



EFBC/Feline Conservation Center

<http://www.wildcatzoo.org>

DEDICATED TO THE PROTECTION AND PRESERVATION OF ENDANGERED FELINES Winter 2008

Message from the president:

First let me apologize for the delay in getting our December newsletter out. It is customary for us to publish highlights from our financial statements, and with a multitude of adjustments that had to be made in our balance statements due to regulatory changes, the preparation of these reports took longer than expected. We realized a modest growth in public support of 9% in our '07-'08 fiscal year, which is above industry standard. Thanks to grants received from the Kern County Tourism program, Boeing Employees Community Fund, The Healey Foundation and the M. Piuze Foundation, we were able to produce a rack card promotion program, complete landscaping in our front entrance area and convert some of our drip lines to an underground bubbler system to promote water conservation, and acquire the funds for completing some major work on Project Tiger. Due to C.A.R.B. Regulations, and other regulatory changes, EFBC took a loss in assets of \$183,679 in equipment and medical inventory which is reflected in our balance statement. Despite the economy, your support of our programs continues and we are most grateful.

Our cats continue to thrive. Our baby jaguar Rocco has gone to his new home in Arizona. The Canada lynx Thumper is entertaining visitors in the exhibit area, and Kali, our young fishing cat is still roaming our house. With breeding season upon us, the pairing of several species will be attempted, and we are prepared for a busy 2009.

I have recently joined the Board of Directors of



Gregori enjoyed his enrichment at the last twilight tour. The next twilight tour will be on April 25, 2009

ZAA (Zoological Association of America) and our Director Sandy Masek has agreed to be on the Accreditation Committee of the organization. These are tasks that we have agreed to do on our own time, and it will not create any financial burden on EFBC or detract from our commitment to our work here. We believe our involvement with ZAA will further help promote the preservation of these magnificent cats on a global level.

Thank you for all your support of EFBC.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Joseph W. Maynard'.

Joseph W. Maynard, President



Enrichment making is always a popular station at our Kid's day event.

Kid's day:

This year's kid's day was another wonderful event. There were many people that pulled together to make it all work, and the staff really appreciated the efforts of all those who found the time to help out.

Wildlife Conservation Network Expo:

Our head keeper, Melany Marotta, along with three volunteers represented our center with a booth at the expo in San Francisco, and generated support from many. The Amur leopard logo was photographed many times, and the faces of those who participated can now be seen at the ALTA web site. There is a link to that gallery on our front page, found at wildcatzoo.org.



Nancy Vandermey, Dr. Jim Sanderson, and Melany Marotta holding the Amur Leopard Banner in front of the EFBC-FCC booth at the WCN conference.

Zoo Reciprocal List: Enclosed is the 2009 zoo reciprocal list. These facilities offer our members free or discounted admission. Remember to present your EFBC/FCC membership card and photo ID.



Thanks to Wonders of Wildlife, Inc who donated the educational animal presentation. Cheryl fascinated the children. Thank you Cheryl!!

Ralph's Community Contribution Program: In September it was required that everyone sign up again to have a portion of their purchases from Ralph's and Cala/Bell markets go to EFBC/FCC. It is easy to do. Just go to our website and click on the Ralph's link. EFBC/FCC's NPO # 82845, should automatically be entered when you use our link. This cost nothing extra to you but a little time to sign up every year. Please ask others to sign up as well. Thus far, we have received contributions from this program totaling \$1661.76.

Geoffroy's cat:

The people of South America call the small Geoffroy's cat "gato montes", which translates to mountain cat. The name comes from a French naturalist, Geoffroy St. Hilaire, who discovered this feline. Its genus is *Oncifelis geoffroyi*. It has also been called the cat that fishes by natives to its habitat.

This cat is adaptable and it is found from sea level up to 10,000 foot elevations. The variety of fur types is also varied, with melanistic (Black) traits common due to a dominant autosomal allele.

This cat was part of the fur trade for many years, and is known as the second most traded pelt in the cat family (the first being bobcat skins).

While the primary food for this cat is rodents and birds, frogs and fish have been found in scat, and this cat shows no fear of water like most house cats.



Xeno (Geoffroy's cat) is housed off display right now, but has found a caring home here at the EFBC-FCC.

Little is known about the social habits of this feline.

They are able to rear young at a variety of ages, with some females going in to estrus at just 18 months. The oldest Geoffroy's cat to give birth in captivity was thirteen years of age.

Mating often happens in trees and lasts from two to seventy five seconds. The frequency of these copulations can be as much as 150 times in a day. This often includes a neck bite.

Mothers have been known to pluck out their fur to line the birth den, and deliver one to three in a litter. The kittens grow quickly, and in as little as three weeks are quite mobile. At six weeks, they are often ready for solid food, and at six months they are often as large as the mother cat.

In some countries this cat now is offered protection. In Argentina, between 1976 and 1979 over 340,000 pelts were exported through Buenos Aires alone. In 1986, the European Economic Community prohibited the import of Geoffroy's cat fur from Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, and Uruguay, which has helped this feline.

In 1989 only 45 Geoffroy's cats were listed in the International Species Inventory System (ISIS). Since then there has been some private interest in this species and hybrids (mixes of domestic and Geoffroy's cats) are now found called "Safari" cats.

Tigers, need I say more? By Eric Barkalow

Tigers, the cat it seems everyone knows, or do they?

In captivity, the effort to breed the tiger is not a new one. Even in ancient times the tiger was housed by humans. Never before has it been for the tiger species benefit though. Currently three sub-species of tiger are gone forever, and another is almost gone.

Many children will come to our center, see a large cat, and think they are seeing a tiger. In fact what they are seeing is a leopard. Tigers are so prevalent in the stories of so many cultures, it is always difficult to explain why visitors can't see a tiger at EFBC-FCC.

Tigers it seems, are almost mystical in the mind, rising in many cultures as a symbol of power, strength, and tenacity. Many weak humans think that if they kill and/or consume parts of a tiger, they will somehow acquire those same traits. While an encounter with a tiger does send endorphins racing, no such power resides within the animals themselves. Seeing a tiger up close



The train ride allowed visitors of all ages to go see Caesar at our Kid's day event. He was very tired by the end of the day!

can inspire inner strength, power, and tenacity. This is a primary reason that tigers have been kept by humans for centuries.

Happily, the tiger is a prolific breeder. In some cases, a tigress can have three litters in a single year. Each litter can have as many as seven cubs.

So if they breed so plentifully, why doesn't EFBC-FCC have a tiger on display? Why aren't there more in the wild?

The reasons are complex and multi-faceted. The wild situation is perhaps the easiest to explain, especially if visitors are familiar with the countries that still have tiger populations. With India's human population booming, it is easy to understand why the amount of tigers there are is diminishing. Tigers are known to take humans as prey, especially when the stress on them is high. With India and China's populations growing, the space for this large predator is shrinking.

There is also a market for tiger parts. Poaching is another obstacle for the tiger. While every nation considers tigers worth conserving, the laws that pertain to tigers are often difficult to enforce. It will take a cultural revolution to save the tiger in the wild.

There are eight known tiger sub-species. The Caspian, Javan, and Bali lineages are all extinct. The South Chinese Tiger is now listed as extinct in the wild. The Siberian tiger is now called the Amur tiger, since its range has been reduced and they only inhabit the area around the Amur river. The Indo-Chinese tiger and the Bengal tiger live in or between two countries with the highest populations of humans. Encroachment by humans, poaching, and lack of prey will likely further reduce their ranges.



Roby with an enrichment toy during Kid's Day

The last sub-species lives on the island of Sumatra. Reports state that there are perhaps 400 tigers there.

If you add up all of these wild tigers, you will not get to a five digit number. Armed guards have been hired in an attempt to save the few that remain in some of these areas. The moral choice between human life and an animal's life is not an easy one.

In the USA, there are perhaps 5000 tigers. An exact number is not known. The majority are a mixture of sub-species and no records are kept



Angara and Assar have been sharing an enclosure off and on recently.

for those that are not included in the International Species Inventory System (ISIS).

For generations this was not a problem, since the wild populations did not need a back up. That is no longer true, and many major zoos are trying to create viable lines of the sub-species through careful breeding. It is what EFBC-FCC is also interested in doing, so why aren't we?

The expense to house and breed large cats is high. A facility must have a complex enclosure, a good staff, and the ability to maintain these powerful animals for extended periods. It should also display them to the public.

For facilities near a major urban base, funding the cost of these breeding complexes is a slam dunk, and it is often done with tax dollars.

EFBC-FCC is not based near any large city and this limits the number of visitors and support. In spite of these issues, EFBC-FCC can boast many conservation achievements, including the most births of the Amur Leopard in North America. Our Pallas's cat breeding program is second to none, and that is likely in part due to not placing the cats on display.

We also house the most genetically diverse population of Fishing Cats as well.

But not tigers. Why? Well, we once housed several Siberian tigers, and when the genetic line we helped to house was well represented in captivity, we stopped breeding them. The last of this group passed on a few years ago, just shy of her 20th birthday. Now, the only tiger we care for is of unknown origin, confiscated by authorities in a drug bust, and likely is a result of irresponsible breeders that do not care for the genetics of the animals, just the look of them. Ceasar is a rambunctious adult male tiger, and a pleasure to behold. So why isn't he on display to the public?

First there is the safety factor. A safety fence is required before you can allow any member of the public near a potentially dangerous animal's enclosure. Ceasar's enclosure is large and is not near to the public display area that has these fences. Second, easy access. The ability to see the animals has to be open to all members of the public, and without sidewalks, the area would be difficult to access and would not be A.D.A. compliant. Third, and perhaps the most important, is the desire to keep the animal stress free, and happy in it's captive setting. Tigers are curious animals that want to see people, and they are easy to interact with if the human puts some effort into it. Visitors always put in that effort where a tiger is concerned. This is why so many facilities place the great cats in enclosures where humans can not get close to them, using deep pits and moats for a separation.

A new enclosure to house tigers has been under construction for some time now at EFBC-FCC. It is nearing completion, and when it is finished the public will be able to view tigers. Project tiger will be a great educational exhibit. All tigers need help right now. Responsible breeders and facilities should cooperate to bolster the numbers of pure sub-species before it is too late. Perhaps someday the public will only see true representations of the tiger that lives in the wild, but right now, most of the tigers in North America are not. The effort to save the tiger in the wild is tough. It shouldn't be that way in the USA. The tigers will breed, but the space humans will provide them is limited.

Most people will see a mixed breed or "mutt" tiger and not know or care that it is not a true representative of those that live in the wild. If the cultures of foreign countries don't act quickly, the point will be moot - there will be none left in the wild. Nevertheless, a responsible facility wants to

contribute to preservation, more than exploit the animals beauty.

EFBC-FCC and many small facilities want to educate and allow people to feel the thrill only a tiger can give. Photos and videos do not convey their power, grace, and beauty, even when seen in high definition. The people of North America can help conserve this great cat. We have been for generations and now more live here than in the wild.

Donations and Support

As expenses continue to escalate and the economy weakens, donations to our general operation fund helps us stay on top of unexpected things that always seem to pop up. Whether it be cage and equipment repairs, or



A surprise snow storm in December. Ceasar loved it.

costly medical expenses, this fund helps us meet those challenges. We thank the following supporters for their contributions to our general fund in the last quarter of 2008: Sarah Pollock, Vicki Collins, Julita Jones, Edwina Lu, Andrew Bergman, Eric Barkalow, Squire Brown, Sue Yackel, Tiffany Acito, and Steve & Patti Shepherd.

Project Tiger:

You will see a lot of work being completed on this project this coming spring. The apron around the 2nd pool will be completed, landscaping will begin, cage #2 will start having outside wire panels welded in place, concrete work on the inside of the pools will be completed, the pathways for the public viewing will start being installed, and the watering system for the cages will be connected.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The Exotic Feline Breeding Compound Incorporated, Feline Conservation Center in a not for profit, 501 (c)(3) public benefit corporation dedicated to the preservation and propagation of rare and endangered felines through breeding, research, and education. EFBC/FCC is run by an active Board of Directors which governs policies, procedures, and the direction of the corporation. Directors and officers receive no compensation for their services, nor retain any personal interest in any portion of the assets of the corporation. Officers are elected at a regular meeting of the Board of Directors and serve a term of 3 years.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Financial statements for the Exotic Feline Breeding Compound Inc., Feline Conservation Center fiscal year ending September 30, 2008 are now on file. The following are highlights of our annual report. For copies of the complete financial statements, please send a self addressed #10 envelope and a check for \$7.00 postage and handling to: EFBC/FCC, 3718 60th Street West, Rosamond, CA 93560.

Total support and revenue, including non-cash donations:	\$ 433,354
Program service expenses:	\$ 382,424
Administrative & fund raising expenses:	\$ 40,577 (9%)
Gain (Loss) on sale of Assets:	\$ (183,676)
Net support and revenue over (under) expenditures:	\$ (173,306)
Total net assets:	\$ 1,050,099

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING PROJECT TIGER DONORS IN THE LAST QUARTER OF 2008: Mary Marlowe \$5,000.00, The Bindrim Family Trust \$5,000.00, the M. Piuze Foundation \$5,000.00.

In-kind donations: Barbara J. Clifford, a long time supporter of EFBC donated an Aloka 1400 diagnostic ultrasound unit with probe and printer to our clinic. Thank you Barbara, our vets love it.

In October, a \$50,000.00 bequest was received from another long time supporter of EFBC who remembered our feline family in her estate planning. She loved all the cats here, and told us about the pleasures they brought her, and how much she believed in what we were doing. We are overwhelmed by her generosity.





Kali has been growing strong, and here she is enjoying the pumpkin top from a jack o' lantern. Born on July 31, 2008 this is the first female birth from Tamara and Tamil.



The face painting booth was popular, and we thank our local AAZK chapter and volunteers for the continued support.