



EFBC/Feline Conservation Center

<http://www.wildcatzoo.org>

DEDICATED TO THE PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF ENDANGERED FELINES Fall 2011



*On July 7, three fishing cat cubs were born to Kai and Nemo. Kai is raising them off display, but we hope they will come out and fish at our final Twilight Tour of the year on September 17.*

### **Fishing Cat (*Prionailurus viverrinus*):**

Listed as endangered by the IUCN red list, Fishing Cats are losing habitat to agriculture, toxic pollution has infiltrated much of their prey, and people still value its fur and meat. It is no wonder that we feel this species deserves our efforts for captive conservation. Kai and Nemo have highly desired bloodlines and this litter should help the genetics of future generations.

Often confused with the Leopard Cat, many of the areas once believed to have Fishing Cats are now suspect. The island of Java may have never had this species, and if it ever did, there doesn't appear to be any there now. In addition, Thailand now believes there are only two sites with Fishing Cat populations and has started a public education program to slow the persecution that this felid has received. Fishing cats are remarkable animals with a dense fur coat. They are different than most cats in many ways,

including a love of water, claws that remain outside the sheath even when retracted, interdigital webs, and a mid sized stocky body.

### **Vet's Corner:**

Our board member, Dr. Kristi Krause D.V.M., serves as the Fishing Cat and Jaguarundi Veterinary Advisor for the Association of Zoos and Aquariums' Felid Taxon Advisory Group. She is working with many of the facilities housing Fishing Cats to investigate a cancer that appears more often in these cats than in other captive wild felines. Below is a summary of findings to date.

A Transitional cell carcinoma (TCC) is a tumor commonly found in the bladder. It has been found in approximately 20 captive Fishing Cats over the last 10 years. The tumors are most commonly found at the neck of the bladder where urine exits out the urethra, but they may also be present in other areas of the bladder wall. These tumors will commonly invade the urethra, as well as the ureter (where urine comes from the kidneys to the



*Kai with one of the three cubs.*

bladder), causing an obstruction and inability to urinate. Tumor cells can eventually metastasize, or spread, to surrounding abdominal organs and/or the lungs. This disease is affecting cats as early as 7 years of age, but is mostly found in older cats. The most common clinical signs include blood in the urine and straining to urinate.



*Kristi with the original artwork donated by Chris Hoy - It went for \$1000 at Follies! Thanks again Chris.*

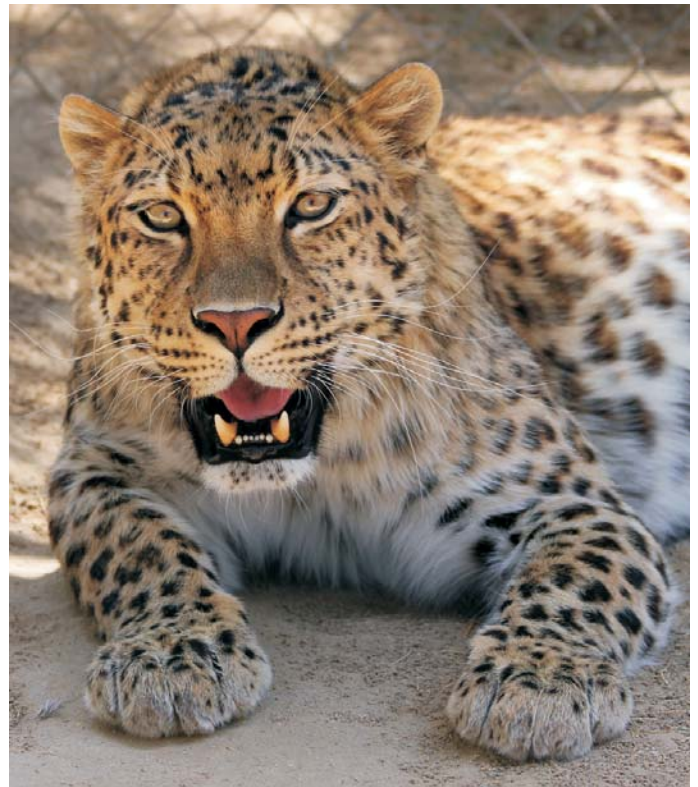
Treatment for TCC usually consists of surgically removing as much of the tumor as possible and treatment with piroxicam, an anti-inflammatory medication shown to have anti-tumor properties. Surgery is sometimes difficult when the urethra and/or ureter are involved. Recently, a Bladder Cancer Working Group was formed, aimed at gaining a better understanding of the cause of the disease, how to prevent it, how to detect it early, and the best way to treat it. An Action Plan was created that addresses four main aspects of the disease — epidemiology/risk factors, diagnostics, veterinary therapy, and dietary issues. Currently, samples of blood and urine are being collected opportunistically (when cats are anesthetized for other reasons, not specifically for sample collection for this purpose) from as many Fishing Cats as possible in the captive population, as well as samples of their diet.

The group is working with human oncologists to evaluate the suitability of human TCC biomarkers for detecting the disease in Fishing Cats in urine, as well as developing new diagnostic methods, based on biomarkers in urine, blood, and tissue, and evaluating them for early cancer detection and diagnosing the type of tumor. These findings will

help establish recommendations for age-specific TCC screening.

The Bladder Cancer Working Group is also doing a more thorough assessment of studbook data to identify all TCC cases in North America and global populations and assessing the relationship of these cases to diets and genetic relatedness of individuals.

Nutrition may play a major role in the high prevalence of TCC in Fishing Cats. As an adjunct to dietary surveys, nutrient levels (especially anti-oxidants) need to be assessed in blood and urine of captive Fishing Cats on various diets. Comparison of these values to that of wild Fishing Cats in Thailand also would be useful.



*Under Kristi's care, Sevastian continues to do well in his fight with cancer. Thank you to all who will, and have already contributed to his medical fund.*

Findings from TCC characterization and early diagnosis studies will provide insight to the most appropriate veterinary therapy, especially non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, such as piroxicam, for alleviating clinical signs and slowing disease progression.

It is our hope that researching all of these aspects - epidemiology/risk factors (including genetics), nutrition, early diagnostics, and appropriate treatment - will not only help us to decrease, if not eliminate, the incidence of TCC in Fishing Cats but also bring a good quality of life to those few that are affected.

### **Kid's Day:** November 19, 2011

This is an all day family friendly event. While the center always seeks to be an educational center for young minds, on this day we pull out all the stops, and create a fun learning environment for children of all ages.

Live animal shows, scavenger hunts, and enrichment making for the felines always make the day special. There is no need to buy tickets in advance for this event. Admission prices are raised on this day to help fund our many missions, and membership does not gain you free admission on this day. Adults will pay \$7, and kids (0-12, must be accompanied) are \$5 per child.

Enrichments will be handed out several times, and everyone is sure to have a great time. For a small additional charge a train ride to go up and see the tigers will be available.



*Cheryl of Wonders of Wildlife will be back for Kid's Day again this year. Her animals are always interesting, and many of them are a hands on experience! Bring the whole family and make a day of it! November 19!*

**Have you started your holiday shopping yet?** Remember that year-round you can help us out while shopping online at no cost to you! Just start

at our web page and use the Goodshop or Igive links, or bookmark those and start there in the future. Many online merchants will donate a portion of your purchase back to us.

Unfortunately due to changes in California law we are no longer affiliated with Amazon. This is sad, but we have raised nearly \$3500 through Igive, and you can even book travel, car rentals, and order magazines through them and generate donations.



*Shiela the kangaroo delighted our guests at Follies.*

### **2012 dates:**

Twilight tours: April 7, June 23, and September 15. Fabulous Feline Follies - August 18

Don't forget to renew your memberships if possible before the end of the year, as prices will be increasing for several levels on January 1. Individual memberships will rise from \$20 to \$25, family from \$30 to \$40, and support from \$50 to \$75. Twilight Tour admission will increase from \$15 to \$20.

General admission will increase to \$7 adults, \$6 seniors, \$5 children 3-12 (free under 3). A family membership will still pay for itself in 2 visits if you have 2 kids! For a list of benefits each level includes you can visit our website at [www.cathouse-fcc.org](http://www.cathouse-fcc.org).

### **Our Fabulous Feline Follies was held August 13**

- Thanks again to all of our sponsors:  
**TITANIUM** - Donations of \$2,500+ - Mary Marlowe - Los Angeles, CA. - Eric Barkalow & Nancy Vandermeay - Altadena, CA

**PLATINUM** - Donations of \$1,000 - AAZK-EFBC Chapter - Rosamond, CA. - Elizabeth Marquart - ElizabethSells.com - Sherman Oaks, CA. - Steven M. Crutchfield - Gainesville, VA. - Susan Lozier & Ian MacLeod - Omaha, NE. - George & Joan Paulikas - Palos Verdes, CA. - Scott & Nicole Pearson - Cheviot Hills, CA. - Garner Holt Productions Inc - San Bernardino, CA.



*Kim Blaquera gives Mary Marlowe her plaque.*

**GOLD** - Donations of \$500 - Valerie Loew, Happy Pets, Happy People, Tustin, CA. - Christine E. King, Los Alamitos, CA. - Serrano Animal & Bird Hospital - Lake Forest, CA.

**SILVER** - Donations of \$300 - Paul Castle, South End Recording - Oregon City, OR. - In Memory of Steve Rendes, former EFBC Director, by Irene & Cherylrenee Rendes - Fullerton, CA. - Diamond Jim's Casino - Rosamond, CA.

**BRONZE** - Donations of \$200 - Larry Purcell - Sav-on Fence - Lancaster, CA. - Diane M. Citron - Santa Monica, CA.

**Auction and Raffle Donors:** Chris Hoy, NBC/Universal, Safari West, Sandy Masek, Scott & Nicole Pearson, Nancy Vandermey & Eric Barkalow, Pam Rose & Gene Bowan, Camille & Jerry Gadwood, DeAnna Scott, Candy Martinez

(Stuffe & Nonsense), Raychelle Haney, Irene & Cherylrenee Rendes, Alan Mootnick (Gibbon Conservation Center), Betty Platero, Jorge & Jenny Kauffman, Yvonne King, Mariah Orsburn, Donna S. Cohen, Leslie Simmons, Lori Hands, Dale Rieth, Danny Jacobs - Antelope Valley Fair, Howard & Wanda Laire, Warner Brothers Studio, Shannon Hair Salon, The Huntington Library, Katz Kreations Photography, Trina Ray, Dreamworks Animation SKG, Debbie Clark for "Dancing With the Stars & America's Got Talent", Sony Pictures, La Beth Thompson, Don Patterson.



*Feline Follies platinum sponsors - thank you again!*

The 1st prize winner of the \$1000.00 cash prize in our Follies raffle was Tina & Tom Bowman of Long Beach, CA. The Bowman's continued their generous support of our organization by donating the prize money back to EFBC for our programs. We extend a special thank you to Tina and Tom.

### **Intern Jessica Larson**

My name is Jessica Larson and I am 20 years old. I am a senior at Auburn University in Alabama studying Zoology with a concentration in conservation. I have been working with all different kinds of animals for years and had several pets growing up. My interest in conservation began when I started volunteering at the Southeastern Raptor Center. I had never been to the EFBC's Feline Conservation Center before I started my internship so I didn't know what to expect but jumped at the chance to intern here because I have always been fascinated by exotic cats. All of the staff and

volunteers are great coworkers and all the cats are amazing to work with and be around every day. It is an incredible opportunity to work with people who are as passionate about the animals as I am and are working hard to help the cats and educate visitors about the importance of exotic felines in the wild and in captivity. I have enjoyed learning about all the different species and how to care for them and what can be done to protect them. The Amur Leopards here caught my attention since they are a critically endangered species; one in particular was Anju who is a very sweet girl that was born at EFBC. Every cat is different but it's a lot of fun watching them and seeing how similar they are to house cats and how they are different. I wish I could do more for the cats but this internship has opened doors for me to continue doing what I enjoy which is helping animals. The knowledge I have gained at EFBC will always be a part of me and I hope to share it with others as I continue my part working for the conservation of animals.

**The article below is a follow up to an article we printed in our last newsletter:**

**Mountain lions are turning up in Greenwich, Conn.** Greenwich, Conn., best known for hedge-fund and banking millionaires, is now earning a reputation for another potentially treacherous population -- mountain lions. After more than 100 years with nothing but news of high-bred dogs and people with names like Winthrop, Bush and Cohen, Greenwich has now had several reports of mountain lions roaming its tony quarters. In late spring there were three separate sightings in Greenwich, and then a wild mountain lion was killed by an SUV on a highway 37 miles north in the New Haven suburb of Milford. The Hartford Courant reported that authorities were stunned when DNA testing showed that the animal had probably traveled 1,500 miles from South Dakota to Connecticut, an unprecedented distance for that type of animal. Since then, the local police have fielded numerous reports of mountain lion sightings in Greenwich. Last week, two residents of a gated community adjacent to a wildlife preserve reported seeing one. This time, officials warned the locals to keep an eye on their children and dogs--and to be extra-cautious walking at dawn and dusk when the wild animals might be particularly active. As for the cat killed

on the highway, no one quite understands how he ended up so far from the Black Hills of South Dakota. A necropsy showed that the lean, 140-pound male was 2 to 4 years old, had an empty stomach and most likely had never spent time in captivity, according to the state environmental protection agency. His travels were well documented through sightings in Minnesota and Wisconsin; biologists speculate that he later wandered through southern Ontario and New York before reaching Connecticut. Connecticut's Department of Energy and Environmental Protection maintains that despite a dozen or so sightings a year, there is no evidence of a native mountain lion population in Connecticut. Officials are concerned that the heightened focus on the dead animal may be stirring local imaginations--to mistake garden-variety bobcats, coyotes and dogs for mountain lions. Nicknamed the St. Croix when he was seen wandering Wisconsin, the cat was the first confirmed mountain lion in the state of Connecticut since the 1880s.



*Our visitors now can enjoy air conditioning in the gift shop, as well as a good place to warm up in the winter time.*

### **Snow Leopard Population Discovered in Afghanistan**

Science Daily (July 13, 2011) — The Wildlife Conservation Society has discovered a surprisingly healthy population of rare snow leopards living in the mountainous reaches of northeastern Afghanistan's Wakhan Corridor, according to a new study. The discovery gives hope to the world's most elusive big cat, which

calls home to some of the world's tallest mountains. Between 4,500 and 7,500 snow leopards remain in the wild scattered across a dozen countries in Central Asia. The study, which appears in the June 29th issue of the International Journal of Environmental Studies, is by WCS conservationists Anthony Simms, Zalmai Moheb, Salahudin, Hussain Ali, Inayat Ali and Timothy Wood. WCS-trained community rangers used camera traps to document the presence of snow leopards at 16 different locations across a wide landscape. The images represent the first camera trap records of snow leopards in Afghanistan. WCS has been conserving wildlife and improving local livelihoods in the region since 2006 with support from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). "This is a wonderful discovery -- it shows that there is real hope for snow leopards in Afghanistan," said Peter Zahler, WCS Deputy Director for Asia Programs. "Now our goal is to ensure that these magnificent animals have a secure future as a key part of Afghanistan's natural heritage." According to the study, snow leopards remain threatened in the region. Poaching for their pelts, persecution by shepherds, and the capture of live animals for the illegal pet trade have all been documented in the Wakhan Corridor. In response, WCS has developed a set of conservation initiatives to protect snow leopards. These include partnering with local communities, training of rangers, and education and outreach efforts. Anthony Simms, lead author and the project's Technical Advisor, said, "By developing a community-led management approach, we believe snow leopards will be conserved in Afghanistan over the long term." WCS-led initiatives are already paying off. Conservation education is now occurring in every school in the Wakhan region. Fifty-nine rangers have been trained to date. They monitor not only snow leopards but other species including Marco Polo sheep and ibex while also enforcing laws against poaching. WCS has also initiated the construction of predator-proof livestock corrals and a livestock insurance program that compensates shepherds, though initial WCS research shows that surprisingly few livestock fall to predators in the region. In Afghanistan, USAID has provided support to WCS to work in more than 55 communities across the country and is training local people to monitor and sustainably manage their wildlife and other resources. One of the



*Chris Hoy and our live auctioneer Stan Ulvin pose together. Thank you for coming out and sharing your talents guys!*

many outputs of this project was the creation of Afghanistan's first national park -- Band-e-Amir -- which is now co-managed by the government and a committee consisting of all 14 communities living around the park. Snow leopards have declined by as much as 20 percent over the past 16 years and are considered endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

### **Ralph's Community Contribution program:**

On 9/1/11 it became time again for our members to re-register at [www.ralphs.com](http://www.ralphs.com) to continue to have a percentage of their purchases at Ralphs, Cala Foods, & Bell Markets donated to EFBC. Our NPO # is 82845. There is a direct link on our web site home page for your convenience. We want to thank everyone who participates in

this program. From 9/1/10 to 9/1/11 we have received \$1,818.36 from the Ralph's Contribution Program.

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

**Commercial grade hoses**

**Stainless steel water buckets**

**Electric golf carts**

**50/50 Raffle:**

Our 50/50 raffle drawing was held at our June 18th Twilight Tour. The winner of the \$1,390.00 cash prize was Karen Brown of Lancaster, CA. Congratulations Karen.

**Project Tiger:**

We are still hard at work on this project and have begun communications to bring in a pair of Sumatrans and a pair of Indo-China Tigers for breeding. Recent changes in regulations require us to put a top on the exhibit if we plan to house jaguars on one side. Since stringing a top over one of the exhibits would run an additional 35k, we decided to concentrate on just housing tigers.

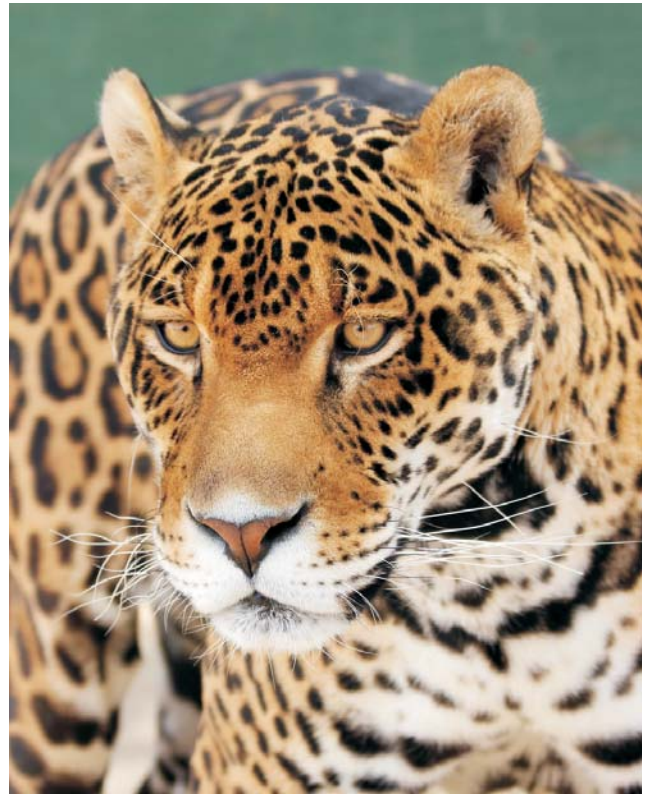


*Maya, female jaguarundi*

Thanks to Scott & Nicole Pearson and Kathryn Davis for donating to Project Tiger this last quarter.

**General Donations:**

Support of our general operating fund helps EFBC maintain the highest standards in both our animal care and service to the visiting public. Thanks to the following for their unrestricted general donations; Toni Chancellor-Adams, Chris Tromborg, Lee Turner, Jon Thomas, Monika Ritter, Monika & Chandler Joshi, Tony & Starr Ginn, Elaine & Morris Asch, Lisa Edmondson, Barbara Garrett, Jay Haas, Joe & Melissa Pearson, Vicki Collins, David Forward, Roberta Lotter, Eric Barkalow, Carolyn Michels, Gerald Bandy, Lisa Hill, Beverly Ann Kimbrough, David Gregory, Paulette Burgess, James Birdsall, Ben & David Pearson, Thomas Abate, Susan Smith, Mayfield Marshall, Brent Prindle & Vicki Haneckow.



*Poncho, jaguar*