



EFBC/Feline Conservation Center

<http://www.wildcatzoo.org>

DEDICATED TO THE PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF ENDANGERED FELINES SPRING 2005

Volunteer of the Quarter - Eric Barkalow

I am grateful and humbled to be honored as Volunteer of the quarter. The EFBC-FCC has enriched my life in many ways. A short list of my top cat related experiences can be found on my contribution to the gift shop.

A Volunteer's View: I worked hard to narrate a 45 minute pictorial essay made from photos of my first year of Sundays. Many have enjoyed it, and I plan on doing a year two version! (CD that plays in DVD). I want to thank the community which has been essential to this establishments success. Each of you reading this has had a hand in making a dream of mine come true, and I owe you. I try every Sunday to repay you, with wheelbarrows of dirt or ideas to enrich a cat's life. I do what I can to be inspired when I volunteer, even when it is 100+ degrees out. When I do tire, I think of the community of support that is behind this establishment, and I am refilled with life's energy. Most of our membership is acutely aware of the plight that faces many of these feline species. Their money and supplies make for a pro active stance. I am blessed with the time that others do not have, and strength of arm that many will never have. So I use what I have, and yet I am consistently humbled by the staff, long term volunteers, and some of the members. Every person that I have spoken to at the Feline Follies has been a joy to my heart. THANK YOU ALL FOR YOUR HELP!!!

I have seen first hand how difficult the world makes conservation. The perception that god has a plan so why worry about it seems to comfort many people, but if you know the story of Noah, you know about conservation. I believe my time on

Sunday's is spent in that same pursuit, but the flood that is coming is of people, not water. Having traveled recently to Ecuador to a remote rainforest (Playa De Oro - Featured in the last newsletter.) I witnessed the clear cutting of forests for hardwood. I also experienced a culture that understands that the wild is quickly becoming extinct. It takes vision and intelligence to fight for it, and all of the conservationists need whatever support they can find.

As for who I am outside of the EFBC-FCC. I have worked for the City of Burbank for over 20 years, which is quite satisfying. Burbank is a progressive city that is phasing out gasoline and diesel powered vehicles, and so for the last couple of years I have been using compressed natural gas to power my vehicle, which is a street sweeper. Seeing the 20,000 lbs.(Avg.) of material that is collected from a small city streets on a daily basis makes it easy for me to understand the need for conservation. Community involvement is key to change of any kind, and I am glad to work for a community that understands that. I urge each of our members to recruit one member a year, so that our EFBC-FCC community continues to grow. Volunteering does not have to be done in Rosamond.

SPECIAL EVENTS

It will soon be time for our first Twilight Tour of the year, on April 23. If you've never been to one, these are fund-raisers we hold 3 times a year on Saturday evenings. Visitors can enter parts of the compound that are not open during the day. This is because Twilight Tours are restricted to adults only (18 and over). There is an admission fee of

\$15 per person. Doors open at 5:30 p.m. (5 if prepaid) until it's dark out. There is a bake sale, barbecue, a raffle, and other surprises - goldfish in the fishing cat ponds, watermelons for the tigers, other enrichment items for all the other cats. Our cat's "adoptive parents" are invited to attend the Summer tour on June 18 as our special guests. The last one this year will be September 17. Advance reservations are not required but prepaying does allow 30 minutes earlier entry.

Preparations are in full swing for our new fund-raiser, the Big Cat Bazaar. This huge parking lot sale will be held on May 7 & 8 (Saturday and Sunday). We are receiving LOTS of great items as donations. Clothes, books, bikes, furniture, art, appliances, kitchenware - we've got a bit of everything, and ALL proceeds go straight to the cats! We are also expecting a second Charity Poker Run, to be sponsored by Lancaster Harley-Davidson on June 25th this year. Our 16th annual Fabulous Feline Follies will be held on 20 August. Save the date! And finally, a Children's Holiday Event is in the planning for November 26.

Web Site News

We have MANY new items available for purchase from our cafepress store. The direct link is <http://www.cafepress.com/wildcatzoo>, which you can also reach through our web site. There are 7 designs currently available with more on the way. Many different clothing items, as well as mugs, pillows, tote bags, and other fun items are for sale with photos of our cats. And of course we are still affiliated with Amazon.com - please go to our web site first and follow the link to Amazon before you make any purchases there - we will get a percentage of your purchase as a donation at NO cost to you!

Can't go to Africa? Read about the ongoing life of wild Africa at various websites!

<http://www.malamala.tv/diary.htm>

Styx Pride & Split Rock Male - 2 February

Seven members of the Styx Pride were seen between Mlowathi Koppies and Campbell Koppies on 2 February. One of the Split Rock Males was also present. Missing from the pride was one of the adult lionesses. Some time after the lions were

first found, an eighth member of the pride appeared out of the grass near some rocky outcrops. This eighth lion was not an adult lioness, but a small cub, estimated to be about 3 months old! No other small cubs were seen. This was the first sighting of this cub, and it is quite likely that it has no litter mates. When its mother was first seen to be lactating, it was noted that she did not have a great deal of milk, and she had not appeared to be heavily pregnant before giving birth, so it is likely that she only bore one or two cubs. This is not too surprising, because she is a young lioness and this is her first litter. Often first litters are small in number.

<http://www.wildwatch.com/sightings/default.asp>

Leopard female mates with two males (2/7/2005 06h30) Londolozi - South Africa Whilst driving along the Sand River early in the morning, we were fortunate enough to find what we thought to be a pair of mating leopards. On closer inspection however, we realised that there were actually THREE leopards present. A female and two males! The female, a young'ish leopard (well known to us) who has not yet borne cubs, proceeded to tempt the older male to mate with her. Then, to our astonishment, once she had finished mating with him, she went straight to the younger male and then mated with him too! This behaviour was repeated at least eight times while we watched, before all three disappeared into thicker riverine vegetation. The males showed no aggression towards each other at all, not even growling at each other and seemed totally comfortable in each other's presence. All three

WISH LIST

Landscape materials, plants and trees

Construction equipment supplies

(8x8x16 concrete block, rebar, cement)

New electrical supplies

Water truck, Backhoe

People with arc welding experience for Project Tiger work

leopards were within a few metres of one another. On having a closer look, we realised that the two males were father and son, both being leopards that we see regularly and know well. This father was seen a while ago to have killed a warthog which he shared with this same son with virtually no aggression at all other than a few half-hearted growls. The son is already a sexually mature male. Having watched many mating leopards over the years, this was something that I had never seen or read about before and I felt privileged to have been able to witness such extraordinary behaviour.

CAT NEWS

Various sources, February 2005

Authorities shot and killed a tiger that had been roaming the hills near the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library. The cat was shot several hundred yards from soccer and baseball fields at the edge of a housing development, said Lorna Bernard, a spokeswoman for the California Department of Fish and Game. "It's unfortunate that we had to kill it," Bernard said. "It's even more unfortunate that the person who owned it didn't come forward and alert us immediately. We might have been able to capture it." The animal was killed near Simi Valley, about 40 miles northwest of Los Angeles. Authorities received a call just after 6 a.m. from a resident who reported the tiger strolling past his back fence. He said his children took pictures from inside their home. The trackers had been looking for the animal for eight days, using infrared equipment at night. They had set traps with goat meat and chicken. The hunt began after the discovery of paw prints on a ranch near the library that were far too large for native bobcats or mountain lions. The size of the tracks indicated the animal weighed as much as 600 pounds. Authorities said they were investigating how the cat got loose in the hills.

Next related article is the follow up

Los Angeles Times, 17 Mar 05

Couple Arrested in Tiger's Escape: The Moorpark animal sanctuary owners denied the cat belonged to them while it roamed suburban areas. Trackers killed it Feb. 23. The owners of a Moorpark animal sanctuary were arrested for allegedly allowing a

352-pound Siberian tiger to escape and prowl suburban neighborhoods for four weeks while denying the cat was theirs. Gert "Abby" Hedengran, 56, and his wife, Roena "Emma" Hedengran, 52, were transported in a government van to U.S. District Court in Los Angeles. The couple were expected to be released on \$25,000 bail each, but Assistant U.S. Atty. Joseph Johns said he planned to ask for a psychiatric evaluation of Emma Hedengran because she is suspected of attempting to shoot her husband Feb. 17 during an argument at their home. The Hedengrans' arrests brought an end to a month long investigation as state and federal authorities tried to determine who owned the tiger and how it escaped. The tiger was fatally shot Feb. 23 when it was found roaming near a school in Moorpark. During the probe, the Hedengrans repeatedly denied owning the escaped tiger, saying their 5-year-old male, named Tuffy, had died. "Abby said that the male tiger had died 1 1/2 to two years before because someone from PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) had poisoned it," U.S. Department of Agriculture Special Agent Manny Flores wrote in the affidavit.

The Hedengrans, however, could not produce records or police reports related to the tiger's death, and former neighbors told authorities they had seen Tuffy as recently as January, according to the criminal complaint filed against Abby Hedengran. The Hedengrans originally held a permit to keep their animals in Temecula but failed to notify federal and state authorities when they moved to Moorpark in January, said Mike Wintemute, a spokesman for Fish and Game. Authorities did not learn of the couple's move until Jan. 31 when an escaped lynx was found 1/8 of a mile away from the couple's property on a neighbor's front porch. Fish and Game wardens tranquilized the lynx and took it to a state-run animal-holding center. Authorities believe Tuffy had escaped at the same time the lynx did because tiger tracks were photographed Jan. 31 near California 23 near Simi Valley by researchers on a mountain lion tracking project. About three days after the lynx was trapped, Abby Hedengran showed up to claim the 90-pound cat, which triggered an inspection of the property he and his wife rented in Moorpark, Wintemute said. Authorities found three lions, two tigers, a snow leopard and 16 smaller cats,

including bobcats and lynx, in a barn or running free inside the Hedengrans' mobile home. The animals were not in permanent cages, as required by law, nor was the ramshackle barn structure up to code, Wintemute said. Authorities gave the couple 72 hours to find homes for the cats, which were transferred to various sites in California and Nevada. Most of the larger animals were sent to a sanctuary in Las Vegas. Investigators said they linked the Hedengrans to the tiger by comparing pictures and videos seized from the couple with the dead cat.

Press release, 8 March 2005

The world's rarest cat, the Amur leopard, is facing immediate extinction in the wild due to a recent decision by the Russian government to approve an oil pipeline through the leopards' only habitat. The Kremlin has approved a plan to build a pipeline through the Kedrovya Pad nature reserve, home to the last 30 to 40 remaining wild Amur leopards. The pipeline will move oil from central Siberia to the Japanese Sea, through Kedrovya Pad, a protected area recently declared a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve. The Amur leopard is listed on the IUCN Critically Endangered Red list. In just 13 years, from 1970 to 1983, the cat lost 80 percent of their range because of encroachment. For more than a decade, conservation organizations have worked with local Russian charities to fund anti-poaching teams, studies, education and to compensate farmers who lose stock to the leopards. The efforts seem to be paying off and there is hope for the Amur Leopard. A pipeline through their fragile area could mean the end to the Amur Leopard. Please save the leopard today and write letters of protest, to the Russian government as well as the main pipeline funder, Japan Bank for International Cooperation, and Transneft, the government pipeline monopoly. There is no guarantee that this pipeline will provide a large amount of oil. And Amur leopard experts familiar with the area have said there are many alternate routes this pipeline can take, without destroying the leopard's environment. Building of the pipeline is supposed to start in May, but the situation is not yet lost, environmentalists recently stopped a plan to build a pipeline on the Russian Island of Sakhalin. More information on the Amur leopard situation is available at www.carnivoreconservation.org and www.amur-leopard.org.

VenturaCountyStar.com January 25, 2005

The National Park Service has confirmed that rodent poisons are killing area mountain lions. Two of the cats, a male and female, were found dead in the Simi Hills just before Christmas, and lab tests at the University of California, Davis have confirmed they both died from anticoagulant poisoning after ingesting bromadiolone and brodifacoum, active ingredients in household rat and mice poisons. The female lion, known as P4, was found in late October; the male, P3, was found on Nov. 17. They both died in the hills from internal bleeding. Park Service officials suspect the lions ingested the poison by eating coyotes that had eaten poisoned rodents. In other words, the poisons are working their way up the food chain starting with mice and rats. Brodifacoum is an active ingredient in d-Con, a commonly-used rodent poison available at Home Depot in Thousand Oaks. The packaging on a box of d-Con Ready Mixed Baitbits has an environmental hazard warning that the product is toxic to wildlife. The leading cause of death in coyotes studied by the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area from 1996 and 2000 was anticoagulant poisoning, said Seth Riley, a wildlife ecologist with the Park Service. Anticoagulants are substances that keep blood from clotting. Lions living in the Santa Monica Mountains primarily eat deer, but data-tracking on P3 and P4's radio collars provided the coyote evidence. "We know both the lions that died had killed coyotes in the month before they died," Riley said.

Sun Dec 26, 2004 Associated Press

REFUGE, Texas - LAGUNA ATASCOSA NATIONAL WILDLIFE After the third report in a month of jaguarondi darting through the brush, wildlife biologist Linda Laack took action. She hid sensory cameras in the grasses of this Gulf Coast preserve, in hopes that one of the rare, weasel-like wildcats would trip a self-portrait during its hunt for rodents or birds. Such a photo would be the first of a wild jaguarundi in the United States since 1986, when one of the animals was found dead outside of Brownsville. The endangered animal, about the size of a house cat, usually roams land stretching from southern Brazil through Central America and Mexico. At one time, the animals reached north

along Mexico's Gulf Coast into the subtropical scrub of the Rio Grande Valley — the only place they have been documented in the United States — but their range is dwindling because of deforestation and development. The evolutionary line of the jaguarundi most resembles pumas and cheetahs, though they are usually compared to weasels for their gait and otters for their long, short-legged bodies. Their name means "weasel cat" in German. The animals have no spots or stripes and come in one of two colors — blackish-gray or cinnamon brown. They have long, wide tails and weigh between 8 and 15 pounds. While difficult to catch, jaguarundi are seemingly easy to tame. South Americans kept them as pets for centuries because they helped control rodent populations, but they were less popular among those with poultry livestock, since the animals raid chicken coops. The animals usually roam during the day, live alone and don't scurry up trees. The only previous scientific study of the jaguarundi was in 1989 in Belize, but it involved only three animals. Pat Burchfield, deputy director of the Gladys Porter Zoo in Brownsville and the man who found the dead jaguarundi in 1986, said he is convinced there are at least a few jaguarundi roaming the area. He said he recently glimpsed two, possibly a mating couple, in the thickets of an old Girl Scout camp. "Why or how they've managed to elude trappers, I'm not quite sure," he said. The most recent jaguarundi sightings were reported by two U.S. Fish & Wildlife employees and a longtime refuge volunteer, so Laack believes it's just a matter of time before she gets photographic proof.

The LookOut news, December 10

Researchers are happy that four young mountain lion kittens recently born in the Santa Monica Mountains have weathered most of the early dangers and are growing bigger and more active. They also hope the kittens — which, along with the parents, have tracking devices — will provide valuable clues about how wild animals manage to coexist with humans near populated urban areas. "So far they seem to be doing fine," Ray Sauvajot, chief of science, planning and resource management for the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. "If you saw them you might think they are very big house cats with very big feet," he said of the approximately 20 pound kittens. Their mother keeps close watch on them

as they begin to venture and explore their home, he said. The kittens, two of each sex, face an uncertain future. It would be unusual for all four to survive to adulthood and the risks of living near a city create long odds for the offspring of the only proven pair of local big cats. Researchers studying them are near the half-way point of a three-year study of urban mountain lions. The parents are known as P-1 (puma 1) and P-2. P-1, the male, is about four-years-old and weighs 150 pounds. The two-year-old first-time mother is about 80 pounds. The parents are both collared as part of the study. Sauvajot thinks there may be a few other mountain lions (known to scientists as pumas) in the region, but not many. "There may be two or three," he said "but not five or ten." The couple is the only known mating pair, he said. The cats live in the "central Santa Monica Mountains" and mating is thought to have taken place in May, researchers said. The cubs arrived in late August. As soon as the mother left the den, researchers entered it and inserted tracking devices into the kittens' abdomens, Sauvajot said. He added that the researchers monitor the cats frequently by coming to within a few miles of the cat's location and tracking the signals. They are "monitoring in place" and no longer get close enough to the cats to risk being seen, Sauvajot said. "We are able to pick up signals from all four," he said. "If something goes wrong, we will know about it." The adults are healthy and primarily eat mule deer. "We don't have a good idea of the number of deer out there, but we suspect that since the cats are doing well, the deer are, too," Sauvajot said. The cats eat smaller prey as well, including coyotes but primarily hunt the deer, he said. The cougars (as mountain lions are known in the Pacific Northwest) and the mule deer are the biggest animals in the region, according to Sauvajot. Black bears sometimes wander into the area, but are not regulars. Coyotes are numerous, as are bobcats. Bobcats weigh between 20 and 30 pounds and prey primarily on rabbits. Sauvajot thinks there may be 400 of the feisty little cats in the region. He said that density would match that of any he is aware of. The bobcats eat the numerous local rabbits. Such studies may also have implications for the future of all wild cats and their prey as they face increasing threat from human growth. Time noted that, like pumas, tigers, lions, leopards, snow

leopards and cheetahs are being forced into smaller and smaller parts of their former range. Until recently most hope was placed in parks and reserves. But it is now seen that animals in reserves form isolated population pockets which have less genetic diversity and are at risk of dying out. Researchers such as the local team are looking at many wild cats and trying to find ways to allow them to roam through areas populated by people so that the animals maintain healthy populations. With its urban density, freeways and major roads, this region is a test case for ways in which animals can continue to coexist with humans, researchers said. "We are trying to study the animals to find out where the travel corridors are," Sauvajot said. "We want to answer the question 'How do you get the animals across major roads?' The survival of a population is going to depend on connecting to areas beyond these mountains. The kittens themselves will provide the answers." Although the cats are near trails and other human habitations he says they "are keeping to themselves," and so far have largely avoided human contact. The male did eat goats belonging to a Malibu man and was almost condemned for it. The goat's owner gave the cat a reprieve. Currently there is no reparation plan in effect for owners who lose animals to the cats.

Zoo recipricol list: Add the following zoo to your recipricol list; Dickerson Park Zoo, Springfield Missouri.

50/50 Raffle Ticket: Enclosed with this newsletter are 50/50 raffle tickets. Price is \$20.00 per ticket and the drawing will be held at our Summer Twilight Tour June 18, 2005.

Donations:

Don Roth, an artist from Garden Grove CA. donated 4 limited edition prints for our next Fabulous Feline Follies. Thanks Don!

Many great items have been donated to us for our upcoming "Giant Weekend Garage Sale" being held May 7, 2005.

We would like to thank the following people for their donations to this event; Betty Platero, California City CA. - Chris and Ruth Gage, Los Angeles CA. - Emily Sparks, California City CA. - Harry Eby, Nipomo CA. - Lisa Edmondson, Los

Angeles CA. - Barbara McNaught, Rosamond CA.

Donations continued

Elizabeth Fewtrell, Lancaster CA. - Ms. Pat Minosh, Rosamond CA. - Carol Yarbrough, Rosamond CA.

Thanks all !!

A Special Note to our Foster Parents!!!

Our Summer Twilight Tour being held on June 18th is Foster Parent's night. All current Foster Parents are welcome to attend as our guests at no charge.

If you can attend, please call Sandy at 661-256-3793 and let her know so she can add your name to the list.