BIG CAT RESCUE'S BIG CAT TIMES WINTER 2016



IN MEMORY OF JUMANJI - BLACK LEOPARD

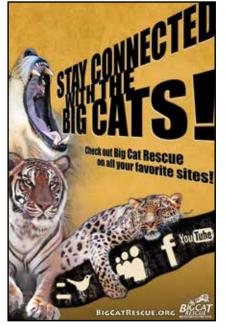


A MESSAGE FROM BCR PRESIDENT & EDITOR Jamie Veronica

We have so many wonderful things going on here at the sanctuary!

On the following pages hear about our newest rescue of 2 cougars and 4 bobcats from a facility shut down by the USDA in South Dakota. Nabisco, one of the bobcats, is just 6 months old and is now officially the youngest cat at Big Cat Rescue.

Check out the update on Spirit Feather, a native Florida bobcat that was orphaned as a kitten. She is getting ready for her



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upcoming release into the wild and we couldn't be more excited for the big day!

Read my report on our recent attendance at the 2016 CITES CoP 17 and the listing changes affecting the Florida Panther and African Lions as well as positive developments in the struggle to end commercial farming of tigers.

The Wildcat Walkabout was a roaring success raising thousands of dollars to support 5 conservation projects around the globe. Take a look at the pawsome photo collage capturing this popular event.

Be sure to check out the wild selection of big cat gifts and meaningful ways you can help fund the care of these precious cats both in this issue of the Big Cat Times as well as online at BigCatRescue.biz. Your support through gift shop purchases and contributions enable us to rescue abused and abandoned big cats from across the country. Your generosity gives them the life and care they so desperately need and deserve.

Keep the cats in mind this holiday season. Not only can you find the purr-fect gift in our online or onsite gift shop, you can also generate donations at no cost to you by shopping on Amazon and choosing Big Cat Rescue as your charity (see page 18 for de-tails).

Thank you for your support and Happy Holidays from all of us at Big Cat Rescue!

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





Big Cat Rescue, one of the world's most effective 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 over 70 lions, cougars, tiaers, bobcats, servals and other species of exotic cats, most of whom abandoned. have been orphaned, abused. 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", 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

Tour Info: BigCatRescue.org/Tickets

JOSIC AND THE PUSSY CATS

6 RESCUED FROM FAILED SOUTH DAKOTA SANCTUARY



Spirit of the Hills Wildlife Sanctuary was founded in 1999 by Michael Welchynski to provide a home for unwanted abused and abandoned wild animals. The sanctuary located in Spearfish, South Dakota was started with the importation of 200 animals from Welchynski's previous sanctuary in Canada. Over the years Spirit of the Hills Wildlife Sanctuary grew to house more than 400 animals on it's 200 acre refuge.

During a routine inspection of the

Spirit of the Hills facilities the USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) were dismayed at the condition of the nearly 160 animals living on the grounds. Reports indicate that several of the animals were underweight. An agreement was made between the owner Michael



Welchynski and the USDA to surrender his license and the animals in order to avoid charges.



Law enforcement remained onsite for several days as arrangements were made to bring in help to care for the animals and begin the relocation process. A few days later an incident occurred resulting in the mauling of Welchynski by a tiger during feeding time. The tiger escaped its enclosure leaving deputies no choice but to shoot and kill the cat which was rushing towards them. Welchynski was transported to the hospital where he received treatment for his injuries. Luckily these injuries were not life threatening.



In the weeks that followed the revocation of Welchynski's USDA license came the daunting task of





finding new homes for lions, tigers, bears, and more. Big Cat Rescue agreed to take in 2 cougars, Josie and Sassy, 4 bobcats, Dryden, Kewlona, Smalls, and Nabisco and 1 leopard who's name we do not yet know. The leopard requires specialized surgery to repair a complication resulting from her previous declaw. She will receive this much needed treatment and time to recover prior to coming to Big Cat Rescue. Meanwhile Lions, Tigers, and Bears a California based sanctuary is providing daily care to the remaining animals at Spirit of the Hills as well as transporting animals to sanctuaries across the country that have available space.

JOSIG: FEMALE COUGAR **APPROXIMATELY 16 YRS**

B.E.A.R.C.A.T. Hollow, located in Racine, MN, was established by Ken and Nancy Kraft in 1998. The couple claimed to be dedicated the preservation of native, to endangered and rare animals and at one time housed nearly 300

wild animals at their facility. Ken and Nancy solicited and collected donations by misleading the public. What was perceived by the outside world as a sanctuary for animals was in fact a front to hide their illegal wildlife trade. Hundreds of animals were being killed, skinned and sold behind closed doors. The Krafts ran

a second business on the same property their roadside as called Kraft zoo Escapades that sold live and dead tigers.

Krafts The and **BEARCAT Hollow had** a history of animal related emergencies including the escape of a full grown tiger in 2001 which mauled a 7 year old girl, an escaped grizzly

that went on a rampage destroying a nearby neighbor's porch, and a connection to the infamous tiger kept as a pet in Harlem, New York. That tiger named Ming subsequently mauled its owner leaving first responders the impossible task of sedating the beast by repelling down the side of the building.

In 2004 the Krafts and several other animal dealers were charged in a 55-count indictment following an extensive undercover investigation



by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the United States Attorneys Office known as Operation Snow Plow. The group of dealers were accused of illegally trafficking



exotic animals including 17 tigers, 7 leopards, and 5 grizzly bears as well as dead exotic and endangered animals and animal skins between 1999 and 2003. In one instance 8 tigers were shot to death while confined in a transport trailer. They were then slaughtered and their pelts and meat sold. Although federal regulations allow possession of captive-bred tigers and other big cats, regulations prohibit the killing of Endangered species like tigers for profit. It is unlawful to sell their hides, bones, parts or meat.

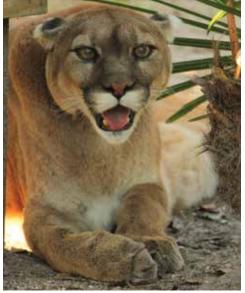
In 2005 Ken Kraft pleaded guilty to seven criminal counts in connection with his endangered-animal He and his brokering business. wife Nancy admitted to buying and selling big cats including tigers and leopards illegally, falsifying documents, lying to authorities, and witness tampering. Ken was sentenced to 18 months in prison and ordered to pay a \$700 fine, his wife Nancy was sentenced to a 15 month prison term. The Krafts sentencing was a far cry from the maximum penalty of five years in prison and/or fines of up to \$250,000. Prosecutors revealed the Krafts raked in more than \$200,000 with their lucrative black market trade in exotic animals.

Following the Kraft's conviction their remaining collection of animals, 27- 41 in total according to various reports, were seized and placed at Spirit of the Hills. Among those animals was Josie the cougar.

Josie spent the next 11 years of her life at Spirit of the Hills. She is missing the tips of her ears, the cause of which is unknown. Josie has a very inquisitive personality. She is so curious about her new keepers and what they are doing. Her first couple of days at Big Cat Rescue were spent peering out from the darkness of her massive rock den. Thankfully it didn't take long for her to warm up to her new surroundings. She now proudly perches atop her den surveying all that is hers.

Sassy: female cougar Approximately 17 yrs

Sassy's favorite place to nap is under the palmettos.



Jim Morrow AKA Wildcat Jim longed to own a large domestic cat such as a Maine Coon. While on the hunt for his new pet he came across a cougar kitten for sale. He and his wife Judy purchased the cougar for \$800 in 1986. The kitten, named Harley, was raised in their Washington home and soon grew to be 200 pounds. Gradually they added bobcats, lynx, servals, and more cougars to their private collection. Jim was known to drive around town with two full grown cougars in the front seat of his pickup truck and enthusiastically advocated for the private ownership of exotic cats. While he cautioned that these wild pets were not for everyone, he believed that they can make excellent companions.

In 1991 eastern Washington was ravaged by nearly 100 simultaneous A combination of severe fires. drought, a humidity zapping cold front, and gale force winds resulted in what was grimly referred to as Firestorm. The wind toppled trees, which took power lines with them, igniting the brush below. Gusts of wind as high as 62 mph sent embers soaring, spreading the blaze faster and further than firefighters could keep up with. The high winds made aerial fire suppression impossible. It took days to get the fires under control as the winds continued to reignite blazes that appeared to have been subdued. The Firestorm resulted in widespread destruction claiming the life of one person, burning 114 homes to the ground and resulted in the deaths of many animals including 75% of the wildcats owned by the Morrows.



Jim and Judy tended to the animals who had survived the blaze, one of which was a serval named Amanda who was so severely burned she required reconstruction surgery. Gradually the couple rebuilt their home and their menagerie with the help of supporters from across the state.

Years after the Firestorm Jim and Judy decided they wanted to share their collection of wildcats with the public. However, regulations in Washington were too strict to allow them to open a commercial facility. In 1996 the two packed up their home and their pets and moved to Keystone, South Dakota where they opened Wildcat Valley Sanctuary of the Black Hills. Throughout the next decade they amassed a total of 40 exotic cats and became a popular tourist attraction.

Some time between 1996 and 1999 Jim and Judy acquired Sassy. There are no records as to where she came from or how old she was when they received her. The only report of her condition at the time indicates that she had lost the tips of her ears to frostbite prior to her arrival. Jim and Judy showed off Sassy with interaction sessions and by walking her on a leash.

Judy fell ill and eventually lost her battle with cancer in 2009.

Kewlona playing in the grass shortly after her arrival. 6 BIG CAT TIMES - WINTER 2016 - TWITTER.COM/BIGCATRESCUE

Due to her passing in combination with his own failing health Jim's heart was no longer in it for the animals and by 2011 his last six cats including Sassy were relocated to a nearby wildlife sanctuary called Spirit of the Hills. (Jim passed away, joining his wife, in January of this vear.)

Fast forward to 2016 and Sassy would be relocating once again. Thankfully for her, she will never again be homeless. Sassy will live out the remainder of her days in comfort at Big Cat Rescue.

Dryden & Kewlona Male & FEMALE BOBCATS 1.5 YEARS OLD

Dryden and Kewlona were found when the were tiny kittens in a barn in Wyoming. Their mother and siblings were found dead nearby. It is not known what happened to the mother and her other two kittens. Dryden and Kewlona were surrendered to Spirit of the Hills where they were raised together.

Both are very shy, Dryden more so than Kewlona. When they first arrived neither would venture

> out of the den and they were uninterested in extensive the menu offered to them. Kewlona was the first to explore her new home. She slunk low to the ground checking out the perimeter, then her platform, and finally the top of her



den mountain. She is unsure but curious about her new caregivers. When approached she retreats to the safety of the den. However, as keepers make their way around the enclosure cleaning in the mornings she sneaks out and follows them to get a closer look, always keeping herself hidden at the edge of the den mountain, or behind a tuft of saw grass. Dryden is still settling in



than the others to feel comfortable around keepers.

and only explores his new digs under the cover of darkness. Camera trap video collected days after their arrival shows the two checking out their new home, lounging on the platform, eating their favorites of the smörgåsbord offered and playing.

Dryden and Kewlona were housed together when they were rescued. Because we did not have access to any of their previous veterinary records Kewlona was sedated for an exam and was spayed so the two can continue to live together. True sanctuaries do not buy, breed, or sell.



Smalls: FEMALE BOBCAT **3 YEARS OLD**



Smalls was found drowning in a creek in Wyoming. She was captured by concerned citizens and brought to a nearby veterinary clinic where she was diagnosed with pneumonia and required extensive care for more than a week. After her recovery she became a permanent resident at Spirit of the Hills. We do not know how old she was when she was surrendered. According to volunteers at the facility she and Nabisco, an un-neutered male bobcat kitten, lived in the home of Spirit of the Hills founder Michael Welchynski.

A few days after Smalls arrived she was sedated for an exam and to be spayed. During her exam our veterinary team discovered a bad molar that required extraction. Thankfully Smalls had already been

spayed. Unfortunately we had no way to know this in advance, but wanted to take every precaution considering she had been living with Nabisco. Both surgeries went well and following a period of time recovering in the cat hospital she was returned to her enclosure.

Smalls is a very large fluffy bobcat with dark amber eyes. She is one of the first cats quests see when they enter the tour path. Smalls was shy when she first came to Big Cat Rescue and took her time getting

used to her new surroundings.

Nabisco: Male Bobcat 6 MONTHS OLD

Nabisco was dropped off at Spirit of the Hills during the Crow Peak fire this summer. The fire ignited by a lightning strike set 2,733 acres of the Black Hills national forest It took nearly 200 ablaze. people more than 32,000 hours to extinguish the flames. As a result of the fire Nabisco was separated from his family.

Nabisco was too small to live in the same enclosure as Smalls and so upon arrival the two were separated but are housed near one another. Neither seems to mind at all and Nabisco in particular settled into his new home right away.

Nabisco has all the spunk and spirit of an inquisitive young bobcat. He is full of energy and is very dependent on the attention of his keepers. He follows them around constantly and cries out for them when they leave. During this transitional time for Nabisco he will receive lots of attention and enrichment. We hope to introduce him to Mrs. Claws who is of similar size once his guarantine of 30 days has expired. He and Mrs. Claws will surely make a great pair as they are both very energetic and require special attention.



BOBCAT REHABILITATION PROGRAM UPDATES

SPIRIT FEATHER'S RELEASE DAY IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER

Spirit Feather was found all alone in the middle of the road when she was just 2 months old. After her rescue she spent weeks quarantined in the Cat Hospital with a ringworm infection.

This quarantine period delayed Spirit Feather's training and came close to negatively affecting her candidacy for release.

Throughout her stay indoors she was fed a diet of whole prey (dead chicks, mice, and rats). Unfortunately we were unable to provide her with live prey while living in the Cat Hospital and once she moved outside she had fallen behind in her rehabilitation.

Our Bobcat Rehab Team has developed an intuitive way to train young bobcats to hunt that closely mimics how they would learn from their mothers in the wild.

A mother bobcat will bring small or injured prey back to her den site and present it to her kittens. The kittens will play with the prey and gradually realize that these small animals are food.



In an effort to mirror this tactic our bobcat rehabbers cut a hole in the top of a large dog crate. This crate, called a feeding station, provides a confined area to introduce small prey.

A series of training steps must take place to get the bobcat kitten to utilize the feeding station. First dead prey is placed on the ground next to the crate for a few days. The kitten quickly picks up on the routine and comes to that exact spot for food each day. Next the food item is placed on top of the crate for a few days. When the kitten goes to the usual spot in search of food and finds none it will use its sense of smell to locate the food on top of the crate.



After the kitten has been trained to jump on top of the crate the food is placed inside the crate. Once again the kitten goes to the usual food spot and quickly finds the new location. When the kitten is trained to jump into the crate for food live prey is introduced. Amazingly but not surprisingly natural instincts immediately fire and the kitten dispatches the prey. Finally after the kitten has developed efficient hunting skills the use of rat tunnels is implemented. These tunnels are a maze of plastic piping. The rat is placed into the tunnel system and then navigates its way into one of the several exit points into the rehab enclosure. The rat tunnels closely mimic the unpredictability of wild prey and the need for the bobcat to always be on the lookout for food.

This live prey training has worked successfully with dozens of wild bobcat kittens that have come through our doors.

Spirit Feather's training was nearly derailed by an unexpected complication. A lone rat had utilized this tunnel system to evade the enclosure's previous resident Mrs. Claws.

A few days into her training Spirit Feather was approached by this rather large rat. He was much bigger than the smaller rats she was accustomed to eating at the time.

Because he was introduced to her out of the typical sequence of training Spirit Feather was unsure what to do. The rat was not much smaller than she was. Their first interactions were quite comical. Spirit Feather was hesitant but inquisitive. The rat was very brazen and approached the kitten in a playful manner which further confused her.

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As the days went on Spirit Feather and the rat, affectionately named Monty, became friends. They would

wrestle and playfully pounce after one another.

Although this was extremely cute to watch via live streaming cameras the Bobcat Rehab Team became increasingly concerned that Spirit Feather would not be a good hunter.

Rehabbers tried desperately to humanely trap Monty and remove him from the rehab enclosure. Unfortunately Monty was very smart and always found a way to get the treats and avoid capture.

Spirit Feather eventually began eating live mice as well as dead rats the same size as Monty yet still she did not look at him as food.

Finally with the use of irresistible peanut butter

Monty was caught. The now world famous rat was adopted by BCR staff member Chelsea Feeny.

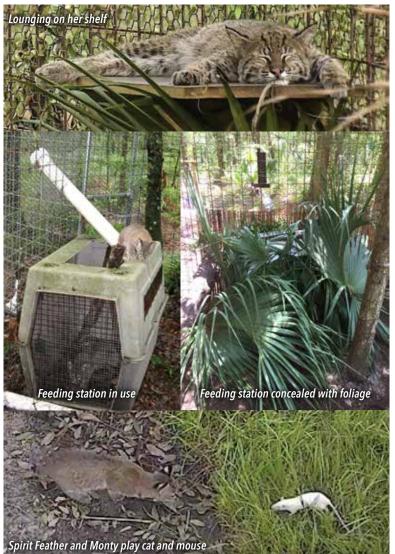
While it was sad to take away Spirit Feather's unusual pal, it was necessary for her to continue her

> training so that she could be released back into the wild where she belongs.

Shortly after Monty was relocated Spirit Feather began hunting full size rats. She has since become a very efficient hunter and is nearly ready to be released.

We are currently seeking a release site in Lake County Florida. If you have any contacts who own a large tract of land in this county please contact jamie.veronica@ bigcatrescue.org

Spirit Feather's enclosure is equipped with a live streaming web cam viewable at **explore.org/ bigcatrescue**. Tune in to watch Spirit Feather's progress and stay tuned for updates in our next issue.



5 CONSERVATION PROJECTS FUNDED THANKS TO SELL OUT CROWD AT 2016 WILDCAT WALKABOUT

This year's Wildcat Walkabout was a blast! A sell out crowd of 500 enjoyed a leisurely walk among our resident felines where they learned about five critical projects geared towards saving exotic cats in the wild. Thanks to the efforts of Big Cat Rescuers and the generosity of Walkabout guests an astounding \$12,738 was raised for the conservation of clouded leopards, lions, tigers, jaguars, and Canada lynx.

Several lucky guests took home great prizes from our raffle thanks to the fabulous contributions of Aubree Clark Photography, Boston's, Ella's, Fodder and Shine, Health Mutt, Hopcloth, Ichicoro, The Independent, Jug & Bottle, the Miami Hurricanes, OptiLife Chiropractic, PRP Wine International, Six Ten Brewing, St. Pete Tax Service LLC, Tampa Bay Roller Derby, Tampa Joe's, The Refinery, Rooster & the Till, and Whiskey Joe's.

The beastly appetites of guests and volunteers was well fed thanks to these paw-some food trucks: Better Than Eve's BBQ, I Wanna Wok, Krepelicious, Vegan Take Out, What Up Dog and Yogurtology, you guys rock!





ROARING SUCCESS!

CONSERVATION PROJECTS FUNDED IN HONOR OF OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEERS

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.

The SAVE award is a \$1,000 donation made by Big Cat Rescue towards wild cat conservation in honor of the recipient.

Senior Keeper Barbara Riddle aka Babs recently celebrated 10 years of



volunteer service. Babs is such a positive role model and has been a wonderful leader of our Junior Volunteer Program. She has also quite the green thumb and

keeps the sanctuary looking lush. We are so happy to present Babs with this prestigious award.

In honor of Babs a donation of \$1,000 was made to the Andean Cat Alliance to support the ongoing research needed to conserve the elusive Andean cat.

The Andean cat (Leopardus jacobita) is a small feline found in the high Andes of Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, and Peru. It is one of the least known cats in the world and is considered the most threatened feline in the

Americas and one of the five most endangered cats in the world.



Though the Andean cat is found across a wide area, its extensive habitat ranges share common characteristics including extreme temperatures and scarce vegetation. Despite what little is known about the Andean cat, it is certain that their habitat is both fragmented and highly fragile. The current distribution of the Andean cat covers four countries resulting in habitats within areas of significant cultural, social, and economic diversity. Human populations also fluctuate greatly in the regions where the Andean cat is found, this presents a challenge in developing conservation strategies since the attitudes and interactions with the Andean cat vary greatly by locality.

Research is a fundamental component of the Andean Cat Alliance. The coordinated work and establishment of a common database have facilitated a study of population genetics and the development of a global distribution



model for the Andean cat. Through the systematic use of camera traps, they are able to gain information on habitat use, ecology and diet of a species little is known about. Greater knowledge about the Andean cat allows members of the Andean Cat Alliance to reassess the conservation status of the species in each country and propose actions for the development of conservation.

gatoandino.org

Senior Keeper Sharon Henry has dedicated her time to the care of the cats for just over two and a half

years. She is a previous winner of the SAVE award and has been nominated a second time for her friendly personality and hardcore work ethic.



To celebrate Sharon a \$1,000 donation was given to the World Wildlife Fund towards the research needed to conserve the Iberian lynx.

The Iberian lynx is the world's most endangered cat. In 2002 there were fewer than 100 left in the wild, and although there are now over 400, their numbers are still declining. The Mediterranean forest where the Iberian lynx reside are some of the most biodiverse ecosystems in Europe. This already fragile habitat is under threat from illegal farms and wells, mining, river dredging and gas extraction that risk pollution of limited water resources.

High tech cameras spread across lynx habitat help conservationists better understand and protect the endangered cat. Since the beginning of the research project every Iberian lynx in the area has been studied and named. Scientists use radio collars to follow lynx that venture into new territories. The collars help



prevent poaching and identify which roads are too dangerous for lynx to cross. As a result of this monitoring, a huge amount has been learned about Iberian lynx behavior.

Rabbits account for 90% of the lynx diet. The lynx is not the only predator that feeds on rabbits, which are the base of the food chain in this habitat. With more than 30 species relying on rabbits and an increase in diseases in the past decades, rabbit populations are declining which increases competition for food. As a result WWF has been calling for the implementation of measures to help rabbit populations recover.

After securing a core population WWF gave the lynx more room to breed creating new populations. In 2016, 37 captive-bred lynx were released into reintroduction areas. WWF is working to ensure the new populations thrive by encouraging authorities to not to let their guard down since poaching and road kills remain real threats. At present all populations are growing with 34 kittens born in the wild to date.

wwf.panda.org/wwf_ news/wwf_needs_your_ help/iberian_lynx Michelle Baker has been volunteering at Big Cat Rescue for one year. She has moved her way through each level to her current Keeper status with big smiles along the way. Michelle is very outgoing and is always looking for ways she can pitch in. Her recent help with the Wildcat Walkabout was a true blessing. She reached out and booked a variety of awesome food trucks for the event.

To show Michelle how much we appreciate everything she does for the cats a \$1,000 donation was made

to the Small Wild Cat Conservation Foundation to aid conservation efforts for the Pampas cat.

The Pampas cat (Leopardus colocolo) is a small cat that has been poorly studied despite its wide distribution range in South America. It is distributed from northern Ecuador to

southern Argentina, including Peru, Bolivia, Chile, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Brazil. The Pampas cat is listed as Near Threatened by the IUCN and is listed as Appendix II by CITES. The threats that this species faces along its distribution range are habitat fragmentation, disturbance and habitat loss, pasture burning, hunting, and presence of pets and livestock.

Even though this species is listed as Vulnerable and Data Deficient by the Ecuadorian and Peruvian Governments; distributional and ecological research has been

focused on the Andes and Cerrado almost entirely excluding its desert and dry forest populations. The first phase of this project was initiated with a distribution assessment to confirm Pampas cat presence and evaluate



if human-cat conflict exists in the Sechura Desert and seasonal dry forest of northwestern Peru and southwestern Ecuador. The Sechura Desert and the dry forest are listed among the Global 200 priority ecoregions that harbor exceptional biodiversity. Sadly both are at risk. The Sechura Desert is considered Vulnerable due to serious threats of development of rural and urban areas. The dry forest is listed as Critically Endangered however only 5% of it is legally protected.

> Based on the results of the first phase of the project the second phase will focus on investigating Pampas cat movements to identify key areas for its survival as well as compare its home range, movement patterns and habitat use in two differing habitat types and finally to conduct environmental

education workshops for local people highlighting the importance of the Pampas cat in this ecosystem.

smallwildcats.com

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



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BOARDEWLD



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Hoodie

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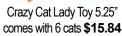


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SPONSORACAT All kits include: 4-page color fact sheet about the species, BCR decal, Registration Card to select the cat of your choice. 8x10 color photo of the cat you choose to sponsor with the cat name and your name as sponsor printed on it. Sponsor levels below include these additional benefits:

\$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

\$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, 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, Founder Tour for 10

VISIT THE CATS TOUR & PROGRAMS RESERVATIONS REQUIRED



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 the 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

Prices and availability for all tours are subject to change. Visit us online for the most current tour information. Closed Thursdays, Thanksgiving & Christmas Day. Tours may be canceled due to inclement weather.

THE BIG CAT TIMES ORDER FORM BI ORDER DATE: _____

Winter 2016

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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	ΟΤΥ	SIZE	PRICE EACH	TOTAL PRICE
CALENDAR				
SPONSORSHIP KIT:			\$18.05	
BOBCAT REHAB EXPANSION DONATION (FIRST \$100K RAISED IS MATCHED 100%)				
AUTOMATIC GIVING PROGRAM - SUSTAINING DONOR SOCIETY	Please	e 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	
			GRAND TOTAL	
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)	CREDI	CARD INFO:	VISA MasterCare	
	Card #:	: /	1	1

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, 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.

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YOUR ONLINE VOTING WON \$56,926 FOR THE BIG & LITTLE CATS!

Some readers may recall that early this year we asked you to go online and vote for Big Cat Rescue in the contest run by our local PGA Tournament, the Valspar Championship held at the beautiful Innisbrook Resort. Volunteers at the tournament chose nonprofits they wanted to represent. Supporters of that nonprofit could then vote for that volunteer. The contest was sponsored by Myrbetriq® and had three parts.

First, Myrbetriq® paid \$1 per vote up to the first 10,000 votes. BCR supporters cast 7,254 of the first 10,000 votes earning \$7,254 for the cats.

Second, the volunteer who won the most votes within the Valspar won an additional \$10,000 for their charity. A number of volunteers chose Big Cat Rescue as their charity. We asked supporters to vote for one volunteer, Dr. Dorothy Christman. With your support she received 9,310 votes, far more than #2, which won the \$10,000 prize for the cats.

Third, the Valspar Championship competed with 15 other tournaments and the tournament that had the most total votes won \$50,000 from Myrbetriq® to divide pro rata among the nonprofits based on their votes. The Valspar ended up with 14,604 total votes, of which you were roughly two thirds. No other tournament exceeded 10,000 votes. Soooo, the Valspar won the \$50,000 and the cats' share was \$36,672.06!



This photo from October 20th shows BCR CFO Howard Baskin receiving the check with (left to right) Andy Pazder, PGA TOUR EVP &; COO, tournament volunteer Dorothy Christman, M.D.; and Valspar Championship Tournament General Chairman Les Muma.



In addition to all that, many of you helped us with a more recent contest sponsored by Pet Partners, a provider of pet insurance that covers veterinarian bills from accidents and illness. This contest was for work with domestic animals.

For the last few years, in addition to our work with exotic cats, we have implemented a program to save newborn domestic kittens who are brought to Animal Services. Historically these kittens would be destroyed on



arrival because there was no one to foster them and their immune systems are so weak they would invariably become ill and die if not euthanized.

We coordinated an ongoing program with the Humane Society of Tampa Bay to foster these newborn kittens until they are ready to be adopted. Our interns foster the kittens in our intern housing and after they receive their first vaccines they begin bringing them to the "Kitten Cabana" where our volunteers socialize them. Once they are 2 pounds and healthy they are returned to the Humane Society to be spayed or neutered and put up for adoption. Because our foster kittens are so healthy and social, they quickly find homes. To date we have saved over 400 of these tiny kittens!

This voting contest was nip and tuck all the way, but in the end once again you came through and we won the \$5000 prize. In fact, the victory was particularly sweet because some of the people we view as animal abusers who are threatened by our advocacy to stop the abuse of big cats sent people to vote for another entrant and you won anyway!

Thank you so much! If you are interested in pet insurance, please consider visiting PetPartners.com to thank them for their generous support. You can see our kittens live when they are in the Kitten Cabana at

explore.org/live-cams/player/ big-cat-rescue-kitten-cabana

DONATIONS Received July 1st - Sept 30th

Estate of Denise Richman \$50,000 Hogwarts Running Club \$25,000 Berwind Fund \$15,000 Ferguson Foundation \$5,000 Dwight & Kimberly Lowell \$5,000 Saint Pete MRI \$4,500 Whiskey Joe's Bar & Grill \$3,126 The Amelia Foundation \$2,500 Lynn Russell Advised Fund at Aspen Community Foundation \$2,050 Stephen & Alice Valentine \$2,000 Alan Shneour \$1,934 Sole Marittimi \$1,500 Lisa Mustapich \$1,500 Robert Reid \$1,500 Coldwell Banker, Stephanie Cutter Group \$1,468 Henry Itkin \$1,116 Karen Waller \$1,100 Geoff Blades \$1,000 Diana Brookes \$1,000 Stephen T. Chupack \$1,000 Donna DeMaria \$1,000 James Grant \$1,000 Joey Hill \$1,000 Nikki Holbrook \$1,000 Carol McGehee \$1,000 Lenne' Nicklaus \$1,000 On Shore Foundation, Inc. \$1,000 Vincent & Cathy Pavese \$1,000 Mitchell & Amber Peterson \$1,000 Phillips Murrah, Attorneys & Counselors at Law \$1,000 S. Balolia Family Foundation \$1,000 Margaret Weingartner \$1,000 Lachterman Memorial Fund within the Community Foundation of Tampa \$1,000 Suzanne & Alan Lucas \$900 Frank & Mavis Ainsleigh \$800 Maser Consulting PA \$701 Terry Luke \$700 Steven Carter \$600 Timothy Hill \$600 Matilde Mesavage \$535 Jen Danby \$525 Shalen Hamar \$515 Cynthia Avender \$500 Frank Braden II \$500 William & Donna Brown \$500 Gerald Burblis \$500 Michelle & Scott Chamberlin \$500 Lee Chrostowski \$500 Linda & Louis DeBlass \$500 Andrea DeCapua \$500 **Beverly Diehl \$500**

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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



BIG CAT RESCUE ATTENDS **COP 17** CITES

In September Jamie Veronica and Dr

Boorstein represented Big Cat Rescue at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP 17) to CITES in Johannesburg, South Africa.

CITES (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora) is an international agreement between 183 governments. Its aim is to ensure that international trade in specimens of wild animals and plants does not threaten their survival.

Annually, international wildlife trade is estimated to be worth billions of dollars and to include hundreds of millions of animal and plant specimens. Because this trade crosses borders between countries, the effort to regulate it requires international cooperation to safeguard certain species from overexploitation. Today, CITES accords varying degrees of protection to more than 35,000 species of animals and plants.

CoP17 had the largest attendance in history with more than 3,500 attendees representing 152 governments and dozens of animal welfare organizations. 62 proposals to change CITES trade controls affecting close to 500 species were voted on at the conference.

Big Cat Rescue was among 45 22 BIG CATTIMES - WINTER 2016 BIGCATRESCUE.ORG/PLUS



Agency, Sanctuary Asia, Save Wild Tigers and Wildlife Protection Society of India were our primary partners at the conference.

Our coalition rallied support the ban for educating by delegates and attendees about the proposals that would affect tigers both in the wild and in captive farming situations.

This was accomplished in ways. Our two coalition manned

an educational booth throughout the conference. We distributed handouts with a simple breakdown of the proposals along with supportive facts. In addition we handed out tiger striped lanyards for ID badges and

commemorative tiger pins. Both gifts were worn by thousands and spurred conversations about protecting tigers.

Our second approach at gleaning support was by hosting a side event. Nearly 150 side events

animal welfare organizations, many of whom attended the 12-day conference, to lobby support to ban tiger farming. Born Free, Education for Nature Vietnam. Environmental Investigation

took place throughout the duration of the conference. We had two internationally known speakers at our event that exposed the black market trade in tigers and called on delegates to take action to support the proposals that would protect Attendees were gifted a tigers. bottle of wine featuring a custom label calling attention to the illicit trade in tiger bones to make tiger bone wine.

2 TIGER PROPOSALS

Two main proposals focused on the captive breeding of tigers and poaching were up for vote at the conference. The first proposal was



a call to assess the trade associated with tiger farms within a specific time frame and to uphold a previous decision by CITES in 2007 which stated that countries who have large tiger breeding facilities should scale



End Tiger Trade Side Event Info & Gift

back their captive populations to the minimum number specimens of required for the conservation of the species. Furthermore the proposal states that tigers should not be bred for trade in their parts or pelts.

Second was a proposal that would aid law enforcement with identifying seized tiger pelts as specimens poached from the wild. Submitting photos of the seized pelts to a global database of wild tiger images procured through the use of camera traps would greatly impact antipoaching initiatives.

This proposal was adopted with a few amendments. Images of seized pelts would first be compared to a country's own data base of wild tiger images. If a match was found then it would not be submitted to the global database. If a match was not found the country would submit the images to a global database if and when they had time to do so. So basically the proposal was watered down and countries that strive for conservation of wild tigers will actively participate and countries who benefit from the trade of tiger parts and pelts will most likely not.

Both proposals could greatly benefit the tiger both in captivity and in the wild. Across Asia 1,755 tiger pelts were seized between 2000 and 2015 – an average of more than two per week. With only an estimated 3,900 tigers left in the wild, evidence indicates that an increasing number of seized pelts undoubtedly originate from captive breeding operations: at least 30% of the tigers seized in 2012-2015 were known to be of captive-sourced tigers.

In an exciting and unexpected turn of events Lao PDR announced their

interest in phasing out their tiger farms which house approximately 700 big cats. Big Cat Rescue has offered assistance with boots on the ground and technical/logistical support. More on that development in our next issue of the Big Cat Times.

Aside from tiger discussions, disappointment came with respect to decisions regarding the Florida

panther and the African lion.

DOWN-LISTING THE FLORIDA PANTHER

Canada and the United States proposed downlisting the believed to be extinct Eastern cougar the and endangered Florida panther from Appendix I, which prohibits all commercial trade, to Appendix 11, which permits commercial trade. Reasoning for the diminished protections

were unclear, but both countries cited that there is no trade in these species. This is correct, however, there is no trade in part because it is banned by the Appendix I listing. It appeared as though something was brewing behind the scenes with regards to the Florida Panther.

BCR's President met with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dan Ashe prior to the proposal being announced. She voiced her concerns that the down-listing in combination with current Florida Fish and Wildlife commissioners' conflict of interest when it comes to protecting the imperiled species would doom the Florida Panther to the fate of the Eastern cougar. (Members of the current commission are land owners with interests in developing prime panther habitat and have asked for



special permission to "take" i.e. kill any panthers that get in their way.) At the time Mr. Ashe said he would not support any proposal that threatened the Florida Panther and that he would have his staff look into the issue further.

When the proposal came up for a vote the US rejected the proposal and recused themselves from voting. Despite several other neighboring



countries coming forward in opposition of the proposal the decision was made to down-list both sub-species.

The USFWS ensures that the federal regulations will continue to protect the panther. Only time will tell if the down-listing was the first in a series of steps that will completely eradicate the panther from our state.

UP-LISTING THE LION

Wild lions currently inhabit 8% of their historic range. Their numbers have plummeted by 80% in the last 20 years to a record low of 20,000 individuals today.

Nine African lion range states including Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Gabon, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, and Togo proposed that the African lion be up-listed



from Appendix II to Appendix I affording the species the highest level of protection.

Despite the obvious and inevitable loss of this iconic big cat, the proposal was rejected with an annotation that bans the trade in the bones, claws, teeth, and skulls of wild lions, but does not prohibit the trade in trophies (heads and pelts). Commercial farming of lions for all of their parts remains open for business putting wild lions at higher risk of being poached for profit. Enforcement agencies have

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no way of distinguishing parts derived from captive vs. wild lions therefore the minimal protection agreed upon in effect does nothing to protect lions.

In the aftermath of this devastating blow to the African lion the United States struck back by imposing a ban on the importation of trophies from captive bred lions. This ban does not include trophies from lions hunted in the wild, however, the exporting government must meet key criteria for transparency, scientific management and effectiveness of their conservation programs.

> Wild hunts are less common

and represent a fraction of the trophies historically imported. A wild lion hunt can take up 21 days, is not guaranteed, and costs the hunter upwards of \$70,000 while a canned hunt takes place in a couple of days, is guaranteed and costs just \$5,000.

Canned hunting of lions in South Africa is a big

business. An estimated 200 lion farms house nearly 8,000 lions



REGULUS VISION AND WILDLANDS PRESENT

being killed in canned hunts. Hundreds more are slaughtered annually for the lion bone trade. Blood Lions is a compelling documentary with a call to action to have these pracices stopped.

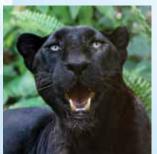
> bred for profit. Tourists pay big bucks to handle cubs and walk with adolescents. Unknowing volunteers pay to help bottle raise cubs under the guise that it is in the name of conservation. Once the cubs have outgrown their usefulness they are sent to game farms where they are hunted in confined spaces (mainly by Americans). The U.S. ban on the importation of parts and pelts of captive bred lions will put a huge dent in this cruel business practice.



Sad Farewell

Taking care of 74 exotic cats 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 74 cats, 50 are over the age of 12, which is about as long as they live in zoos or in the wild. An amazing 44 are over the age of 15 (90+ in human years). Even more incredible, 20 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.

JUMANJI



1993 - 2016

veterinary check ups a breeze. He was one of BCR President Jamie Veronica's favorites and will be missed terribly. Jumanji succumbed to kidney failure.

KALHARI



Serengeti were kept as pets. The pair became unwanted soon after their owners divorced. Kalahari was diagnosed with a heart condition at a young age and was given medication for her condition her entire life. Despite her health issues

Kalahari and her sister

Jumanji was born at the

sanctuary before we learned

that no privately held

exotic cats serve any sort

of conservation purpose.

Jumanji was very smart and

was the star of our operant conditioning program. He

would do anything for a

treat which made regular

Kalahari was a fun loving serval and especially liked to play with enrichment. Kalahari passed away as

PURR-SONALITY



a result heart disease. She has now joined her sister who left just last year.

Purr-sonality was full of spirit in her younger days, her fit her well. She loved to pounce around her enclosure chasing after

1995 - 2016

birds and squirrels. In her later years she spent a lot of her time snoozing in the warm sun or lounging under her shady palms. Purr-sonality was always interested in what was going on nearby. She would get to the highest perch in her enclosure to take a peek at keepers nearby or her serval neighbors. Like many of our cats who live into their twenties, her kidneys could no longer keep up with her.

RUSTY



Rusty was loved by many keepers. You couldn't help but love him, he was adorable and inquisitive. Rusty lived with another caracal named Sassy. The two were inseparable and utter soul mates (Rusty was neutered). They were always cuddled up together in the den or on their hammock or

1997 - 2016

just about anywhere actually. Rusty's passing was unexpected. He fell ill quickly and was sedated for an exam. To everyone's surprise his kidneys were failing. The humane decision to euthanize him was difficult, but the right thing to do.

SASSYFRAS



1998 - 2016

Sassyfras was rescued in 2010 along with another cougar named Freddy. The pair were kept in tiny cages in a backyard in Illinois. One of their owners had been killed by their pet lion and the other took her own life. Sassyfras loved two things; food and people. He

always looked forward to meal time or extra treats and he loved chattering and purring at his keepers. Sassyfras too died from kidney disease.

WINDSTAR



Windstar was another of Jamie's favorites. He could melt anyone's heart with his deep rumbling purr. Windstar had an enclosure next to the gift shop. He loved his lounging area outside one of the windows. His life was cut short by a rare form of adrenal cancer.

BIG CATTIMES - WINTER 2016 - VISIT OUR ONLINE GIFT SHOP AT BIGCATRESCUE.BIZ 25

SPECIES SPOTLIGHT: SNOW LEOPARD

Fun Facts: Snow Leopards are insulated by thick fur, and their wide, fur-covered feet act as natural snowshoes. Snow leopards have powerful legs and are tremendous leapers, able to jump as far as 50 feet. They use their long tails for balance and as blankets to cover

sensitive body parts against the severe mountain chill.

Population: The Leopard Snow Strategy Survival national compiled leopard snow population estimates in 2003, updating the work of Fox in 1994. Many of the estimates are acknowledged to be rough and out of date, but the total estimated population is 4,080-6,590, as follows: 100-Afghanistan:

200, Bhutan: 100-200, China: 2,000-2,500, India: 200-600, Kazakhstan: 180-200, Kyrgyzstan: 150-500, Mongolia: 500-1,000, Nepal: 300-500, Pakistan: 200-420, Russia: 150-200, Tajikistan: 180-220, Uzbekistan: 20-50.

Size and Appearance: Snow leopards have thick gray and yellow-tinged fur, with solid spots on their head, neck and lower limbs and rosettes over the rest of the body. Rosettes are large rings enclosing

smaller spots. They have a relatively short body measuring 30"- 60" from the head to the base of the tail. Their large thick tail that can reach a length of 36". This close relative to the tiger ranges in weight from 60-120 lbs.

Habitat: Snow Leopards are closely associated with the alpine and sub-alpine ecological zones, favoring steep terrain well broken by cliffs, ridges, gullies, and rocky outcrops. However, in Mongolia and Tibet they may occupy relatively flat or rolling terrain as long as there is sufficient hiding cover. are born between April and June. Litter size ranges from 1-5 cubs, with the average being 2. The cubs leave the den when they are between 2 - 4 months of age, but remain with their mother until they become independent between 1.5 - 2 yrs.

Social System: Snow Leopards are solitary by nature. An individual snow leopard lives within a welldefined home range, but does not defend its territory aggressively when encroached upon by other snow leopards.

Hunting and Diet: The snow leopard's principal prey species are blue sheep (bharal) and ibex whose distribution coincides closely with

snow leopard range. Though these powerful predators can kill animals three times their weight, they also eat smaller fare, such as marmots, hares, and game birds.

Threats:

Major threats to the Snow Leopard include prey base depletion, illegal trade, killing of snow leopards by people in retribution for

Distribution: Snow Leopards are confirmed to live in 12 countries of Central Asia. Their range covers 463,000 - 618,000 square miles.

Reproduction and Offspring: Snow leopards are unusual among large cats in that they have a well-defined birth peak. They usually mate in late winter, marked by a noticeable increase in marking and calling. Snow leopards have a gestation period of 90–100 days, so the cubs livestock depredation, and lack of conservation capacity, policy and awareness.

Up to a third of the snow leopard's range falls along politically sensitive international borders, complicating trans-boundary conservation initiatives. Snow Leopards are suspected to have declined by at least 20% over the past two generations (16 years).

BigCatRescue.org/snow-leopard-facts

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Hercules - Male Snow Leopard 1996 - 2010

VET REPORTS:



LEAPING SERVALS!

Nala is a 6-year-old female serval who was kept as a pet by an elderly man in New York. Sadly her owner fell ill and passed away. The man's son was then tasked with the mission to find Nala a new home. Nala was not very friendly and the son was concerned that getting her into a crate for travel would be impossible. However, somehow he managed and in January of 2013 Nala was on her way to her new home at Big Cat Rescue.

Nala is pretty young compared to our mainly geriatric population of wild cats. She is very playful and loves enrichment and chasing after lizards, squirrels, and birds that accidentally find themselves in her enclosure.

Nala also loves meal time and when she was uninterested in her breakfast keepers knew right away something was wrong with her.



Samantha Bohorquez preps Nala's leg for surgery

Staff managed to get her to stand up to get a better look at her and the problem was immediately apparent. Nala had broken her leg. It is believed she may have climbed the side of her enclosure chasing after a bird and jumped down landing wrong on the limb.

Nala was taken to the Humane Society of Tampa Bay where Dr. Boorstein repaired the fracture. The surgery required specialized equipment which we do not have at BCR's Windsong Memorial Cat Hospital.

Following surgery Nala was prescribed 8 weeks of cage rest. This time was especially frustrating for the young serval as all she wanted to do was go back outside and play.



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The repair to her leg was so solid Nala thought she was all better once she woke up, so she did not understand why she was being confined to a small indoors. cage Keepers have done everything they can to keep her entertained by providing enrichment, playing a DVD with video clips of squirrels, birds, and fish, and opening up the hospital doors each day so she could get fresh air.



Overall Nala has been a good patient and by the time you are reading this issue of the Big Cat Times she will most likely have had her follow up x-rays and exam and is now back in her enclosure outside.



IS SKIN CANCER IN THE CARDS FOR WHITE SERVAL SIBLING?

Pharaoh is a 17-year-old male serval and is the brother to Tonga. Like his brother Pharaoh's coat is white, however, he has three patches of fur that are completely normal in color (yellow and black).

Skin cancer affects animals just like people. Animals that have sparse fur, light colored skin, or white coats are especially at risk for the disease. In 2012 Pharaoh's brother Tonga was diagnosed with squamous cell carcinoma on his nose. Thankfully a life saving surgery has led to his celebration of 4 years cancer free.

Pharaoh is very shy and terrified of new things. He was not too happy about the arrival of newly rescued Smalls, Nabisco, Dryden and Kewlona who had become his neighbors. The day of the rescue and a few days following Pharaoh paced around a lot putting stress on his muscles and joints. Unfortunately he developed a limp as a result of his increased and erratic activity.

Initially the vet team decided to give him a few days to settle down in order to see if his mobility would improve. However it did not and he was sedated for a full work up.

X-rays showed no signs of a broken bone and after the physical exam it was concluded that Pharaoh most likely pulled a muscle. The physical exam starts at the head and goes all the way to the tip of the tail. Every part of the cat is thoroughly checked including their eyes, ears, nose, mouth, teeth, skin, fur, joints, and muscle tone. Pharaoh had a small lump the size of a BB on his chin. The mass was removed and sent to an off-site lab for testing. Because

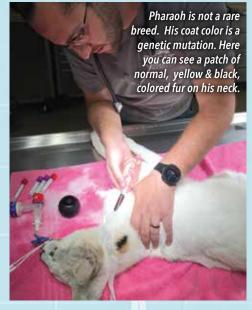
of his brother's diagnosis and Pharaoh's light colored fur the vet team wanted to take every precaution. During the exam Dr. Boorstein also found that he had two bad teeth that needed to be

removed, one canine and one molar.

Pharaoh spent one night recovering in the Cat Hospital and was then returned to his enclosure. He was prescribed medications to ease the pain in his achy muscles as well

> as antibiotics to prevent infection at the surgery site on his chin as well as the dental extraction sites. The pain medication had an additional benefit of making him a little less worried about his new neighbors.

Small mass on the underside of the chin.



Two excruciatingly long days passed before the biopsy results came back from the mass on Pharaoh's chin. Waiting patiently to find out if he had cancer and would require further surgery or treatment was very

> difficult. Thankfully the results indicated the mass was a nodular sebaceous gland hyperplasia! So what did that mean, you ask? Basically the mass was a benign overgrowth of cells from the oil gland in his skin. These noncancerous tumors are

a common occurrence among older

animals, especially in dogs. Removal of this types of tumor is curative. Although, as Pharaoh ages he may develop new tumors on other parts of his body. As long as these growths stay small and do not bother him it is not necessary to remove them.

We are so grateful that Pharaoh does not have cancer and are even more thankful for the state of the art hospital we have onsite thanks to our generous donors and supporters. This hospital has been a blessing and enables us to provide the very best veterinary care to our resident felines.



STATE ATTORNEY & STAFF VISIT BIG CAT RESCUE



We were honored recently by a visit by the Hillsborough County State Attorney Mark Ober and members of his staff. His office is for known the work staff have done animal on related In issues.

fact, Mr. Ober received the Florida Animal Control Association's Guardian of Animal Justice award "in recognition of your compassion and defense of those who cannot speak for themselves." After his visit Mr. Ober sent us the following text: "Protecting our animals and preserving the endangered species is so important – thank you for your great work!"

Photo left to right: State Attorney Mark Ober, Suzy Lopez, BCR CFO Howard Baskin, Pam Dato, Sara Messina and in front Amanda Ojeda.

MACY'S WORKGROUP PROJECT

The Macy's Sustainability Group is committed to protecting the environment and raising awareness of reducing, reusing and recycling precious resources. Their goal is to educate and engage their employees on

how their behaviors and efforts impact the environment in the workplace and the greater Tampa Bay Area. This wonderful group of Macy's employees worked tirelessly to help with the preparation of our new bobcat rehab enclosures. Thank you so much for the team effort!



TRIPADVISOR WILL NO LONGER SELL TICKETS TO ATTRACTIONS THAT ALLOW CONTACT WITH WILD ANIMALS

A huge announcement from a leading authority in travel has made a decision that will greatly impact the welfare of animals in captivity in a positive way. We could not be more thrilled to share with you this forward thinking announcement.

TripAdvisor and its Viator brand will discontinue selling tickets for specific tourism experiences where travelers come into physical contact with captive wild animals or endangered species, including but not limited to elephant rides, petting tigers, and swim with dolphin attractions.



With endorsements from the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), TripAdvisor will create a wildlife tourism education portal for travelers in partnership with top accredited trade groups, conservation organizations, academic experts, tourism experts, and animal welfare groups, including the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, ABTA – The Travel Association, Global Wildlife Conservation, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA), Oxford University's Wildlife Conservation Research Unit (WildCRU), Sustainable Travel International, The TreadRight Foundation, Think Elephants International, Asian Elephant Support, Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) and World Animal Protection.

Read more: tripadvisor.com/PressCenter-i7796-c1-Press_Releases.html

BIG CAT RESCUE BREAKS GROUND ON BOBCAT REHAB EXPANSION FUNDS STILL NEEDED

With so many orphaned and injured Florida bobcats in need of rescue Big Cat Rescue has just broken ground on a massive expansion to our current facilities in a more

Support posts of the first rehab enclosure are installed.



feet) of natural habitat. The roofed enclosures are divided into sections with special needs in mind.

The first section is 10'x20' which will

be specifically designed to house kittens or bobcats recovering from major injuries.

The second section will be 40'x20' allowing kittens or recovering and hone hunting skills.

So far one enclosure is nearly complete and the second enclosure is well on its way. Due to the arrangement of the enclosures and the construction crew working onsite we cannot start using the new space until all 4 enclosures in Phase 1 are complete.

We need your help to complete this much needed project. The



Fencing is going up quickly in the new bobcat rehab area.



remote location at the sanctuary. This epic project is estimated to cost \$345,000.

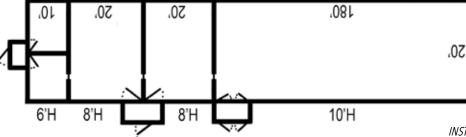
The new bobcat rehab area will include 8 enclosures each spanning 230'x20' (4,600 square bobcats to have more space with lower walls to prohibit climbing too high.

The final section of the enclosure is 180'x20'. This area will give the bobcats a large tract of land to run first \$100,000 raised will be matched dollar for dollar. To date we have raised \$75,000 towards that matching grant. Meaning that the next \$25,000 donated will be matched dollar for dollar making your contribution count for twice as much.

Please consider donating at:

Chris Poole released Bellona was in 2011 after 16 months of rehabilitation. She had been hit by a car and suffered a broken leg. Her surgeries and care cost more than \$6,400, but were well worth it to give this beautiful bobcat a second chance.

BigCatRescue.org/rehabfund





Big Cat Rescue on



12802 Easy Street Tampa, FL 33625

:CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

WATCH THE BIG CATS 24/7 on 9 live web cams

FEDERAL BILL MOMENTUM CONTINUES!

As we head toward the end of this 2 year Congressional session the Big Cat Public Safety Act continues to build momentum in the House. Since our last report to you in the summer issue, 23 more Representatives from all across the nation, listed here, have signed on as cosponsors. Cosponsors are legislators who agree in advance to vote for the bill when it comes to the floor of the House for a vote. This brings us to 95 cosponsors, 96 if we include primary sponsor Walter Jones (NC). That means that 22% of the House of Representatives have already agreed to vote for the bill!

Please help us make this year end push to continue to build support. If you have not already contacted your legislators, please visit BigCatAct.com for easy instructions on finding out who your legislators are and how to contact them. To see if your legislators have already signed on as cosponsors visit:

BigCatRescue.org/house BigCatRescue.org/senate

Our sincere thanks to the following legislators who signed on in the last few months to stop the mistreatment of big cats in private hands by passing the Big Cat Public Safety Act.



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Katie.Nikic@BigCatRescue.org

While the list of donors of \$100-199 is too long for the print edition, they are very much appreciated and recognized here in the online edition.

Howard Baskin, Treasurer

Barbara Smith \$100