HOPE, A FLORIDA BOBCAT, GOES FREE AFTER A YEAR OF REHABILITATION

April 29th was a special day for Big Cat Rescuers. Because on this day Hope the bobcat was set free after nearly a year of rehabilitation at the 45 acre sanctuary in Tampa. It was dark, just before sunrise, on this Wednesday morning as sleepy eyed Rescuers entered the sanctuary gates. The still morning air was awakened with the chatter and buzz of excited volunteers. Some have had the privilege of witnessing two other bobcats being released back into the wild and recounted the events with those who would observe a release for the first time. Faith, a female bobcat that had been orphaned, was released in 2005 and Chance, a male bobcat that had been injured, was released in 2008. This day would soon be just as memorable.

Hope came to Big Cat Rescue on May 3, 2008. She was found nearby, at the side of a busy road, and was brought to the sanctuary. Big Cat Rescue’s President and licensed rehabilitator Jamie Veronica visited the site where she was found looking for signs of other kittens or the mother, but had no success. A brand new housing development was under construction at the very spot where Hope had been found. Her mother’s den site could have been disturbed and so the mother may have been trying to relocate her kittens to another more secluded area. Perhaps the mother had abandoned her litter or maybe she was hit by a car. We will never know exactly what happened, but unfortunately all of these scenarios are common.

Hope was very tiny and was estimated to be about two weeks old when she arrived. She was still nursing and was too young to be weaned. Hope would need milk for the next few weeks. When rehabilitating a bobcat for release back into the wild it is of the utmost importance to keep the handling of the bobcat to a bare minimum. Since this kitten still needed to nurse it made for an impossible situation. Rescuers got creative and came up with an interesting solution. Word was sent out to all local shelters and rescue groups: Wanted mother cat with kittens! An unusual request as most of the time these facilities get quite the opposite from people looking for a home for their unwanted cats. The request started quite a buzz and within an hour a domestic cat family had been found thanks to Jack Talman, Cat Call, and St. Francis Society. Hope’s new family would be Momma Cat, Indy, and Maxwell.

Hope was very tiny and was estimated to be about two weeks old when she arrived. She was still nursing and was too young to be weaned. Hope was born April 2008 - rescued May 3, 2008 - released April 29, 2009.
The family spent their first few months together living in the on site West Boensch Cat Hospital. Momma Cat accepted Hope, allowing her to nurse and cleaning her up as she did her own kittens. Indy and Maxwell also accepted Hope as their new sister. After nursing, they would romp about and play together before crashing into a huge pile of fur for a nap. A special one-way film was applied to the windowed doors that looked into the room where this unusual family resided. This way Rescuers could look in on the family without disturbing them and Hope would not get accustomed to seeing lots of people.

The weeks flew by and soon Hope was weaned. She was started on a diet of whole dead animals like chicks and mice. The family also moved from the cat hospital out to a specially designed rehab enclosure. This would be where Hope would spend the rest of her time until her release. Once she was familiar with her new food source it was time to move on to the next phase of her training. It was also time for Hope to say goodbye to her foster family for good. Momma Cat, Indy, and Maxwell were adopted by friends of Big Cat Rescue.

Hope developed quite a taste for her whole prey and moved on to hunting her own food. Teaching Hope to hunt was accomplished through many phases. For a week she was given dead whole prey inside a large dog carrier with the top cut off. Once she was given dead whole prey inside a large dog carrier with the top cut off. The rat could be put into the end of the tunnel and the best part about this system is that Hope would not associate humans with food and since the rat could pop up anywhere in the enclosure at any time she would have to be on constant lookout for her next meal. Rescuers really went the extra mile when it came to Hope’s rehabilitation. In the end it would all be worthwhile to see this bobcat get a second chance to live free.

The afternoon before her release day Hope was darted and tranquilized. She was taken by surprise at first, but her natural instincts quickly took hold and she instinctively snatched up the mouse killing it with a bite to the neck. She was fed live prey in this controlled manner for another two weeks. She could jump down into the carrier from the top and the mouse had no escape. She became quite good at this game and so a new feeding system went into action.

As Hope grew so did her appetite and she moved up from eating mice to eating large rats. These rats were fed to her by way of a tunnel system. The rat could be put into the end of the tunnel and then the keeper could leave. The rat would make its way through the tunnel system eventually entering the rehab enclosure. The best part about this system is that Hope would not associate humans with food and since the rat could pop up anywhere in the enclosure at any time she would have to be on constant lookout for her next meal. Rescuers really went the extra mile when it came to Hope’s rehabilitation. In the end it would all be worthwhile to see this bobcat get a second chance to live free.

The morning before her release day Hope was darted and tranquilized. She was actually taken by surprise at first, but only to find her dinner moving about. It was placed in the carrier. Since she was used to finding her food inside the carrier, she jumped down inside only to find her dinner moving about. It actually took her by surprise at first, but it turned out that the mouse was placed in the carrier. Since she was used to finding her food inside the carrier, she jumped down inside and began moving about to find her dinner. The decision was made to remove from her rehab enclosure and taken into the West Boensch Cat Hospital for a pre-release physical exam. Hope was in good condition; her coat shiny, her teeth perfect and white, her weight a healthy 12 pounds. Dr. Wynn drew blood samples from Hope in order to get a better picture of her overall health as well as to assist in an upcoming research project that will focus on the wild populations of bobcats. At the end of the tunnel and the best part about this system is that Hope would not associate humans with food and since the rat could pop up anywhere in the enclosure at any time she would have to be on constant lookout for her next meal. Rescuers really went the extra mile when it came to Hope’s rehabilitation. In the end it would all be worthwhile to see this bobcat get a second chance to live free.

Almost instantly Hope bust forth from the crate only to stop a few feet in front of it. She turned and looked back at her keepers as if to say thank you for giving her this second chance and bringing her back to her real home. Then in a few leaps and bounds she disappeared into the thick forest. Tears of joy swelled in their eyes of her Rescuers. What an awesome privilege to witness Hope running towards freedom.

Hope’s rehabilitation was not only made possible thanks to the tireless efforts of her keepers, but also thanks to the generous support of our donors. Donations make all that we do here at Big Cat Rescue possible. Since Hope’s release has left her rehab enclosure empty, Rescuers have plans for improving the enclosure; doubling the size, installing special dens, and adding more tunnels for the rats. If you would like to help please make a donation on page 10 and indicate that the gift is in Hope’s honor. Thank you.
CELEBRATE HOPE’S RELEASE IN STYLE

Get these hot new items while supplies last. The Hope bracelet is hand beaded with glass beads and a Hope ribbon charm. A limited edition, only 100 bracelets will be made. The Hope Tee is a white cotton t-shirt with the above photo collage on the front. The collage chronicles the different stages of Hope’s life.

Hope Bracelet 7.5" $24.40 Hope Tee S, M, L & XL $24.40

FLORIDA WILDLIFE COMMISSION MEETING IN JUNE - PLEASE ATTEND TO HELP THE BIG CATS

In most states citizens can turn to their legislators and ask for laws that protect wild animals from abuse, but in FL the only way to protect wild animals is to seek the approval of the Florida Wildlife Commissioners. The FWC is considering changes to their rules regarding keeping exotic cats as pets and using them for exhibit or entertainment purposes. Most of the people who attend these meetings and speak up are breeders, dealers and animal abusers. Good people who care about animals rarely even know these meetings are being held. You can be a hero for the big cats by attending this meeting in support of better laws to protect all animals. There is a public hearing before the Commissioners on June 17-18, 2009 8:30 - 5:00 PM at the Plantation Inn 9301 West Fort Island Trail Crystal River, FL 34429 Join us there and speak up for the animals. If you would like to RSVP for this meeting, so that we know who of our supporters attended, please email your name and address to:
SaveTheCats@bigcatrescue.org
Keep checking this website for their agenda to be posted to see what days & times they will be discussing Captive Wildlife Rules:

BOBCATS LIKE HOPE MAY NOT GET A SECOND CHANCE IF NEW RULES GO INTO ACTION

The Florida Wildlife Commission changed their rules recently so that “trappers no longer need to notify or obtain FWC authorization to take nuisance wildlife from private property with the consent of the property owner. Likewise, property owners may take nuisance wildlife, as long as the animals are destroyed humanely. Relocating nuisance wildlife to another property is prohibited.” (Take is the FWC’s euphemism for Kill) What this means is that if someone sees a bobcat and a trapper is called, the bobcat cannot be relocated, but has to be killed!

In January a bobcat was trapped and killed near Orlando, FL. You can read the story on our website and see that Big Cat Rescue tried to rescue the cat from being killed, but was ignored. There are two steps you can take to save bobcats from being killed just for being seen. One is to write RuleChanges@MyFWC.com before the June meeting and tell them that bobcats should be removed from the list of animals they call “nuisance wildlife.” The other is to download our new Living With Bobcats Brochure and make sure that your home owners association and civic groups know the facts about bobcats so that these important rodent controllers are not persecuted and killed.

Get the brochure, Living With Bobcats on this page:
http://www.bigcatrescue.org/relocatewildcat.htm

KEEPER’S LOG

William the bobcat gets a new friend. Will is a young male southern bobcat who has been living by himself for quite some time now. While most cats live solitary lives in the wild, those in captivity can sometimes find comfort in having someone to share their life. This is especially true of captive cats that were raised as pets. Most of the cats that live at the sanctuary are former pets. The sad reality is that these animals are raised as beloved members of a family, but when they reached maturity and are no longer suitable pets they are dumped at the doors of overflowing sanctuaries across the country. These cats may have been treated well where ever they came from and were probably given lots of attention when they were kittens. Now these adult cats find themselves alone and their lives are void of the human interaction they had grown so accustomed to. They do not understand why they have been imprisoned to live out their next 15-20 years in solitary confinement. In order to provide a more interesting environment for them, many of the cats at Big Cat Rescue live in pairs or groups. However some still prefer to live by themselves too. For those that seem receptive to others of their species keepers will make arrangements to match up cats to live together. This was the case with Will, since the tragic loss of his friend Kennedy who passed suddenly from a seizure more than a year a go. Following this loss Will became depressed. The once goofy and playful bobcat seemed somber and uninterested in his surroundings. He didn’t care much about food and slept a lot. It was soon after that keepers decided to move him to an enclosure next door to a group of southern bobcats; Moses, Bailey and Ana. These enclosures are connected with a tunnel and one day keepers hope to open it up and have all four bobcats live together. He spent several long months next door to the three and they became acquainted as neighbors. Ana is the most docile and laid back of the group so she was chosen to introduce to Will first. She was let into his enclosure through the tunnel. Immediately she began to check out all the new smells and inspected every square foot of Will’s home. Will was sleeping in his den and didn’t even awake for the ordeal. Ana made her way all the way around the enclosure then she started to approach the den. The keepers stood tense, this would be the moment of truth. Ana poked her head into the dark entry way of the den and froze for a few seconds as she sniffed inside. Then she casually went about inspecting the rest of the enclosure. The first encounter between Will and Ana had gone quite smoothly. The two were left on their own for the rest of the day. When keepers checked back a few hours later, Ana was sharing the den with Will, a good sign. These two have since made friends and Will has even perked up a little. It has only been a few weeks, so Will and Ana will live together for a while longer before attempting to introduce either Moses or Bailey into the mix. Stay tuned to hear how Will’s demeanor improves and how the upcoming introductions go.

A sad farewell to a much loved lynx. Shatia a female Canada lynx was born on May 17th, 1993. She came to Big Cat Rescue from a game farm in Ohio. She had Cardio-Myopathy, a heart condition, so she was never be as big and healthy as the other Canadian Lynxes, but she had a lovely disposition. She had lived with Dances with Wolves and Sasquatch but a fight had resulted in them being housed separately. Many years after Sasquatch died we tried introducing them back together, thanks to a generous donation by Patricia Webber to join their cat-a-tats, but they didn’t get along and we had to separate them again. They seem to like each other best as neighbors rather than room mates. Sadly Shatia died in her sleep at the age of 16. Shatia had many favorite keepers and she will be missed deeply by all.

Shatia photos by Julie Hanan
Charles Rutenberg Realty held the fourth annual company golf tournament on April 12. The company, founded by John and JoAnn Nestor, has about 3500 brokers. In addition to the Clearwater, FL headquarters they have offices in Orlando, Fort Lauderdale, Chicago, Manhattan and Long Island.

At a time when many tournaments are being cancelled or seeing reduced attendance, this tournament had record attendance of over 130 golfers! Big Cat Rescue was a co-beneficiary for the third year in a row.

BCR Volunteer Merrill Kramer tended our booth at the event spreading the word. Stuffed toy tigers atop the beverage carts added our big cat theme to the event. The day after the tournament, John and JoAnn Nestor and John and UnMi Rurkowski, pictured here with Enya the cougar, visited the sanctuary.

The tournament raised $4,250 to support the cats, an increase of 20% over last year! Our sincere thanks to all who attended, and special thanks to owners John and JoAnn Nestor, Managing Broker John Rurkowski, Lori Ford and Linda Russell for making the tournament and our participation possible! If you are thinking of buying or selling a home in any of their markets, please consider thanking them for their support with your patronage.

For more big cat fun visit www.bigcatfun.com

ADOPT A “TIGER” FOR YOUR COUCH

Big Cat Rescue invited Hillsborough County Animal Services to set up their Adoptable Pet Mobile at the front gates to the sanctuary during the busiest tour day of the week. The bus housed 9 domestic cats and kittens that were looking for a home. Visitors stopped by the bus and met the cats. We plan to invite the Adoptable Pet Mobile out again in the near future, so keep an eye out on our website for upcoming dates.

It’s important to the big cats to help out their little cousins. If you have space in your heart and are looking for an addition to your family consider adopting a pet from one of the many animal shelters and rescue centers that are out there. Click the Adopt-A-Cat link on the domestic cat page of our website to see the cats that Big Cat Rescue has available for adoption.

Thanks to 1,010 of YOU We Won $10,000

Big Cat Rescue has won the Razoo contest prize of $10,000 thanks to 1,010 of YOU who helped by donating $10 or more. The total donations raised were $30,630 plus the $10,000 Razoo Grand Prize, plus the $25,000 Reitzel Foundation matching grant for a total of $65,630. for the cats! Razoo covers all of the credit card processing fees for donations made via their site, so that saved the cats another $1,400.

African Serval

Charles Rutenberg Realty Golf Tournament Generates $4,250
Big Cat Rescue was founded sixteen years ago of November in ’92 and to celebrate our anniversary we are going to celebrate the 16 species of wild cat that reside at the sanctuary. The cats that have been celebrated through the Big Cat Times and the Advocat Ezine are; Windsong the bobcat, Hercules the snow leopard, Genie the sand cat, Jade the Leopard, Nikita the tiger, Rambo the Jungle Cat, Aspen the Cougar and Esmerelda the serval. The species spotlight for June is Esmerelda the serval on page 12. Make a $10 donation and “kiss a big cat” and you will receive a glossy 8x10 of the species spotlight. “Kiss” your favorites or collect them all. Order on page 10.
Can’t wait to bid on grrr-eat items? Visit our website to bid on items in the virtual Fur Ball today!

GET YOUR TICKETS TODAY AND RESERVE YOUR “SPOT” FOR THE YEAR’S WILDEST PARTY!
TICKETS $150 EACH
TABLES OF TEN $1500

FOR TICKET INFO CONTACT CUSTOMERSERVICE@BIGCATRESCUE.ORG
OR CALL 813.850.7052 OR WWW.BIGCATRESCUE.ORG/FURBALL.HTM
SANCTUARY CELEBRATES WORLD TAI CHI DAY

At 10am Saturday, April 25th Big Cat Rescue hosted a group of 30 led by Tai Chi Instructor Robbie Miles in celebration of World Tai Chi and Qigong Day. Participants learned about the creation of World Tai Chi and Qigong Day 11 years ago by one Tai Chi instructor to educate his local community about the health benefits of Tai Chi and Qigong. These two gentle exercise forms from China are bringing better health and relaxation to people around the world. In 2008 World Tai Chi and Qigong Day events were held at over 1100 locations in 60 countries, all at 10am in their time zone. Big Cat Rescue was pleased to provide a peaceful setting by our lake for this event.

Grand Opening BigCatLuxeGifts.com

Big Cat Luxury Gifts & Home Accessories

By Barbara Krai, ASID for Big Cat Rescue

An exciting new creative collaboration of Big Cat Rescue and Barbara Krai, ASID to bring you luxury big cat related gifts & home accessories. Add big cat pizzazz to your lifestyle at home and work! Give memorable gifts to friends, family and special associates! Contribute to the wonderful work of Big Cat Rescue!

SUSTAINING DONOR SOCIETY GROWING

Supporters who make their donations by monthly, quarterly or annual deductions from a bank account or charges to a credit card become members of our Sustaining Donors Society. For donors, this method of contributing has two advantages. First, it saves the time it takes to write checks or go online repeatedly to donate. Second, it conveniently spreads their donations out across the year for those who choose the monthly option. For the sanctuary, these donations are particularly helpful because it allows us to better plan our cash flow to care for the cats and process donations at the lowest cost.

As members of our Sustaining Donor Society you receive special recognition on the website, in every issue of the Big Cat Times, and on a sign outside our Gift Shop in addition to the other recognition associated with your donation. Automated donations can be changed or discontinued at any time.

To arrange to make regular monthly donations by credit card from our website, click the Donate button at the top left of the home page, then the DONATE NOW button. On the screen pictured below, under FREQUENCY, select monthly, quarterly or annually.

To arrange for direct debit to your bank account:

Email - Finances@BigCatRescue.org
Call - 813-426-5948


Our sincere thanks to the following generous Sustaining Donors:

Nicole Babyak
Rhonda Balsamello
Howard Baskin
Lewis Blatt
David Brooks
Judy Chesnutt
Diana Wise Compton
Colby Cox
Cheryl Cromwell
Ana D. Cruz
Jill A. Edgar
Christina R. Farah
Wendell Finner
Blake Ford
Tom Garrison
Kerry Beth Gilbert

Fontane Grijalva
Darla J. Haines
Maribeth Higgins
Harriett Holzmann
Mami Huebner-Tiborsky
B. Jimenez
Diane M. Kastel
Joshua Kennedy
Mary Lee Kingsley
Lea Langenb urg
Rebecca Lawrence
Jeff & Kit Lawr ence
James Lewis
Kim Loughlin
Nicki Lyford
Bob Mitchell
Lisa Morgan
Carol-Ann Myers
Michael Neblock
David Nugent
Patricia A. Perkins
Sheri L. Ranson
Regina Rinaldi
Katie Rugh
Jennifer A. Schang
Laura Sherwood
Wendy J. Smith
Linda Stepharnoff
Darlene Tschiember
Haywood Turner III
Andrea C. Webb
Heather Weber
Jennifer Wright
Pat Young

This recognition list is compiled manually from the automated lists. If you are currently making automated donations and not on the list above, please email Finances@BigCatRescue.org so we can correct this oversight. THANK YOU!

Chat Big Cats Online at www.ChatBigCats.com

People who love animals love to share their photos and stories. Now Big Cat Rescue has a Chat Big Cats community. Only animal lovers need apply. Unlimited storage space for your photos, videos and music. Post your own blogs, or join in our forums and contests.

Rotary Guests from Denmark Visit

In its efforts to promote world peace and understanding, Rotary International operates a program that selects individuals in one country who are not Rotarians and arranges for them to visit and learn about another country for four weeks. Big Cat Rescue was proud to be one of the sites the team from Denmark visited in May. Pictured here are Erik Salomousen, Kristina Lord, Heine Boe and Henrik Larsen from Denmark, with Jeff Kremer, Big Cat Rescue’s Director of Donor Appreciation, with TJ the tiger looking on.

Rotary Guests from Denmark Visit

An exciting new creative collaboration of Big Cat Rescue and Barbara Krai, ASID to bring you luxury big cat related gifts & home accessories. Add big cat pizzazz to your lifestyle at home and work! Give memorable gifts to friends, family and special associates! Contribute to the wonderful work of Big Cat Rescue!

Send a Text to 20222

A one-time charge of $5 will be added to your mobile phone bill. Standard messaging rates and additional fees may apply. All charges are billed by and payable to your mobile service provider. Full disclosure at: http://commons.m/t

Big Cat Rescue’s Young Adult Expedition

The big cat opportunity young adults have been waiting for! Have you always dreamed of a career in animal care? Are you passionate about conservation? For the first time ever young adults ages 16-18 can explore their interests and learn from our Keepers, Staff and experts in person. Join us in small workshops designed to give a real taste of life in the animal care and conservation world. Three different session topics will be offered with “Big Cat Tracking Academy”, “So, You Want to Be An Animal Keeper?” and “Modern Conservationist” on the agenda for this summer season. Young Adult Expedition is offered for three day sessions, on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday with the bonus option to attend our Keeper and Feeding Tours (a $150 value at no additional cost). Tuition is only $300 a session per participant. Class size is limited so register now! PLEASE NOTE- “Tracking Academy” requires offsite transportation.

For Details or To Register: Contact Beth Kamhi, ED Director at (813) 323-3265
education@bigcatrescue.org
The Big Cat Trading Post - Shopping Guide

Gifts that keep on giving. By purchasing the gifts on these pages not only will you be giving a truly unique gift, but the proceeds help us care for all of the big cats living at Big Cat Rescue. Order these gift items using the order form on page 10. S & H within the United States as well as tax has already been included in the price. You can also upgrade your shipping to Priority for just $3 for your entire order.

Photo Magnets and Key Rings
Choose Any Species at BCR
Magnet $5.68 or Key Ring $5.21

Metal Magnets Choose Tiger, Cougar, Lioness, Lion, Snow Leopard, Black Leopard, Ocelot, Serval, or Bobcat
$5.14

Gifts that Bloom, seeds and soil packaged in leak resistant container. Choose Catnip, Big Cat Garden, or Breast Cancer Awareness $11.56

Grassroots Beaded Figurines & Key Rings
3.5" Lion or Tiger $20.12
9" Lion $24.40
12" Bobcat $13.70
12" Plush Tiger or Lory Leopard $13.70
Jazzy Lion Kids Purse $13.70
Travel Around The World 10" travel case with world map, stickers, choose tiger or lion $17.98
Soft & Cuddly 20" Snow Leopard Plush $25.00

African Animal Action Figure Set
Also Available: Asian or Rainforest
5" Diecast Metal Animal Explorer Truck $17.98
12" Bobcat $13.70

Themed Monopoly Board Games
Choose Animalopoly, Earthopoly, or Catopoly $28.54

Endango Game
The object of this game is to move your 3 animals from endangered to saved. For ages 6 and up. $24.40

Magnetic Clingers Choose Cougar, Lion, Lynx, or Tiger $8.42

Bumper Sticker $5.21
BCR Patch $5.28
BCR Sticker $4.21
BCR Pin $5.28

BRC Laser Engraved Multi-Tool $17.98

African Animal Action Figure Set
Also Available: Asian or Rainforest
5" Diecast Metal Animal Explorer Truck $17.98
12" Bobcat $13.70
### YOUR TOUR ADMISSIONS

Your tour admissions are a major source of revenue to support the cats. Thanks for visiting and caring!

#### Kids Tour

Big Cat Rescue offers regularly scheduled, guided, kids tours. This is a complete guided tour where children of all ages, and their parents can get up close and learn about exotic cats and other animals. The tour is given on a child’s educational level. Reservations not required.

- Tour Time is 9:00 AM Saturday, 1 hr
- $18.00 per child under 10 years
- $25 per child 10 years & over and per adult

*Children must be accompanied by adult guardian.*

#### Day Tours

Monday - Friday 9 AM & at 3 PM, 1.5 hrs
Saturday 9:30 AM, 11:30 AM, & 1:30 PM, 1.5 hrs

Guided tour of the sanctuary. Admission is $25.00 per person. Reservations are not required. No children under 10 years of age.

#### Feeding Tour

Friday and Saturday at dusk. During this tour, you will follow along with big cat keepers. As you observe the big cats being fed, you will also learn about the cats nutritional needs in captivity. Admission is $5.00 per person. No children under 10 years of age. For reservations 813-426-5948

#### Big Cat Keeper Tour

This tour takes you behind the scenes where you will enjoy making enrichment (treats and food puzzles) for the animals. After which you will follow along with big cat keepers. As you journey through the sanctuary you will learn about the cats nutritional needs in captivity. Admission is $100.00 per person. The 2 hour Keeper Tour is offered every Saturday as well as the last Friday of the month at 2 PM. No children under 10 years of age. For reservations 813-426-5948

#### Wild Eyes At Night Tour

Night Tours are the best way to see the animals come alive! As you journey through the sanctuary you will be stalked and pounced at from the shadows! No worries though, all the animals will be safely in their enclosures. This is an adventure that’s sure to please! $50.00 per person. No children under 10 years of age.

#### Kids Keeper Tour

This tour is offered every Saturday as well as the last Friday of the month at 2 PM. No children under 10 years of age. For reservations 813-426-5948

### ORDER FORM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Qty</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Price Each</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPONSOR 1 FOOT OF PERIMETER WALL *</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIGER/TIGER MARBLE PLAQUE *</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$80.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KISS ALL 8 BIG CATS - 8 8x10 PHOTOS *</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$10.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KISS ESMERELDA THE SERVAL 8x10 PHOTO*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIFT ITEM! HOT NEW ECO-BAG</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

#### AUTOMATIC GIVING PROGRAM - JOIN THE SUSTAINING DONOR SOCIETY

Big Cat Rescue makes it easy and convenient to donate monthly with no worry. You can do this either by credit card or by direct debit to a checking account for as little as $5/month. For credit card donations, just fill in the highlighted line on the order form above and provide your credit card information. For checking account direct debit visit www.bigcatrescue.org/AutoPay.htm, email finance@bigcatrescue.org, or leave a message for Howard at 813-920-4130. This is a G-R-R-eat way to spread out your donations and provide steady support that is so meaningful for the cats.

---

*Personalization: (How you would like your name to appear):______________________________

---

**NOTICE:** Prices and availability for all tours are subject to change.
**Serval - Leptailurus serval**

*Common Name:* Serval  
*Kingdom:* Animalia  
*Phylum:* Chordata  
*(Vertebrata)*  
*Class:* Mammalia  
*Order:* Carnivora  
*Family:* Felidae  
*Genus:* Felinae  
*(Leptailurus)*  
*Species:* Serval  
*Sub-species:* *(L.s. constantina)*

**Misc.:** The genus name for serval, Leptailurus, comes from the Greek words “lepta,” meaning small, and “ailur,” meaning cat. Serval is derived from the Latin word “cervus,” which means deer. Thus, the serval’s name means “small deer-cat.”

**Size and Appearance:** Often referred to as the “cat of spare parts”, this unusual but beautiful cat is among the feline family’s most successful. It has a small, delicate head and extremely large ears set on an elongated neck, long slim legs (hind legs longer than front), long slender body and a short tail. The ears are black on the back with a distinctive white spot, and the tail has 6 or 7 black rings and a black tip. The coat color is pale yellow with black markings, either of large spots that tend to merge into longitudinal stripes on the neck and back, or of numerous small spots, which give a speckled appearance. These “speckled” servals from west Africa – called servalines – used to be considered a separate species, *Felis brachyura*, until it was demonstrated that the speckled pattern was just a variation or “morph.” Melanistic (all-black) servals have been known to exist, mostly in the Kilimanjaro and Mount Kenya areas. They are most likely found in the borders of rainforests, where they would need the darker coloring to camouflage. White servals have also been observed, with photographic evidence. This color morph only exists in captivity, however. These servals are white or creamy colored with normal and pale spots.

**Habitat:** Servals are found in well-watered savannah long-grass environments and are associated with reed beds and other riparian vegetation types. They occupy a variety of habitats, all associated with water sources. They range up into alpine grasslands and can penetrate deep dense forests along waterways and through grassy patches, but are absent from rain forests. They will make use of arid areas in extreme instances, and have occasionally done so in parts of southwestern Africa.

**Distribution:** Sub-Saharan Africa, with small populations in southwest Africa, and a reported relic population in North Africa (no recent sightings confirmed).

**Reproduction and Offspring:** After a gestation of approximately 73 days, females produce a litter of 1-5 kittens, with 2 being the average. They weigh in at around 8.5-9 ounces at birth, and it will take 9-12 days for their eyes to open. They begin to take solid foods around the age of 3 weeks, and are independent between 6-8 months, but may remain in their natal ranges. They attain sexual maturity between 18-24 months, and it is at this time that they will be forced out of their mother’s territory. In captivity, servals have lived up to 19 years.

**Social System and Communication:** Servals are solitary animals, and social interactions are limited to periods of mating. Each sex maintains its own territory.

**Hunting and Diet:** Much like the big bad wolf in “Little Red Riding Hood,” the serval’s big ears are “the better to hear you with!” Unequaled in the cat world, the serval’s hearing allows it to locate (through echolocation) small mammals moving through the grass or underground, and to hunt its prey without seeing it until the final pounce. It also has the ability to leap vertically and catch prey such as birds right out of the air. They do this by “clapping” their front paws and striking with a downward blow. Primary prey items for the serval include rodents, birds, reptiles, fish, frogs and insects. Servals have a hunting success rate of 50%.

**Principal Threats:** While the scale of the harvest and its effect upon populations is difficult to judge, the pelt trade appears to be primarily domestic (especially for ceremonial or medicinal purposes) or tourist-oriented, rather than international commercial exports.

**Status:** CITES: Appendix II  
*IUCN:* Least Concern

**Fidel TAG Recommendation:** Serval (*Leptailurus serval*). Common in nature and captivity, this species is important for institutions with zoogeographic themes, as well as for educational uses. Most specimens probably can be traced to a subspecies. Currently, there are more servals in zoos than recommended by the RCP. The PMP target population is 80 individuals. 91% of the population is of unknown origin and not suitable for breeding. The first study book ever published for this species was in 2003.

**How rare is this cat?** The International Species Information Service lists 386 in captivity worldwide that are registered with accredited zoos and sanctuaries, 17 of which live at Big Cat Rescue.

**ESMERELDA Female Serval  Born 3/1/92**

Esmerelda came to Big Cat Rescue in April of 1995 with her mate, Medicine Man. Their previous owner gave them up because Medicine Man had terminal cancer. Despite all our efforts with both traditional and holistic medicine, he died a year later. Esmerelda is one photographer’s favorite subject, since she poses with such enthusiasm, as if to say, “Look at me! I’m gorgeous!” When keepers or guests approach her enclosure, she prances over to say hello with a chirp and a thundering purr. Esmerelda is also very playful; she will play with anything – her boomer ball, enrichment, sticks, bugs, even a single blade of grass that is fluttering in the breeze.

**CHECK THIS OUT! This month’s Kiss a Cat is Esmerelda** and for a $10 donation you can get this beautiful 8x10 color photo of her. The bottom of the photo reads: “Your Name Kissed Esmerelda the Serval”. “Kiss” Esmerelda today with your $10 donation on page 10.