



EFBC/Feline Conservation Center

<http://www.wildcatzoo.org>

DEDICATED TO THE PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF ENDANGERED FELINES SUMMER 2010

Cat Update:

New arrival: Kai - Female fishing cat, arrived April 2010 from Dallas Zoo (born March 17, 2008 at Minnesota Zoo). Paired with Nemo who was born here at the EFBC-FCC on July 1 of 2004.



Fishing cats are now considered endangered. Native to riverbanks from India through Southeast Asia, these cats love to fish. They have partially webbed paws and a double layer of fur so when they go in the water they don't get wet down to the skin. They don't have full claw sheaths (similar to the cheetah) so their claws are partially visible even when retracted. Although they have a substantial range in tropical Asia (over 1 million square kilometers), its actual area of occupancy is much smaller as it is strongly associated with wetlands. In 2003 it was reported that 45% of protected wetlands and 95% of globally significant wetlands in Southeast Asia were threatened. Water pollution and forest clearance for settlement threaten the species through much of its range. Deforestation



412 OSS/OSAT from Edwards AFB

rates in tropical Asia's wetlands are quite high, resulting in similar decline among the fishing cat populations.

Project Tiger:

In March Abigail M. Diaz from Edwards AFB 412 OSS/OSAT got together a group from her squad and spent the day painting the last half of Project Tiger exhibit. They did a great job and all of us here at EFBC appreciate the time that they gave to help us finish this exhibit.

Duwayne Howell's family has enjoyed the EFBC-FCC for many years, but he was always too busy to make it out himself. Duwayne began volunteering two years ago, lining up visitors cars as they parked for special events. Duwayne's occupation is a welder and as such, we found plenty for him to do. The new main

enclosures show his handiwork. The new freezer has a rain/shade cover due in part to his dedication. Those of you that have been watching project tiger may notice his handiwork, since the welding is almost done due to Duwayne. Often as much as six days a week,



Duwayne working on Project Tiger

and working all day long, he truly gave himself toward the effort, welding in tight places, through paint, and hanging in the air.

Duwayne shares his home with Lilly, a miniature dachshund that has been blinded by ailments. He is currently stomp training Lilly, helping her to deal with the diabetic condition that has affected her health. If there is a message he would like to send to all the other tradesmen out there it would be: "Get out here and make yourself useful." To all the members and volunteers his request is that they continue to come out, and support the EFBC-FCC.

We have started construction on the rock walls inside Project Tiger. One side should be completely finished



by the June Twilight Tour. Hopefully we can get a start on the other side soon.

Upcoming Events:

Twilight Tour dates: June 19th and September 18:
These are the only times adults (18 and over only) can come visit all of the cats, see the breeding areas, and enjoy an evening with the felines. These events start at 5 PM for those willing to buy tickets in advance, everyone else waits till 5:30. Tickets are \$15. The June Twilight Tour is also Foster Parent's night, and our adoptive parents are invited to attend free as our guests. If you can make it, call Sandy @ 661-256-3793 so she can add your name to our prepaid list.

There is a bake sale to benefit our local AAZK chapter, a raffle, and burgers and dogs are cooked up by the local Rotary club, so come hungry! Call the gift shop for tickets, 10am -4pm Thursday through Tuesday - (661)256-3793.

If this is the first you have heard of these events, they are very special. Evening hours bring cooler temperatures, and enrichments are given out. Ever see a leopard act like a kitten? Want to see a jaguar devour a watermelon? See a fishing cat fish? Get close to a white or orange tiger? Mark your calendar, and we'll see you there!

This year we celebrate the 21st annual Fabulous Feline Follies!!! Our theme this year is the "Snow Tails."

Join us! Tickets are \$75, 18 and over only please. Dress is casual. Collectible glasses will be sold with special icy drinks. A silent auction will offer fabulous items. A live animal show, raffle, and door prizes will add to the excitement, as well as a special guest speaker. Raffle first prize is \$1,000, winner need not be present. Sponsors are being sought. An information package is available online, and we invite you to print it and help us solicit sponsors. A Follies package will also be mailed to all members. With the economy in its present state, we need help! We already know some of our regular sponsors will be unable to continue their support this year. The money raised at Follies is vital to supporting the cats over the winter months.

The Follies event has sold out the last two years and several people missed the opportunity to attend so get your tickets early.

Save The Date!
21st Annual Fabulous Feline Follies
August 14 2010

*conservation speaker * silent auction
 animal entertainment * AND MORE!*

Sponsors Needed

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



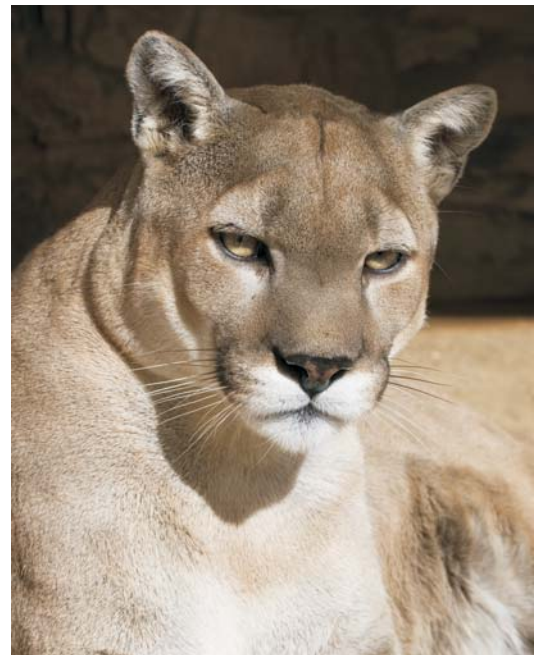
Cat News:

The life and times of a cougar named DOUG By Rob Alexander - Rocky Mountain Outlook - Published: April 14, 2010 7:00 PM

Doug the cougar died as he had lived, out there in the public eye. Parks Canada staff identified Doug's carcass on April 2 after a canoeist reported finding a badly decomposed cougar carcass in the Bow River not far upstream from the canoe docks. And so, for one last time, just as it had on so many occasions, the blue-ear tag emblazoned with the No. 61 let officials know they had found Doug. After an impromptu

evaluation of the carcass, Steve Michel, human-wildlife conflict specialist with Banff National Park, said he was certain the 14-year-old cougar, which showed no signs of trauma, died of old age.

How Doug ended up in the river is left to speculation – he may have fallen through the ice while chasing an elk, or he could simply have died on the ice. While the circumstances of his death will never be known, the fact his carcass was found is not only fitting, but provides an end to the story of a remarkable animal, which according to Michel demonstrated that humans and large carnivores can share the same landscape. “It is a good testament that we can live together. There is no question that in the very rare circumstance, cougars



Teddi, our resident cougar.

can pose a threat to people and domestic animals. There's no question about that and people need to be aware of that possibility and be proactive to do their part to prevent situations like that arising. “But this is also a good example of how rare those situations are and just because a cougar is around and using an area close to people doesn't mean he is going to get into a conflict with people,” Michel said. “His whole story is a real success story in terms of his use of corridors. When we were able to restore a corridor to a more natural state, he was willing to use it very, very quickly. We've learned that corridor restoration can

really be a success and we just have to take those essential first steps to get things back into good shape and the animals will quickly learn to utilize it,” he said.

Doug was tagged and outfitted with a GPS collar in January 2002 as part of a research project undertaken by Andrea Kortello as part of her master’s-degree thesis seeking to understand cougar-wolf interaction in the central Bow Valley. Kortello said her interest in the project arose after wolves returned to the Bow Valley, beginning with two in 1999 and growing to 17 by 2002, following by work to improve the wildlife corridors. The increased number of wolves led to greater conflict between the two species as they competed for the same habitat and prey with cougars being pushed closer to town. “Our hypothesis was because of this competition and because cougars lose out in this competition, cougars avoid wolves and that the town was acting as a refugia.” This refugia – a habitat providing protection or security – attracted numerous elk and deer and cougars as a result, allowing the big cats to hunt without fear of wolves. However, Kortello said it also led to increased encounters with cougars in the Banff region, culminating with the death of Frances Frost of Canmore, who was killed by a cougar in 2001 while cross-country skiing near Lake Minnewanka. That in turn led to a great deal of fear and uncertainty, while raising many questions about cougars in the Bow Valley, Kortello said.

To answer some of those questions, Kortello, working with Parks Canada and provincial wildlife authorities, radio collared 12 cougars over a three-year period between Dead Man’s Flats and Castle Junction. Doug, five years old at the time, was tagged and collared in January 2002. Cougars are caught using dogs, which tree the cats, allowing researchers to tranquilize them – a process that may sound easier than it is, especially in Doug’s case. Each time the dogs treed Doug, he leaped from the tree reigniting the chase. He did this five times before he could finally be tranquilized. “Every time we came up, he jumped out and started running again instead of hanging out in the tree. In that particular instance, every tree he treed in was a Douglas fir, so we called him Doug,” she said.

With a GPS collar around his neck, researchers began to understand how Doug used the Bow Valley, and how tolerant he was of people, quite willing to use wildlife crossing structures and to hunt in the most unlikely places close to developed areas. “Some staff I work with here weren’t really comfortable with what Doug was doing. They thought it was something we should be more concerned about in that he might have posed a threat to public safety with his behaviour, being so close.” Michel said. But, following numerous discussions with cougar experts, Michel added the unanimous opinion was that having a large, dominant male willing to use and hunt in areas close to people without showing any aggression towards people or domestic animals is an ideal situation. “Having a big dominant male like that means some of the younger cougars will stay well away from his entire home range. He’ll actively defend his home range and the younger, less dominant males will be aware there’s a big male around town and they’ll stay clear,” Michel said, adding it is the younger males – which is the same with bears – that often cause problems as they haven’t honed their hunting skills or don’t have the maturity of an adult. Young males may be willing to create conflict situations by testing encounters with people or by killing pets, Michel said. “By having a big male like Doug around, we really had the luxury of not having to worry about any of those situations because he wouldn’t allow younger males to stray into his home range,” he said.

While Doug was comfortable using wildlife corridors, crossing structures and areas on the periphery of Banff, Kortello said he also spent a large amount of time in the wilderness area flanking the Trans-Canada Highway from Protection Mountain on Highway 93 South to Canmore. But when he did come near roads and developed areas, Kortello said the data demonstrated Doug changed his behaviour, becoming nocturnal to avoid people. “It’s important to know he wasn’t lurking around on a continual basis. In fact, in terms of the amount of time he spent actually around town, it was not that great. He’d zip through the corridors through the night unless he made a kill,” Kortello said. She added that fact is important, as having a cougar comfortable living in people’s backyards is problematic. “It is a really fine balance

and Doug had that balance. It is one of the things that made him special. He didn't come into town, but lived on the periphery," Kortello said.

But when the 150-pound cougar did kill an ungulate, he often did so in the most unexpected places and occasionally in places people could watch the entire encounter or at least the end result when he remains on the carcass feeding. Michel said he could think of at least 10 occasions in the past three years where Doug killed elk, deer and bighorn sheep in surprising areas. On one occasion, Doug ambushed and killed an elk in the Trans-Canada Highway underpass near the old bison paddock, while on another he took down another elk on the edge of the recreation grounds just off the pavement near the kids bike park. "There was a great incident last summer where he was riding across the back off a mule deer near the edge of the industrial compound and a contractor got to see that as they went running across the road in front of him with Doug hanging off the deer," Michel said. Doug also killed an elk one night on the ice on Forty Mile Creek just upstream from the Trans-Canada Highway, creating a cougar-jam in the morning as motorists spotted him as he smashed ice and used the broken pieces to bury the carcass. Michel decided to move the carcass as people were stopping on the highway. He dragged the carcass a short distance off the creek and into the trees to give Doug some privacy. In the process, Michel said he tried to smash the ice with his heavy hiking boots, but quickly realized he couldn't. "And yet Doug had been smashing this ice with his paws and breaking these big large chunks of ice free and covering them all over the top of the elk. It was just a testament to how strong and powerful an animal like that is."

After Kortello finished her study, Doug's GPS collar was replaced with a VHF radio collar, allowing researchers to keep track of him sporadically until that collar fell off in 2007. Kortello and her colleague Simon Ham found the collar after it put out a mortality signal, indicating it hadn't moved in six hours. Following the signal, Kortello and Ham, expecting to find that Doug had died, located the collar on a pass near Mt. Bourgeau buried under seven feet of snow – but no Doug. But, Doug being Doug, he kept popping up.

"We were pretty pleased after that to catch him on the underpass cameras and know he was still around. It's nice to know that after an animal provided a lot of good info on cougar movement and use of developed areas around town, that it is not carrying a collar anymore and going on its way," she said. Doug went on his way for three more years, but even though he is no longer with us, he left a substantial legacy. "Doug was a cougar that could get around and adapt to people's presence and I'd say that he let us know a lot about how cougars interact with people. How they use human-dominated environments and how their behaviour is affected by human activity," she said. This past year alone, Kortello said Doug is known to have fathered five kittens in the Bow Valley region with three different females. "He has left a legacy and I was happy that he died being a cougar. So many carnivores in the valley get killed by the train or on the highway. It was really nice to see him die a natural death – of being an old cougar," she said.

Doug also assisted Parks Canada to implement its Elk Management Strategy by killing elk in the townsite region, doing exactly what Parks Canada wants to occur, Michel said. "The reality is, they (cougars) are doing exactly what we are saying on paper we want carnivores to do. We want them to utilize these corridors close to town. We want them to reconnect with some of these habituated townsite elk and deer causing problems. When it happens it makes us a little bit nervous, but it is exactly what we want them to do," Michel said.

Ultimately, Doug's story is a success story, reminding us that it is possible to share this valley with large predators. "He pushed the boundaries of our comfort level and tested us a bit in terms of what we were willing to tolerate. We were almost testing each other's boundaries a bit. "He pushed the boundaries on what we thought cougars were willing to do and areas they would be willing to utilize and conversely, our own boundaries got pushed a bit as to what we were willing to tolerate from cougars on the landscape and conversely our boundaries," Michel said. Now that Doug's territory is open, Michel said he is uncertain of what will happen next. Another male or males will certainly occupy Doug's home range, but whether or

not another large, dominant male will arrive and occupy it or one of the younger males will grow into the dominant male, remains to be seen.

But both Kortello and Michel agreed they'll miss seeing Doug pop up in the most unlikely places. "It is special to have a glimpse into the lives of these animals and both him and I have followed Doug around in the snow quite a bit. We've seen what he is eating and where he is leaving pee-mail for the ladies or for the other cougars to mark his territory. It's been pretty amazing thing to be a part of this, to know a part of this cougar's life."



Nikolai, Pallas' cat.

General Donations:

The support we are receiving to our general operating funds have significantly helped us with the challenging economic times. We extend a special thank you to the following for their donations this last quarter: Dr. Rick Butler and Darline Raskind both donated \$1,000.00. Kroeber Sound gave \$1,600 for the use of our animal sounds for a pro-bono interactive display they are doing for another facility, and Animal Explorations shot another episode of their show for ABC here and donated \$500. Additional donors were Susan Lozier and Ian MacLeod, Chris Tromborg, David Forward, Bonnie Clark, Kevin Sinichko, Martha and David Gregory, Evelyn Wisneski, Melissa Breeding, Sophie McIntosh, Lisa Edmondson, Gerald

Bandy, Vicki Collins, and Ron Wildermuth. Thank you all!



Obi serval, fishing at the last Twilight Tour.

Non-cash Donations:

Tim Peveler of Tim's Bamboo Gardens in Central, Indiana has provided us with several different species of bamboo for planting around the facility. We are hoping that some of the species will thrive in our high desert environment. Thanks Tim.!



Thanks also to Dave Hunsinger for donating a HP All-in-one printer, fax, scanner, and Tina Zeigler for donating some much needed cleaning supplies.

Sevastian Update:

We are very happy to advise everyone that Sevastian, our young Amur leopard who is battling cancer is

doing great. His one year regiment of chemotherapy will not end until November 2010, but the frequency of his treatments will change to every four weeks at the end of May. Sevastian's cancer is located in the sinus cavity and was detected due to profuse nose bleeds. Since treatment began, the nose bleeds have stopped, his blood work is good, he has never missed a meal, and depression has not been an issue. ABC's Animal Explorations spent three days here at EFBC filming an episode which highlighted our medical talents and the measures our organization goes to provide the best possible care for our feline family. They interviewed our veterinarians, Dr. Scott Weldy and Dr. Kristi Krause as they filmed Sevastian's chemotherapy treatment. They also used X-ray images, titanium rods and screws to show the amount of highly technical skills that were needed to rebuild the ankle of our female Amur leopard Tanya. The success of her surgery was evident when they also filmed her attacking a large cardboard box she received as an enrichment, and proudly carrying it into her den box. The day prior to Dr. Weldy and Dr. Krause's arrival, we observed that our young male

Eurasian lynx Assar had labored breathing. With all the rains we had, we were suspecting pneumonia or a possible fungal infection. The crew from Animal Explorations also filmed this exam, however the outcome was not good. An ultrasound revealed that Assar had extreme cardiomyopathy, a congenital disease which causes thickening of the heart walls. There is no treatment and the condition is fatal. Assar did not recover from anesthesia and we lost him.

WISH LIST

Large food prep table (stainless steel)

Industrial refuse containers

New electrical supplies

Golf carts (electric)

Pulse oximeter units



Aztec, jaguarundi

We were surprised when Animal Explorations decided to include this sad event but they felt it was important to let their viewers know that when you deal with animals, like people, some things are beyond our control. EFBC can provide the best medical care to



Lancaster Rotary at our April Twilight Tour

our animals only because of the generous support of all our members. Your donations go a long way, and we especially want to thank those of you who have contributed to Sevastian's medical fund for helping our boy have a long, happy life.