



EFBC/Feline Conservation Center

<http://www.wildcatzoo.org>

DEDICATED TO THE PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF ENDANGERED FELINES SUMMER 2008

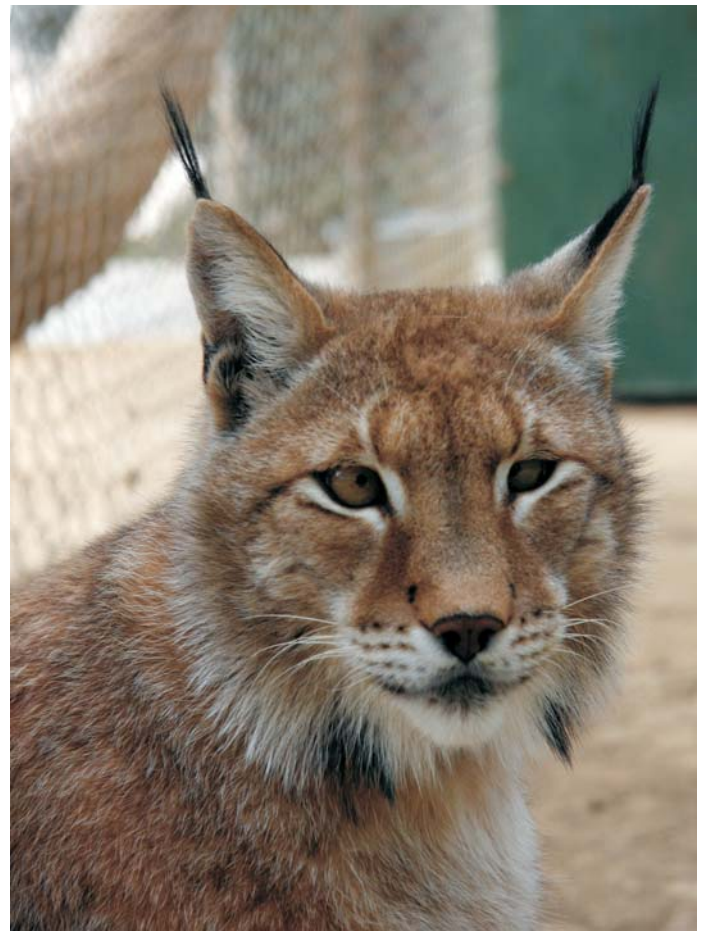
**Arrivals:** Assar, a Eurasian Lynx arrived in May from the Jarv Zoo in Sweden and is now housed in the public area, next to Angara. He turned four

and large feet which provide a “snowshoe effect”, allowing for more efficient travel through deep snow. In winter, the fur grows very densely on the



*Assar is a handsome gent.*

years old shortly after his arrival, and for his birthday he was introduced to Angara. The Eurasian lynx is the largest of the lynxes. The lynxes of eastern Siberia consistently reach the greatest size (*Angara is from the Siberian line*). The Eurasian lynx has relatively long legs,



*Angara seems interested in her younger suitor from Sweden.*

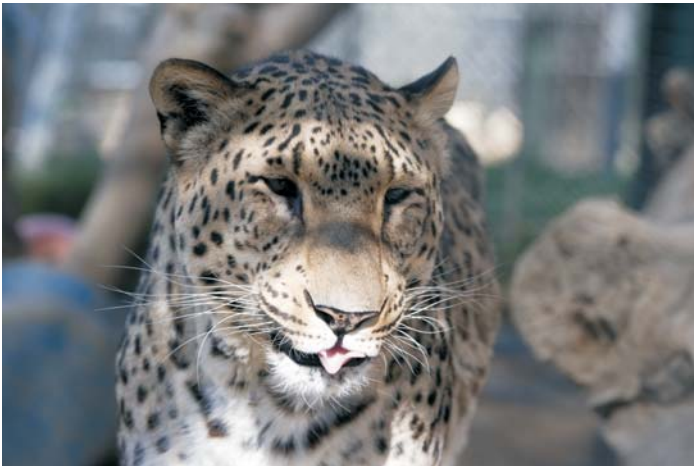
bottom of the feet. The coat is grey, with tint varying from rusty to yellowish. A bright reddish tint, with profuse spotting, is seen most frequently in the south-western part of the lynx’s range (southern Europe, Asia Minor and the Caucasus).

There are three main coat patterns: predominantly spotted, predominantly striped, and plain. Eurasian lynx have long, prominent black ear tufts, and short black-tipped tails. Lynx activity peaks in the evening and morning hours.

While all the lynx species are similar in appearance, the Eurasian lynx bears the closest morphological resemblance to the Canada lynx, and the two are very often treated as conspecific. There are convincing arguments that the two are ecologically separate species however. Specialization for different prey has led to a divergence in life history and social and spatial organization. Unlike the Canada lynx, the Eurasian lynx has a "phenotype set" typical of a large felid. The Eurasian lynx is large, long-lived, kills prey at least half its own body weight, forages over wide areas, and generally exists at low densities. Only in some parts of its range, chiefly the northern boundary, is there ecological similarity between the Eurasian and Canada lynxes in their predation on cyclically fluctuating hare populations.

The Eurasian lynx has one of the widest ranges of all cat species, with approximately 75% of the range within the borders of Russia. Lynx have been recorded as far north as 72°N, near the edge of the continental landmass.

### **Persian Leopards: Rarest leopards in North America?**



*Shapur, one of the last 5 Persian leopards in North America*

The country for which this cat received its name is now known as Iran. This is the common name for *Panthera pardus saxicolor*, one of the subspecies of leopard who lives on at the EFBC-FCC. Some of you know him as Shapur, and he is one of only

five male Persian leopards left in the North American line. The last female Persian Leopard (Shapur's mother) on this side of the ocean recently passed away.

Eight leopard subspecies are listed in the 2004 IUCN Red List of Threatened Species as either "endangered" or "critically endangered" and seven of them are living today in Asia. Without taking active, targeted, and large-scale conservation measures, they are in imminent danger of extinction from the Earth. The Persian, Amur, and North Chinese Leopards are all in danger of disappearance.

European facilities house about 78 Persian Leopards, and Australia has one male and female listed in the International Species Inventory System (ISIS). As with all of these sub-species in danger of extinction, the EFBC-FCC is constantly seeking ways to help solve this global issue.

The Persian Leopard's current range extends over the Middle East and its total number is less than 1,300 individuals. Most of the cats are found in Iran (550–850 animals) and especially in its northwestern portion adjoining southern Armenia and Azerbaijan (160–275). The number in Afghanistan is unknown, but should be at least several hundred. The rampant leopard fur trade (In the Kabul market) after the long-term civil unrest may pose the greatest threat to survival.

Considering the remaining lands that this leopard has to call its realm, the outlook for the species is less than desirable. Preserving the genetics through captive lines has never been as crucial as it is now. All of our members can be proud to know they are a voice for this effort.

### **Update on Pallas's cat embryo implants:**

No kittens expected by Erie Zoo Pallas' cats, despite surgery - The AP 04/05/2008

ERIE, Pa.—Erie Zoo officials say efforts to impregnate three Central Asian wildcats have failed.

The Pallas' cats arrived from the San Diego Zoo last year and were implanted with embryos. The embryos were made with eggs taken from other cats in the Cincinnati Zoo that were inseminated with sperm drawn from wild cats in Mongolia. But sonograms done by a medical team from the Cincinnati Zoo this week show the Erie cats aren't pregnant. There are only 45 Pallas' cats in



*There have been no new births to report this year of the Pallas' cat.*

captivity in North American zoos (*Twelve of which are housed here at the EFBC-FCC.*). Bill Swanson, director of the Cincinnati Zoo's center for Conservation and Research of Endangered Wildlife, says officials had hoped success with the procedure would lead to similar success with other animals.

#### **Amur leopard website redone:**



*The EFBC-FCC has had twelve births of the Amur leopard, and can boast the most genetic variability of any facility in North America.*

**[Http://www.amur-leopard.org/](http://www.amur-leopard.org/)**

Many of you have purchased the shirts we offer in our gift shop and online to aid the wild effort for this most endangered species of leopard.

In order to show the support we have for the effort to keep these leopards walking free, we request

that you wear your shirts often, but most importantly to our upcoming events. Photos of our patrons and members will be sent to Russia to show them that the world does care.

Look for the banner, buy a shirt if you can, and look for Eric Barkalow at our events. He is collecting digital photos that will be sent to an international audience. If you visit the above website you may find a photo featured in our Winter 2007 issue of Spots and Stripes, featuring Eric when he visited Africa wearing his Amur leopard logo shirt. All proceeds from the sales of these shirts go to the anti-poaching effort and to protect the Leopard's environment.

If there is enough interest, we may create a special event centered around this theme.

#### **Twilight tours: September 20 2008**

The entry fee is \$15. **These events are for adults 18 and over only.** Those that pre-pay for these events may come in at 5PM. Entry for same night admissions begins at 5:30PM.



*Guests look on as our tiger Caesar goes for an evening stroll.*

Twilight tours are held three times a year and are fun filled events that highlight the diversity that is the EFBC-FCC. All of our breeding areas and back areas are open, and volunteers are out in force to answer questions and share stories about the felines.

Toys for the cats (known as enrichments) are handed out and with the sun setting, many of the cats get as excited as our guests. Come wander about and see what happens as night takes the desert.

## Fabulous Feline Follies: August 16, 2008

The theme this year is "A Night On Safari" and the greatest supporters of our cat family are usually in attendance at this once a year event. Come mix and mingle and see what this year's safari may have in store. Last year's guests had the chance to get up close with Jun Jie, our North Chinese Leopard cub, a caracal from Zoo to You that purred for our guests, and many other animals that were not so nice to touch, such as an African porcupine. Tickets are limited, so please make your reservations soon.



*Guests that brought their own camera have moments like these captured forever from our follies events. While at Twilight Tours we sometimes do instant photos for an additional charge, the Follies Events are far more relaxed. Here Melanie holds JJ while guests enjoy the thrill of touching a leopard.*

There is always a need for sponsors, so if you have contact information for a business that might be interested, please contact us so we can follow up with them.

We will be closed the day (8-16-08) of the Feline Follies to prepare for the event, so please note that on your calendar.

### **Project tiger update:**

Work continues on project tiger. Half of this large enclosure should be ready for tigers within the next six months. Paperwork to bring the felines in may take longer than that, but it is hoped that the wait is almost over.

Thank you all for your continued support for this



*The rock facing work has begun, and the enclosure is starting to look like a home for the pampered. Built in pool, waterfall, and skylights for natural lighting indoors!*

project. We have had some more donations come in recently, including a \$100 bill from a gentleman that said nothing more than that he was involved with the Best Friends organization.

Fund raising is still ongoing, and no date has been set for the second stage to be completed.

### **Kid's Day: November 22**

This is not just a children's event, as many of the parents have found out in years past. Like our twilight tours the cats get toys to play with, and some of them are decorated and designed by the children in attendance!

With educational presentations that include a variety of animals the value of this day is immeasurable. The admission price is only \$7.00 an Adult and \$5.00 a Child. While we don't open up the back areas, we do have a train ride that takes visitors into the back where a volunteer gives an educational tour for those that partake of this optional adventure.

The center has always had an active interest in educating young people about its preservation programs, the importance of conservation efforts, and the benefits of housing species in a captive environment. Through the years, thousands of students have visited the center with their schools, youth-oriented organizations, family, and friends. Although many children want to help at the center or become a volunteer, it is simply too dangerous for us to allow them. More than a

few have come out shortly after their eighteenth birthday, and some have even been inspired enough to seek out a career in the fields of conservation, in part due to this center.

On this special day we allow children some hands on ways to help keep our felines happy. Although they still can't work directly with any of the felines, they can leave with a feeling they helped do something about a worldwide problem, locally.

As always, we hope to see you at all of our events

**Big Cat Bazaar:** It was a hot weekend, but many people still managed to get out to sort through the donations received. A special thanks go out to all our volunteers and staff that endured 100 degree heat to raise funds for the felines.

**Maintenance area:**

Shipping containers have added a valuable new area to the facility, and the storage areas they provide will be utilized fully.



*Using the containers as walls, we will soon have a covered area to work on vehicles, make den boxes, and do other projects.*

**Intern:**

My name is Rachel Meili and I have come all the way from Wisconsin to the EFBC as a summer intern. I am 22 years old and next year I will be completing a double major in Biology and Wildlife Management as well as a minor in Captive Wildlife at UW-Stevens Point. Being this far along in my education, I am most fascinated by and would most like to pursue a career working with animals in captivity. I feel that if an animal is no longer capable of being reintroduced back into the wild its stay in captivity should be as natural and as enjoyable as possible. So far, every past job I

have had, has involved scooping some sort of animal poo. LOL, so I have no problem in that area.

Conservation is a very important concept at UWSP's College of Natural Resources. That is why I decided to focus my project on the critical endangerment of the Amur Leopard. I am planning to construct some sort of informational sign to be put in the gift shop or near the Amur Leopard enclosures to educate the visitors a little bit more about this species, just how lucky they are to be observing it, and what they can do to help.



*Rachel and Maggie "margay"*

**Funding:**

A special thank you to the following for their additional donations to our general operating funds. With the increase in fuel, utilities, food - and all other operating expenses, these additional donations mean even more than ever:

Brent Pringle & Vicki Haneckow, Andrei and Masha Vernikov (Moscow Russia), Vicki Collins, David Forward, Chris Tromborg, Toni Chancellor-Adams, Bonnie Clark, Peter Beckham, David Gregory, Sharon Young-Martin, Melissa Breeding, and Mary Thomas.

The following were restricted donations to our "Project Tiger" building fund received this past quarter; Charles & Shelia Binkley \$500.00, and Tina Zeigler \$50.00.

The Kern County Tourism Grant Program funded our request for \$5000.00 for the production and distribution of a rack card promotion program. Thank you to all at the Kern County Board of Trade for your support of our efforts.

## Tiger news:

THIMPHU, Bhutan, May 9, 2008 (ENS) - Fresh pictures and pug marks from the Jigme Dorji National Park show that royal Bengal tigers in Bhutan are being found at altitudes never seen before. In fact, authorities say that the tigers are going so high that they are overlapping the habitat of the elusive snow leopard.

"We've realized that Bhutan is now officially the only country in the world to have tigers at such high altitudes and also the only country where the habitat of the snow leopard and the tiger are overlapping," said Tiger Sangay of the Nature Conservation Division. Sources say that pug marks and pictures can be seen between 3,700 to 4,300 meters in the latest study. The study, which started in April 2008, is using 38 strategically placed GPS marked and infrared-trigger cameras to find out the total number of tigers in the country. At the moment, the study is focused in Jigme Dorji National Park and will move to other parks. According to Tiger Sangay, each tiger has a unique stripe.

### WISH LIST

Landscape materials, plants and trees  
(8x8x16 concrete block, re-bar, cement)  
New electrical supplies  
Golf carts (electric)

The study will also extend to get a solid photographic record of the total number of snow leopards in the country. The rough estimate was around 100 but there is now confirmed data that can support this guesstimate. These cats have been known to reside in heights of up to 5,500 meters coming down to 2,000 meters in the winters.

The implications and reasons for tigers being found at such high altitudes will hopefully emerge from the study. "We may also get data on how the overlapping of territory of these two big cats may be affecting each other, if at all," said Sangay.

"Global warming with warmer temperatures in the higher reaches is a logical but not confirmed explanation," said animal specialist Dr. Sangay Wangchuk of the Nature Conservation Division.

Another possible explanation could also be habitat pressure on tigers forcing them to extend their hunting area upwards with growing habitat disruption at the lower reaches.

Officials also say that the latest data is an indication of the good health of Bhutan's forests because they allow the tiger to easily reach high places due to continuous forest cover in a diverse landscape.

Another explanation, say experts, could be that it may always have been there but it is only now that we are learning about it. "We're also hoping to see if tigers at these altitudes have developed any extra features by which we can classify them as being different from their cousins in the plains," said Sangay. "We're looking for features like if they're bigger than the plain version or if they have more fur to deal with the cold." He is already looking forward to compiling a comprehensive report on Bhutan's unique and little known high altitude tigers for scientific journals like "Biological Conservation" and the "Journal of Wildlife Management."

Also, an area of interest will be a study on how tigers and snow leopards are affecting each other. "The worst case scenario will be the bigger tiger going higher and minusing (sic) out the smaller snow leopard, since they don't tolerate other predators in their area, but generally we



*Caesar looks out from the safety of his logs as the sun sets.*

hope that they'll not impact each other nor come into close contact," Sanjay said.

Tigers and snow leopards so far have moved higher and lower, according to season, in winter and summer, but the record altitude of these tigers may also test this theory. Another fact emerging from the study is that

tigers and snow leopards are following the migration pattern of domestic yaks and cattle. "With 300,000 cattle increasingly penetrating more forest, they're beginning to affect the hunting patterns of these big cats," said Dr. Wangchuk.

Between 2003 to 2006, there were 424 confirmed tiger kills of yaks, cows, horses, bull, mules and sheep.

The last study was done in the Jigme Singye Wangchuck Park where cameras were used in 2006 to get data of tigers there. Old data show that 115 to 150 tigers are found in Bhutan and have been seen in Bumdeling Wildlife Sanctuary, Thrumshingla National Park and also in Manas and Sarpang.

With emerging new data on tigers and snow leopards, Bhutan may be the next frontier of research into unlocking the secrets of these unlikely high altitude competitors.

The forgoing article was originally published by Kuensel Newspaper.

**Following is text from Tiger Territory website:**

**[Http://www.lairweb.org.nz/tiger/](http://www.lairweb.org.nz/tiger/)**

**Captive Sumatran tiger numbers:**

Captive Sumatran tigers are found in Indonesian, North American, European, Japanese and Australian zoos, with the latter area placing their focus almost completely on this subspecies.

The entire captive Sumatran population descends from only 37 wild-caught founders. Currently, one third of all Sumatrans are bred and protected in zoos or captive breeding centers; this is approximately 235 cats, all of these being listed in the international studbook. Some of the tigers at captive breeding centers were problem cats, threatening people or livestock. The native answer for dangerous tigers is to ask a shaman to charm the responsible cat into a trap; it's a method that can result in the death of innocent tigers.

The more scientific method is to translocate the animals, usually to the main breeding center located on Java. This presently contains 32 males and 29 females, many of these being animals which would previously have been shot.

**Sumatran tiger studbook:** Studbooks are designed to ensure significant genetic diversity remains so as to strengthen captive populations. Using the records kept, pairs are selected for breeding based on genetic history and soundness. It is hoped that this will ensure a stable population and prevent possible extinction.

Captive management of the Sumatran tiger is a huge improvement on the wild situation, which still has a considerable way to go before it becomes effective.

### **Bengal Tiger in Captivity**

Indian zoos have bred tigers since 1880, with the first successful attempt occurring at Alipore Zoo in Calcutta. Since then the Bengal tiger has bred freely in captivity. It has reached the stage where contraceptives are needed to prevent an excess of captive tigers, for which adequate facilities may not be available. The 1994 International Tiger Studbook listed 333 captive Bengal tigers. One of these, one tigress, was in a North American zoo, while the rest were within India.



*While not on display right now, Oranda, who was found orphaned in Washington State, is a gorgeous Puma that is enjoying her space in a secluded back area.*