



EFBC/Feline Conservation Center

<http://www.wildcatzoo.org>

DEDICATED TO THE PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF ENDANGERED FELINES Summer 2011



*Christo, leopard cat is settling in well.*

### **Leopard Cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*)**

In April a young male leopard cat arrived at our facility. The original owner was a private breeder that died recently after a car accident. We have been home to leopard cats in the past, both the common Asian subspecies as well as the rarer

Amur subspecies. Christo is not currently on display. Leopard cats tend to yellowish-brown in the tropics and greyish-brown in the northern parts of their range. The leopard cat's pelt is dotted with dark spots which are sometimes solid, sometimes rosettes. Controversy exists over whether diverse sub-species such as the Iriomote cat of Japan and the Amur leopard cat of Russia should be separate species rather than subspecies. Size also varies over the range, from 3.5 to 7 kg for males (7-15 pounds). The Bengal house cat breed is the result of hybridization with the Asian leopard cat, with rosetted forms being the most highly desired patterning.



*Leopard cat skins are still highly prized in some cultures. In just two years, 1980 and 1981, 400,000 pelts were harvested in China alone. In Sumatra, the pet trade is a threat. While it is believed there are a large number of leopard cats living in Asian and European zoos, they are not well represented in U.S. zoos.*

## More Exhibit Improvements:

We continue to refurbish our existing facilities, repairing and replacing den boxes and repainting the caging. New safety fences are being installed in the exhibit area, and new shade tarps have been purchased and installed over many cages with the help of the Healey Foundation.



*New stainless steel tables were purchased via a restricted donation received from Karen Sharits.*

Our Spring Twilight Tour, held on April 23, was another fantastic success, with over 560 visitors and \$11,000 raised. Since we placed new tables in the exhibit area, we used our old picnic tables to make a seating area by the Rotary's barbecue.

The Bake Sale area on the lawn, run by our American Association of Zookeepers chapter, also sells plaster pawprints from our own felines!



*Carrie, left with another intern Jessica, visiting Kiana.*

My name is Carrie Hsing. I graduated from the University of California, Davis with a major in Animal Biology and a minor in Psychology. As a child, I grew up in the Midwest, climbing trees to spy on bird nests and digging around in filter systems to find salamanders. I found all the excitement in nature, so before everyone knew it, I wanted to become a wildlife/exotics vet.

My internship at the EFBC Feline Conservation Center has been a significant eye-opening experience for me. Before I came to the facility, I had never heard of Pallas's Cats or Persian Leopards. But during the internship, Boris the Pallas's Cat has stared at me with his trademark suspicious face as I raked his enclosure, and Kiana the Persian Leopard has caught my heart with her silly antics and big curious eyes, and I cannot go a day without visiting her. I never thought a Snow Leopard would brush up against the fence for rubs or a Geoffrey's Cat would guard a banana like his life. I also never thought I would be cruising around in a golf cart in the middle of the desert to run each day's errand. Every single cat has a distinctive personality, and people get to learn them quickly during cleaning and feeding. All the staff and volunteers work at the facility for the cats, and anyone can understand why.

The conservation efforts at EFBC has been inspiring to me, and I find myself constantly sharing the message with my friends. EFBC is a truly unique and amazing facility, and it has been a great honor for me to be able to intern here. I can no longer look at a leopard and mistake it for a jaguar.

## Feline Follies Fast Approaching:

Our biggest event of the year, the 2011 Fabulous Feline Follies will be held on August 13th. The Follies informational packages will be going in the mail the 1st week of July so keep an eye out for it, or you can go to our web site and download the information now. We are actively seeking sponsors for the event, and items for our live and silent auctions. If you can help, we would love to hear from you. Famous artist Chris Hoy will be donating an original painting of one of EFBC's cats to our live auction, as well as attending the event. His work is beautiful and you can view some of his accomplishments at [www.hoyart.net](http://www.hoyart.net).



*A closeup of the refurbished den boxes.*

### **Project Tiger:**

This project is still on track for completion by the end of the year and we thank Margo Koss \$500, and Bryon & Louise Pebbles \$25, for their restricted donations.

### **Helping cats, big and small:**

Animal shelters are often overrun this time of year with kittens, and without community support the majority of them would never find homes. The Volunteers of the Burbank Animal Shelter (VBAS) save several hundred kittens every year through a kitten foster program. When we heard they were looking to improve the care of the animals that come through there with an X-ray machine, we decided to help them out with an extra used machine we had.

Some of you may remember we also sent a portable x-ray machine to Botswana to aid Cheetah Conservation. Now some animals in Burbank may be helped by our facilities commitment. It is hard to think of any animal getting injured, ending up at the shelter, and having to wait several days to get an x-ray. We know that many of our members volunteer at facilities that do rescue type work for a variety of animals, and since it is kitten season, we thought it might be a good idea to give a few pointers on what to look for when choosing a new friend from the shelter. Clear, bright eyes as well as clean ears and nose. A thick, glossy coat with the skin free of fleas, scabby patches, and lumps. Ask about inoculations, parasite checks, age, sex, and breed (he should be at least 6 to 8 weeks old).

If this is your first cat, you need to prepare your home. Kittens and cats are curious, which can

lead them into serious trouble unless you take preventative measure. Also remember that your cat has a lower vantage point than your own, like a baby who has begun to crawl, and may be attracted to things you do not see when you are standing. Check the screens on all windows to help prevent falls. Keep your cat off balconies, upper porches and high decks. Securely store poisonous materials. Cats have been known to open cabinets and doors. Remove poisonous houseplants or place them completely out of your cat's reach.

Ask your veterinarian for a complete list of dangerous plants. Some indoor and outdoor plants which are poisonous to cats include: Amaryllis, Ivy (most types), Azalea, Lilies (all types), Buckeye, Mistletoe, Castor Bean, Morning Glory, Clematis, Narcissus, Corn Plant, Oleander, Cyclamen, Philodendron (all types), Daffodil, Poinsettia, Daphne, Precatory Bean, Dumb Cane(all types), Rhododendron, Foxglove, Rubber Plant, Holly, Weeping Fig, Iris, Yews.

### **Sevastian Medical Fund:**

Sevastian, our 7 year old Amur leopard, is continuing with his chemotherapy to fight cancer. He is still doing well. Donations were received from Bernard & Lynn Borderre and Clifford & Patricia Crader to help with his medical expenses and we thank you for your compassion.

### **General Donations:**

As mentioned, we are completing a lot of general maintenance to our animal habitats. Much of this work is possible due to the support we received to our General Operating Fund this last quarter from the following individuals; Linda Braun, Chris Tromborg, David Erickson, Lisa Hill, Kathryn Davis, Vicki Collins, Evelyn Richard, Carol Fenwick, Louise Fry, Lisa Edmondson, Toni Chancellor-Adams, Cynthia Rini, Carolyn Michels, Gerald Bandy, Charlotte Chinovsky, David Gregory, Paulette Burgess, Roberta Lotter, Donna Klaput, Linda & Martin Herman, Khin Swelay M.D., Melissa Breeding.

### **In-Kind Donations:**

Mike & Maryeann McMullen continue to provide our feline family with two boxes of fresh meat bones each month. The cats love this special treat.

Laurie Peters donated a Samsung DVD/VCR/MP3 player which will be used when the current player in our gift shop gives out.

Thanks to Wanda Collaro who brought us a host of items ranging from cleaning and office supplies, to a portable swamp cooler and window air conditioner.

Thank you to Ron Garcee of High Country Feed & Pets for donating the gold fish for our April Twilight Tour. Although some of the cats were shy and didn't fish during the event, all of the gold fish were gone the next morning.

One thing we are always in need of around here are golf carts. A friend of Kathryn Davis, Mr. Joseph Sershen, of Bend, Oregon, had a 1987 Club Car at his summer home in Arizona that was not being used so he generously donated it to us. It was even street legal in Arizona.

The high winds we have been experiencing this year have caused several trees to come down. One in particular took out 50 ft. of our chain link fencing in the parking lot area. One of our directors, Larry Purcell, who also owns Sav-On Fence Company in Lancaster, came to the rescue. He donated all the labor and materials to repair the fence. Thank you Larry and his partner Laura Maluccio.

## **USFWS - March 2, 2011**

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service concludes the eastern cougar extinct.

Although the eastern cougar has been on the endangered species list since 1973, its existence has long been questioned. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conducted a formal review of the available information and, in a report issued today, concludes the eastern cougar is extinct and recommends the subspecies be removed from the endangered species list.

"We recognize that many people have seen cougars in the wild within the historical range of the eastern cougar," said the Service's Northeast Region Chief of Endangered Species Martin Miller. "However, we believe those cougars are not the eastern cougar subspecies. We found no

information to support the existence of the eastern cougar."

Reports of cougars observed in the wild examined during the review process described cougars of other subspecies, often South American subspecies, that had been held in captivity and had escaped or been released to the wild, as well as wild cougars of the western United States subspecies that had migrated eastward to the Midwest.

During the review, the Service received 573 responses to a request for scientific information about the possible existence of the eastern cougar subspecies; conducted an extensive review of U.S. and Canadian scientific literature; and requested information from the 21 States within the historical range of the subspecies. No States expressed a belief in the existence of an eastern cougar population. According to Dr. Mark McCollough, the Service's lead scientist for the eastern cougar, the subspecies of eastern cougar has likely been extinct since the 1930s.

The Service initiated the review as part of its obligations under the Endangered Species Act. The Service will prepare a proposal to remove the eastern cougar from the endangered species list, since extinct animals are not eligible for protection under the Endangered Species Act. The proposal will be made available for public comment.

The Service's decision to declare the eastern cougar extinct does not affect the status of the Florida panther, another wild cat subspecies listed as endangered. Though the Florida panther once ranged throughout the Southeast, it now exists in less than five percent of its historic habitat and in only one breeding population of 120 to 160 animals in southwestern Florida.

Additional information about eastern cougars, including frequently asked questions and cougar sightings, is at:

<http://www.fws.gov/northeast/ecougar>. Find information about endangered species at <http://www.fws.gov/endangered>.

The Service works with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and

their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and a trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information about our work and the people who make it happen, visit <http://www.fws.gov>.

The loss of another sub-species of feline seems to be reality, although we all wish it was not. If this cat is truly gone, it is due to humans in the USA, not India, China, or any other country - this one is on us. While this report does mention the dispersion of western cougars to the eastern states, it does not give those felines protection, and may actually allow the shooting of any large cat seen in the northeast due to the de-listing of this sub-species. Non-native animals are almost always legal to eliminate. Here in California, the Agriculture Commissioner has been talking about allowing mountain lion hunting. Public fear of this animal is always high, but that fear is largely unfounded. Nationwide over 100 people are killed every year by mountain lion prey (Deer) getting into collisions on roads. The number of human deaths by Puma in the last century and a half is less than a fourth of that number.

### **EASTERN COUGAR DECLARED EXTINCT - EASTERN FORESTS FACING ECOLOGICAL COLLAPSE:**

For Immediate Release, March 6, 2011 - Cougar Rewilding Foundation - [www.cougarrewilding.org](http://www.cougarrewilding.org)

Harman, W.VA. – With the eastern cougar subspecies declared extinct, and no federal plan for the recovery of the cougar east of the Rocky Mountains and north of the Carolinas, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has tolled a death-knell for eastern ecosystems, according to the Cougar Rewilding Foundation. The non-profit organization today announced that the cougar's extermination in the East imperils the habitat of animals such as the endangered Karner Blue butterfly and the declining New England cottontail rabbit because of over browsing by superabundant white-tailed deer. Many plant species from Maine to Wisconsin and south to the Smoky Mountains, including trilliums, lady's slippers and wild American ginseng, are at risk from uncontrolled deer herbivory that

threatens forest regeneration, rare plants and habitat for wildlife.

"The potential collapse of our restored deciduous forests is the biggest under reported ecological crisis developing in the eastern third of the country," said Christopher Spatz, president of the Cougar Rewilding Foundation. "Step into your nearest woodlot, state or national forest. Notice the deer browse-line five-feet high, the missing seedlings and saplings, the carpets of ferns and invasive weeds that suppress tree-growth. Our forests are standing graveyards."

"Declaring the cougar extinct in the East underscores the urgent need to restore them," said Dr. John Laundré, Cougar Rewilding Foundation vice president and a pioneer in predator ecology. "Apex predators help forest regeneration by naturally shepherding prey. Cougar presence moves browsing deer around, which allows seedlings and saplings to mature and the forest to regenerate. Without predators, deer act like pastured cattle, eating everything to the ground."

Beginning in 1995, Laundré and colleagues watched twenty-five reintroduced wolves in Yellowstone National Park shift 20,000 elk away from meadows and streams where the big ungulates had browsed without care – now potential ambush sites. Released from browsing pressure, willows and cottonwoods began to recover; beaver and fish, birds and butterflies followed. Researchers in Zion and Yosemite National Parks also documented similar beneficial effects from cougars preying on mule deer in remote park areas, compared to developed areas with little cougar presence where deer browsed unmolested.

A 1992 study found that 98 threatened or endangered plant species were damaged by deer. In Cades Cove, Great Smoky Mountains National Park, forty-six species of wildflowers that were present in 1970 were eliminated by 2004 due to over browsing. Replacement of the natural forest understory with deer-resistant ferns and invasive plants such as Japanese stilt grass has sharply reduced the numbers of songbirds that nest in the native vegetation. Japanese barberry, another invasive plant whose swift spread is facilitated by over browsing, provides

cover for the proliferation of Lyme-disease carrying ticks.

“The Endangered Species Act was written with the overarching goal of conserving ecosystems on which threatened and endangered species depend,” said Spatz. “The eastern deciduous forest is dying before our eyes, on our watch because the cougar is gone. Endangered bald eagles and peregrine falcons were restored successfully to the East from western sources. By failing to provide an action plan for the recovery of a species critical to eastern ecosystems using western cougars, the Interior Department is abdicating its responsibility to conserve this ecosystem.”

### **Beautiful Mountain Lion Killed By SUV In Connecticut:**

The Eastern mountain lion was declared extinct in March by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, but it looks like one hardy cat may have been keeping his species alive in the wilds of Connecticut. Or maybe it was just a different subspecies of mountain lion that escaped or was released by someone illegally keeping him as a pet. Either way, the kitty was killed by an SUV Saturday morning. But are there more out there?

Residents of fancy Greenwich, Connecticut and other towns have been reporting sighting mountain lions for weeks, and despite the death of this one, Greenwich police continue to receive reports of the ferocious felines. But authorities are urging citizens to remain calm, and they've decided that this was the only mountain lion roaming around. "DEP continues to believe that the animal killed in



Milford was indeed the one seen in Greenwich," DEP Deputy Commissioner Susan Frechette told reporters yesterday. "Until we have something that we can really go on — a fresh paw print, a photo — we will go on the assumption that there is only one."

The 140-pound cat may have escaped from domestic captivity (which is illegal), but maybe not—he was lean, not declawed, and not neutered. Scientists will conduct a necropsy to determine what kind of diet it had been surviving on, and also to figure out if it's a South American or North American mountain lion. (The Hartford Courant reports that most of the mountain lions in the pet trade come from South America.) Officials say the last confirmed sighting of a mountain lion in the area was in the 19th century; the eastern mountain lion was relentlessly hunted and trapped until it disappeared forever.

Still, the DEP advises Connecticut residents to "watch their children, watch their pets," and not leave any pet food outside. Two seniors citizens who regularly walk in Milford told Fox CT yesterday, "We decided to pick up a few sticks" for protection during their stroll. (A laser pointer couldn't hurt, either.) Locals swear there are more of them out there, and they don't trust the DEP one bit. But a government spokesman tells the Times, "We've never been presented with any credible evidence of a native population.

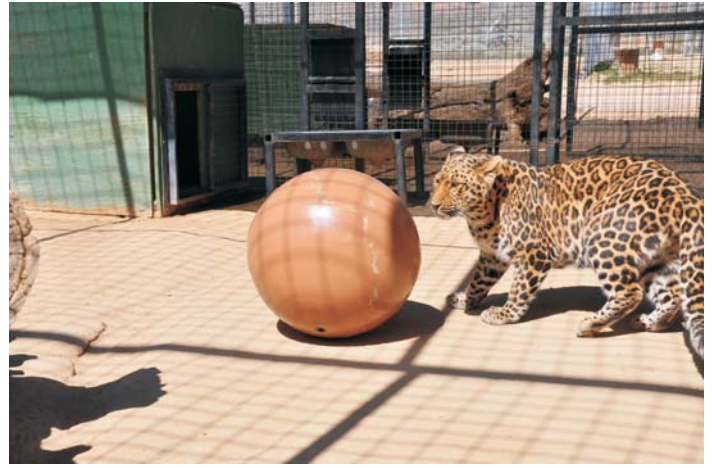


There is a school of thought out there that we are knowingly denying it, but there is no reason the Department of Environmental Protection would

do that." He then presumably cut the interview short and boarded a helicopter transporting him to his cougar-proof bunker deep under Greenwich Town Hall.



*Our North Chinese leopard "Yanna" received a very special birthday present from her adoptive parents Aroonrat & Lynn Kiriputt of Seattle WA. They sent her a 20" Boomer Ball. The ball stands taller than her but that didn't stop Yanna from showing her new toy her joy and affection.*



**<<<< WANTED ITEMS>>>>**

**Commercial grade hoses**

**Stainless steel water buckets**

**Golf Carts**

**Save the Date!**  
**22nd annual Fabulous Feline Follies**  
**August 13 2011**

silent auction \* raffle \* signature drinks  
animal entertainment \* AND MORE!

Sponsors Needed

**More Details to follow in separate mailing,  
available online NOW**

