

EFBC's Feline Conservation Center



SPRING 2012

Dedicated to the Protection and Preservation of Endangered Felines

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EFBC to Restart Tiger Breeding

In its early years, EFBC's Feline Conservation Center bred tigers, but has not for nearly 30 years. Over that period the number of wild tigers has plummeted to less than 5,000, and the captive U.S. population has decreased as well.

One reason is AZA zoos held the majority of purebred stock for many years, and with limited cage space chose to focus on only two of the tiger subspecies - Sumatran and Siberian. With all six remaining tiger sub-

species (Sumatran, Siberian, Indochinese, Bengal, Malayan, South China) endangered in the wild, and the South China tiger possibly extinct already, private facilities such as EFBC-FCC are needed to bolster the numbers of all the unique tiger subspecies.

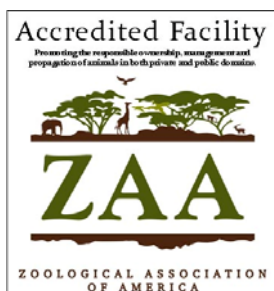
Our Project Tiger is near completion and our curator has been in contact with many zoos to determine the best fit. We hope to have tigers on display in the near future.

50/50 Raffle Now Open

Enclosed in this newsletter is the entry ticket for our annual 50/50 raffle. The tickets are \$20 each and if you would like more tickets, just give us a call.

This is a great way to further support EFBC's efforts. The drawing will be held at our Summer Twilight Tour on June 23rd and the winner need not be present to win.

The lucky winner receives 50% of the net proceeds received. The more that participate, the bigger the prize. Don't forget to return the completed ticket stub with your entry fee.



We've got a new look!

After years of using the same design, we've taken the look of Spots 'n Stripes up a notch. It's still chock full of great information for our members. We hope you like it and appreciate your continued support!

Cat Report: The Black-Footed Cat

EFBC and EFBC's Chapter of the American Association of Zookeepers has purchased a R1000 telemetry receiver for Black-footed Cat Working Group to assist in their research of this African species.

The black-footed cat (*felis nigripes*) is the smallest cat species in Africa, found in the south west arid zone of the southern African sub-region, and one of the smallest cats worldwide. The average male weighs about 4.2 pounds, while the average female weighs about 2.9 pounds. Since 2002, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) lists this species as "vulnerable." They are a protected species and hunting of these animals is banned in Botswana and South Africa.

The species is called the black-footed cat because the pads and under parts of its feet are black. The rest of the



A black-footed cat female with kitten.

cat's coat is cinnamon to tawny color with black or dark brown spots.

There are two subspecies of the cat recognized: *felis nigripes nigripes*, which is found in Botswana, Namibia and in the northern parts of South Africa; and *felis nigripes thomasi*, which lives in southeastern South Africa. Black-footed cats are known to be highly unsociable,

are solitary and strictly nocturnal. They spend their days resting in dense cover, such as unoccupied burrows of springhares, porcupines and aardvarks, or in hollow termite mounds, and emerge to hunt after sunset.

The Black-footed Cat Working Group has conducted field research on this species, noting it is an excellent hunter with

several hunting styles: a fast trot, a slow stalk and lying in wait. Its size is advantageous to hunting and it can jump up to 2.5 meters wide and 1.5 meters high. According to the research, the black-footed cat spends the majority of its nights hunting and feeding. Among its prey: birds, squirrels, snakes, frogs and larger animals such as the Cape Hare. The cat will spend several days consuming larger prey, which they busy in sand in-between feeding.

Females reach sexual maturity after 8 to 12 months of age and come into estrus for one or two days. They are receptive to mating for only a few hours, requiring males to locate them quickly. As with other cat species, territorial markings are key to communicating. Gestation lasts from 63 to 68 days and a litter usually consists of two kittens, but can range from one to four kittens. The black-

Continued on Page 3

EFBC AAZK Chapter Gets Cookin'

Our EFBC Chapter of the American Association of Zookeepers has begun work on a new eco-project, "Renewable Futures for Felines." These projects are beneficial to the environment and at the same time support EFBC's mission.

In tandem with beautification and improvements around EFBC, one of our projects is to incorporate small area landscaping with draught tolerant foliage - xeriscaping. This year, we hope to break ground in a small space in the exhibit area center and work from there. In order to accomplish this goal, we are asking supporters, volunteers and staff for their best and easiest recipes to be incorporated into an AAZK EFBC cookbook to be sold to



raise funds for this and other chapter projects, including direct support of the EFBC.

"Cookin' Safari" will showcase quick-fix recipes for busy, on-the-go people. The journey will begin with recipes for breakfast items through midday snacks to evening meals and, of course, desserts.

Questions and recipes for consideration can be sent via email to aazk.efbcchapter@gmail.com, Subject: AAZK EFBC Chapter - Cookbook, or by mailing a recipe c/o EFBC, 3718 60th St. West, Rosamond, CA 93560, Attn: AAZK EFBC Chapter—Cookbook.

Deadline for receipt of recipes is July 31, 2012. Any recipes not used will be kept on file.

Black-footed cats (cont.)

footed kitten weighs just 2.1 oz. to 3 oz. at birth. They are born blind and are able to crawl about after just a few hours. Within two weeks, they are walking and begin taking solid food after about a month. The kittens are fully weaned by two months of age.

In-situ research of the black-footed cats includes capturing not only this species but other carnivores and studying the prevalence of their diseases, especially the viral ones. Researchers collect fat and blood samples to check if amyloidosis (when amyloid proteins are abnormally deposited in organs and/or tissues and cause harm) is present and also collect sperm of wild males for reproductive studies and introduction of new genes into U.S. institutions.

The species is called the black-footed cat because the pads and under parts of its feet are black.

Among the questions researchers are trying to answer: What is the distribution of black-footed cats in other provinces of South Africa and other countries? What is their status there? Are there subspecies of *Felis nigripes (nigripes/thomasi)*? What are their habitat requirements and relationship with other carnivores?

On April 1, 2010, the working group fitted the first GPS-GSM transmitter to a large male black-footed cat. It transmitted for 13 months. Since then, they have a data download every two weeks via an ARGOS Satellite. In captivity, zoos have housed the black-footed cat since the late 1950s. However, it is one of the most difficult to keep of the smaller wild cats because it can be highly strung, sensitive to stress and it is difficult to gain its trust. Observers say they are active, challenging, have attitude and have provided information to the public about *in-situ* work.

Captive Tiger Numbers Lower Than Thought

By Lynn Culver, *Feline Conservation Federation*

The Feline Conservation Federation (FCF) has used the Freedom of Information Act to gain U.S. Department of Agriculture and state wildlife agency inventories of all wild cats in captivity in the United States. Contrary to the wild guesses of 5,000 to 10,000 tigers, FCF's survey has revealed less than 3,000 tigers live in America. The FCF survey also proved the so-called "pet tiger" in your neighbor's back yard is an overblown urban legend. The majority of tigers live in licensed exhibits such as zoos, nature centers, and sanctuaries.

The FCF census has documented 2,884 tigers, which is less than the estimated number of tigers in nature. The FCF census revealed that the licensed tiger habitat in America consists of 468 facilities. Of these facilities, at least 226 are USDA Class C exhibitors that operate city, county, or private zoological parks. These facilities hold at least 809 tigers, including the nearly 400 tigers maintained in AZA member zoos. Another 91 sanctuaries hold 1,544 tigers. At least 22 educational facilities provide habitat for 68 tigers. The remaining 585 tigers held by 129 USDA or state licensed entities, reside in commercial breeding facilities, nature centers, are owned by individuals, are part of retired commercial operations, or are used in circus, stage, and other traveling exhibits.



EFBC resident tiger Caesar.

Speculation by animal rights organizations that the state of Texas holds more tigers than the country of India has been proven completely false by the census. Actually only about 300 tigers live in Texas, and most are in zoos or sanctuaries. In 1998 the Fish and Wildlife Service enacted the Generic Tiger Rule, legalizing interstate commerce of mixed sub-species and non-pedigreed tigers. This exemption allowed tiger breeders to purchase unrelated bloodlines, which improved the health and genetic diversity of tigers.

The World Wildlife Fund and TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network, have pressured the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to rescind the Captive Bred Wildlife registration exemption for generic tigers. A 2008 report by TRAFFIC examined whether U.S. tigers were involved in the illegal trade in tiger parts and could not find any evidence. The FCF believes the proposal to rescind the Generic Tiger Exemption is unnecessary at this time due to other laws that already regulate and protect tigers.

The Captive Wildlife Safety Act restricts interstate movement of tigers to USDA licensed facilities and sanctuaries. The Rhinoceros and Tiger Conservation Act criminalizes the sale, import, and export of products intended for human use and containing, or labeled or advertised as containing, any substance derived from tiger.



Reintroduction of captive born cats to the wild

The reintroduction of captive born cats into the wild is a very complex subject. There are currently efforts underway for the South China tiger and the Amur leopard.

The South China tiger program is controversial in that it involves mother-raised captive born cats fending for themselves without human interaction - but in South Africa, not China. Whether the cats can successfully survive on their own upon relocation to a new habitat and new prey species, and whether the habitat they are released into will be safe and have sufficient prey, are questions yet to be answered.

In March 2010, a plan for re-introduction of Amur leopards was discussed and approved by local and international experts during an Amur leopard and tiger conference in Vladivostok, Russia. The plan was then sent to the responsible Moscow authorities for approval. Releases would take place in or near the Lazovsky Nature Reserve in Southern Sikhote Alin, an area where leopards disappeared approximately 30 years ago.

It is unknown what caused the local extinction in this area, but due to an increase in suitable prey, such as sika deer, circum-

stances have improved. It is likely to be at least another three years before all necessary administrative processes have been gone through and sufficient numbers of suitable leopards from the zoo population can be made available for this project.

Given political support and the necessary funding, it is possible that in one-to-two years from now preparations in the field (building of holding facilities and other infrastructure) will have begun.

Meet the Keeper: Laura Bowen

My name is Laura Bowen and I am EFBC's newest zookeeper.

I grew up in Rosamond and made frequent visits to the compound to see the newest additions or just visit old favorites.

When I graduated from UC Santa Barbara last March with a BS in Zoology I knew exactly where I wanted to apply. After volunteering for a few months, I was hired!

I have absolutely loved working at the compound for the last seven months. I get hands-on

experience that you cannot get anywhere else in the world and I get to use my biological background by helping our cats participate in studies. I have also made many friends with my volunteers and coworkers. But most of all I enjoy spending time with my feline friends.

Each cat has a unique personality and forming different bonds with each of them has been amazing.

Working at EFBC is a great experi-



Zookeeper Laura at Kids' Day 2011

ence and I am so grateful to get the chance to work with these amazing animals at such an extraordinary facility.

Vet's Corner: Dr. Kristi Krause

One of the many things that makes the Exotic Feline Breeding Compound a leader in feline conservation is its contribution to the ever growing pool of what we know about these unique felids in the area of diseases and medicine.

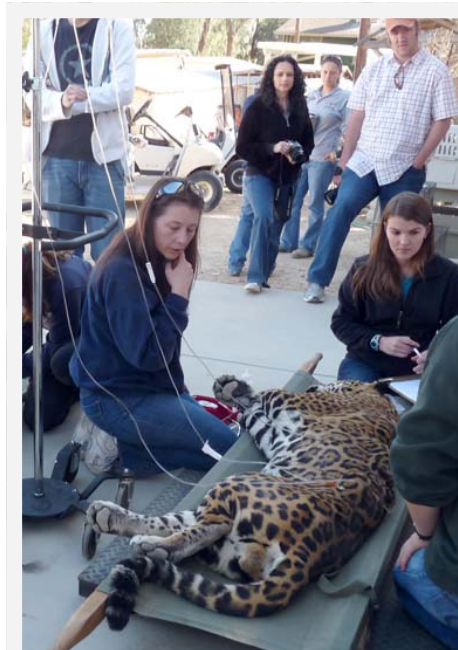
When one of the cats gets sick, we are able to utilize many resources to diagnose and treat diseases, which in turn is shared with the rest of the zoo community. Many people are not aware of the technology, specialists, and treatments that are available to domestic animals, much less zoo animals, so I thought I would share a little bit of what goes on "behind the scenes" here in diagnosing and treating the cats, as well as what is available to your own personal pets.

The most important diagnostic tool and where some of the best information comes from, is the physical examination. That is where the veterinarian talks to the owner, or in the case of zoo animals, the keepers and people who work most closely with the animal, to find out things like, "How is the animal acting?" "How is it eating?" "Any changes in drinking?" "What problems is the animal having?" The actual examination involves a trained, focused, systematic evaluation of every part of the body, looking for anything that is not normal.

After the physical examination is where diagnostic tools come into play. If you have ever watched an episode of "House," this is where they start running all the tests they can think of. In human medicine, that is easy to do, since people generally have insurance that pays for everything and the full costs are not coming directly out of the person's pocket. With animals, however, we have to

do things step by step and pick and choose which tests we think are going to give us the most information and be the most cost-effective for the owner. This is based on the information that we get from the owner and what is found on the physical exam.

So, what tests do we have to choose from? For the



Top photo: Dr. Scott Weldy works on Bubba's teeth. Bottom: Dr. Kristi Krause (left) examines Dexter the jaguar.

most part, whatever is available to humans is available for animals! We can run blood tests, radiographs (x-rays), ultrasounds, endoscopy, MRI, CT scans, cultures, and urine tests, just to name a few.

Most of the time, trying to find out what is wrong with an animal will start with a blood test. A routine blood panel looks at many different things. There are two parts - a complete blood count (CBC) and chemistries. The CBC evaluates the red blood cells (RBC) and white blood cells (WBC). The RBC are responsible for delivering oxygen to the organs of the body. The CBC will show the number of RBC, if they are shaped normally, and, if the num-

Vet's Corner *(continued)*

ber is low, if the body is trying to make more to bring the count back up to normal. WBC are the body's army. They respond to infections and inflammation. The CBC shows the number of the different types of WBC and can help determine if there is an infection, inflammation, and sometimes what might be responsible- parasites, cancer, or bacteria. The chemistries help to evaluate how different organs are functioning, as well as show things like electrolyte (sodium, potassium, and chloride) imbalances, which can



Frisbee the fishing cat gets checked out.

indicate certain diseases or dehydration. It evaluates the liver, kidneys, pancreas, and thyroid. Based on what the blood panel shows, it can either "rule in"- point to what the problem is and help make the diagnosis, or "rule out"- tell the doctor what is not the problem.

Radiographs, or "x-rays" are often the next step. These give a two-dimensional view of the organs and bones of the body. They show size, shape, and patterns. Abnormalities, such as a large or small organ, fluid where it should not be (in the lungs, chest, or abdomen), bladder or kidney stones, an intestinal blockage, or a mass can often all be seen on radiographs.

At this point, anything further depends on the diagnosis, if one has been made. Further testing is often necessary if a diagnosis has not been made, or if it needs to be confirmed to make sure the treatment is going to be appropriate.

Ultrasound is a very common, non-invasive test

that can not only help make a diagnosis, but also help determine appropriate treatment. In the case of heart disease, the type can be determined (a leaking valve, thickened heart walls, blood vessel abnormalities, etc) and

measurements can be taken to decide the appropriate treatment. Abdominal ultrasound can show the size and texture of the organs, such as irregularities in the liver, spleen, and kidneys, thickening of the intestines and bladder, enlargement of the lymph nodes in the ab-

domen, and masses that may not have been visible on radiographs. Small biopsies can be obtained with an ultrasound-guided biopsy tool if something abnormal is found. The biopsy is then sent to a pathologist, who looks at the cells of the sample to determine what the disease is. A report is then sent back to the veterinarian to prescribe the best treatment for the disease.

Endoscopy is used when the disease has been narrowed down to the stomach and/or intestines. A long, flexible tube with a camera on the end is passed through the mouth,

down the esophagus, into the stomach, and can reach into the first part of the intestines. The same can be done from the other end, going in

One of the best resources we have here at the EFBC is the number of veterinary specialists that work with our veterinary team.

Vet's Corner (continued)

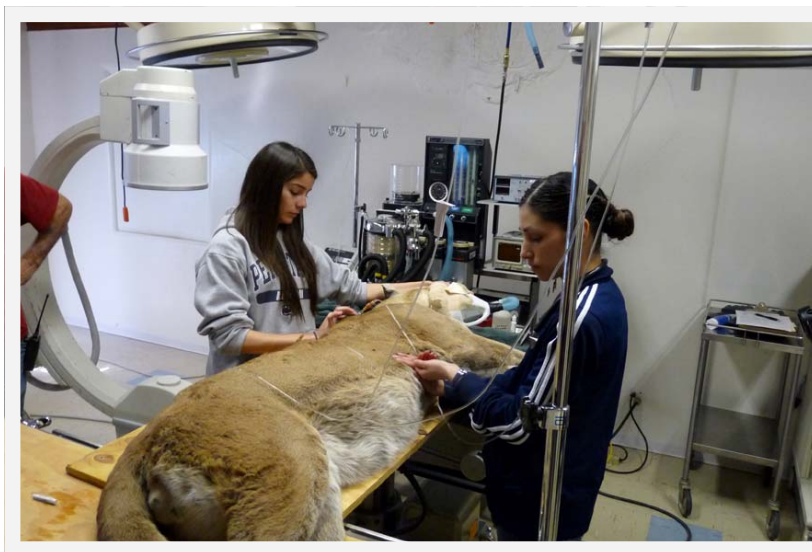
through the rectum and into the colon. Abnormalities such as ulcers, masses, and strictures (narrowing) can be found this way. Biopsies of the top inside layers of these areas can be obtained this way.

The disadvantage to endoscopy is it is limited to a small area of the intestinal tract (it misses the entire middle part) and you can only get biopsies of the top inside layers. Some diseases, like intestinal lymphoma (cancer) are often found in the deeper layers and can be

missed or misdiagnosed this way. Unfortunately, exploratory surgery, where the animal is opened surgically into the abdomen, is the only way to get the appropriate biopsy samples for this. However, the doctor can also evaluate all of the other organs and lymph nodes and take samples of them at the same time. Biopsies can be saved in formalin and do not necessarily all have to be submitted to the pathologist at once.

How else can endoscopy be used? There are many sized tubes, some are flexible, others are metal and rigid. A small tube can be used to go up into the nose to look for a tumor, fungal growth, or other abnormality and to get a sample of abnormal cells. That was how Sebastian's cancer was diagnosed. It can also go into the trachea, or windpipe, and into the lungs to look

for abnormalities where the trachea begins to branch into the lungs. Endoscopy is also commonly used to look at and take samples of the organs of reptiles and birds.



Veterinarian interns tend to Teddy the cougar at a recent check-up.

Myelograms, CT scans, and MRIs are also available to animals with spine or brain problems. Myelograms are used to diagnose problems in the spine, such as a ruptured disc or a tumor. Special dye is injected into the fluid around the spinal column and radiographs are taken. The dye will be missing where the disc or tumor is pushing out. CT scans and MRIs are usually done when problems with the brain

are suspected, such as a tumor, infection, blood clot, or parasite.

One of the best resources we have here at the EFBC is the number of veterinary specialists that work with our veterinary team. We have veterinary ultrasonographers, surgeons, ophthalmologists, neurologists, cardiologists, internists, dentists, oncologists, pathologists, and dermatologists who assist with diagnosing and treating our animals. Together, they help ensure these animals get the highest quality of care and contribute to diagnosing and treating diseases of zoo animals around the world.



Cat Briefs

New Project: Public Restrooms

In our last newsletter, we discussed hoping to raise the funds to build public restrooms. We have placed a general donation box to seek the support of our visitors and have raised \$376 so far. Our goal is \$75,000.

Healey Foundation Funds New Enclosure

The new fishing cat enclosure funded by the Healey Foundation has been completed. Our two young females born July 7, 2011 are currently occupying the new enclosure but eventually one of the females will leave us and a male will come in to be the other's mate.



With Project Tiger near completion, our focus will turn to the funding of new public restrooms.



Kiana's adoptive parents will be at the June Twilight Tour—will you join them?

Foster Parents Night Set for June Twilight Tour

Our June 23rd Twilight Tour is Foster Parents night. Adoptive parents are invited to attend as our guests. If you can attend, please call Sandy Masek at 661-256-3793 so she can add your name to our list.



The three Amur leopards explore Project Tiger.

Amur Leopards Call San Diego New Home

The three juvenile Amur leopards that were being temporarily housed in our "Project Tiger" enclosure were sent to the San Diego Zoo on March 7th. Now that the exhibit is empty, we can complete our final work to get it up and ready for tiger exhibition and breeding.

Eagle Scout Project Benefits EFBC Cats

EFBC/FCC would like to thank Eagle Scout Michael Bedard for focusing his Troop 41 project on building new small cat den boxes.

Michael and his Eagle Scout team, which included Daniel Clanton, Matthew Bryant, Michael Burdick, Douglas Long, Sarah Shoesmith, Angelique Clanton, Abigail Bedard, Erik Bedard, Chih-Yi Bedard, Mike Bedard, Tyler Koharik, and Richard Bedard, were able to build a total of eight boxes: five medium-sized and three smaller-sized boxes, complete with hinged lids, painted and ready to go!

Project prep started on Oct. 24, 2011, with planning the design of the boxes—coming up with a variety of designs. After careful review, Michael chose to go with designs based on EFBC/FCC's original small cat den box design.

The team started building the boxes on Nov. 5, the majority of them in the garage of Michael's grandfather, Richard Bedard.

After a few hard months of constant work, the group was able to finish. On March 5, Michael's project came to an end and he delivered the boxes to the compound.

"The employees of EFBC were thrilled with the work my group and I had done," he said of his project. "I could not have done it without their help."

Thank you Michael and Eagle Scout Troop 41 team for dedicating your project to our residents!



Eagle Scout Michael Bedard shows off some of his handiwork with EFBC/FCC Head Zookeeper Melany Marotta.



Thumper, Canadian Lynx

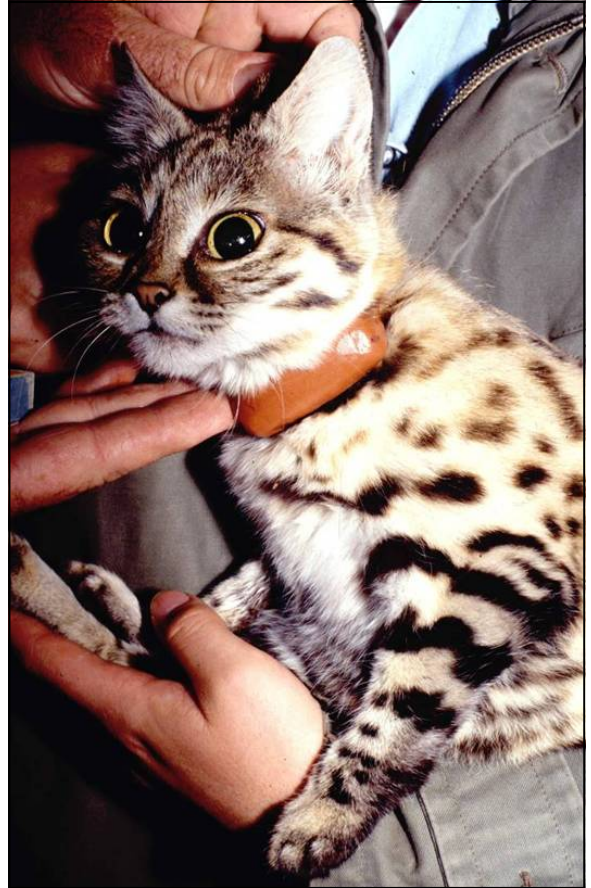
General Donations

Support of our general operating fund helps us stay on top of the daily needs of our organization. We thank the following for their support this last quarter:

Kathryn S. Davis, Rebecca Ryan, Cynthia Rustanius, Rita Truderung, Ian MacLeod & Susan Lozier, Dell Hledik, Chris Tromborg, Emily Biros, Sharon Keys-Kendrick, Marchia Forber, Lisa Hill, David Gregory, Gerald Bandy, Carolyn Michel, Linda Frank, Vicki Collins, Philip A. Roberts, Lee Turner, Mary D. Duque, Wende Kremor, Linda S. Braun, David Forward, Hugh & Janet Carnes, Denise Vardaro.

A special thank you to the **George C. Karlson Foundation** for their generous unrestricted gift donation of \$5000.00. Many years ago the Karlson Foundation funded one of our natural exhibits and we thank them for their continued support over the years.

Mary Marlowe donated \$1000 to help finish our safety railings in the exhibit area, and also became our first Titanium Sponsor of the 2012 Feline Follies for \$2500. Thank you Mary.



(Top) EFBC and EFBC's AAZK Chapter donated a R-1000 to Dr. Alex Silwa for the Black-footed cat field research program in Africa. (Right) A Black-footed cat is fitted with a radio collar.

- \$2,000.00 LIFETIME**
- \$1,000.00 V.I.P.**
- \$500.00 PATRON**
- \$100.00 ASSOCIATE
- \$75.00 SUPPORT
- \$40.00 FAMILY
- \$40.00 FOREIGN (Individual)
- \$25.00 INDIVIDUAL (U.S. Only)
- \$150.00 WALK OF HONOR

****Indicates payment plan: 50% down, balance of 50% due in 90 days.**

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Enclosed is my contribution of \$_____ New Renewal Gift
 All memberships are Annual except Lifetime

Name (print) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (include area code) _____

Gift For (print) _____

Additional Donation _____

Walk of Honor Name _____

Mail your deductible contribution to
 EXOTIC FELINE BREEDING COMPOUND, INC.'S
 FELINE CONSERVATION CENTER
 3718 60th Street West, Rosamond, CA 93560
 Phone (661) 256-3793 Fax (661) 256-6867 <<http://www.cathouse-fcc.org/>>



Chimlin, fishing cat, born July 7, 2011 at EFBC-FCC.

Shop online and raise money for EFBC-FCC

Supporters can help EFBC-FCC by starting at our home page before shopping online. In addition to Amazon, shoppers can use Goodshop or Igive, or search through Goodsearch.

We also have an official Facebook page and a cause that you can donate through. We also invite you to write reviews of us on TripAdvisor or Yelp. Links for all of these can be found on our homepage.

2012 EVENTS CALENDAR

Twilight Tour:

April 7

June 23

September 15

23rd Annual

Fabulous Feline Follies:

August 18

Kids' Day

October 20

We're on the Web!

Visit us at www.cathouse-fcc.org

EFBC's Feline Conservation Center

3718 60th Street West
Rosamond, CA 93560

661.256.3793 voice, during operating hours
(10 am-4 pm Thurs-Tues)

661.256.3332 recorded directions and information,
24 hours

661.256.6867 fax