

WILDCAT ADVOCATE

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WILDCAT CONSERVATION LEGAL AID SOCIETY

JUNE 2009

IUCN publishes new report on the conservation status of the world's species



Iberian Lynx struggles for survival

The International Union for Conservation and Nature (IUCN), in October 2008, released its new comprehensive assessment of the conservation status of the world's mammals. The assessment confirms "an extinction crisis, with almost one in four at risk of disappearing forever."

In their press release, the IUCN states that the Iberian Lynx (*Lynx pardinus*) is now in the highest threat category of

Critically Endangered. The Iberian Lynx has a population of only 84-143 adults and is continuing to decline due to a shortage of its prey, the European Rabbit.

The Fishing Cat (*Prionailurus viverrinus*) native to Southeast Asia, moved from Vulnerable to Endangered. Its decline is linked to habitat loss in the wetlands.

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Scottish Wildcat Association

Exciting new plans for the UK's critically endangered Scottish wildcat from the Scottish Wildcat Association and world-leading captive breeding-for-release organization the Aspinnall Foundation. This past spring, a new charity was setup to champion and conserve the Scottish wildcat, Scotland's unique European wildcat sub-species. With only 400 individuals estimated to be left in the wild, a strong captive breeding program is essential for the Scottish wildcat. The UK's expert captive breeders

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IUCN continued

The **Oncilla (*Leopardus tigrinus*)** moved from Near Threatened to Vulnerable. A reduction in population size of 30 percent is projected due to declining areas of occupancy and habitat quality.

The **Leopard (*Panthera pardus*)** moved from Least Concern to Near Threatened. Leopards are projected to decline due to habitat and prey loss along with persecution. Leopard subspecies remained listed as Critically Endangered or Endangered.

The IUCN Red List database is available online at: www.iucnredlist.org



Fishing Cat now listed as endangered

The IUCN Species Program produces, maintains, and manages The IUCN Red List of Threatened Species,TM implements global species conservation initiatives, and supports the activities of the Species Survival Commission and its constituent Specialist Groups.

The Cat Specialist Group is comprised of the world's leading felid experts—scientists, wildlife managers, and conservationists—who are devoted to advancing awareness and conservation of all of the living wild cat species. The Cat Specialist Group executes the cat species status assessment for the IUCN Red List and prepares cat action plans and policy guidelines. They also pursue their own projects that focus on developing methods and tools for the assessment, providing access to research information, facilitating dialogue between scientists and conservationists, and supporting its members.

To learn more about the Cat Specialist Group and browse their extensive "Cat Library," please visit their website: www.catsg.org.

Scottish Wildcat continued

at the **Aspinall Foundation** took over control of the species studbook and started working on their own comprehensive improvement plans. The **Scottish Wildcat Association** and the **Aspinall Foundation** are working together to bring a whole new standard in enclosure design to what is widely considered the world's least friendly cat!

Aspinall's set aside a large off-exhibit area at their **Port Lympne** wildlife park—overgrown with patches of forest, shrubs, meadow, rocks, and a stream—which offers the Scottish wildcat a perfect multi-habitat territory in miniature. Construction of the first new enclosures will begin in late summer that involves encircling 2500m² of the area with a new design in cat-proof fencing and leave the entire space open at the top.

Working with ideas developed for wildcat breeding in Germany, the enclosures will be fitted with a series of auto-feeding devices which keepers load from outside the fence each morning. These devices will randomly drop in a variety of food items and interesting objects triggered by timers and "booby traps" throughout the day which encourages the captive cats to develop natural behaviors of investigation and curiosity and no direct human dependency for food. The organizations hope to see the first of these enclosures operating by the end of the year, develop enclosures at other centres over the next three years, and establish captive release sites in the Highlands. For more information, please visit: www.scottishwildcats.co.uk www.totallywild.net./jaf

Wildcats

The curious case of Macho B

On May 12, 2009, after weeks of conflicting statements by Arizona Game & Fish (AZGF) agents and medical assessments of Macho B's death, the Center for Biological Diversity sent a formal 60 day notice of intent to sue to AZGF for violating Section 9 of the Endangered Species Act by illegally "taking" a jaguar.

Media reports were a flurry when on February 18, 2009, the AZGF announced the "incidental" capture and collaring of a male jaguar, Macho B, in a Southwest area of Tucson. AZGF was reportedly conducting research on mountain lions and black bears when Macho B was caught in a leg-hold snare. To release him from the snare he needed to be tranquilized which gave AZGF the opportunity to fit him with a satellite tracking collar before releasing him. The tracking device provided his location every three hours. As it turned out, Macho B had been photographed by trail cameras over the past 13 years. At the time of his capture, he was healthy, with a solid build, and weighed 118 pounds.

But within weeks of his capture and release, Macho B had to be located, tranquilized again, and transported to the Phoenix Zoo for medical care after tracking data showed little to no movement. Macho B was estimated to be between 15-16 years old and was one of two jaguars seen north of Mexico in recent years. Tests conducted at the Zoo showed severe kidney failure and the decision to euthanize versus treatment was made.

Questions about his capture, recapture, and death began to emerge along with differences in opinions by pathologists regarding the state of his kidney failure.

Did AZGF have the requisite permit to capture Macho B? Was the capture truly incidental to the other research project or was it intentional? Was his age, setting a leg-hold snare, the stress of capture, and the obvious use of tranquilizers ever considered? And was he perhaps euthanized too soon?

While an internal investigation was underway, on April 2, 2009, on a request from U.S. Rep. Raul Grijalva, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service stated that its law enforcement division had begun a criminal investigation of the circumstances leading to the capture and untimely death of Macho B.

Tracking Florida panthers

In April 2009, the Florida Fish & Wildlife Commission (FWC) announced that while the state is undergoing budget cuts, their Florida panther tracking program will continue.

The FWC tracks panthers in Southwest Florida by fitting the panthers with GPS collars which may be monitored from a central location. FWC also uses VHF collaring equipment that requires aerial data collection.

There are approximately 100 panthers remaining in Southwest Florida. FWC receives contributions for panther research from Florida residents that purchase special panther license plates. For information on the FWC panther program: MyFWC.com/panther/index.htm A special report on the "State of the Florida Panther" is available at: <http://web.naplesnew.com/static/multimedia/panther/panther.html>

Cougar shot in Bridgeport, Washington

A healthy adult male cougar that weighed between 125-135 was shot and killed by a State Fish & Wildlife officer after officers were able to "scare" it out of a tree. Instead of running away, the cat stayed and reportedly was ready to pounce. At the scene, a crowd of people had assembled that "could have been threatened," so the officer decided to shoot him.

Ringleader of "Kill 'Em All Boys" gets 13 months in prison

In Cathlamet, Washington, Mick Gordon, the ringleader of a group of poachers, pleaded guilty to a gluttony of charges including first degree animal cruelty and hunting black bears, cougars, bobcats and lynx. The Kill 'Em All Boys broke into timber company land reported as prime poaching territory. Gordon was accused of torturing his dog with a shock collar and failing to provide medical care for porcupine wounds; the dog died. He told an undercover officer he put a shock collar on a child and shocked the kid!

Wildcats

Balkan Lynx on brink of extinction

In Macedonia's Galicica National Park, a project to monitor lynx numbers is underway through the use of cameras set up to track the movements of the cats.

Experts report that the number of lynx could range from only 40 to 100. Lynx are hunted by local people for their fur, a spotted golden brown. Illegal hunting is the main cause of the lynx's decline, however, other factors such as habitat loss and uncontrolled timbering are also threats to its survival.

The objectives of the lynx project include determining the status and population number, developing a conservation strategy with local authorities that may include a reintroduction program, and establishing protected areas.

The biggest hurdle for conservationists to overcome in their lynx recovery plan is poaching. Hunting is illegal but the laws are not enforced; no one has ever been prosecuted for poaching.



Balkan Lynx

48 Tigers poached in 6 years

New Delhi: The Times of India reported that the tiger is out of crisis but figures show the wild cat is not completely secure in the forest. From 1999 to 2002, 100 tigers were killed by poachers. The number of tigers killed between 2005 and 2008 is assessed at 28, however, the number may go up as officials are waiting on additional post-mortem reports that may reveal the tigers were killed and did not die from natural causes.

Pulp giant set to assault area around Sumatra sanctuary

Asian Pulp & Paper and the Sinar Mas Group, is planning a logging operation in the areas around the Bukit Tigapuh National Park in Sumatra. Conservation groups as well as government officials in Indonesia are opposed to the devastation the paper industry will have on the forest areas. This particular park and surrounding areas is home to Sumatran orangutans that had been painstakingly reintroduced, tigers, critically endangered elephants, and indigenous tribes.

While the commercial value of the land is high, the environmental impact to one of the few remaining forested areas in Sumatra, if the massive logging operation were to take place, will be even higher; it will cause irreversible and reprehensible damage that is incalculable.

Monitoring Tigers and their prey

The Wildlife Conservation Society's India Program released a training video on the scientific methods for estimating the number of wild tigers and their prey on You Tube! Shakar Dattari, a wildlife filmmaker collaborated with Dr. K. Ullas Karanth, a tiger scientist with WCS and created a five part instructional video, "Monitoring Tigers and Their Prey-The Right Way," based on a training manual, for wildlife researchers, park managers, conservationists, and students. The objective of the video, according to Karnath, is to demystify the practice of field techniques that includes line transect sampling and camera trapping to easily understand the correct field protocols to be followed. Formerly, the Indian government used the pugmark method which was found to be unreliable as it produced inflated numbers. The video will be useful in the study of other big cats as the monitoring methods are essentially the same. Books and DVDs are available at www.wcs.india.org and Amazon. You tube link: www.youtube.com/monitoringtigers

Captive Wildcats

Tony: The "Truck Stop" Tiger

In February 2009, Michael Sandlin, a truck stop owner, in Grosse Tete located in Iberville Parish, Louisiana, was granted an exemption by parish council to keep his 550-pound Siberian-Bengal tiger, Tony, as a "roadside attraction." Iberville Parish has an ordinance that prohibits an individual from keeping a "wild, exotic, vicious animal or a reptile for display or exhibition purposes."

The council voted 11-1 to allow Sandlin to keep Tony which will enable him to obtain a permit from the Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries. Councilman Edwin Reeves, the only dissenter in the vote, commented that, "the tiger deserves a better environment than the one he has been given at the truck stop."

One week later, Iberville Parish President, J. Mitchell Ourso Jr., vetoed Sandlin's exemption stating that, "the ordinance was deficient because it failed to provide for permitting conditions to ensure the safety of the general public and the health and welfare of the tiger."

In March, a revised ordinance was passed by parish council but this time it included guidelines for Tony's care such as, sanitary conditions, sleeping mats, heat in the winter, and a proper diet prescribed by a licensed veterinarian with experience in big cats. Sandlin is also required to carry liability insurance and have trained staff to deal with any escapes. Sandlin is prohibited from "displaying any more tigers after Tony dies or is legally transferred out of Iberville Parish."

Thankfully, Tony has many friends that will continue to watch over him including Sky Williamson who has been championing his cause since 2007 and Big Cat Rescue in Tampa, Florida has offered Tony a more suitable home.

Heads Up!

In February 2009, a tiger's head fell off the back of a truck on Rte 12 in Lakemoor, IL. A motorist saw the head and brought it to police who contacted USFWS. USFWS reported that the head was from an 18 year old tiger kept at Hawthorne Corp. Exotic Zoo and had died of natural causes. The head was being transported to a taxidermist. John Cuneo, Jr. the owner of the zoo said he was not aware of the tigers' death or that someone else was keeping a big cat at his facility. Cuneo was not listed as the owner; the owner's name was not released.

Tigers Hamilton & Sheena saved from inhumane owners

In February 2009, two tigers were removed from private owners in Texas and Missouri, both due to neglect.

An adult Bengal tiger named Hamilton was removed from a residence in Hamilton County, TX by the Humane Society of North Texas. Officers removed the tiger because his cage was inadequate and filthy, he was malnourished; weighing only 250-pounds half of what he should weigh, and was not registered as required by law. Neighbors notified officials about Hamilton being penned in the backyard for nearly five years. Officials speculated that he was being used as a "tourist attraction."

Sheena, an adult tigress was removed by the Greene County Sheriff's Department from a woman in Seneca, MO who also had 150 puppies removed from her commercial kennel. Sheena was also malnourished and suffered from an infection on her paws due to exposure to feces. She was sent to Dickerson Park Zoo in Springfield to recover. Both cats are expected to be transferred to suitable sanctuaries.

Tigers & lion seized from abusive exhibitor

In March 2009, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) seized two tigers and a lion from owner Marcus Cook, a North Texas wildlife exhibitor. USDA officials were watching Cook for years and was repeatedly accused of putting the public at risk by allowing direct contact with the big cats and for abusing several of his big cats.

In-Sync Exotics Wildlife Rescue & Education Center in Wylie, took the tigers and lion. Staff at the Center commented that it is the worse case of abuse they have ever seen. The big cats were seized by USDA agents because they suffered from extreme malnourishment and lack of veterinary care.

How much is that kitty in the window?

In Oldtown, Idaho, a private owner of Bengal tigress named Lily, has put Lily up for sale for \$20,000. The owner is under pressure from the community to provide Lily with a larger living area which he cannot afford to do. The owner stated that if someone does purchase Lily, they have to promise not to "euthanize" her or give her to a "taxidermist."

Captive Wildcats**Exotic cat shot and killed**

On a farm, 20 miles west of Philly, a “pet” serval was killed by a caretaker of a farm after it attacked his chickens. A friend who works for the state game commission told him he was within his legal rights to shoot the cat to protect his chickens. After the serval was killed, he discovered the cat was wearing a collar with a phone number on it. Authorities were informed that the serval was loose for about six weeks.

Over the past year, servals were captured in Georgia, Louisiana, Michigan, and Washington. A serval was killed in Missouri and one was seized in Illinois. A serval and a bear escaped from a sanctuary in Michigan.

Simon the Savannah Cat

A Savannah cat, named Simon, a serval mixed with a domestic cat was returned to its owner by the Alaska Department of Fish & Game. In a bizarre twist, Simon will need to find a new home in a new state. Alaska Fish & Game is prohibited under state law from issuing permits of hybrid game animals to be kept as pets.

Simon was on his own and on the run for six months before being caught. He was malnourished, in shock, and had a broken tail. Simon’s owner also had a Bengal cat—a hybrid of an Asian leopard cat with a domestic cat. The Bengal cat has been “on the lamb” since June 2007!

Elvis: A serval’s story of abandonment

In May, a surprise awaited staff at the Carnivore Preservation Trust (CPT), a small crate with a note attached to it: “His name is Elvis.” Elvis is a two year old serval that was extremely undernourished, had scars, and showed signs of muscle atrophy—a result of being confined in a small space for a long period of time. CPT is a nonprofit rescue and sanctuary in Pittsboro, NC. CPT is home to numerous animals including tigers and ocelots. Despite their limited quarantine area and resources, CPT is caring for Elvis. The abandonment of exotic animals puts a strain on the limited funds of sanctuaries and zoos also find it difficult due to the lack of information on the medical and genetic history of the animals. CPT reported that even being in an outdoor pen, Elvis displays typical behaviors of confinement, such as, “pacing rapidly back and forth within a small area, as if confined by invisible walls.”

The Great “Serval” Escape!

A serval was discovered in the backyard of a home in Orleans Parish, Louisiana. A 911 call resulted in police, an agent from LA Department of Wildlife & Fisheries, and staff from the Audubon Nature Institute, arriving at the scene. Audubon agreed to provide a home for the serval until a permanent home is found. The serval is believed to be someone’s “pet” that escaped. Private possession of servals is illegal in Orleans Parish.

Tiger Killed at Mexican Zoo

In the Zoo Bioparque Estrella, state of Mexico, North of Mexico City, a Bengal tiger was killed because it escaped from its cage and killed a zookeeper. Authorities from the zoo declared they had to kill it because it was “aggressive and dangerous!”

Hunting, Trade & Trafficking

Reports from US Fish & Wildlife, Office of Law Enforcement 2005-2007

~ A big game guide in Colorado was fined \$12,000 and his client \$5,000 for hunting mountain lions on Federal land without the required permit.

~ Another Colorado guide who took nonresidents on illegal mountain lion hunts was fined nearly \$10,000 and barred from hunting for five years. One of his clients from West Virginia paid more than \$25,000 in fines and restitution.

~ Service officers in Atlanta seized over 400 vials of traditional Chinese medicines that were being smuggled in a passenger's baggage. Protected wildlife included tigers and leopards.

~ Interceptions in Memphis included two ocelots skins.

~ Interceptions in Denver included a commercial shipment of leopard trophies from Zimbabwe.

~ In Northern California, individuals were fined for wildlife smuggling who unlawfully imported a large snow leopard skin.

~ Inspection of a passenger flight arriving in Los Angeles from China resulted in the seizure of medicinals made from tiger.

~ "Mike the Smuggler" was sent to prison for six months after pleading guilty to smuggling wildlife that included a leopard skin.

~ A Service investigation of a Minnesota animal park that claimed to be a wildlife sanctuary resulted in the prosecution of the husband and wife of the facility and six of their business associates for wildlife trafficking. The investigation which sent the park owners to prison for terms of 18 and 15 months, exposed four years and more than \$200,000 worth of black market transactions that included tigers and leopards.

~ The owner of a Portland, Oregon fur store was fined \$40,000 for trafficking in coats made from jaguars and leopards.

~ Staff in Memphis stopped unlawful importations of leopard claws.

~ A Service and State investigation of an unlawful guiding operation that involved hunting by out-of-state clients on public lands in New Mexico led to the conviction of 21 individuals including the owner of a New Mexico outfitting company, several professional guides, and a Virginia taxidermist. Penalties totaled \$110,850 in fines and restitution, 36 months imprisonment, 24 years probation, and 24 years of lost hunting privileges. 80 wildlife trophies were forfeited that included full-body cougar mounts.

~ A Florida business man who sold protected species items through his website and retail store in Port St. Lucie, Florida, was sent to prison for 25 months. Sales documented in the case involved more than \$200,000 worth of federally protected wildlife, including tiger, snow leopard, and jaguar skins as well as baby tiger mounts.

~ A man in New York who was keeping unlawfully acquired live leopards at his residence was sentenced to serve two years in prison for Lacey Act wildlife trafficking violations. The man also forfeited three live leopards, several tiger and jaguar skins and full mounts, a snow leopard hide, and a clouded leopard hide.

~ Service agents and inspectors seized over 1,700 packages of traditional Asian medicinals made from protected species as part of an interagency inspection blitz of markets and stores in the Chicago and Milwaukee metropolitan areas.

~ Prosecutions wrapped up an investigation that exposed the interstate sale of live endangered ocelots. A nonprofit religious group that played a central role in the trafficking scheme pleaded guilty to conspiracy and was ordered to contribute \$60,000 to a newly created Endangered Species Justice Fund managed by the Oregon Zoo. In 2007, an Oregon wildlife park that disguised a sale as a "donation" was ordered to pay \$10,000 to this fund, and a New York company that purchased four ocelots pleaded guilty to violating the Endangered Species Act. Five other defendants had previously pleaded guilty in the case.

~ A Utah man was fined \$7,500 and forced to forfeit 106 bobcat skins unlawfully taken in Nevada for export to European fur markets; the skins were valued at \$38,000.

~ Officers in New York seized two large suitcases containing CITES protected wildlife from a traveler from Zimbabwe that included a leopard rug.

Hunting, Trade & Trafficking

~ Staff in Baltimore seized two full mount leopard trophies that were imported without valid CITES permits.

~ Staff in Atlanta foiled the illegal importation of a leopard skin imported as a personal sport-hunted trophy using a false CITES permit. Inspectors also seized five leopard trophies that either lacked tags or were improperly tagged.

~ Seizures in Miami included an ocelot skin recovered from a passenger that arrived from Guyana.

~ Seizures in Houston included a leopard trophy imported without a valid CITES permit.

~ Illegal wildlife products intercepted at the Denver International Airport included a leopard skull from Zimbabwe.

~ Seizures in Pembina, North Dakota included lynx hides that lacked the required CITES permits; and in Dunseith, a Service inspector stopped an individual attempting to import bobcat hides.

~ Two South African big game guides involved in an illegal leopard hunting and smuggling scheme both pleaded guilty to federal charges after being arrested at a sports show in PA where both were advertising their business. The men tried to import five hides and three skulls of leopards illegally killed in South Africa, smuggled to Zimbabwe, then shipped to the U.S. with false CITES permits. One defendant was sent to prison for 18 months while the other was fined \$5,000.

~ A man suspected of selling protected cats to breeders in the U.S. pleaded guilty to illegally importing an endangered Asian leopard cat via Miami for sale in the U.S.

International Customs Reports, 2007-2008

~ Hunting trophies were seized from a taxidermist's shop just outside of Paris, that included cheetah and leopard skins, stuffed tigers and lions, and a whole leopard. The taxidermist was unable to provide valid CITES permits and may have produced false documentation.

~ In Russia, Customs and the Frontier Service in Primorsky Province uncovered a smuggling ring. The lot included four Amur tiger skins and 60 kg of tiger bones.

~ In Cameroon two wildlife dealers were arrested after being caught attempting to sell leopard skins.

~ A sailor was sentenced to eight months in prison and fined nearly \$1,500 for illegally trading a clouded leopard skin. The sailor purchased the skin in Bengal, India, brought it to China and sold it to a Hong Kong citizen.

~ In China, police caught six people involved in the poaching and dealing of four snow leopards.

~ On the border of Mongolia, checkpoint officers seized the pelt of a tiger, stashed under the seat of a car.

~ In Yunan Province, border soldiers seized wildlife products that included tiger bone. The individuals from Myanmar said they bought the products from a market in Danbang, Myanmar.

~ In India, over the course of two months, a total of 15 leopard skins were seized and eight arrests were made.

~ In Sumatra, four arrests were made, following a raid by authorities. The suspects were found to be selling tiger parts that included bones, skins, teeth, and claws.

Federal & State Updates

Great Cats and Rare Canids Act of 2009

On April 21, 2009, H.R. 411; related bill S. 529, passed in the House of Representatives. On April 22, 2009 it was received in the Senate and referred to the Committee on Environment and Public Works. The Act will assist in the conservation of rare felids and canids by supporting and providing financial resources for the conservation programs of nations within the range of rare felid and canid populations and projects of persons with demonstrated expertise in the conservation of rare felid and canid populations. Rare felids include any species of lion, leopard, jaguar, snow leopard, clouded leopard, cheetah, Iberian lynx, and Borneo bay cat, including any subspecies or population of such species and excludes any species, subspecies, or population that is native to the U.S. and any tiger. (Tigers are included under the Rhino and Tiger Act.)

The Captive Primate Safety Act

On February 24, 2009, H.R. 80; related bill S. 462, passed in the House of Representatives. On May 14, 2009, the Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works ordered to be reported without amendment favorably. The Act will amend the Lacey Act Amendments of 1981 to treat nonhuman primates as prohibited wildlife species and to make corrections in the provisions relating to captive wildlife offenses under the Lacey Act and for other purposes.

Nonnative Wildlife Invasion Prevention Act

On January 26, 2009, H.R. 669 was introduced in the House of Representatives. On February 4, 2009, it was referred to the House Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, Oceans and Wildlife. The Act is to prevent the introduction and establishment of nonnative species that negatively impact the economy, environment, or other animal species' or human health and for other purposes.

Endangered Canada Lynx

On May 27, 2009, "Citing the impacts that global warming will have on the endangered Canada lynx, four conservation groups have filed a legal challenge in Federal District Court in Missoula against the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, (FWS) challenging the agency's selection of designated lynx habitat. The Sierra Club, the Alliance for the Wild Rockies, Native Ecosystems Council, and the Center for Native Ecosystems argue that the land area FWS intends to designate as critical habitat for the lynx is not sufficient to protect the wild cat, making this the first such challenge to rely on concerns over global warming's impacts to habitat."

ON JUNE 24, 2009, THE GOVERNOR OF OREGON SIGNED SENATE BILL 391 THAT BANS DANGEROUS WILD ANIMALS AS PETS!

Florida

On June 17, 2009, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission approved changes to laws regulating captive wildlife. Revisions to laws include: Cougars and cheetahs will be reclassified from Class II to Class I. A grandfather clause is included for anyone possessing Class II wildlife for personal use when the classification changes to Class I. However, all Class I wildlife, except those for sale or exhibition, must have permanent identification devices such as a microchip and photographs of distinct features and tattoos. Wild or domestic hybrids that are indistinguishable from a wild animal will be classified and regulated as wildlife.

Other changes and requirements include: Documentation of experience; record keeping; critical incident and disaster plans; facility and structural caging including research facilities; transportation requirements; and new regulations for captive wildlife sanctuaries. The new rules will go into effect in August 2009. Owners will have until January 1, 2010 to comply with the permanent identification requirements.

Missouri

On February 10, 2009, the Senate General Laws Committee held a hearing on S.B. 227 that modifies provisions relating to dangerous animal registration. Under current law, certain dangerous wild animals may not be kept unless they are registered with local law enforcement except if the animals are kept in a zoo, circus, scientific or educational institution, research laboratory, veterinary hospital or animal refuge. The Act will remove the exception for animal refuges. The Act adds the criteria that research laboratories and scientific and educational institutions must be accredited, veterinary hospitals must be permitted by the Missouri Veterinary Medical Board, and zoos must be accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums in order for the exemption to apply. Any such dangerous wild animal shall be registered within 5 days of being acquired or moved into any county or the city of St. Louis and must be renewed annually. Any animal required to be registered shall be identifiable by a microchip or other reliable identification device. The Act prohibits the bringing of any such dangerous wild animal to public, commercial, or retail establishments unless it is a veterinary clinic. The animals shall not come into contact with anyone other than the owner, possessor or handler.

THE TIGER NEXT DOOR



“The Tiger Next Door tells the story of Dennis Hill who has been breeding and selling tigers from his backyard in Flat Rock, Indiana for over 15 years. Hill’s dream is to make his fortune breeding stripeless white tigers but at what cost to the animals and at what risk to the community? Hill has lost his federal license to keep captive wild animals and the state of Indiana is threatening to shut him down. *The Tiger Next Door* follows Hill over the days and months that follow; exploring his motives, his past, and the curious, ethically-murky world he’s created in his backyard. Reaching far beyond Hill’s compound, the film also illuminates the connection between breeders and captive wild animal ownership in the U.S.



Experts estimate that there are now more tigers in private hands in the U.S. than there are roaming wild in the world. *The Tiger Next Door* presents arguments for and against the keeping of wild animals and raises the question of the relationship we can have with wild animals when the wild is disappearing.”

The Tiger Next Door is A Rolling River Films Production; directed and produced by Camilla Calamandrei.

To learn more and for information on screenings and DVD availability please visit: <http://thetigernextdoor.com>

Bobcats on the move and moving in

Bobcats in California are enjoying some swanky digs!

As the U.S. housing market continues to take a beating, bobcats in California are taking advantage of the situation and moving out of the woods and into foreclosed homes. One could also surmise that they are taking back what was once theirs but with a few leasehold improvements!



Does a serval *really* look like a cheetah?



Servals and cheetahs are native to several African countries but clearly they look nothing alike. More often, leopards, cheetahs, and jaguars are mistaken for each other due to the confusion over spots versus rosettes!

(Just in case – Serval on the left; Cheetah on the right!)

Captive Wildlife Safety Act – U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

The Captive Wildlife Safety Act (CWSA) addresses concerns about public safety and the growing number of big cats in private hands in the U.S. This law amends the Lacey Act and makes it illegal to import, export, buy, sell, transport, receive or acquire certain big cats across State lines or the U.S. border. The CWSA prohibitions apply to lions, tigers, leopards, snow leopards, clouded leopards, jaguars, cheetahs, and cougars including all subspecies and any hybrid combination of these species. The CWSA provides no “grandfather clause.”

The penalties for violating the CWSA depend on the type of violation. If you import or export a big cat or sell or buy a cat or cats worth more than \$350 in interstate commerce, you have committed a felony. You could be sent to prison for up to five years and ordered to pay a fine of up to \$250,000. Fines for organizations can be as high as \$500,000. Other violations are misdemeanors with lower penalties. If you move from one State to another and take a big cat with you, you could be fined as much as \$100,000 (\$200,000 for an organization) and sent to prison for up to one year.

Persons, facilities, and other entities licensed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) under the Animal Welfare Act to possess big cats are exempt. State colleges and universities, State agencies, State-licensed wildlife rehabilitators, and State licensed veterinarians are also exempt. To qualify for exemption, wildlife sanctuaries must be a non-profit entity that is tax exempt under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue Code; cannot engage in commercial trade in big cat species including their offspring, parts, and products made from them; cannot breed big cats, cannot allow direct contact between big cats and the public at their facilities, must keep records of transactions involving covered cats; and must allow the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to inspect their facilities, records, and animals at reasonable hours.

For more information contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Law Enforcement.
Email: lawenforcement@fws.gov

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