

BIG CAT RESCUE'S

# BIG CAT TIMES

SPRING 2016



[BIGCATRESCUE.ORG](http://BIGCATRESCUE.ORG)

CAMERON - LION





## A MESSAGE FROM BCR PRESIDENT & EDITOR

*Jamie Veronica*

The holidays have come and gone and things are getting back to a more manageable pace here at the sanctuary. It can be quite a challenge to take care of all the cats and accommodate all of the visitors during a time of year a lot of our volunteers are traveling and we have few interns. However,



Correction to article BCR Interns - where are they now? Winter 2015 issue. Alex Walsh testimonial was not directly written by Walsh, but derived from <https://alexandthealpaca.wordpress.com/tag/big-cat-rescue/>

despite how short handed we may be, Big Cat Rescuers find a way to get it all done.

The biggest news by far that I bring you in this edition is the introduction of the Big Cat Public Safety Act into the Senate. This bill is gaining momentum and will put an end to so much suffering endured by big cats all across the country. The bill bans the private ownership and breeding of dangerous big cats.

If this publication inspires you to do just one thing, I hope it is to make the Call of the Wild. This simple gesture can help get this bill passed this session. Details on making the call are on pages 4-5.

I am also excited to share with you several rescue stories including that of Teisha, a 13-year-old tiger from OH, and three new bobcats that are being rehabilitated for eventual release back into the wild. Their tale of survival and how they have flourished will warm your heart.

Just a few weeks ago we released bobcats Phoenix, Captiva, Rain and Dancer. These four kittens had grown into wild cats and were ready for life on their own. I have shared with you lots of photos of the big day so you can feel like you were there with us.

Well what are you waiting for? Get reading! This issue of the Big Cat Times is jammed packed!

Scan QR Codes in this issue  
with your smart phone  
to get more info.



Big Cat Rescue, one of the world's largest accredited sanctuaries for exotic cats, is a leading advocate in ending the abuse of captive big cats and saving wild cats from extinction. We are home to 85 lions, tigers, bobcats, cougars, servals and other species of exotic cats, most of whom have been abandoned, abused, orphaned, saved from the fur trade, or retired from performing acts.

The sanctuary, located on 67 acres in the Citrus Park area of north Tampa, was founded in 1992 and is a 501c3 charity.

Big Cat Rescue is accredited by the Global Federation of Sanctuaries, certified by Independent Charities of America as a "Best in America Charity", a member of the World Society for Protection of Animals, rated 4 Stars by Charity Navigator, and is part of a global coalition including HSUS, IFAW, WWF, GFAS, Born Free and other animal protection groups working together to end big cat abuse.

Read more about Big Cat Rescue and the cats who call it home at: [BigCatRescue.org](http://BigCatRescue.org)

Tour Info: [Zerve.com/BigCatRescue](http://Zerve.com/BigCatRescue)



# TIGER RESCUED FROM OHIO NOW LIVING THE GOOD LIFE

On Monday, October 5, 2015, the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) and the Marion County Sheriff's Office seized 5 tigers from the owner of Paws & Claws Animal Sanctuary near Columbus.

The owner was unwilling to comply with new regulations and had been battling state officials to keep his tigers ever since Ohio legislators enacted an exotic

animal law that went into effect almost two years ago. All 5 cats were confiscated and placed in approved sanctuaries outside of Ohio.

offered to take in the 13-year-old tigress. Four Big Cat Rescuers, Jamie Veronica, Gale Ingham, Afton Tasler and Karma Hurworth left Tampa on October 21, for the 15-hour drive to Ohio. They drove straight through and met with Ohio authorities the next morning to take possession of Teisha.

Late that evening they arrived at Big Cat Rescue, but it was too dark to safely unload Teisha so the crew waited until morning.

The following morning just after sunrise Teisha was transported to her lake view enclosure. A special ramp was installed as she was still very unsteady on her hind legs.

Teisha was reluctant at first, but the new sights and smells were too much to

resist. She wobbled down the ramp and laid down in the cool soft grass.

Teisha is a very sweet natured tiger. While most big cats become scared or stressed during a trip such as this, Teisha was chuffing throughout her journey. The very first day she happily greeted all the new people in her life. She has become a favorite among staff, volunteers, and interns.

Teisha was very overweight when she arrived so she was put on a restricted diet to trim

down. Losing weight would put less stress on her joints and would make sedating her for an exam less risky. In the meantime she continued medications she was prescribed by the ODA to manage her pain and instability.

Three months after her arrival she was a healthier 304 lbs. Teisha was sedated and examined by volunteer veterinarians Dr. Wynn and Dr. Boorstein. They discovered she has severe arthritis and fusing along her spine. Teisha will continue her current medications while we consult with a specialist to determine if an MRI would give us more insight into the best possible treatment plan for her.



*Teisha rolling around on the ground after getting out of the transport*



*Teisha takes her time making it down the ramp*



*Teisha has settled in to her new home*

One of the tigers, Teisha, was in such poor health she was unable to walk, and didn't react when she was darted the day of the seizure. From what we were told, the previous owner claimed Teisha had been injured by her cage mates who were constantly picking on her. Knowing that we could provide her the best possible veterinary care we



# FEDERAL BILL GAINING MOMENTUM 59 COSPONSORS NOW!

## PLEASE MAKE THE “CALL OF THE WILD”

**The Big Cat Public Safety Act** would put an end to the private breeding and possession of big cats that leads to thousands of tigers, lions and other species living in miserable conditions. These animals in houses and back yards create danger for the public and for law enforcement and animal control officers. The bill has been endorsed by the



*Sheriff Lutz with BCR's Susan Bass and Jennifer Leon*

country. A “cosponsor” is a legislator who commits in advance to supporting the bill if it comes up for a vote. The bill was introduced on a bipartisan basis by Rep. Walter Jones (R-NC) and Loretta Sanchez (D-CA). We are now up to 59 cosponsors!



*Tiger kept in backyard in Kansas confiscated by authorities after reports of abuse*

National Association of Animal Control Officers and the Florida Association of Animal Control officers. In February while attending the National Sheriffs' Association conference in Washington, DC, Sheriff Lutz from Zanesville, Ohio joined our lobby team to visit legislator offices about the bill. Zanesville is the home of the tragic “Zanesville massacre” four years ago when Terry Thompson let over 50 dangerous animals out of their cages and then committed suicide. Officers had to shoot most of the animals. Here Sheriff Lutz poses with BCR's Susan Bass and Jennifer Leon at our booth at the conference.

The House bill, numbered **HR 3546**, is steadily gaining. This is largely due to the many phone calls and emails from animal lovers like you all over the

The Senate bill, **S. 2641**, was just introduced on February 11, 2016 as this issue goes to press, by Senator Richard Blumenthal of Connecticut. In addition, that same day Sen. Blumenthal and presidential candidate Bernie Sanders sent the wonderful letter you see printed here to USDA asking them to move forward on banning the cub petting that causes so much misery. Our sincere thanks to both of them!

**YOU CAN HELP!** Emails, and particularly phone calls, from constituents do matter! Please visit

[StopBigCatAbuse.com](http://StopBigCatAbuse.com) for instructions on how to contact your legislator. Phone calls are easy. All you need to do is say you live in the district and you would like to ask the Representative to support HR 3546, the Big Cat Public Safety Act. And if your Representative is already a cosponsor, it is very helpful to call or email and thank them so they know that constituents appreciate their support. If you cannot call during the day, you can call and leave a message at night or on the weekend.

It only takes two minutes of your time to call or email and make a difference for these magnificent animals. Please make the “**Call of the Wild**” today!



# BIG CAT PUBLIC SAFETY ACT CO-SPONSORS

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United States Senate  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 11, 2016

The Honorable Tom Vilsack  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

We write to urge you to strictly prohibit, under the Animal Welfare Act (AWA) animal handling regulations, public contact with big cats, bears, and nonhuman primates of any age. When individuals other than trained employees or veterinarians come into direct or unsafe close contact with these animals, regardless of age, it fails to protect animal welfare and public safety and undermines the conservation of endangered species.

In October 2012, a broad coalition of animal protection organizations, sanctuaries, professionally-run zoos, animal behavior experts, and conservationists submitted a petition requesting that the agency take action to prohibit public contact with big cats, bears, and nonhuman primates. In August 2013, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) issued a notice in the Federal Register requesting comments on the petition. However, the agency has yet to take action to amend its regulations or animal care policies.

Big cats, bears, and nonhuman primates (including endangered species like tigers, cheetahs, orangutans, and chimpanzees) that interact with the public are irresponsibly bred, forcibly separated from their mothers, and frequently subjected to horrific, abusive practices. Public handling begins when young exotic animals appear deceptively unthreatening and lasts until the animals have grown large enough to present a clear danger to the public. At that point, these menageries typically send the animals into the exotic animal trade, where they might be kept as backyard pets, sentenced to life at another substandard roadside zoo, or even slaughtered for human consumption. A lucky few may end up in accredited sanctuaries, in which case animal welfare groups will bear the financial burden of providing care for a decade or more.

The steady flow of big cats, bears, and nonhuman primates produced by petting zoo operations puts an excessive burden on law enforcement and government agencies and poses an increased risk of attacks and escapes. Ultimately, taxpayers, as well as the law-abiding sanctuary community, foot the bill in the wake of attacks, escapes, or confiscations that inevitably result from the country's growing population of captive exotic animals.

There is simply no safe or humane way to allow for public handling of big cats, bears, or nonhuman primates of any age, and it is essential that USDA explicitly and expeditiously prohibit such activity under the AWA regulations.

Thank you giving your attention to this important matter. We appreciate the opportunity to provide input on this process and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator

Bernard Sanders  
United States Senator





*Phoenix takes first steps into the wild (Photo by Vanessa Lyn)*



*Lauren Buckingham & Jamie Veronica carry Phoenix (Photo by Alyssa Weber)*

## FLORIDA BOBCATS HOMEWARD BOUND

Last summer Big Cat Rescue rescued four orphaned Florida bobcats. Phoenix had been found among the ashes of a forest fire. Captiva was trapped and removed from the wild. Rain and Dancer were found playing near a busy highway all alone.

After several months of rehabilitation these four lucky bobcats were returned to the wild. Phoenix and Captiva were released on 30,000 acres of thickly wooded forest in Lee County. Rain and Dancer were released on 100 acres of pristine habitat with thousands of acres of protected lands nearby.

Big Cat Rescuers and rehabbers had the experience of a lifetime watching these four go home. We are confident that they will do well on their own. Each pair will likely stay with one another for several months post release.



*Phoenix as a kitten*



*Captiva as a kitten*



*Captiva as an adult*



*Phoenix as an adult*



*Rescuers hike to release site*



*Captiva takes one last look at her rehabbers before disappearing into the forest (Photo by Alyssa Weber)*





*Rain & Dancer as kittens*



*Rain as an adult*



*Dancer as an adult*



*BCR Rehabbers set up Rain & Dancer's crates (Photo Julia Piotti)*



*Rain is the first to make a dash towards freedom (Photo by Julia Piotti)*



*Rain & Dancer release site*



*Big Cat Rescuers at Rain & Dancer release site*



*Dancer joins her brother to start a new chapter in their lives (Photo by Alyssa Weber)*



# BLEAK START TO 2016 FOR *FL PANTHERS*

Florida's iconic big cat, the panther, is on track to match or possibly beat last year's record number of fatalities. Each year dozens of Florida panthers are lost, putting this endangered species at great risk of extinction. Current estimates of the population vary widely from 100-180 individual cats.

When a panther is found dead its body is sent to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Research Institute in Gainesville to be studied. A necropsy is performed to determine the cause of death, test for infectious diseases, and collect data. After the necropsy is completed some panthers are sent to the Florida Museum of Natural History to be preserved. The rest are cremated.

In 2015 42 panthers were reported dead; 30 of those were road kills, 1 orphan starved to death, 3 panthers were killed by other panthers over territory disputes, 1 panther was shot, and 7 died from unknown causes.

Just five weeks into 2016 5 panthers have been reported dead; 4 from vehicle collisions and 1 of unknown causes. That averages out to one panther being lost every week. At this rate the species could be gone completely in just a few years.

So what can be done to slow the rapid decline of these big cats in the wild? Wildlife overpasses provide some relief, but what it really comes down to is individual responsibility. Please drive with caution when traveling through panther territory. Their lives depend on it.



Panthers use a variety of vocalizations to communicate. Sounds they make have been described as chirps, peeps, whistles, purrs, moans, screams, growls, and hisses. When frightened, kittens emit a series of short, high-pitched peeps. Kittens and mothers keep track of each other with whistles. Females signal their readiness to mate by yowling or caterwauling.



The home range of male panthers is about 200 square miles or 128,494 acres and the home range of female panthers is about 75 square miles or 48,185 acres.



This elusive cat goes by many names; Cougar, Mountain Lion, Puma, Panther, Painter, Catamount, Klandagi, Ghost Cat, Coowahchobee, Katalgar, Koicto, Pumato, Shadow Cat.





## THANKS TO OUR LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBERS

Supporters who make a provision for the cats in their estate planning become members of our Legacy Society. The donations that result have played, and will in the future play, a huge role in making sure we can meet our commitment to care for the cats to the end of their lives as we have promised. In some cases supporters who are not financially able to make significant donations while they are alive have had a very significant impact by choosing the cats as beneficiaries of their estates.

Anonymous (14)	Hester Fuller	Carol Sandstrom
Heather Achey	Linda Harris	Robert Shepard
Jean & Peter Albini	Natalie Hosp	Alexia Sherman
Bob Anderson	"Hunter"	Veronika Silvani
Chuck & Lisa Andrus	Peter W. Jasin (D)	Martha J. Simms (D)
Candace Barbara	Mary Margaret Kalal (D)	Andy Sirna
Carole Baskin	Carol Klinger & Bill Loggins	JR Smalarz
Howard Baskin	William Kuni	Diane Smith
Michelle Black	"Tiger Claw" LaFever	Morgan Jane Smith
Ebe Bower	Imara Wisdom Light	Arlene Spencer
Natasha Brenner	John E. Lovell	Dr. Elizabeth S. Stewart
Laurie Cillo	David H. Lytle	& John H. Stewart
Robert & Susan Cochran	Jean Matusinka (D)	Faynetta Thompson (D)
Marie Collart	Candice McClain	Starla Trivilino
Mindy Cox	Kathy McDaniel	Monnie Turley
Bonnie-Jean Creais	Martha June Melville (D)	Ken Turnbull
Joan & Richard Czeck	Terri Mimbs	Robin Tyler
Mary Ann D'Agostino	Marcella Mirande-Ketcham	John A. Varnado
Thomas Daly (D)	Cecilia Nelson	Lynne and Todd Waymon
Elena Damien	Terry Nordblom (D)	Patricia Webber (D)
Lynne Daub	David G. Nugent	Margaret Welke (D)
Amy Davis	Pat O'Shea	Karen Wells
Beverly Diehl	Pamela Pipe	Ron & Joy Wentworth
Dorothy I. Edwards (D)	Dennis Polivka (D)	Carol Wettersten
Fran Ezer	Karen & Jay Quinn	Susan Wilcox
Lona Feingersh (D)	Marjorie Rhodes (D)	Odette Wilkins
Claudette M. Ferree (D)	Denise Richman (D)	Brandy Williams
Ira Fischer	Nancy Rodgers	Robert C. Williams (D)
Patricia Francis	Pamela Rodriguez	Mary Yang
David & Kathy French	Steven Salomons	Jill Yasgur

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the generous supporters below for including the cats as part of their life's legacy.

(D) represents deceased. This list is maintained manually and errors can occur. If you are not listed or listed incorrectly, we ask your forgiveness and request that you email [Finance@BigCatRescue.org](mailto:Finance@BigCatRescue.org) so we can make the correction.



# A BOBCAT'S TALE

## OF BEATING THE ODDS

Not even 24 hours after releasing Rain and Dancer back into the wild their spot in our bobcat rehabilitation program was filled. At approximately 1 AM on Friday February 5th we received a call from a good Samaritan who had come across a bobcat that had been hit just east of Tampa.

it is usually an unsuccessful search. This time, however, thanks to the caller and the sheriff's department the bobcat was looked after until help could arrive.

The bobcat appeared to be in great pain. He was crouched with his head hanging low in the middle of an intersection completely undisturbed by the nearby cruisers and flashing lights. Jamie and a deputy approached the bobcat with nets and Carole followed closely with a crate. The bobcat lifted his

with little resistance the bobcat walked in.



*Thor's left eye was badly damaged*

Now that the bobcat was captured and on his way to Big Cat Rescue it was time to roust a veterinarian out of bed. Lucky for us and the bobcat volunteer veterinarian Dr. Justin Boorstein met rescuers at the sanctuary.



*Broken upper jaw and canine*



*X-ray of broken lower jaw*

head and perked up his ears at the sight of rescuers approaching and he made an effort to flee the scene. Jamie quickly scooped him up in the net and the deputy used his net to secure the bobcat to the ground while the crate was placed nearby. In a coordinated effort the nets were swooped to the entrance of the crate and

The bobcat was barely breathing upon his arrival to BCR's Windsong Memorial Hospital. He was sedated immediately for an exam, and was quick to fall asleep as his body was weak from the accident. He weighed in at 24 pounds and according to his overall body size and condition he was estimated to be approximately 2 years old.

During his exam it was discovered that he had several critical injuries to the left side of his body. His jaw was broken in multiple places including a break in the middle



*Jamie and Dr. Boorstein examine Thor at 2 AM*

BCR President Jamie Veronica and Founder Carole Baskin rushed to the scene, 25 minutes away, nets and crates in tow. To our surprise and delight the entire intersection had been blocked off by 3 sheriff's deputies. Many times when we get calls about bobcats having been hit by a car the caller can not wait with the animal. We are often unable to find the bobcat and have to search all of the surrounding areas. Unfortunately,



*Jamie taking x-rays of Thor*



of his upper jaw between the canines, another in the lower jaw between the canines, as well as a third break just behind his lower left canine. In addition an upper canine was broken off, the eye socket was fractured, and he had a complicated fracture to the shoulder blade. His eye was swollen and protruding most likely due to a combination of the impact and the resulting fracture to the socket. Blood work revealed he was anemic, most likely due to blood loss. He was a mess and the prognosis was poor.

Despite the severity of his injuries rescuers moved forward. This bobcat was going to be given a second chance to go back to the wild no matter the odds or cost. He was given subcutaneous fluids and injections for pain and to reduce inflammation. Then he was placed in a hospital cage where he was monitored throughout the night via Explore.org cameras. It seemed unlikely he would make it through the night.

The next morning the bobcat was much more alert. He had made the first hurdle! Because of his strength and determination he was given a name to reflect his

bold spirit, that name is Thor.

Thor required surgery to repair his lower jaw. He was taken to the Humane Society of Tampa Bay where Dr. Justin and his expert team Talma, Jamie, Angelica,



and Sam sedated, examined, and performed surgery to stabilize the fractures. Due to the location and surrounding bone and tissue of the upper jaw fracture it was determined that it will heal fine on its own.



Meanwhile we consulted with two board certified specialists regarding Thor's eye and shoulder blade injuries. Dr. Miller who is an ophthalmologist and Dr. Hay who specializes in orthopedics as well as neurological and soft tissue surgeries are a valuable resource and always happy to help out in any way they can.

Thor recovered well from the surgery to his jaw and was taken back to Big Cat Rescue's West

Boensch Cat Hospital to recover. He was prescribed a course of medications to manage his pain as well as to treat his eye which due to the swelling he was unable to blink.

Over the weekend Thor received intensive care. He was given sub q fluids, injectable medications, and eye drops twice a day and he even started to eat a little. However, once Monday approached he was improving to the point that he would no longer tolerate being handled for fluids and medications, but was still not eating and drinking on his own.

Unwilling to give up on Thor, Jamie made a concoction of beef, liver, and water blended up in her own personal blender. She then used a pole syringe to feed the meat shake to Thor. At first he was very put off by having this long metal syringe slowly approaching







*A little bit of everything on the menu to try and entice Thor to eat*

his face. He backed up, swatted at the pole, and turned his head, growling in defiance. Patience and consistency eventually won him over. Jamie was very quiet and slowly moved the end of the syringe pole closer and closer to the corner of his mouth. When Thor hissed she deployed some of the meat shake into his mouth. He stared her down and growled deeply, but then he licked his lips and swallowed the food. She tried again and again and each time he swatted and growled less.

By the end of the feeding session he had welcomed the incoming syringe and would lick the food as it was pushed out. Although he had become tolerant of this method of feeding he would still let out the occasional growl or throw a swipe just to remind her that he was a bobcat and he was wild.

Still Thor refused to drink. His bowl was moved to a lower position,



*Jamie syringe feeding Thor*

different types of water were used such as tap and bottled and still he would not drink. Rescuers worried over him day and night constantly checking the video feeds to see if he would drink.

To complicate matters Thor's eye stopped responding to the eye medications and the cornea appeared to be drying out. Dr. Miller examined his eye and we made the decision to sedate him again for a procedure that would hopefully save it. Dr. Miller burrowed away the dried areas of the cornea and applied generous amounts of medication ointment to the eye. Then she sutured Thor's third eye lid closed over the desiccating eye to protect it and keep it moist. This would mean that Thor would no longer need eye drops twice a day.

Radiographs of the injury to Thor's shoulder were sent to Dr. Hay to examine. Because of the amount of muscle that is attached to the shoulder blade and how thin the blade bone is, surgery would not be his best option for recovery.

Instead Dr. Hay recommended rest in a small hospital cage for several weeks. This worked well with Thor's current treatment plan as he must remain in the hospital while his jaw and eye heal.

In an ongoing effort to get Thor to drink, a water fountain bowl was purchased. It was installed in his cage with hopes the sound of water flowing would entice him to drink. Finally rescuers caught Thor drinking! Every little victory is celebrated around here.

Thor continues to receive intensive care while he recovers. At the writing of this article it has been two weeks since Thor's rescue.



*Thor maintains his wild spirit*

His tale of woe and determination have drawn in thousands nationwide who follow the daily updates on his progress. Thor is now eating and drinking on his own and continues to gain strength and respond well to the medications. The next steps for him will be to re-examine his eye

and repair his broken canine.

Show your support for Thor with one of these awesome tees. Each design features an actual imprint of Thor's paw taken while he was sedated. Text reads; Paws Crossed for Thor - Big Cat Rescue Bobcat Rehabilitation Program.







## Gaming for Kitties!

For the past four years Big Cat Rescue Advocat Genesis Whitmore and her worldwide community of gaming friends have conducted a marathon 24 hour virtual fundraiser in support of the magnificent creatures that call Big Cat Rescue home.

Known for her artwork, Genesis became known for her gaming streams and decided to harness her creative talents in support of the sanctuary by conducting an annual 24 hour Livestream fundraiser to help keep the Big Cats fed, housed, and healthy!

Dedicated in loving memory to her beloved kitty Feep, this 24 hour nonstop virtual fundraiser has collectively raised a ROARING total of \$34,000.00+ in support of the magnificent creatures that call Big Cat Rescue home.

## “Felis” Navidad

For the second year in a row, Big Cat Advocat Oglä Kruse partnered together with artisan friends Karin and Lisa in seeking to “give back” to the animals during the Christmas holiday season.

These inspiring animal advocates combined their artisan talents and conducted the 2nd Annual “Felis Navidad” fundraiser in support of the cats.

Olga, Karin and Lisa hosted a festive evening amongst like-minded friends that included delicious food, spirits and most importantly a silent auction.

Their collective efforts in support of the cats have raised approximately \$3,000 in support of the sanctuary’s mission/vision.



*The mastermind behind the Murder House, Shane*

## HALLOWEEN SCARE RAISES FUNDS FOR THE CATS

The major amusement parks in Tampa and Orlando have made it a popular Halloween activity to visit their exhibits where you walk through dark corridors and have people or objects jumping out at you scaring the wits out of you. Tampa big cat lover Shane Downs literally brought this concept “home” when he turned his home into a scare house called Murder House that people could visit in the weeks before Halloween. There was no admission charge, he just asked for donations to Big Cat Rescue. The result was \$2000 in donations! Thanks so much Shane!



# GIFT SHOP PURCHASES DIRECTLY BENEFIT THE BIG CATS



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Lion wearing BCR Beanie  
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Tiger in Text  
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Medium Socks fit Women 6-11 & Men 5-10  
**\$9.49 ea.** Choose Shorty Tiger made with  
recycled materials, White Lion w/BCR Logo,  
Black Tiger w/ BCR Logo, or Lion March





Tigers 15 oz Mug **\$15.84**



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Bobcats 15 oz Mug **\$15.84**



Joseph Painting Mug 15oz **\$15.84**



BCR Tumbler  
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8" Serval  
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12" Dream Eyes  
Tiger **\$15.48**



BCR Photo Collage License Plate Frame features 18 resident big and little cats of Big Cat Rescue. Standard size and four holes make easy installation. **\$15.84**

A NON-PROFIT EDUCATIONAL SANCTUARY  
[BIGCATRESCUE.ORG](http://BIGCATRESCUE.ORG)

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message w/  
each click  
**\$4.00**



BCR  
Supporter Bracelet  
**\$3.68**



Lion & Lioness Bumper Sticker **\$6.21**

## SPONSOR A CAT



All kits include: 4-page color fact sheet about the species, Big Cat Rescue logo window decal, Registration Card to select the cat of your choice. 8x10 color photo of the cat you choose to sponsor with the cat name and your name as sponsor printed on it. The sponsor levels below include these additional benefits and donor recognition:

**\$25 BIG CAT BUDDY – KIDS:**  
Wildcat coloring pages,  
1 Kid Tour Pass

**\$25 BIG CAT SUPPORTER:**  
10% off card

**\$50 BIG CAT FRIEND:**  
10% off card, 1 Day Tour Pass

**CHECK OUT  
OUR ENTIRE  
SELECTION AT:  
[BIGCATRESCUE.BIZ](http://BIGCATRESCUE.BIZ)**



**\$100 BIG CAT PROTECTOR:** 10% off card, 2 Day Tour Pass, 30 mailing labels

**\$250 BIG CAT CONSERVATOR:** 10% off card, 2 Day Tour Pass, 60 mailing labels

**\$500 BIG CAT WARRIOR:** Conservator benefits plus 4"x4" photo donor plaque displayed at gift shop and 6"x12" engraved sign displayed on tour path, Private Tour for 10

**\$1,000 BIG CAT HERO:** Conservator benefits plus 6"x6" photo donor plaque displayed at gift shop and 9"x12" engraved sign displayed on tour path, Private Tour for 10

**\$2,500 BIG CAT CHAMPION:** Conservator benefits plus 8"x8" photo donor plaque displayed at gift shop and 12"x12" photo donor sign displayed on tour path, Private Founder Tour for 10

**\$5,000 KING OF BEASTS:** Conservator benefits plus 12"x12" photo donor plaque displayed at gift shop and 18"x24" photo donor sign displayed on tour path, Private Founder Tour for 10

**NEED A LAST MINUTE GIFT?  
DOWNLOAD KITS ONLINE AT  
[BIGCATRESCUE.BIZ](http://BIGCATRESCUE.BIZ)**



Sassyfras



Cameron

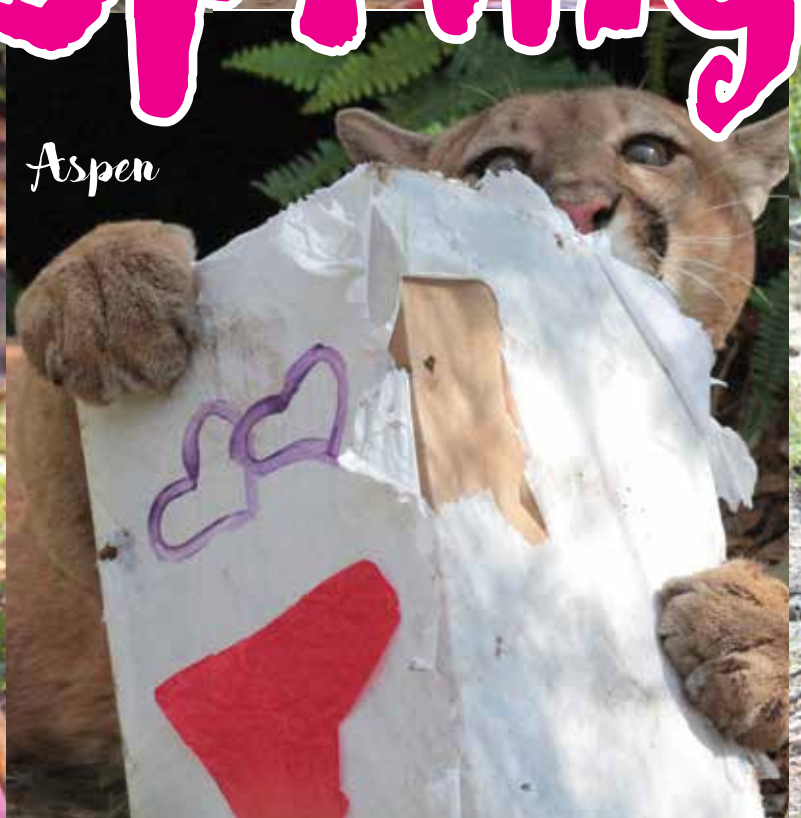


Sundari

# Spring



Bengali



Aspen





# was Sprung at Big Cat Rescue



Jumanji

MAX

Jade



# WAYS TO HELP

[bigcatrescue.org/get-involved/](http://bigcatrescue.org/get-involved/)

## VISIT THE CATS

### TOUR & PROGRAMS

Reservations Required For All Tours

[zerve.com/bigcatrescue](http://zerve.com/bigcatrescue)

(888) 316-5875

Closed Thursdays, Thanksgiving & Christmas  
Tours may be canceled due to inclement weather

### KIDS TOUR

Children of all ages and their parents can learn about the big cats on this guided tour of the sanctuary. This tour is given on a child's educational level. Tour is 1 hr. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

### DAY TOUR

Guided tour of the sanctuary. Learn about the big cats and the threats they face both in the wild as well as in captivity. Hear their personal stories of how they were rescued. Tour is 1.5 hrs. No children under 10 years.

### FEEDING TOUR

Follow a keeper as they feed the big cats. Observe a variety of cats eating and learn about their nutritional needs in captivity. Tour is 1 hr. No children under 10 years.

### BIG CAT KEEPER TOUR

This tour takes you behind the scenes. Enjoy making enrichment (treats and food puzzles) for the big cats and watch as the keepers hand out the enrichment you made. You will also observe operant training sessions with the big cats. Tour is 2 hrs. No children under 10 years.

### GIFT CERTIFICATES FOR ALL TOURS AVAILABLE ONLINE AT [BIGCATRESCUE.BIZ](http://BIGCATRESCUE.BIZ)

*Prices and availability for all tours are subject to change. Visit us online for the most current tour information.*

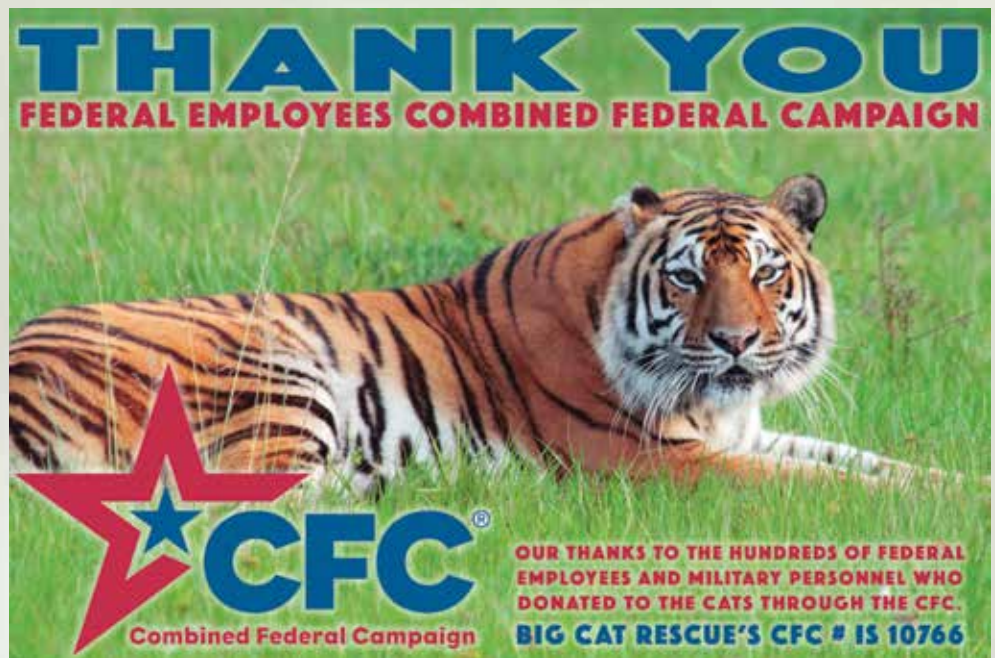


## PROJECT CATER-WALL

The perimeter of the sanctuary is 7,200 feet. We have completed construction on 2/3 of this project, and need your help to finish the remaining 2,300 feet. You can sponsor 1 linear foot of wall for \$100. For your donation you will receive a BCR screensaver, 2-for-1 Tour Pass, and name listed on donor sign.

## BIG CAT WISHLIST

Donate a new or used item from our wishlist online at: <http://tinyurl.com/n42yjmh>



## AMAZON SMILE

Do you shop on Amazon? Select Big Cat Rescue as your designated charity at: [smile.amazon.com/](http://smile.amazon.com/)

Everything is the same as it is at Amazon.com, with the added bonus that a donation will be made to the big cats for every purchase you make using this portal. It's a free and easy way to give without any extra cost!





## Spring 2016

ORDER DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

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

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

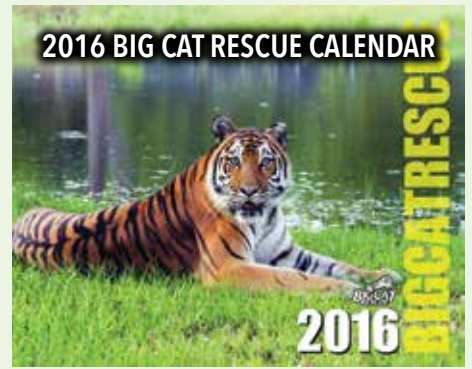
State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**RECIPIENT ADDRESS** (if different than above)

Address:

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_



13-month glossy color calendar features the big cats who call BCR home. Each month enjoy a fabulous big cat image to go wild over! \$18.05

DESCRIPTION	QTY	SIZE	PRICE EACH	TOTAL PRICE
ULTRASOUND DONATION (Your contribution will be matched dollar for dollar!)				
AUTOMATIC GIVING PROGRAM - SUSTAINING DONOR SOCIETY	Please charge my card this amount each month:			
PAVE THE WAY BRICK (See description and instructions below)		4X8	\$100	
PAVE THE WAY BRICK (See description and instructions below)		8X8	\$200	
PERIMETER WALL		1 FOOT	\$100	
			<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	

**PERSONALIZATIONS** (inscription to appear on the brick or wall fund sign, or brief note to be included on a card sent with order to recipient)

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**AUTOMATIC GIVING PROGRAM - JOIN THE SUSTAINING DONOR SOCIETY:** Big Cat

**CREDIT CARD INFO:**

Card #: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date (MMYY): \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ CCV# (back of card) \_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**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 email [finance@bigcatrescue.org](mailto: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.

**PAVE THE WAY BRICK:** Laser engraved bricks line the paths leading to our Trading Post Gift Shop and to the entrance of the tour path. 4" x 8" Brick: 29 characters per line, total of 5 lines OR heart or paw print symbol, 14 characters, total of 5 lines. 8" x 8" Brick: 14 characters per line, total of 6 lines OR With heart or paw print symbol, 14 characters, total of 4 lines. To order complete form above and include personalization in provided area.

**PERIMETER WALL FUND:** To best protect our big cats we have constructed a solid perimeter wall surrounding the property. \$100 funds 1 linear foot of wall. Donors will be recognized on a permanent sign at the sanctuary.

Big Cat Rescue is a 501 (c)(3) non profit organization, FEID 59-3330495. A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION FOR BIG CAT RESCUE CORP., A FL-BASED NONPROFIT CORPORATION (REGISTRATION NO. CH 11409), MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE 1-800-435-7352 WITHIN THE STATE OR BY VISITING [www.800helpfla.com](http://www.800helpfla.com). REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE. Big Cat Rescue does not utilize the services of professional solicitors, 100% of all contributions go directly to Big Cat Rescue Corp. The Big Cat Times is distributed quarterly in Tampa, FL at no charge to our donors. If you have any questions, please email [info@BigCatRescue.org](mailto:info@BigCatRescue.org) or call 813-920-4130.



# DONATIONS

Received Oct 1st - Dec 31st

Harry & Debra Stonecipher \$50,080  
 Reitzel Foundation \$25,000  
 Berwind Fund \$10,000  
 Charles Rutenberg Realty Inc \$10,000  
 Lawrence & Pamela Trissel \$10,000  
 Royal Little Family Foundation \$8,000  
 Saint Pete MRI \$7,500  
 Mireille McGail \$6,101  
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 Robert & Susan Cochran \$5,000  
 Fields-Gordon-Galley Private  
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 Jean Fraley \$5,000  
 Lilian Giraldo \$5,000  
 Johnson Singer Foundation \$5,000  
 Litter Quality Propane \$5,000  
 Piper Mongan Properties \$5,000  
 The Kors Le Pere Foundation \$5,000  
 Peter Mynard \$4,995  
 Mark Smith & Maxine Harris \$4,000  
 Robert & Doretta Marwin \$4,000  
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 Dinah Greeff \$3,000  
 Gunst Family Foundation \$3,000  
 David Keller \$3,000  
 Sole Marittimi \$3,000  
 Whitney Charitable Foundation \$3,000  
 Susan Wilcox \$2,573  
 Diane & Robert Klingel \$2,500  
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 American Fundraising  
 Auctions Inc \$2,347  
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 Cynthia Ostrowski \$2,000  
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 Finn Thompson \$2,000  
 Korrin Fallbacher \$1,979  
 The Body Shop Foundation \$1,612  
 Whiskey Joe's Bar & Grill \$1,555  
 The Richard L. Levin  
 Family Foundation \$1,540  
 Aaron Link \$1,500  
 Marvin D and Melissa U Gill Family  
 Foundation Inc \$1,500  
 Gregory & Carlene Smith \$1,500  
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 Christina Farah \$1,050  
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## ZEUS TIGER HAS A GREAT LIFE



THANKS TO  
DONORS LIKE YOU

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Thank you for your support!  
 If your donation came toward  
 the end of the quarter, it may  
 not have been entered into  
 our database in time for this  
 newsletter and will appear  
 in the next. Donation data  
 entry is manual and subject  
 to occasional errors, so if your  
 donation should appear and  
 does not, please email:

Katie.Nikic  
 @BigCatRescue.org

While the list of donors of \$100-  
 199 is too long for this print  
 edition, they are very much  
 appreciated and recognized by  
 being appended to the online  
 edition.

- Howard Baskin, Treasurer





## CANDIDATE ERIC LYNN VISITS THE CATS

In early February we were honored to be visited by Congressional candidate Eric Lynn. Mr. Lynn is running for the Pinellas County 13th Congressional seat left open when Rep. David Jolly decided to run for the Senate seat that has been left open by Marco Rubio. Mr. Lynn spent 8 years in Washington as a policy advisor to President Obama and then moved back to St. Petersburg where he and his wife Tracy plan to raise their two young children Hazel and Jaron. He is pictured here with Andre the tiger.

We are always appreciative when legislators and candidates for office show interest in the plight of the big cats in captivity and in legislation to end their suffering. After his visit, Mr. Lynn sent us the following wonderful email:

*"I was truly moved during my visit to Big Cat Rescue. After learning about the conditions thousands of animals are kept in around the country, it's clear to me that we need people in Congress who will advocate for these amazing animals. I will support the Big*

*Cat Public Safety Act and will seek other ways to help.*

*The people at Big Cat Rescue are working hard every day to care for these animals and raise awareness. I'm proud to stand with them, and I hope you'll join us."*

On behalf of the cats, we thank Mr. Lynn for making time to visit us during this busy campaign season.

## GIVE DAY IS MAY 3RD HELP US WIN \$30,000 AGAIN THIS YEAR!

On May 3rd the Community Foundation of Tampa Bay will hold its third annual Give Day contest where nonprofits compete to see who can have the most donors and donations that day. There are also prizes for the most donations in a particular hour of the day.

Thanks to so many of our supporters who participated, last year Big Cat Rescue won \$30,000, more than any other nonprofit! Of that \$30,000, \$10,000 was a

prize for the most donations to an animal nonprofit sponsored by Caspers Company pictured here presenting their check.

Helping us win this prize money to support the cats is a great way to leverage your donation dollar.

On May 3rd donations will be accepted online by credit card for the contest. The minimum donation is \$25.

If you prefer to donate by check, the check is still made out to Big Cat Rescue but must be dated May 3 and have "Give Day" in the memo section. We need to submit it the day before Give Day, i.e. on Monday, May 2, so need to have it in hand, or at least a scanned copy of it, by that day. If you mail checks, please send them to:

**Howard Baskin - Big Cat Rescue**  
**12802 Easy Street**  
**Tampa, FL 33625-3702**

If you are contemplating a donation this year, Give Day is a great time to do it. Please mark May 3 on your calendar and help us win again this year!





## VOLUNTEERS AWARDED FOR OUTSTANDING DEDICATION

Congratulations to the following Big Cat Rescuers who have been recognized for their outstanding commitment to the mission of Big Cat Rescue. In honor of this service they were each presented with the SAVE award.

Senior Keeper Lauren Grant has volunteered at BCR for 7 years and has always been a wonderful hardworking volunteer.



She has a positive attitude, is dedicated to the mission, and is always willing and able. Congratulations! You are so deserving.



During the holidays it can be difficult to get everything accomplished day to day because many of our hard working volunteers are traveling or have family in town. Red Level Partner Danielle Smith and Keeper Mike Surdyk both recognized this struggle and volunteered as many hours as they could to help out during our busiest time or year. Thank you so very much!



New to Big Cat Rescue, Partner Trainee Barbara Nicholas is a shining example of what we

look for in our volunteers. She is friendly, always smiling, and jumps in to lend a hand wherever and whenever needed.



Big Cat Rescue is so lucky to have outstanding volunteers and interns who give not only their time to help the big cats, but also go above and beyond.

Do you want to help the big cats and make new friends? Big Cat Rescue is always looking for volunteers. Keepers clean enclosures, feed the animals, and landscape. Partners work in the gift shop and guide tours of the sanctuary. Get all the de-tails at:

[BigCatRescue.org/volunteer](http://BigCatRescue.org/volunteer)



## MOROCCAN SAND CAT STUDY

Beginning this year Big Cat Rescue will honor our monthly SAVE winners by making a donation towards conservation efforts around the globe. Each month BCR will make a \$1,000 contribution towards a special project in honor of the SAVE recipient.

January's SAVE winner Barbara Nicholas was honored with a contribution to the Species Survival Commission Cat Specialist Group to fund ongoing research of sand cats in the wild. The research will be the first ever study on sand cat ecology and

behavior in Morocco, using radio tracking collars.

The aim of the study is to investigate how sand cats co-exist in shared habitats and the distribution of the species within the Moroccan Sahara. Once sufficient data is collected, a long-term study is proposed to expand the research across the whole country to determine where the species live in high, medium and low densities, and where they are missing. Researchers plan to study the sand cats over several years to collect data throughout their lives, ideally covering multiple generations.

In addition researchers hope to raise awareness of the species amongst locals, training them to track and record sand cats.





# SPECIES SPOTLIGHT: LIONS



**Population:** Lions have undergone catastrophic declines, from as many as 200,000 wild lions in Africa a century ago to about 20,000 today. Their populations have declined by approximately 40% in the past 20 years alone.

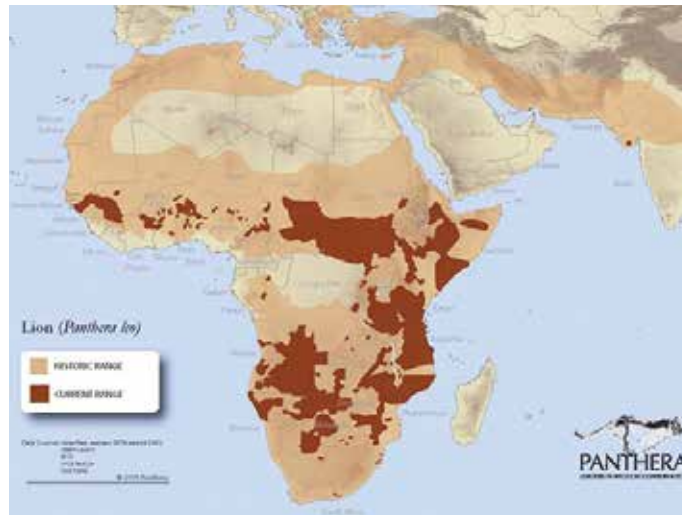
Lions are extinct in 26 African countries and have vanished from over 90 percent of their historic range. Though lions still exist in 27 African countries and one Asian country, only seven countries are known to each contain more than 1,000 lions.

Lions are currently listed as "Vulnerable" on the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species. In West Africa, the species is now classified as "Critically Endangered."

**Size and Appearance:** Second only in size to the Siberian tiger among the felines, the lion is the largest carnivore in Africa, and the second largest feline predator in the world. Average males weigh 385-550 pounds, and females weigh 250-450 pounds. The males reach an overall length of 11 feet from the tip of the nose

to tip of the tail, with females being just a bit shorter. Lions have a uniformly tawny coat, and the shades of it may vary from light to dark. Males possess a mane and it can range in colors from blonde to red to brown to black. It covers their head, neck and chest, and its development is believed to be strongly influenced by testosterone.

**Habitat:** The lion has a broad habitat tolerance, absent only from tropical rainforest and the interior of the Sahara desert. There are records of lions at elevations of more than 4,000 m. in the Bale Mountains and on



Kilimanjaro. Although Lions drink regularly when water is available, they are capable of obtaining their moisture requirements from prey and even plants (such as the tsama melon in the Kalahari desert), and thus can survive in very arid environments.

**Distribution:** Today, the majority of Africa's lions can be found in east and southern Africa, with about 1,500 in West Africa. Most

of the lions today exist inside protected areas.

**Reproduction and Offspring:** Lions give birth to 1-6 cubs after a gestation of 110 days. Any lactating female in a pride will suckle any cub that belongs to the pride. The cubs are born blind and helpless, and weigh approximately 2-4 pounds. Cub mortality is very high, less than half will survive their first year.

**Social System:** Lions are the most social of the cats, with related females remaining together in prides, and related and unrelated males forming coalitions competing for tenure over prides. Average pride size (including males and females) is 4-6 adults; prides generally break into smaller groups when hunting.

**Hunting and Diet:** Medium to large-sized ungulates (including antelopes, zebra and wildebeest) are the bulk of their prey, but lions will take almost any animal, from rodents to a rhino. They also scavenge, displacing other predators from their kills.

**Threats:** The main threats to lions are indiscriminate killing (primarily as a result of retaliatory or preemptive killing to protect human life and livestock) and prey base depletion. Habitat loss has led to a number of subpopulations becoming small and isolated. Furthermore, trophy hunting has contributed to population declines in Botswana, Namibia, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Cameroon and Zambia.





Joseph - Male Lion  
Born: 1998 Rescued: 2007



# FUN-CATION ROTATION NEARING COMPLETION



Completion of the Fun-Cation Rotation enclosure is fast approaching. This was no easy feat as we faced many hurdles during construction. The old enclosure at the site had to be torn down, Armani and Jade the leopards were relocated, and the summer rains constantly held up the project, not to mention the design of the enclosure was more complex and totally different than any enclosure we have built before.

All of this hard work is about to pay off when the first cat sets foot into the grand new space. The Fun-Cation Rotation enclosure encompasses 20,000 square feet and includes a massive jungle gym, large cave, and lots of

fun new toys. This new enclosure will be enjoyed by our small cats as well as the leopards and cougars.



There are plans in the works to connect many of the surrounding enclosures to a main chute that the cats can be shifted into in order to gain access to the Fun-Cation Rotation enclosure. Before we can start building these chutes along the back side of these enclosures we had to clear out a lot of overgrown palmetto thickets. Thanks to the hard working volunteers from Balance Tampa Bay much of this clearing was completed in just one day! We would like to thank this amazing work group for their efforts that will bring us one step closer to reaching our goals.



## TIGERS FOR TIGERS HELP BIG CAT RESCUE

Past BCR Intern Diane Dotson organized a group of 14 members of Clemson University's Tigers for Tigers to spend 3 days volunteering at the sanctuary.

Tigers for Tigers is dedicated to preserving tigers through education, research, and service learning on local and global levels.

The team worked diligently on preparing a new rehab enclosure for Rain and Dancer. They also made a very generous donation towards the care of new arrival Teisha the tiger.

We would like to thank this group of tiger enthusiasts for all of their help and their contribution to Big Cat Rescue's efforts.





# Sad Farewell

Taking care of 85 exotic animals is a roller coaster ride of emotions as we try to provide the best possible life for them and yet deal with the gut wrenching decisions of life and death. Of our 85 animals, 22 are over the age of 12, which is about as long as they live in zoos or in the wild. An amazing 57 are over the age of 15 (90+ in human years). Even more incredible, 29 are 20 years or older. It is with heavy hearts we must say good bye to these beautiful cats who have touched our hearts forever.

## ALEX



**1996 - 2015**

and was always excited to tear into enrichment toys created by our dedicated team of volunteers. In the end, Alex passed away due to kidney disease.

## GENIE



**2000 - 2015**

was the oldest sand cat we have ever known. She too lost her battle to kidney disease.

**Narla** was kept in a backyard in Rhode Island. A man had purchased her as a pet, but when his fiancé found out, she made him get rid of her. The man took Narla to a friend who agreed to take her in. He looked for alternative homes for Narla including local zoos, but to no avail. He ended up getting

## NARLA



**1997 - 2016**

her time here Narla became the sanctuary's little darling. As Narla aged she lost her sight and hearing. Again, kidney disease claimed the life of this sweet cougar. She will be greatly missed.

## TOBI



**1991 - 2015**

and the husband was diagnosed with a terminal illness. BCR took most of the cats including Tobi. Tobi was very secretive and had only a small group of keepers she was affectionate towards. Tobi showed her affection by her guttural rumbling purrs. As you have read here most of our big cats live well past their life expectancies. When this occurs their organs fail to work as well, most commonly their kidneys. Tobi was another example.

## TOMMIE



**2011 - 2015**

seizure attributed to the neurological disorder that had claimed her vision.

the necessary permits and housing to keep her. He cared for her until his passing at which point his wife, not willing to care for the big cat, contemplated euthanasia. However, close friends and family would not stand for it and contacted Big Cat Rescue. Narla was rescued in 2010. During

**Tobi** was rescued in 1995. She was part of a collection of privately owned "pets" which included 2 tigers and 8 cougars. Unfortunately life comes with unexpected road blocks and detours. The couple who owned the big cats had their world turned upside down when the wife became pregnant

**Tommie** was found blind wandering a mine in Florida. Unable to survive on her own in the wild she was given a permanent home at BCR. Tommie lived a great life here. She enjoyed a healthy diet, a cozy den, and enrichment toys to play with. Sadly her life was cut short when she suffered a massive





*Jennifer Dupre-Welsh, Dr. Wynn, Afton Tasler, Gale Ingham, Dr. Gingerich, Denise Rollings, and Jeff Kremer with TJ*

## VET REPORTS:

### WHAT BIG TEETH YOU HAVE

TJ is a 17-year-old tiger that was rescued in 2007 from a breeding facility in FL that was shut down by the USDA. He has always had a playful and mischievous spirit. TJ also loves to eat and at breakfast time is ready and waiting. So when TJ became less active and uninterested in some of his favorite foods keepers took notice.



*Broken canine post root canal*

TJ was sedated for an exam during which Dr. Wynn and Dr. Boorstein found that he had a bad canine. Tiger canine teeth can be upwards of 6" including the root, so extraction can be quite a difficult task. Otherwise he was in good health.

A dental specialist, Dr. Gingerich and his team Jennifer Dupre-Welsh and Denise Rollings of the Pet Dental Center in Miami made the trip across the state to see what could be done for TJ. A root canal was determined to be the best course of action. The procedure took a couple of hours to complete.

The results were fantastic. Not only is TJ eating better now, he has returned to his fun loving antics.

### SERVAL DINES OFF MENU

All of the cats at Big Cat Rescue are fed a well balanced diet. The main staple is a ground meat diet fortified with vitamins and minerals. To supplement this "mush" the cats also receive chunks of beef and boned chicken from necks and wings to thigh quarters depending on the size of the cat.



*X-rays of Zouletta show over filled stomach and severe arthritis in the knee*

Cats will be cats and many of the residents at BCR often snack between meals on lizards, frogs, bugs etc. However, no one would have ever guessed what Zouletta

*Dr. Boorstein and Dr. Gingerich with TJ*





the serval had eaten.

Zouletta, who is very food motivated and is never late for a meal, was nowhere to be found one morning. After searching around she was seen in her den tucked up in the corner. No amount of coaxing would make her come out.

Big Cat Rescuers caught her and brought her to the Windsong Memorial Hospital where Dr. Boorstein examined her.

X-rays were taken, blood work performed, and subcutaneous fluids and injectable medications were administered. Nothing



*Irritated portion of small intestine*



*Acorn removed from Zouletta's digestive tract*



*Karma Hurworth assists Dr. Boorstein during surgery on Zouletta serval*

remarkable was found during the exam and so she was moved the West Boensch Cat Hospital for observation.

Two days passed and still Zouletta would not eat. Despite receiving medications for pain and stomach upset, Zouletta looked like she felt awful.

With no other option, the decision was made to perform an exploratory surgery. Once Dr. Boorstein

opened her up the culprit was immediately apparent. A portion of her small intestine was red, inflamed, and hard to the touch. She had eaten something she was not supposed to, but what? Dr. Boorstein carefully cut into the delicate casing of the intestine and pulled out the foreign object, an acorn! Why Zouletta ate an acorn we will never know.

What we do know is that had we been able to perform an ultrasound on Zouletta we would have known what was wrong with Zouletta much sooner.

Zouletta spent a couple of weeks in the Cat Hospital while her surgery incision healed. Then she was reunited with her best friend Santino. She has been doing great ever since and we are so grateful for Dr. Boorstein for performing this life saving surgery!

*Zouletta has fully recovered and is back to normal*





## HELP BIG CAT RESCUE PURCHASE A STATE-OF- THE-ART ULTRASOUND MACHINE TO AID IN VETERINARY CARE PROGRAM

We are thrilled to announce a fantastic matching funds opportunity to help Big Cat Rescue purchase a state-of-the-art ultrasound machine so that we can continue to provide the best veterinary care possible.

It has made a huge impact having our on-site Windsong Memorial Hospital operational. Our vets are now able to take x-rays and perform lifesaving surgeries and procedures on our cats, most of whom are elderly or arrive at our sanctuary with significant medical needs.

However, we are missing a crucial piece of diagnostic equipment: an ultrasound machine.

While our x-ray machine is critical for examining bone structure, it has limited capacity for evaluating organs. An ultrasound machine is more suited for examining soft tissue including the architecture of the heart.

Currently our vet team relies on a physical exam, blood work and x-rays to determine the cause of a cat's illness. If the cause is not readily apparent using these tools, they must perform an invasive exploratory surgery like we recently did on Zouletta.

An ultrasound machine can be used, for example, to look at a cat's heart and evaluate valves

and chamber size; it can even be used to determine the type of heart disease present.

In the abdomen, an ultrasound can be used to evaluate the stomach, liver, gallbladder, spleen and intestines. It can be used to look for stones in kidneys and the bladder. And if there is an internal mass, the ultrasound machine can be used to determine which organs are involved. Our vets can then do a simple needle biopsy of the mass guided by ultrasound and have it tested, which in some cases can save the cat from an unnecessary and invasive procedure.

It is critically important that the person operating the ultrasound machine be trained and have extensive experience reading sonograms. If we purchased a standard ultrasound machine, we would have to incur the logistical issues and cost of bringing in an expert technician each time we needed to use it. This is not practical because in many cases we would not know if we were going to need to do an ultrasound until after we take x-rays. If we did need to do it, we would have to do it immediately while the cat was sedated and would not have time to arrange for a technician.

The specialized machine we need solves this problem in an



ingenious way. It has a camera mounted to it and an Internet connection to a board certified technician who will guide our vet via camera to make sure they get the best possible sonogram images and will aid in correctly reading the images.

But ultrasound machines are very expensive. The specialized one we need for our cats costs \$50,000. The great news is that the Reitzel Foundation has stepped up and pledged a dollar-for-dollar match up to \$25,000!

So your much needed and greatly appreciated donation toward our ultrasound machine for the cats will go twice as far! Thank you for continuing to support our cats and our sanctuary. This ultrasound machine will make a world of difference in the lives of our precious cats.

To donate fill out the form on page 19 or visit:

**BigCatRescue.org/  
ultrasound**

The cats will thank you!



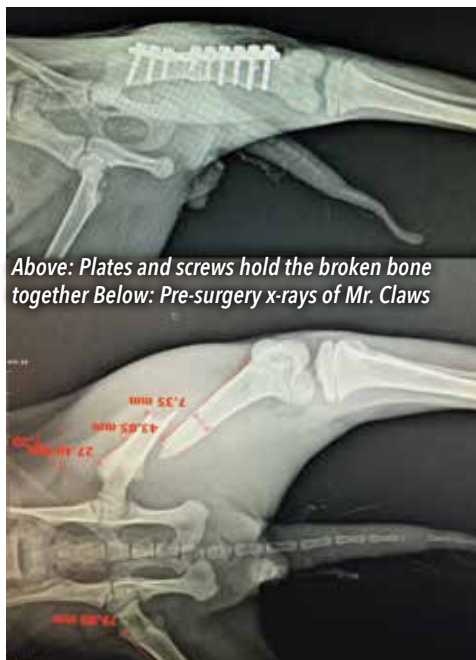


Thor is not the only rehab bobcat currently being cared for at Big Cat Rescue.

Two adorable bobcat kittens were rescued from Christmas, FL over the holidays.

Mr. Claws, an approximately 6 month old male, was found injured in a parking lot. Bystanders contacted FWC and the kitten was sent to the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center of Central Florida. Knowing that Mr. Claws would require extensive and long-term care, founder Carol Hardee reached out to Big Cat Rescue to ask if we had room for the bobcat in our rehab program.

Coincidentally she also had



Above: Plates and screws hold the broken bone together Below: Pre-surgery x-rays of Mr. Claws

and Mrs. Claws was ready to move on to the next phase of rehabilitation.



Dr. Boorstein repairing Mr. Claw's leg with the help of Dr. Bard and technician Jamie Gibbs

We all agreed that the best plan for these two bobcat kittens would be to raise them with one another until they were ready for release and then send them back out into the wild together.

Mr. Claws had several injuries including; a badly broken leg, fractured pelvis, deep laceration to his inner leg, and a few teeth that were missing or broken. Dr. Boorstein repaired the leg with a permanent plate and screws. The pelvis was not displaced so cage rest was prescribed. The laceration was cleaned and sutured. Lucky for Mr. Claws the damaged teeth were baby teeth and will be replaced with adult teeth soon.

a female kitten estimated to be 4 months old. Mrs. Claws had been attacked by another animal and was found with deep puncture wounds to her head. The wounds had since healed



Mr. Claws

Mrs. Claws is not as wild as she should be. At this point we are unsure if this is because of the handling she received when her wounds were treated or if her brain was damaged when she was attacked. We have even questioned if she could see well as she will bite and nip near her food missing it completely.

Once Mr. Claws was healed he was introduced to Mrs. Claws. The two hit it off right away and became the best of friends. Unfortunately this was short lived as Mr. Claws was very food aggressive and Mrs. Claws was unable to defend herself.

Mr. and Mrs. Claws are now housed separately. Mr. Claws will be released very soon. However we will need more time to determine if Mrs. Claws will be a candidate for release.



Mrs. Claws





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## SAVING ENDANGERED WILD CATS IN SRI LANKA

Big Cat Rescue is a proud supporter of conservation projects across the world. We recently made a donation of \$9,000 to the Small Wild Cat Conservation Foundation.

The Small Wild Cat Conservation Foundation (SWCCF) works with partners and organizations around the world reducing and mitigating threats to small wild cats.

Our donation was distributed to SWCCF partner Ashan Thudgala in Sri Lanka to fund two projects. The first to construct rehabilitation enclosures for injured Fishing Cats as well as Rusty Spotted Cats. The second to install eye-catching road signs warning drivers of fishing cats and urging them to slow down.

To find out how you can help small wild cats check out SWCCF online at:

**SMALLWILDCATS.COM**

**Can't wait for the next issue? Sign up for our monthly e-zine the AdvoCat at: [BigCatRescue.org/join](http://BigCatRescue.org/join)** 32



Road signs warning drivers of fishing cats



Fishing cat pair sitting on top of water fall



Fishing cat enclosure funded by Big Cat Rescue in Sri Lanka



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