And, as we headed out the door, once again I was told, "Good luck." Okay, I am seriously getting tired of hearing that!!

Friday at 4 am, we were finally home and had the spare bedroom turned into Buddy's hospital room. Our instructions were to administer the azithromycin and atovaquone orally and five cc's of water to wash it down with every eight hours.

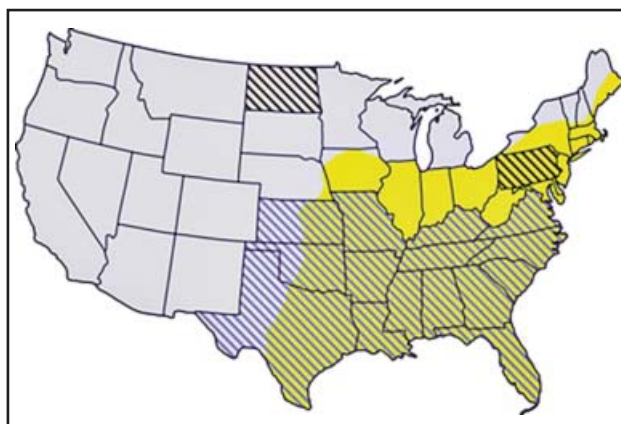
Now, since I am now a Google expert on bobcat fever, as best I could tell, all of these drugs were used to treat malaria. So, I wondered what natural stuff was used to treat malaria? I found that monolaurin is used. Monolaurin is basically the lauric acid that is found in coconut oil. It will not hurt a cat, and should not affect Buddy's prescription drugs either.

On Friday at 8 am, I am on my way to find monolaurin and stopped by another local vet and asked him, "If I need you this weekend during non-working hours to end this, can you?" He confirmed, gave me his cell number, and then asked why.

I spared no detail and told him the story of "Alice's Restaurant in four-part harmony" (Well, you get the idea; I have not slept in 24 hours now, and am now fully aware of how much I love my cat). He said, "Blood work." He wanted to see the blood work results, and he wanted to run his own and he wanted that *now*.

It was Friday at noon, and Buddy was now at this vet getting blood work done, and I was headed on a three-hour drive to get some monolaurin. I had already bought some coconut oil capsules at Wally World, thinking that would be the next best thing in case I could not find monolaurin.

Friday at 4 pm, this latest vet showed us the blood work results and compared them to the results from the night before. He explained the improvement and said his one degree above normal temperature was better than a sub-normal temperature. But, he said, Buddy flat out had to eat, because a cat must eat or else his liver will



Geographic distribution of Cytauxzoon felis infections. Shaded areas show confirmed cases in either domestic cats (blue), or bobcats only (ND and PA). The yellow region represents the distribution of Amblyomma americanum ticks. Image and description from Veteriankey.com.

have to spare you the next three hours of drama.

We left the emergency clinic at midnight and \$600 poorer, with a bottle of atovaquone, a handful of paperwork, and blood work results confirming bobcat fever. Buddy had been administered subcutaneous fluids to combat his extreme dehydration. Buddy's red blood cell count

fail. It is challenging and tough, because a cat with a high fever feels bad, and a cat that feels bad will not eat.

Buddy was given an injection of Metacam to hopefully reduce his fever, reduce his pain, and make him feel better. I was given four more syringes of this and told to administer once daily. His instructions included that I was to call anytime, day or night, if things got better or worse, and also what to watch for.

And so it began; at 8 am, 4 pm, and midnight, I administered .5 cc azithromycin, 300 mg atovaquone, 1000 mg coconut oil, all washed down with at least five cc's of water. Then check his litter box and offer him his favorite treat, raw ground turkey. And offer him PetAg Mature Cat Supplement, which looks like KMR and smells like KMR, even though Buddy will not touch KMR.

This went on for ten days. Each time, he would take one more bite of ground turkey and/or a few more laps of the vitamin supplement.

Noon, 8 pm, and 4 am; Buddy got 500 mg monolaurin, washed down with at least 5 cc's of water, and was offered a few nibbles of ground turkey. On Tuesday, we stopped the noon dose of 500 mg monolaurin. On Friday, we stopped with another 500 mg monolaurin and one of the 1000 mg coconut oil pills. His ten days of medication ended Sunday night.

By then, he was eating quite a bit of raw turkey, putting a small dent in his bowl of kibble, would lick up a dinner plate of supplement, and wanted out of that room! Cabin fever... lol.

On day 14, Buddy went back to the second local vet, who gave him a follow-up shot of imidocarb dipropionate. This was because he had the first one already, was much improved, and "Better safe than sorry."

Worthy of mentioning is that we would cut the tip off of a coconut oil capsule and suck out the oil into the syringe that contained his cherry azithromycin. He tolerated his medication very well. We would take the monolaurin powder out of their capsules and mix with as little water as possible

(drops of water). He *hated* this, and it hurt us to have to do it. But we did it anyway and washed it down with water, then offered the milk supplement or turkey right away. The ground turkey had to be in half-fingernail sized nibbles. Tiny, tiny, tiny, or else he would just lick them and give up. He just could not chew.

We took his temperature once a day for the first five days to be sure it did not hit 106 or drop as low as 96. We never gave him any of the oral Metacam. He didn't seem to be in severe pain, his temperature never rose to 106, and he was nibbling food. Also, I did not like what I read about Metacam, so this was reserved as a last resort. His temperature did drop to 97 once. We threw some towels in the dryer and wrapped him up with those and held him for several hours, changing to a new warm towel every 30 minutes or so. This went over well. He is not much on being held, but he loves fresh towels. So he tolerated that pretty well. His temperature went back up to 99 and we went to bed.

One of us stayed in his room on and off at least eight hours each day during his ten days. We just stayed there with him and did not bother him much. He seemed to like the company. Most of the time, he would come curl up next to us and go to sleep, which is a little strange since he is a "do not touch me" cat most of the time.

Buddy may have just been lucky. I do not know and will never know. Maybe we



Buddy contracted cytauxzoonosis while roaming outside. He must have been bitten by a tick carrying the disease from the native wild bobcat population. Gibsy was captive-born and lived inside Danny's home at the time, so was not the source of the infection.

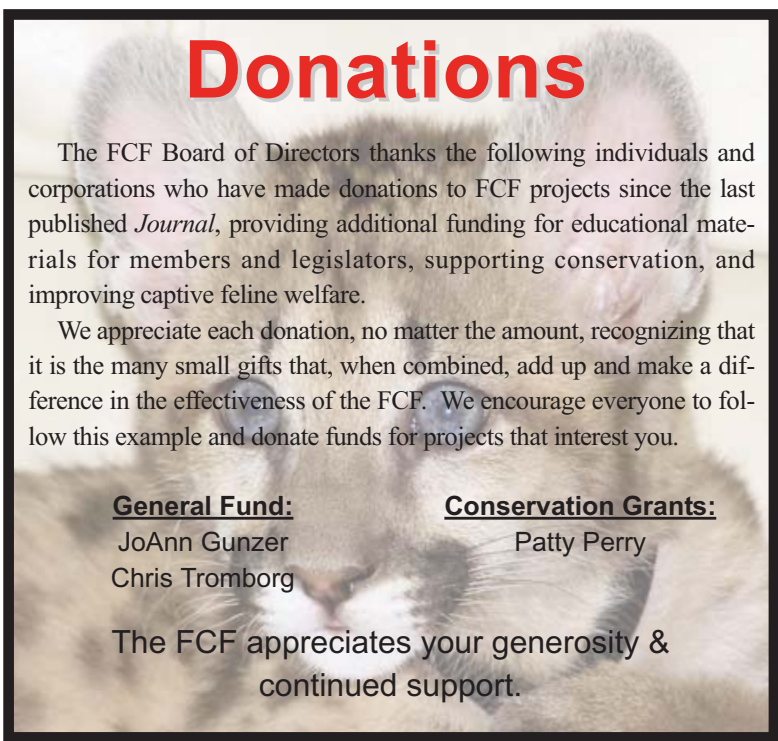
simply caught the symptoms early. I am sure timing is important and minutes matter. I have read survival stories similar to this, explaining what was done, followed by what didn't work the next time. I do know our Buddy survived, and if I had to do this again, I would do the same thing.

In Buddy's case, he received all of every drug and treatment used to combat bobcat fever; what was used before, what is normally used now, and homeopathic treatment. His temperature was high the first two days after starting treatment, then it dropped lower than normal on the third day. Then it went back up to above normal again. It sort of bounced around for three more days, but the highs and lows were no longer extreme.

Each day, he ate a bit more and each day we forced more water down him. And about the third day, after his round of drugs, we would stick his paws in his water bowl, thus making him lick it off. He would not drink out of his water bowl.

And, no, this ordeal had nothing to do with our baby bobcat, Gibsy. We now just have to take extra precautions so that he never gets it again. I sure do not want to go through this again.

As for vets and clinics? I would still get a second opinion no matter how much you like, or think you like, your current vet.



Donations

The FCF Board of Directors thanks the following individuals and corporations who have made donations to FCF projects since the last published *Journal*, providing additional funding for educational materials for members and legislators, supporting conservation, and improving captive feline welfare.

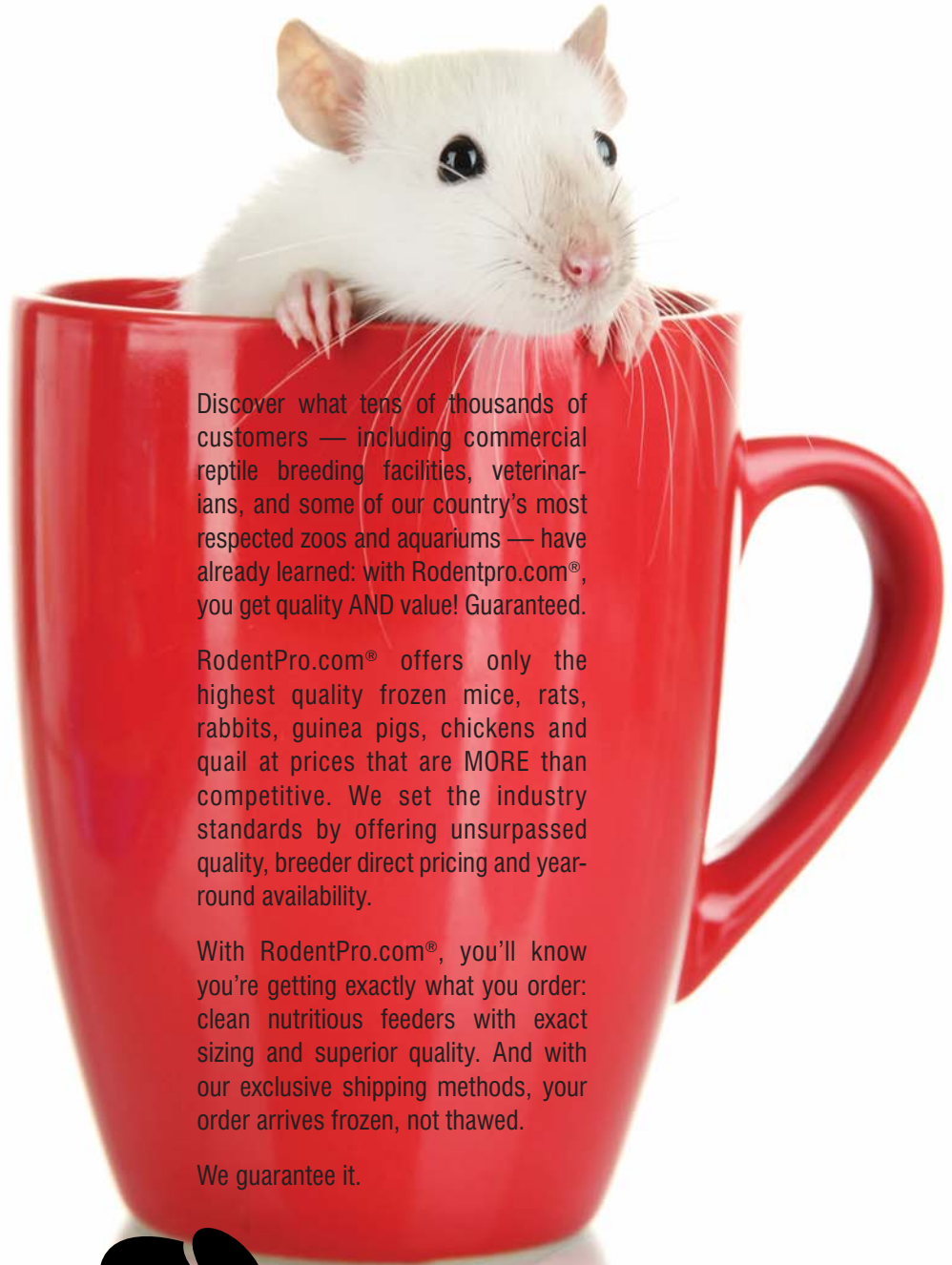
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USDA Fails to Protect Animal Businesses

By Mindy Patterson

Animal rights groups such as Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) have, in recent years, turned to a disturbing tactic of singling out individual animal owners and animal related businesses by publishing their names, their addresses, private business information, and photographs of their animals and places of business online, while falsely manipulating the information with the intent of damaging their business, and discouraging customers and advertisers from continuing their business relationships.

Any animal owner who engages in commerce with their animals, whether they exhibit, transport, raise, buy, or sells animals, is required to be licensed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). A tremendous amount of information is generated by licensees to the USDA, with the expectation that it will be used to benefit licensees and U.S. agriculture as a whole.



Historically, the USDA has been a valuable partner for licensees, but, unfortunately, that is no longer the case. The USDA has succumbed to the pressure of animal rights extremists by hiring them into key positions at the USDA and by allowing the release of private licensee information, knowing full well that it will be used to attack the licensee's business and customers.

The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) was intended to provide transparency to government, not to be used against American citizens, yet this process is being used frequently by animal rights groups whose nefarious use of such private, confidential information is being

handed to them by the USDA.

FOIA has unfortunately been hijacked and is now used by animal rights groups to gain access to confidential business information of USDA licensees to be manipulated and used against those citizens. Business owners wouldn't like it very much if competitors received access to their financials or exclusive information. It's not a stretch to expect that FOIA requests for personal information from the IRS in the future with the USDA setting this precedent.

In the case of the USDA, Executive Order 12600, Sec. 3 (a)(ii), specifically protects the licensee from disclosure of private and confidential business information that would threaten harm to a person or their business interests. Despite required disclosure to the USDA/APHIS of this personal information as a licensed USDA licensee, there is no obvious benefit to the public of the release of private, financial, and other information.

Just five months ago, on September 9, 2016, in the case of American Farm Bureau Federation et al. v. Environmental Protection Agency et al., Case No. 13-cv-1751, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit, stopped the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from releasing addresses and other information about animal farms under the Freedom of Information Act, finding that even if certain personal information might otherwise be disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), the provision of such personal data to environmental groups and animal rights groups would constitute a violation of the submitters' right to privacy. The American Farm Bureau Federation and the National Pork Producers Council sued the EPA in July 2013, after the agency released the names, addresses, and GPS locations of farms that keep animals in close confinement in several states. Environmental groups, including Food & Water Watch, had requested the information, and the plaintiffs sought to prevent further disclosures.

When the USDA was created by an act of Congress in 1862, with the goals of working to improve and maintain farm income, and to develop and expand markets abroad for agricultural products, it clearly was not anticipated that the USDA



would be the law enforcement arm of the radical environmental and animal rights extremists.

The Cavalry Group considers America's food resources to be akin to, and as important as, our energy resources to protect the sovereignty and security of the United States.

Our failure to develop our ample energy resources has kept our industries and our economy as a whole at risk, subject to the whims of unstable and expensive supplies from the Middle East, Mexico, and South America. Agriculture, animal enterprise, and food production is already in the crosshairs.

While the USDA's cultural changes and its failure to protect USDA licensees' confidential information may run under the radar of the average American, our ability to maintain our agricultural production is a key element to maintaining our national security and, therefore, should be important to all Americans. Radical environmentalists and animal rights extremists are using the USDA as a Trojan horse, and hopefully the Trump administration will help the American people see the danger right in front of them and avoid the same fate as the Kingdom of Troy.

While we are hopeful that the new Presidential administration will ease the governmental overreach at the federal levels, we believe 2017 could be most challenging at the state and local levels for animal owners and animal-related businesses. The Cavalry Group is a member-based company and we cannot fight back without support.

Currently, we are opposing pending animal rights-driven legislation in thirteen legislatures, and exotic animal bans in seven city councils across the U.S.

This past year alone, we have:

- Successfully stopped unwarranted seizures.
- Successfully defended members in 62

cases of extortion against our dog breeder members!

- Successfully defended cases against unfounded claims of alleged animal cruelty.

- Successfully cleared members in legal actions brought on by overzealous local, state, and federal officials.

- Testified in opposition of animal rights-driven legislation in several states.

- Testified in favor of legislation supportive of animal ownership and animal enterprise.

- Lobbied in Washington, D.C., against the aggressive promotion of HSUS's federal legislation.

- We have plans to be in Washington, D.C. often in 2017.

- Held instructional webinars to help our members with sales contracts and knowledge about how to protect their property.

- Acted as spokespeople on behalf of our members in both radio and television interviews and working to counter the false claims of the animal rights groups via media.

- Continue to expose the public to the dangers of the animal rights movement via

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nationally syndicated radio programs, speaking engagements, and publications, where we also promote the interests of our members and animal enterprise.

- Hosted the Liberty Summit 2016, a convention in St. Charles, Missouri, with incredible speakers who work daily in the trenches to educate, motivate, and activate in the world of animal ownership!

- Despite our successes, the fight to defend our members' Constitutional rights to be free from illegal search and seizure, and to have the right to due process to defend against fraudulent claims continues, while the animal rights extremists continue to sneak into every aspect of our

American way of life!

We cannot stand watch to protect all of our members without continued support, and we encourage you to join us and become a member of our organization, which is working to fight back and protect animal ownership today and for future generations.

Joining is easy. Visit our website at www.TheCavalryGroup.com and hit the "JOIN" tab. Or feel free to call our office at 855-748-4210.

The 10% discount code for membership and renewals: K1Y95GV0.

Good until December 31, 2017.

Membership is tax deductible.

Mindy Patterson is the President of The Cavalry Group, a member-based company protecting and defending the Constitutional and private property rights of law abiding animal owners, animal-related business, hunters, and agriculture concerns nationwide. Follow Mindy Patterson and The Cavalry Group on Twitter: @cowgirlathart and @TheCavalryGroup.



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Phaedra and the Chipmunk

By Carol E. Cochran

Our serval, Phaedra, was raised in the house with our Bengals and a domestic cat, and normally had run of the whole house. She preferred to hang out in our bedroom, however, as she could see the front porch and front and side yard. She was never allowed outdoors without her harness and leash, or in a holding pen



Carol cuddles with Phaedra.

where she could lie down, relax, and enjoy the sunshine.

One day during the springtime, I noticed her looking out the front window, switching her tail, twitching, and chattering. She was concentrating on the front porch close to the house. I looked out the window and could not see anything that would be so interesting, but she was spying on something that she wanted. For two or three days she stayed right by the window, body stiff and constantly vocalizing, never taking her eyes off of the corner of the porch.

On the fourth day, I was in the bedroom folding some clothes, while Phaedra was busy watching her creature on the porch, although I still had not seen what had captured her interest. Suddenly, I heard a noise and turned around in time to see Phaedra jump out the window to the front porch and freedom to take possession of the prize she had been stalking for so long.

My husband, Pat, had reinforced our windows with heavy hardware cloth to

make them Phaedra-proof, but part of the wooden window frame had become weak and rotten from rain, and the wire gave way when Phaedra leaned against it. I yelled for Pat to tell him Phaedra had gotten out. I knew she would not go to him, but I thought he might be able to distract her enough so I could grab her. It would be difficult, as she was not wearing her harness. She grabbed her prey and ran

across the front yard toward the four foot high fence. She stopped, looked at the top of the fence as if trying to determine whether or not to jump it, and then hesitated. Fortunately, we had taught her a few commands, so I yelled, "Phaedra, no, lie down." She dropped down with the critter in her mouth, giving me enough time to reach her and grab her. When I got to her, I grabbed her under her belly and front legs, and carried her and her catch to the holding cage in the yard. I got her into the cage, closed the door, and it was at that point she dropped her catch. I finally saw that she had captured a chipmunk. It did not appear to be hurt at all, and just before she grabbed it again, it slipped through the bars of the cage and ran off. She fussed and chirped awhile, and after she calmed down I was able to bring her back into the house.

In the meantime, Pat had repaired the wire screen and, as soon as I got her into the house, she immediately ran into the bedroom, right to the window looking for her chipmunk, and stayed there the rest of the day, watching. The little chipmunk showed up the next day and

every day for almost two weeks, and sat right under the window, looking in, which drove poor Phaedra crazy.

Luckily for the chipmunk, Phaedra was not sure what to do after capturing her prey. She finally gave up after it disappeared, but will remember her first hunt for a long, long time.



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Feline Conservation Federation

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Front Cover: Mark Mathews photographed this margay while visiting the Belize Zoo and Tropical Education Center this past January. Read more about his and Shelleen's visit on page 27.

Back Cover: What kids do behind their parents' back. Tapanga Asian leopard cat and her kitten, Amaia. Photo by Sheri DeFlorio.



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