

EFBC's Feline Conservation Center



SUMMER 2014

Dedicated to the Protection and Preservation of Endangered Felines

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First Sand Cat Babies Born at EFBC-FCC

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On May 2, EFBC's Feline Conservation Center welcomed the birth of five sand cats (*Felis Margarita*) to parents Freta and Fath. This is the first time in our history that we have had sand cats born at the facility.



One of the four sand cat kittens at four weeks.

Freta arrived last October from the Tallin Zoo in Estonia where she was born in 2011. Her mate, Fath, was born in 2009 and came to our facility in 2011 from the Cincinnati Zoo. Unfortunately one did not survive but four kittens are doing well

and are off display. Sand cats are desert-dwelling cats native to northern Africa and the Middle East (Algeria; Egypt; Iran; Israel; Jordan; Kazakhstan; Kuwait; Mauritania; Morocco; Niger; Oman; Pakistan; Saudi Arabia; Syria; Turkmenistan; United Arab Emirates; Uzbekistan; Western Sahara; and Yemen.

These small cats weigh just five to 10 pounds. They can live far from water

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Black-footed Cats Arrive for Breeding Program

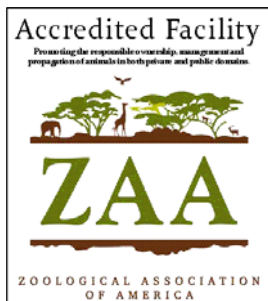


New arrival Mr. B.

E FBC's Feline Conservation Center has now established a black-footed cat breeding program thanks to the arrivals this spring of two males and two females from other facilities.

The first to arrive was Josephine, who was born in April 2012 and sent here by the Cleveland Metroparks Zoo in Cleveland, Ohio. Shortly after that, we received another female, Gabby, in April from the Omaha Zoo in Omaha, Nebraska. Brothers, Killa and Mr. B, born in February 2011, were sent from the Audubon Nature

(Continues on page 5)



Donations



Our new look in the visitor area features desert landscaping and paw pavers.

SPECIAL PROJECTS: A group of volunteers from Edwards Air Force Base came out on April 11 to help us wire brush and paint the welded wire panels that will be used to build the new enclosures in our exhibit area. This was needed to get done for quite a while and we thank **Kaleb Gonzalez, Tiffany Lewis, Akasia Marsh, Brandon Mauro, Jasmine McKinney** and **Benjamin Rojo Perez** for their hard work.

A second group came out on May 31 and painted our tiger Ceasar's pool and also painted the plywood panels for Nacón's (jaguar) new den box. Although everyone received our thanks, some left before we were able to get their full names but we did manage to get: **James Church, Monte Cook** and **Justin Dancer**. Thank you all!

GENERAL DONATIONS: Our members may recognize the names that appear in our newsletter each quarter of those supporters who make monthly or quarterly donations to our general operating fund. This extra support is invaluable to

our organization as it helps us address those unexpected expenditures as well as complete small projects. We are especially pleased to see new contributors to the list this quarter. A special thank you to: **Bernard & Lynne Borderre, James & Barbara Bradley, Anne Calabrese, California Garden Clubs, Bonnie Clark, Vicki Collins, Kathryn S. Davis, Carole Dufresne, Lisa Edmondson, Jill Evensizer, Mr & Mrs Harry Foesener, Roxana Gerns, David Gregory, In Memory of Kenneth Kulow, Roberta Lotter, Chris Tromborg, Jill Tucker, Denise Vardaro, Leslie Ward & Sharon Hathaway, Rebekah & Wesley Ward** and **Vicki Younker**.

PROJECT RESTROOM: This quarter we raised an additional \$440 toward the construction of public restrooms bringing our total to \$7,638. We still have a ways to go. (Goal \$75,000.) If you wish to make a donation toward this project, be sure to indicate it is for Project Restroom at the time of donation.

IN-KIND DONATIONS:

Cyndi & David Hicks donated two Lowe's gift cards which allowed us to go shopping and purchase new trellis for our lecture area. The weather had taken its toll and the old trellis was cracked and worn. The area looks much better now. Thank you Cyndi and David.

Our senior zookeeper **Brittany Furr** donated a new 2.7 cu ft refrigerator to enable the staff to store breakfast meals and certain medications needed for the cats. Thank you Brittany.

Peter & Kris Glaeser saw in our March newsletter the items listed on our wish list and generously donated a 1997 Cushman Utility Vehicle for our maintenance department and a Ingersol-Rand 4-seat golf cart along with six new batteries for our keeper staff. They even delivered the items to us, which we greatly appreciated. A very special thank you to Peter & Kris.

A NEW LOOK: On your next visit you will notice new desert landscaping in sections of our exhibit area. In our efforts to help conserve water (which is a big expense to EFBC-FCC) each plant is on a separate drip line to avoid any waste. Volunteer **Eric Barkalow** also made the paw pavers to give our visitors the opportunity to walk to different areas without disturbing the new vegetation.

FABULOUS FELINE FOLLIES 2014: By now you should have received in the mail our invitation to attend the 2014 Fabulous Feline Follies. This is one of our main fundraisers of the year and always a good time for all who attend. This sit-down dinner includes special animal presentations and a silent auction full of wonderful items. All proceeds go to EFBC-FCC. If you have not yet received your packet of information, contact our office at (661) 256-3793.

JUNE 21 TWILIGHT TOUR: As with every year, the June 21 Twilight Tour is our special Foster Parents Night. All our adoptive parents are welcome to attend the event as our guests starting at 5 p.m. If you wish to attend, please call Sandy Masek at (661) 256-3793 to add your name to the list.

Cats of the Quarter: Zach and Anny

Zach and Anny are two of the three snow leopards (*Panthera uncia*) who live at EFBC's Feline Conservation Center. The third is a 21-year-old female named Woolly. This unrelated breeding pair was born at Tanganyika Wildlife Park in Kansas. Anny was born May 21, 2008 and Zach was born less than a month later on June 7, 2008. They arrived together to our facility in May 2009 and have grown up together in the Snow Leopard Exhibit. Though they have started breeding, they have not yet been successful.

Known by locals as "mountain ghosts," the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) lists snow leopards as endangered in the wild with their estimated numbers put at 4,080-6,590. These felines are elusive in the 12 countries they are found (Afghanistan; Bhutan; China; India; Kazakhstan; Kyrgyzstan; Mongolia; Nepal; Pakistan; Russian Federation; Tajikistan; and Uzbekistan) and live in some of the harshest environments on the planet throughout their 2-million-square-kilometer range. The cats are restricted to ranges in high mountain areas of Central Asia, including Altai, Tian Shan, Kun Lun, Pamir, Hindu Kush, Karakorum and Himalayan ranges. Approximately 60 percent of their habitat is found in China.

Although called snow leopard, this species is closely related to the tiger, according to IUCN, having diverged more than 2 million years ago. As with most wild felines, the snow leopard's biggest threat is loss of habitat and prey base, poaching and persecution. Their numbers are suspected to have declined 20 percent over the last 16 years. Poaching was most severe in the former Russian republics in the 1990s, but conditions have improved. However, poaching and illegal trade is still a major threat given the growing demand in countries like China. Additionally, over-stocking the fragile high-altitude grasslands with livestock has led to a decrease in the snow leopard's wild prey base. It has also resulted in retribution killings of the feline by locals when they turn on livestock. Their principal diet consists of blue sheep and ibex, but also preys on marmot, pika, hares, small rodents and game birds.

Military conflict taking place across their range also plays a significant part in threat to the species, causing direct loss of species and through habitat destruction, landmines, displacement of people and encouragement of trade in wildlife, according to IUCN.

However, there is hope. In Afghanistan, for example, the snow leopard was not a protected species, and became the first listed on its Protected Species List in 2009. This bans all hunting and trading of snow leopards within Afghanistan. Also several organizations, including the International Snow Leopard Trust and the Snow Leopard Conservancy, formed the Snow Leopard Network to coordinate and share information. National action plans are now in place in four countries - Mongolia, Pakistan, Nepal and Russia - and India has developed a national government program for snow leopard conservation.

Sources: IUCN Red List and *Panthera.org*.



Zach (standing) and Anny peek out from the tunnel leading to their den.

Furr Takes Reins as AAZK EFBC President

The members of the EFBC Chapter of the American Association of Zookeepers (AAZK EFBC Chapter) congratulate Brittany Furr on her installment as the new Chapter President.



Senior Zookeeper and newly installed AAZK President Brittany Furr with Kyoke the Clouded leopard (Neofelis nebulosa).

Furr is the senior zookeeper at EFBC. She started as a volunteer in 2009, and was hired on as a zookeeper in May 2012. She took over as senior zookeeper this year.

Because the zookeeper staff at EFBC is mostly comprised of volunteers, forming the AAZK Chapter was a way to make volunteers part of a cohesive group, as well as share ideas about being a keeper and docent. As part of the AAZK national organization, volunteers are also exposed to experiences, education and research taking place in other zoos by keepers just like them.

EFBC's AAZK Chapter supports EFBC-FCC by raising funds at the Twilight Tour through the popular bake sale, as well as through a recycling program. The chapter provides donations of supplies and funds for special projects. Money has also been raised and donated to wild feline conservation projects in the wild. Through the years, the chapter has raised and donated more than \$20,000 to EFBC in support of its mission to save endangered wild feline species.

In 1994, the AAZK EFBC chapter was honored by the national AAZK organization with the Meritorious Achievement Award for excellence in upholding the values of zoo keeping and animal care. The AAZK EFBC Chapter's mission is to ensure a high quality of life for the endangered wild felines in our care. We hope everyone will join us in saying congratulations to Brittany Furr!

Volunteers Hit the Road for EFBC

Volunteers Dave Hunsinger and Missy Koop represented EFBC-FCC at the California Garden Clubs' 2014 Wildflower Conference in Tehachapi on April 7. The two manned an information booth and Dave gave a PowerPoint presentation about EFBC-FCC to conference attendees. Their work at the conference raised \$280 in memberships.

Dave will continue his outreach with *Paws to Read*, a Kern County library educational program, educating the public about EFBC-FCC. He kicked off the speaker series with the Mojave Library on June 13. (See page 7 for the *Paws to Read* calendar.)

Thanks Dave and Missy for volunteering your time outside your normal volunteer days to educate the public about our organization and feline conservation!



Longtime volunteer Dave Hunsinger mans the EFBC-FCC table at the California Garden Clubs conference.

Sand Cats

(Continued from page 1)

sources by utilizing moisture from their prey (rodents, snakes, etc.). They are a pale yellow color with a ringed tail. The sand cat's ears are large and set widely apart and low on the sides of the head. They are nocturnal in their native habitat.

Sand cats are classified as "near threatened" by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), an international organization dedicated to the conservation of species. They can be found in sandy and stony deserts but their population is unevenly distributed. Generally, they are found in areas where there is vege-



Three of the sand cat babies at four weeks of age.

tation to support small prey.

Sand cats have thick furry feet to adapt to the extreme desert environment. According to IUCN, they are capable of rapid digging to get prey, and may cover their kill with sand to return later.

They are primarily nocturnal cats and have been recorded moving long distances in a single night (5-10 km) and research has indicated their home ranges can be large.

The major threat to sand cats is habitat degradation, due to human settlement, including livestock grazing which compete with the sand cat's small mammal prey base that depend on vegetation. *Source: IUCN Red List*

Black-footed Cats (Continued from page 1)



Josephine

Institute in New Orleans, Louisiana in May. These four Black-footed cats are not on display to the public.

Black-footed cats (*Felis nigripes*) are one of the world's

smallest cats and the seventh felid species native to South Africa (the others are lion, leopard, cheetah, caracal, serval, and African wild cat), and by far the least known. This cat only weighs 2-5 pounds and is only active at night. It is boldly patterned with blackish oblong spots, and its legs are barred with thick dark stripes. The undersides of its feet are black.



Killa

The black-footed cat is restricted to the arid lands of Southern Africa. It is typically associated with open, sandy, grassy habitats with sparse shrub and tree cover, such as the Kalahari and Karoo regions. The northernmost records are from Namibia and Botswana although the species may occur in the south-western corner of Angola.

This small cat is listed as "vulnerable" by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). Their distribution appears to be restricted and patchy and the IUCN puts their population at fewer than 10,000 mature individuals. Major threats to the species include loss of prey base and persecution, as well as loss of habitat due to grazing and agriculture. Poison and other methods of pest control also threaten the population. Hunting of the black-footed cat is banned in Botswana and South Africa, according to the IUCN.



Gabby

Join Us for EFBC Night with the Lancaster JetHawks



We're heading to The Hangar – the home of the Lancaster JetHawks – for EFBC-FCC Night on July 19.

Join us for an evening of great minor league baseball as our local team, the JetHawks (Class-A advanced affiliate of the Houston Astros) take on the Modesto Nuts (Class-A advanced affiliate for the Colorado Rockies).

Tickets for this special event are \$8 per person and can only be purchased at EFBC-FCC. Proceeds benefit EFBC-FCC.



The first 1,000 fans through the gates will receive Astros Throwback jerseys.

The Hangar stadium is located off the 14 Antelope Valley Freeway and Avenue I. For more information, contact Camille Gadwood at gadwood4efbcwildcats@gmail.com.

EFBC-FCC Wish List: How to Help

AS A NON-PROFIT, WE RELY ON THE PUBLIC'S SUPPORT THROUGH VARIOUS DONATIONS. THE FOLLOWING ITEMS ARE ON OUR 2014 WISH LIST.

- ✓ **Electric Golf Carts**
- ✓ **6-Line business phone system with phones**
- ✓ **Drought tolerant bushes and trees****
(Desert lavender, goldenbush, Indian ricegrass, desert needlegrass or in the alternative, gift cards to Lowes or Home Depot.)
- ✓ **New golf cart and auto batteries**
- ✓ **Garden hoses**



Questions?

Call us at (661) 256-3793

** CALIFORNIA IS EXPERIENCING A CRITICAL DROUGHT. TO SAVE MONEY AND CURB OUR WATER BILL THIS SUMMER, WE'RE PLANTING DROUGHT RESISTANT PLANTS THROUGHOUT THE FACILITY. THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Paws to Read Calendar

Join EFBC-FCC volunteer Dave Hunsinger this summer for the Kern County Library's *Paws to Read* program. Dave will present a show & tell about EFBC-FCC at the following Kern County Library branches:

June 28 at 11 a.m. – California City Branch, 9507 California City Blvd., California City, CA 93505

July 19 at 2 p.m. – Wanda Kirk (Rosamond) Branch, 3611 Rosamond Blvd., Rosamond, CA 93560

July 26 at 10:30 a.m. – Ridgecrest Branch, 131 East Las Flores Ave., Ridgecrest, CA 93555

Aug. 4 at 11 a.m. – Boron Branch, 26967 20 Mule Team Rd., Boron, CA 93516

The program is free and open to the public.



Stay Connected!

Visit

www.wildcatzoo.org

for the latest on new arrivals, births and construction projects.

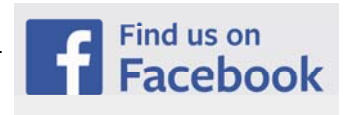


You can join our **Google Group** e-mail list at

groups.google.com

and search "EFBC-FelineConservationCenter" (no spaces).

Our **Facebook Fan Page** is "EFBC's Feline Conservation Center." Like us today!



MEMBERSHIP FORM

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- \$1,000.00 V.I.P.**
- \$500.00 PATRON**
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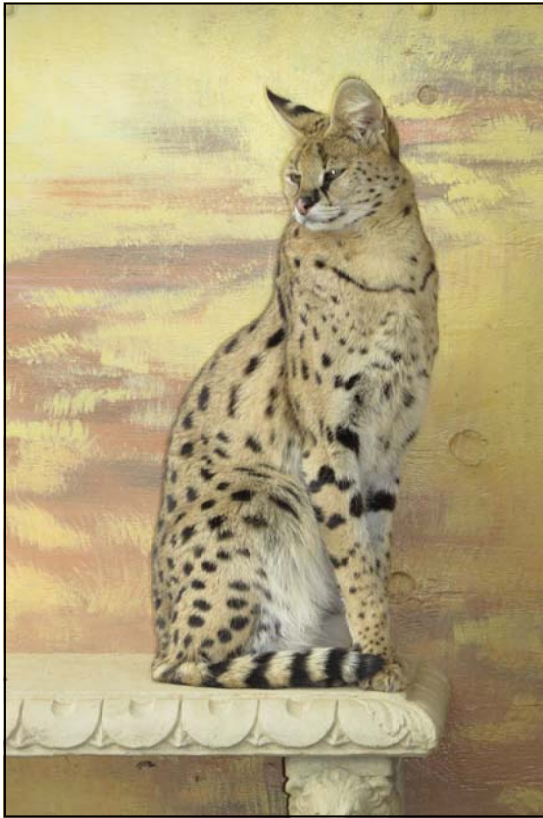
Additional Donation _____

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Mail your deductible contribution to
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FELINE CONSERVATION CENTER
3718 60th Street West, Rosamond, CA 93560

Phone (661) 256-3793 Fax (661) 256-6867 <<http://www.cathouse-fcc.org/>>

Visit us at www.wildcatzoo.org



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SAVE THE DATES!

Twilight Tour	June 21
	Sept. 20
Jethawks Night	July 19
Feline Follies	
(facility closed)	Aug. 9
Kids Day	Oct. 18

2014 EVENTS CALENDAR



Shop Online:

www.cafepress.com/wildcatzoo

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