

Big Cat Chronicles

Spring 2021



Marissa

Female Mountain Lion
(Puma concolor)

Born 6/30/16

Rescued 9/30/16

Read more about Marissa on page 10.

Letter from the President

Co-Founder Tanya Smith

While 2020 was an incredibly tough and challenging year, your amazing support throughout it leaves me filled with hope as we begin anew in 2021. From answering our call for recurring donations to spreading awareness and advocacy, you came through for big cats in so many ways! Despite unprecedented adversity, your generosity, creativity and efforts allowed us to rescue twelve animals, while causing historic progress to be made on the Big Cat Public Safety Act (BCPSA).

Last year, we created a 10-step pledge that many of you participated in to help protect big cats. Your actions resulted in bringing the BCPSA to the attention of politicians unlike ever before! In 2021, it has already been re-introduced to the House as H.R. 263, and we are going to need your help to get it passed quickly. We have republished the pledge on our blog, and urge you to again join us in the fight for their future.

We know that passage of the bill will result in more calls for rescue, made more urgent by the economic impact of COVID-19 on small menagerie owners. That is why we must begin preparations now at the Refuge, by installing service roads, and running water and electric utilities to the cleared, flat area we have available for new habitats.

If you'd like to do more, please consider becoming a recurring donor! The COVID-19 Relief Bill has extended up to \$300 in charitable donations through 2022. This is the perfect opportunity to set up a recurring \$25 per month gift. Breaking the \$300 into smaller monthly donations doesn't just help you, it helps us by assuring us of a solid monthly financial foundation. While donating, please check out the easy employer match tool on our website, to see if your place-of-work will double or even triple your donation.

Right now, you can change the lives of animals across this country who suffer exploitation, neglect and abuse, waiting for the chance of a better life. This is the moment we can transform their future. We are so grateful that you have chosen to continue this fight with us – Victory is within our reach!

Until next time,



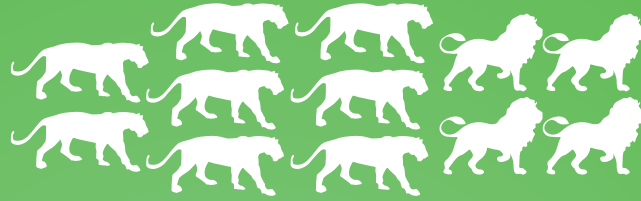
Tanya Smith, President & Co-Founder



Together, we can get the Big Cat Public Safety Act passed in 2021. By reaching out to your US Representatives, you help put an end to the abuse! We are also working to prepare our property for an increase of rescues once the bill passes.



2020 YEAR IN REVIEW



RESCUED
8 TIGERS
4 LIONS



VETERINARY CARE

- 18 WELLNESS EXAMS
- 35 BLOOD TESTS
- 25 DENTAL X-RAYS
- 60 X-RAYS
- 5 CHEMOTHERAPY TREATMENTS

FED RESIDENTS

194,979 LBS OF MEAT!
ROUGHLY 534 LBS PER DAY!



INCLUDING NEBRASKA
SPECIALTY DIET

INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

"WE'RE ALWAYS BUILDING SOMETHING AT THE REFUGE"

- Completed new well and water system to support future growth.
- Revamped Discovery Area: New walkway and wood beamed shade pavilion.
- Opened new multi introduction small cat habitat in Discovery Area.
- Repaired water damage to Gift Shop; updated design with outdoor check in system.
- Converted to open air tram system for all tours for guests' safety and comfort.
- Remodeled some lodging units to improve visitor experience.
- Processed 1,000+ LBS of meat, fruits and veggies daily in our commissary.
- Resumed Capital Campaign preparations for Visitor Education Center.
- Began strategic planning to accommodate future rescues.

COVID-19 IMPACT

- 3 MONTH CLOSURE
- 15,737 LESS VISITORS
- \$27,500 in PPE or COVID-related expenses.
- Completely revamped our tour for social distancing.
- DECIMATED EMERGENCY FUND
- Replaced behind the scenes tours with virtual tours.

EDUCATION

- 18 ANIMAL CARE INTERNS GRADUATED
- 1 EDUCATION INTERN GRADUATED
- 1 NEW EDUCATION INTERNSHIP CREATED
- 3,040 STUDENTS EDUCATED IN 24 STATES/12 COUNTRIES VIA VIRTUAL CLASSES
- 30,953 PEOPLE OF ALL AGES EDUCATED ONSITE
- 1,125 STUDENTS EDUCATED OFFSITE PRIOR TO COVID (JAN-FEB)



FUNDRAISING

- \$491,813 NEWSLETTER
- \$169,640 ADOPTIONS/SPONSORSHIPS
- \$114,264 DONOR DEVELOPMENT
- \$163,500 GRANTS
- \$84,808 FROM FACEBOOK, INCLUDING 149 FACEBOOK FAN FUNDRAISERS
- \$46,526 GIVING TUESDAY
- \$20,289 NWA GIVES



THE BIG CAT PUBLIC SAFETY ACT

(H.R.1380) Passed in the house by 2/3 majority vote - but did not get through the senate before the session ended. Re-introduced to the house as H.R.263 1/1/21.

- 7938 ADVOCACY PAGE VISITS
- 7575 RETURNING ADVOCATES
- 1557 EMAILS SENT TO CONGRESS
- 153 ADVOCACY TWEETS

VOLUNTEERING

- 190 VOLUNTEERS
- 47 VOLUNTEERS (37 PRE-COVID, 5 RECURRING)
- 62 VOLUNTEER HOURS
- ALL YOUTH GROUPS CANCELED DUE TO COVID



When a Smile Isn't a Smile

Reading Facial Expressions in Big Cats

Miles the tiger could also be called “Smiles.” Her photos always seem to capture a feline grin that could rival that of the Cheshire Cat. Naula never misses a photo opp either; though she doesn't say “cheese” like Miles, it eerily seems like she poses for the camera.

The question is, have our felines been influenced by millennial visitors, observing and learning how to take the “purrfect” selfie? While that would be awesome (and financially detrimental to the Refuge if every cat demanded a cell phone), these gestures aren't actually what they seem.

The composition of these Instagram-model-worthy pics is actually the result of natural instincts. Miles enjoys “talking” to team members and is curious about her environment. Her open-mouthed, smirks usually come from catching her in the middle of chuffing, groaning, or sniffing. We often speak about the Flehmens Response, which causes the signature “stinky face” in big cats when they smell something strong. What sometimes appears to be a beaming tiger is actually a sniffing tiger!

Beyond facial expressions the body language of big cats can be very important to watch. Twitching tails, hunched shoulders, flicking ears, and raised paws can all give away a big cat's emotions. These predators are experts at stalking and subtle movements of their body can indicate when they are about to pounce.

Big cats, like Naula, are nosy, though we are sure they would prefer the phrase “invested in furthering their education.” Her big-eyed, stark-still poses for photos are usually the result of trying to figure out what her keeper is doing with that weird object (camera) in their hand. She's likely also interested in whether or not she can eat the camera. Of course, it comes to her attention that her keeper is paying significant attention to that weird, boxy black object in their hands, which in Naula's mind means they are off-guard. Her natural instincts kick into overdrive, so she takes the opportunity to flatten her body or stand close to natural habitat features in order to blend in, stalk, then pounce!

Many of our animal residents are only just now finding themselves. A recurring monthly donation gives them support they can reliably depend on, allowing exotic cats, big and small, a lifetime to find their smile.



Miles loves to “smile” but this facial expression isn't one of joy. When a tiger ‘smiles’ they are usually curious about some strange scent on the wind. By drawing their teeth back they can get a better whiff.



Big cats have an extra organ on the roof of their mouth called the Jacobson organ. They ‘smile’ to expose that organ to the air, helping them figure out exactly what that strange scent is.

Letter from the Curator

Emily McCormack

The Jackson Memorial Veterinary Hospital has profoundly been the most valuable addition to our veterinary program. With your tremendous support, we were able to build the hospital and began utilizing the facility in 2016. In 2018, Dr. Kellyn Sweeley rejoined our team and elevated our program to the highest animal care standards.

Cats are experts at hiding symptoms of illness and camouflaging their attitudes, so it is extremely important that every animal care staff member and intern is trained to note any changes at all. Catching an illness as early as possible is very important because by the time you see symptoms they could need quick attention. We monitor every animal in our care and keep records of any change in appetite, behavior, or water consumption. These are three easy ways to detect any health changes. We also monitor their physical condition for increases or decreases in diet as well as changes in their gait to treat appropriately, especially as they age. Medications and supplements are given when appropriate and of course added in with age to aid in the animals' quality of life. Whenever anything is suspicious, the animals are sedated for a full exam to determine the course of treatment.

Because we monitor our animals so thoroughly we were able to observe the slightest signs that BB King needed to be given a checkup. Due to Dr. Kellyn's keen eye and devotion to her studies and the animals, she was able to identify the smallest abnormality during BB King's exam. After being diagnosed with hemangiosarcoma, a rare form of cancer, BB King began an intravenous chemotherapy. To date, this is the first time this type of chemotherapy has ever been attempted to treat a tiger. BB King received five total treatments given every three weeks.

On January 24th, it was time to conduct BB King's 3 month recheck exam. We are proudly reporting at this time a success! As with every treatment, BB voluntarily loaded into a transfer trailer for a short drive down to the veterinary hospital. He had spent the night in one of the three holding enclosures and was sedated for his exam the next morning. Once again, Dr. Sweeley performed multiple radiographs, ultrasound, full blood panel and urinalysis to ensure there were no tumors that had spread elsewhere in BB King's body. The results again confirmed that the cancer had not metastasized and that BB King is in otherwise perfect health! BB King will again have a recheck exam in 6 months and Dr. Sweeley will determine at that time whether to biopsy the original tumor site for retesting. Not all treatment is possible for every animal, with the greatest example being BB King. Each animal is an individual with different personalities and health backgrounds.

We are very fortunate with BB King's demeanor and trust in his caretakers making his journey a success! Thank you to all who donated to his care and continued donations for the health care for all the animals.



Big cats are experts at hiding their illnesses as a survival instinct. Luckily, because our team monitors their behavior (like eating and drinking patterns) we can catch when an animal is acting abnormally and if necessary, perform an exam.



Three months post-chemo, BB King is showing no signs of the hemangiosarcoma cancer returning. We will continue to monitor him closely and do another checkup in a few months.

Visit TCWR! Big cats are more active in the cooler months!

The Refuge 'Odd Couple'

Male tiger Glacier and lioness Ungowwa were rescued together last September, along with six other big cats from a shut-down Indiana facility. Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge was asked to rescue these animals by the US government and PETA after a federal judge ordered their removal due to multiple USDA and Endangered Species Act violations. While the mating of a tiger and lioness would not occur in nature, these two had clearly been paired to produce hybrid big cats called tigons, potentially unhealthy, unstable animals that sell for higher profit because of their unique markings and smaller size.

After we performed medical exams, both cats required treatment for worms; they also exhibited high food aggression, as did all of "The Indiana 8." Once Glacier was deemed healthy he was neutered late last fall and reunited with Ungowwa in their spacious natural habitat on the tour loop. Seeing our resident *odd couple's* transformation from untrusting and fearful to relaxed and playful with routine daily feeding and care has brought us all much-needed joy during the past months.

While lions are the only social big cat, and tigers are exclusively solitary in the wild, we see a personality flip with Glacier and Ungowwa. He is much friendlier and usually is the first to approach her. While she's not aggressive towards him, she definitely is the boss, and is quick to let him know when he's too much in her personal space! Glacier is also the more curious of the two. He loves to stalk and play with enrichment, as well as follow and chat with animal care keepers as they pass by or perform daily cleaning duties, seeking their attention at every opportunity.



Glacier and Ungowwa were rescued together; a male lion and female tiger are usually paired for hybrid breeding. Since Glacier is now neutered and the pair get along well, we reunited them.

Ungowwa isn't your typical lioness; although lions are social, she likes her space. Luckily, Glacier respects that. They can be found cuddling at times, but usually they just cohabitate, enjoying their shared grassy habitat.

Ungowwa, on the other hand, can typically be found enjoying a nap in the sunniest and warmest parts of their habitat. She is extremely independent and does not care much for social interaction with Glacier or her keepers (unless treats are involved)! Otherwise, she likes to keep to herself and nap all day undisturbed. That is until Glacier, (after doing his rounds and re-marking territory) slowly inches up to her and greets her with friendly chuffs before curling up next to her. She tolerates this personal space invasion well - perhaps because she is happy to have extra warmth during winter!

Animal care staff has spotted them in the den cuddling together, but she is quick to run out as if she doesn't want people to know she actually loves his company! However, they do enjoy feeding off each other's curiosity with any new enrichment. One will watch as the other investigates and plays, switching up who gets a turn to play next.

These two have very distinct personalities, and their *odd couple* relationship dynamic makes sense. The interesting thing about this pair is that, as a social feline, Ungowwa is the least social of the two when it comes to both their keepers and her partner. Overall, it is clear that they both love to spend time in their grassy habitat, whether or not that time is spent together.

Because of your generosity, these two will never be forced to mate, and have their cubs ripped away for profit. Because of you, they both stepped on grass for the first-time last fall, and are now free to live each day on their own terms, cared for and respected as wild animals. Your support will allow us to keep giving this life-changing opportunity to other big cats waiting for rescue!

An Intimate Visit with the TCWR Animals

Michaela and Jayson Juarez first toured TCWR in July, 2020. They loved experiencing the Refuge first-hand, but safety precautions prohibited bear tunnel access. Then she read about virtual tours in the *Big Cat Chronicle*, and decided to purchase one for their wedding anniversary in October. To make the occasion extra festive, Michaela ordered them TCWR t-shirts to wear!

“Our tour started with Bam Bam. When we visited, he was hiding, but now we saw him and all the bears close up! Michael didn’t like the camera so our guide stepped right back. It was evident how much their feelings are respected by the staff.”

Michaela’s favorite animal is Flip, who was in her heated night house with the cooler temps. She was delighted when their guide took them inside for a quick visit, departing as soon as Flip indicated she wished her privacy!

“You get so close to all the animals on the virtual tour. Mauri was so sweet, rubbing against the fence and chuffing! Our guide was amazing; she answered all our questions and did not rush. It was a full 90 minutes with no distractions from kids crying or people straying, just us and the animals! Also, the timing was perfect: the big cats were all out and many came up interested in our host – we can’t wait to do this again!”

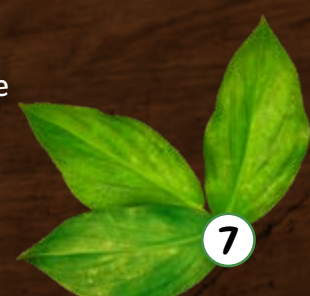
For more information on prices and how to schedule, check out ‘visit us,’ ‘exclusive tours’ on TCWR.org. We are working hard to find better ways to connect you and the animal residents during these strange COVID times. Your purchase will help care for and feed our animal residents!



Experience “Africa in the Ozarks” by Lodging on the Wild Side!

Need a Spring Break getaway? Come stay the night and truly experience *Africa in the Ozarks*. Hear our lions carol throughout the night from the comfort of your lodging accommodation! Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge offers accommodations ranging from Glamping and RV sites to comfortable Zulu Safari Lodges, Suites, and even a Tree House Bungalow. We offer unique options to all overnight adventurers. TCWR lodging was inducted into the Trip Advisors Hall of Fame in 2019 and voted 2020 Traveler’s Choice Award. Our hospitality team is going above and beyond to keep our guests, staff, and animal residents safe during these difficult times. All proceeds from lodging, add-on packages, and gift shop sales benefit our animal residents. So plan your visit and share your experience.

Become a voice for animals who would otherwise have none. “Join the Pride, Help Save Lives” by adopting or sponsoring an animal, or become a wild about wildlife tier member. Each tier is its own exclusive community that allows donors to engage with one another, take home fantastic sign-up gifts, and support the refuge in the most effective way possible. Reserve your room today by visiting TCWR.org or by calling our lodging department at (479) 244-6099.



A Year of Changes

Extending Our Goals and Changing Lives

This past year has brought about many changes, not just in the way we conduct tours but how many of our newest rescues behave. Chief carols now, he didn't do that when he was first rescued. Miles begs for attention with encouraging "chuffs" as she slinks along the habitat perimeter, flicking her tail and rubbing her face against the nearest surface. We thought she'd prefer the seclusion of Rescue Ridge forever, but now she's up-top where she can shine. Hurricane and Avalanche, well, they made small talk with our team during their last move. The boys calmly stepped into the roll cage, the same strange, wheeled device that carried them to safety during their initial rescue. That time, they had protested with desperate pawing and viscous sounds to the strangers, who surely meant no good. Now, they trust those strangers with their life.

We started 2020 out with hope and a plan. Much like the cubs who are born into the Big Cat Trade, life ended up going differently than we ever expected. The grand ideas we had of that year being the one that saw historic progress in the fight to end the Big Cat Trade were replaced by a different historic event entirely. Yet in the end, we saw more progress than we ever thought we would, and it's no mystery why. It was because of you, the people who refuse to give up the fight even amid a global pandemic.

Recently, key criminals in the Trade were brought to justice. Joe Exotic went to prison, we assisted the Federal Government and PETA in saving the animals at Tim Stark's "Wildlife in Need," a federal court ordered the removal of Jeff Lowe's cubs and their mothers, more government officials called for the passing of the Big Cat Public Safety Act than ever before. You did that. Even when the entire world was rocked, you refused to be silenced. If we can work together to make these monumental changes in the face of a global pandemic, we can do anything.

This year, we encourage you to revisit the 10 simple steps we created in 2020 to continue the fight and help you find inspiration:

1. **Share at least 1 post of Turpentine Creek's social media.**
2. **Tell at least 1 friend about why big cats make bad pets**
3. **Educate at least 1 person about what a True Sanctuary is**
4. **Create at least 1 social fundraiser to help raise funds to save big cats**
5. **Make at least 1 post to share why you support facilities like Turpentine Creek and what they do**
6. **Volunteer at least 1 hour of your time helping to raise awareness about big cats in captivity (digitally, in person, or at a facility)**
7. **Find at least 1 way to utilize your own personal talents to benefit big cats in captivity**
8. **Recruit at least 1 person to help the Big Cat cause**
9. **Send at least 1 email to my federal government representatives to inform them about the plight of big cats in captivity**
10. **Respond to at least 1 social post telling others why I support Turpentine Creek**



With your help, Avalanche and many other big cats have been rescued from the Big Cat Trade. Since arriving, Avalanche has settled into his new home well.



Miles

Miles seemed scared and meek upon rescue, but her personality quickly emerged. Her energy and love of people prompted a move from the solace of Rescue Ridge to a big habitat on the Tour Loop so Miles can chat with neighbors and visitors alike.



Chief

Upon arrival, Chief was very sick and did not carol along with our other lions. Now, Chief is one of the main voices, beginning the morning carol almost every day.

You can also access a new “Small Step for Big Cats” each week on any of our social media platforms or through our e-newsletter at TCWR.org/subscribe. Each “small step” will be an easy, free action you can focus on weekly that will take about two minutes to complete. If even a fraction of our supporters engage in these actions, our animal residents and those who are still trapped in the Trade will feel the results.

Chief carols now! There are others like him who still need to be heard. Your support and donations help save lives, donate today.

Please Welcome Dakota to the Turpentine Creek Team!



If you visited us this fall, you were likely greeted and helped by a masked, yet still smiling gentleman at our new ticket window. Dakota started with us last September and his friendly and professional demeanor has shone through providing excellent customer service despite all of the changes we have implemented due to COVID-19 and a tough winter season.

Dakota not only works in our Refuge gift shop he also makes sure our online store is running smoothly, helps with new apparel and product choices, and answers gift shop emails. We are extremely proud to have Dakota as part of the Turpentine Creek family and know that his personality, skills and talents are a vital component in helping to provide the support needed to care for all of our animal residents.

Featured Animal - Marissa

Female Mountain Lion (*Puma concolor*)

Born 6/30/16, Rescued 9/30/16



Marissa was one of 115 animals rescued from a cub-petting and breeding facility in Colorado. This young mountain lion, along with her sister Louisa, were the last cubs used in the facility's cub-petting scheme. The girls were too old and too large to be legally used for cub petting, but only days before we took over the facility, they were still offering photo and play time opportunities with the pair. This duo of playful cubs were full of energy and had no qualm using their long sharp cub claws to climb and play roughly. As soon as we took the facility over we put an end to all cub-petting and public interaction with the quickly growing cubs.

After being brought to Turpentine Creek, the pair were kept in the vet hospital for observation for a short time; it was quickly apparent the girls were going to be a handful. They loved to climb the caging, all the way to the roof! After our veterinarian gave us the all clear on their health we moved them to an outdoor enclosure.

Since their rescue, the girls have grown out of their cub spots but are still as playful and energetic as ever. Most days they can be found stalking their neighbors, visitors, and team members. They will crouch down and wait until someone isn't watching and then pounce at the fencing or charge them, running full speed down the length of their enclosure. It is evident that if there was not a solid fence barrier between them and us that they would be successful in their hunt. These girls are very talented stalkers, patiently waiting and working in tandem to distract and pounce their chosen 'prey'.

At first, after they lost their cubspots, it was difficult to tell the pair apart. Small color variations and nose details were the only way to visually differentiate the girls, but as they've aged more physical differences have become apparent. Marissa is a lot sleeker than her sister, her size slightly smaller than Louisa. Their personalities are also different, Marissa tends to be the more curious of the pair, and she is always the first to investigate new things. She also loves to show off for keepers, rolling around and purring, trying to get their attention. Both she and her sister Louisa are food aggressive and the team has to be extra careful when giving them their meals or treats.

Marissa's life might have started out rough, but thanks to you she will spend the rest of her days safe at Turpentine Creek, where she can be the stalky mountain lion she was always meant to be.



Cute and Cuddly? Just Say No! Thank You!

There is no question that a tiger cub is one of the most adorable creatures you will ever see. Considering we live in America and they are not an indigenous species, it is even more probable you never would see one outside of a legitimate zoo. Except there are now more tigers bred in America than in the wild where they belong. They are at roadside attractions on our highways, and the money paid to see and pet them, to take selfies, is lining the owner's pocket, not saving tigers in the wild. And none of these cubs help the plight of their wild relatives. They are not even pure enough for a zoo to take them.

Facilities that offer cub petting opportunities are quick to identify themselves as saving the tiger species. They claim their breeding program ensures their survival. They omit that these cubs are often produced from inbreeding and have no value to the species survival plan, and can never be reintroduced to the wild. They have severe deformities that would make them unfit, extensive medical issues, and would not be beneficial to the gene pool.

Cubs yanked from their mothers so humans can hold them, often within hours of birth, do not receive the nutrition and antibodies naturally conveyed through mother's milk. They develop Metabolic Bone Disease, a disabling weakness of the bone that leads to fractures due to a lack of minerals and proper nutrients. Three cubs from our Colorado rescue, Peyton, Black Fire, and Rocklyn, could not walk; they were so severely affected.

It is a romantic idea. Cuddle a tiger or lion cub. Other than our domesticated pets, we should not be cuddling any wild animals. It is unhealthy for us and unhealthy for them. We know viruses cross to humans through interaction with infected wild animals and vice versa. The official term is zoonotic diseases, and we know big cats are susceptible to COVID-19.

Passing the Big Cat Public Safety Act, H.R. 263, would protect these animals and stop abuse and neglect. We have been advocating for this bill for several years and saw it passed through the house last year with a 2/3 majority vote. We just fell short of our goal by running out of time. This year with your support, we can make it happen. Please visit TCWR.org/advocacy to send a message to your House Representative today!



Blackfire, Rocklyn, and Peyton are survivors of cub petting. Due to improper nutrition, common in the cub petting industry, the three will suffer from Metabolic Bone Disease for the rest of their lives. Luckily, with care and pain management, they live a full life with us.

Order Your 2021 Calendar Today!

Each year we produce the Turpentine Creek Calendar filled with big, bright photos of your favorite Refuge residents enjoying the habitats you helped provide for them. The calendar also features residents' birthdays, so you can join in celebrating them, and other events at the Refuge in addition to major US holidays.

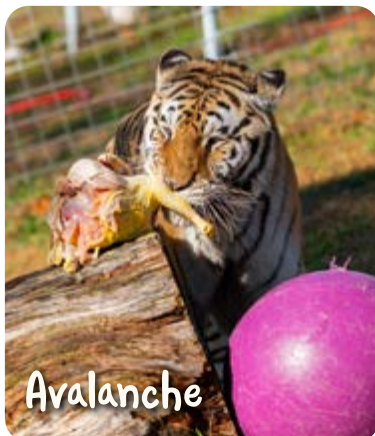
Order your 2021 Calendar through our online store or using the enclosed order form. All calendar purchases benefit the animal residents at the Refuge, thank you!



What Your Donations Do



Thank You!



Build a stronger foundation for big cats — set up a monthly recurring donation.

Yes, I will help the animals! Enclosed is my tax deductible contribution of:

Donations: \$25 \$35 \$50 \$100 Other \$_____

I would like to make my loving donation recurring: Repeat monthly. 

2021 Calendars: \$20 each X ___ calendars + \$5 S/H = \$_____

Choose your Wild About Wildlife Membership Tier

A membership with TCWR is the perfect opportunity to help support the amazing work that the Refuge does every single day and also gives the opportunity to visit multiple times a year!

\$45 The P.A.W. Club, Kid's Membership (Ages 6-13) Name of child: _____
See TCWR.org/kidsclub for more info. Email address: _____

\$100 Pride Membership You and 3 guests get a full year of visits to the Refuge.

\$300+ Friends of India

\$1,250+ Bam Bam Benefactors

\$3,000+ Kenny Fellowship

\$10,000+ Hilda Jackson Society

Shirt Size (circle one) S, M, L, XL, 2XL, 3XL

Shirt Size (circle one) S, M, L, XL, 2XL, 3XL

Total:

\$ _____

- Opt Out of Membership Signup Gifts
- Opt Out of Membership Card

Adopt or Sponsor an Animal Today!

Printed Animal Adoption:

- \$150/yr - Small Mammal/Bird
- \$150/yr - Small Cat/Monkey
- \$150/yr - Cougar/Leopard
- \$150/yr - Lion/Tiger/Bear

Animal Sponsor: One sponsor per animal. New Sponsors, please check to see if desired animal is available for sponsorship.

- \$700/yr - Small Mammal/Bird
 - \$1,000/yr - Small Cat
 - \$2,200/yr - Cougar/Leopard
 - \$2,500/yr - Lion/Tiger/Bear
- Sponsorship includes membership. Opt out to make donation 100% tax deductible.
- Membership Opt Out

Monthly payments available for sponsorships, See website: TCWR.org

Adopted/Sponsored Animal's Name(s): _____

Total Contribution Today: \$_____

Donor Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Recipient Name (if different): _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Input Credit Card below or make checks payable to TCWR.

Credit Card #: _____

Exp. Date: ___/___/___ CVC Code: _____

Please fill out this donation form, detach, fold as needed, and mail with included envelope. Thank You!

Know Before You Go



Before making spring break plans, do your research. Athena came from a facility that allowed hands-on interaction with the public. When a young employee was hurt she and her siblings were rescued by Turpentine Creek, saving their lives.



Magic shows might be a fun spring break activity, but ones utilizing animals, like big cats, should be avoided. Thurston's time as a magic show act caused both physical and mental scars. His owners defanged and declawed him to make him 'safer.'

As the weather warms up and Spring Break approaches, researching facilities with wildlife is vital for both you and the animals. Sadly, pseudo sanctuaries/roadside zoos view the animals as a dollar sign and not for the sentient beings that they are.

These pseudo facilities have an assortment of baby animals and advertise that paying to take pictures with them, feeding, playtimes, etc. helps to care for the animal. In fact, the money is being put right back into their pockets for personal gain. Cub petting facilities will speed breed the females to always have cubs for pay-to-play schemes. A cub can bring in thousands of dollars in their first three months. Once they reach this age, cubs are no longer supposed to be held. They are then sold to the pet/entertainment industry, hunting ranches, kept for breeding, or sadly killed. They genuinely are lucky if they live the 100-150 days. Imagine having a month-old infant and going into a large store, passing them around to everyone in the store each day for 8-10 hours or more, seven days a week, until they are three-months-old. Life is like this for animals in the cub petting industry; they aren't fed right, and therefore, they do not develop properly, ending up malnourished and very weak with fragile bones that can easily break.

TCWR is home to many animals that faced this nightmare before being rescued. Luna and Remington came from a pseudo zoo that forced them to swim for hours in a pool with visitors. Thurston had a very rough start to life before we were able to save him. He was declawed and had his canines filed down, thinking that taking their weapons away will make them safe to be around but, in reality, causes them irreversible harm. The majority of our rescued animals are survivors of the cub petting industry.

It is essential to research and learn about a place before supporting them by visiting. Ask if they provide vet care, do they pet or travel with the animals, and can the animals get out of public view if they want. Real sanctuaries do not force animals to interact with the public, but fake ones do. We can be their voice and be the change. Visit [TCWR.org](https://www.tcwr.org) for a free sanctuary checklist that provides questions for you to ask. We also encourage you to visit the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries website [SanctuaryFederation.org](https://www.sanctuaryfederation.org) to locate other true sanctuaries both accredited and verified. No matter how cute a baby animal is, think about what their life is like for that one photo opportunity. It's not worth the pain they will endure.

Inseparable Senior Siblings

Ty and Crysta were rescued together in 2011. These two senior cats are still full of energy, despite the fact that in July, Ty will turn 23 and Crysta will be 20. Their similarity in appearance and personalities leads our team to believe that they are siblings. This dynamic duo were rescued from a man who had been trying to start a sanctuary, but just couldn't manage to get the funding to support it.

Ty and Crysta are favorites among the team. Their personalities are unique and they obviously care for each other. Most days these two can be found cuddling during one of their many catnaps throughout the day. Although Ty rules the den most of the year, during cold winter days you may catch a glimpse of Crysta safely tucked in the den with her head resting on Ty's hip. They are also two of our most bench-destructive cats. We have to frequently replace the boards on their bench, which is good, because it means their claws stay nice and short!

This playful pair enjoy warm summer days taking long soaks in their pool, with Ty strangely preferring to walk into the pool back feet first! Crysta can often be found sharing the pool with Ty, but she also loves a good staff-provided hose bath. They also both love extra smelly enrichment, spending hours just sniffing and drooling upon it.



As senior animal residents, Crysta and Ty get daily meds to keep them happy and healthy. Crysta loves to sunbathe and destroy extra smelly enrichment. Her favorite positions are to lay stretched out on her back or belly.



The truly unique aspect of their relationship is the fact that, although they are very food aggressive with our team members, they share food. Animal care team members have even observed the pair saving food from their own bowl for the other. This is nearly unheard of in tigers, especially food aggressive tigers.

Ty and Crysta have lived at Rescue Ridge for most of their time at Turpentine Creek. They enjoy the peace and quiet, away from visitors. As a rescue, we do our best to make our animals as comfortable as possible. Only because of your help and donations were we able to build Rescue Ridge, a beautiful retreat deep within the Ozark mountain woods, where they can live their life surrounded by nature. Your monthly donations allow us to continue to build habitats that can offer this same quality of life to more animals waiting for rescue.

Ty and Crysta not only nap on their bench, they use it as a scratching post. We've replaced many boards, but scratching helps to keep their claws manicured and is a natural big cat behavior to mark territory.

Ty and Crysta are very relaxed cats. They love to chuff and greet our team members, but they do not like visitors. That is why they've lived at Rescue Ridge the majority of their time with us.

Donate to create a better future for the animals that call TCWR home.

A Unique Find at a Big Cat Refuge Flip the Coatimundi

Flip is our one and only White-Nosed Coatimundi, and our only animal resident who is not a cat or bear. Flip loves to spend these colder winter months curled up inside her hammock located inside her nice warm building. In the Spring you have a better chance at seeing her because she is much more active! During the warmer months you can find Flip scurrying outside, climbing on her toys, or searching for produce that is scattered throughout her habitat, which encourages her to forage. You might also get to see her crack an egg, which is her absolute favorite food! Sometimes you can also see Flip perched up high. Coatimundis are an arboreal species, which means they love to climb.

Flip is 16 years old, but this girl does not let her age stop her; she still has a lot of pep in her step. For Flip's 16th birthday we threw her a Sweet 16 party, where she got a car! Interns made a car out of boxes and painted it to look just like a racecar. Flip jumped right in! However, she is not a very good driver, she lived up to her name by quickly flipping it! Next time you visit Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge, be sure to keep an eye out for our most unique resident.



Leaving a Legacy of Compassion

By including TCWR in your will or trust you can leave a portion of your estate to the Refuge, ensuring the animals we rescue are cared for as they live out their lives in peace long into the future. Speak with your attorney today to set up your legacy of compassion for these beautiful animals.

Turpentine Creek Foundation, Inc.
DBA Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge
EIN #: 71-0721742

239 Turpentine Creek Lane,
Eureka Springs, AR 72632
479-253-5841

Tanya Smith, President
Scott Smith, Vice President
Amanda Smith, Secretary/Treasurer

Learn more at [TCWR.org/legacy-giving](https://www.tcwr.org/legacy-giving)

Utilizing Vertical Spaces for Our Small Cats

When building new habitats for our animal residents, we have to keep in mind how these animals live in the wild. Tigers and lions claim large territories, so that they have plenty of prey to hunt. Small cats, such as bobcats, cougars, and leopards, don't just need space to roam, they also naturally utilize vertical spaces to protect their kills from larger predators. These smaller carnivores are made to climb and find safety off the ground. So, when constructing small cat habitats we not only need to have lots of enrichment at ground level, such as benches and tunnels, but plenty of vertical spaces for them to climb and hide when they want a little privacy.

Since they can climb, all their enclosures are required to have roofs to prevent escape. This makes it impossible to provide living trees for them to use, so instead, we build benches and other platforms as alternatives.

Many of our smaller cats prefer these vertical spaces; Little Miss and Tigger bobcats can usually be found napping on their bench at the very top of their habitat, while Spyke leopard enjoys napping on his skyhigh bench or with his paws dangling off his aerial log. When we constructed our newest small cat habitat, we made sure to design it specifically to offer plenty of vertical spaces for the smaller cats to enjoy. With cats that enjoy climbing it is important to build up. This is why when comparing our small cat and large cat habitats, the small cat habitats tend to be smaller but offer more benches and lofts.

We are able to offer our animals the optimal habitats thanks to our generous donors and kind volunteers. It is through your help that we can provide the best lives possible for our animal residents!

Your donations save lives!



Dillian

When building habitats, we design them based on future occupants. Small cats, like Dillian, tend to prefer vertical spaces, like benches. Therefore, we build these roofed habitats more up than out.



Lil' Miss Priss

In the wild, small cats and other arboreal felines drag prey up into trees to keep larger predators from stealing their kill. Since roofs prevent full grown trees in these habitats, benches and platforms serve as great alternatives.



Spyke

Not just bobcats enjoy climbing; Spyke, our black leopard, loves spending time on his high log loft watching visitors from this vantage point.

Beyond the Call

Rescues are exciting, and we are always happy to welcome new cats to Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge. Rescues get a lot of attention, but they are only the beginning of the real work to fulfill our mission to provide a lifetime refuge for the exotic pet trade sufferers, with a specific focus on big cats. Rehabilitation for these victims can be a lengthy process.

Tigers can live into their early twenties in captivity. Floyd was only two and a half in 2019, when he arrived here from Oklahoma. He and his habitat mate Tigger are both still very young cats. Beyond rescuing them, our goal is to ensure they have a quality life for their lifetime. That means living in a large and grassy enclosure, filled with enrichment, receiving the medicine and diet designed to give them the best life possible.

Many of our cats have significant health issues because of inbreeding and poor nutrition. Floyd was part of the cub petting industry and had been deprived of his mother's milk. When Dr. Kellyn Sweeley conducted his initial health assessment, we discovered a significant heart murmur. During this exam his x-rays also revealed his forearm bones were deformed, and his claws were unevenly worn because he walked awkwardly. These malformed bones could have been caused due to inbreeding or malnutrition, in this case we suspect it was a combination of both.

Knowing Floyd's health condition and issues have allowed us to progress to the next phase of his life. Beginning the summer of 2019, we started him on a pain management program for his Metabolic Bone Disease. Dr. Sweeley monitors his heart condition, and he receives medication. In the spring of 2020, we relocated him and his pal, Tigger, to one of our lower habitats. This area has flatter ground and was specifically designed for cats with some mobility issues. This move helped Floyd achieve the happiness we want for all of our residents. Tigger is still the happy go lucky of the two, enjoys demolishing all the enrichment we give him, and has lost weight through his own customized program.

To look at Tigger and Floyd today is to witness a fantastic success story with visible results. Slated to die at four months, overweight and in pain a mere two years ago, today they are two beautiful, happy, and healthy tigers, along with the other three survivors. When we rescue animals not only do we make sure they have nutritionally balanced diets, but also proper veterinary treatment, pain management if necessary, and habitats that fit their personal needs. This can all happen because of your support, your generosity and donations allow us to save these animals. When we

answer the call for rescue, the story has just begun.



When Floyd was rescued he had a noticeable limp. This cub petting survivor had a hard start, but thanks to our supporters he now gets the care he needs to live a long, happy life with us.



Tigger and Floyd moved to our lower habitats in 2020. Their new home is located on flatter ground, which is easier for Floyd to navigate. Tigger just loves the extra attention he gets from visitors.

Your donation means more than ever for the animals depending on us.

Donate today!

Tony & Prince, Wild at Heart



Tony

Here at Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge, we provide a second chance at life and a lifetime of freedom. It is an indescribable feeling watching our rescues take their first steps on grass or enjoying the first meal they may have had in days. We watch these animals take a breath for the first time in their lives when they realize they are safe, and that they are finally home.

Tony and Prince are two bobcats that are finally loving life. They were rescued from dog crates within a flooding home in 2019. This pair, stolen from the wild and not eligible for release, are still very wild at heart. Because of this we knew they would need a nice new habitat filled with plenty of space, hiding spots, and places to climb.

It has taken a lot of time and patience to get Tony and Prince used to their caretakers. They do not trust easily, but have grown to accept their new surroundings. Both have grown bolder and braver with each passing day. Today, they are often seen playing with their enrichment within their habitats and snuggling with one another within their dens. They have big, rambunctious personalities and are not afraid to tell it how it is, always keeping their keepers on their toes! These two bobcats are truly wild at heart. Your support has made it possible for us to give Tony and Prince their own little piece of the wild, thank you for your continued support and donations!



Prince



Tony & Prince

ROAR for big cats: talk to friends and family about TCWR and our mission.

Caring for Captive Big Cats

Behavioral Management with Spyke Leopard

by Morgan Lazar

Daily Animal Care activities range from cleaning habitats and feeding animals to careful observation of their behavior and encouraging their participation in our Behavioral Management Training program. In doing so, we provide the best care possible in captivity.

Training is crucial for animals living in captivity as both mental and physical exercise. It takes patience and a good attitude; wild animals do not warm up to the process overnight. However, all sessions are voluntary and are ended when the trainee chooses. We work to create programs that cater to each animal's needs, using only positive rewards. In the case of large predators, there is no better reward than meat!

Spyke the Black Leopard, a personal favorite of mine to work with, can often be seen snoozing upon his benches or casting judgmental looks at our keepers and guests. When he's not getting his 18 hours of beauty rest, this handsome boy loves attacking his toys and our training sessions. This didn't happen quickly. Spyke has been participating in training for five years, and has learned so much! Spyke now excels at a full inventory of maintenance behaviors.

Working with such a talented cat allowed us to integrate more complex behaviors. One of the most important commands Spyke has perfected is **side**: presenting his entire flank to the fence line while pressing his hip against the wire. From this position we can begin specific medical training. During his **side**, I slowly begin **touch**, using an object to apply light pressure to his hip. He is rewarded immediately and then pressure is increased or the object is changed. It can take weeks to years to gain the trust of the animal for a touch command. Spyke has progressed to allow routine vaccinations from our veterinarian, Dr. Kellyn Sweeley, during a training session, without problems!

The importance of this training became evident a few months ago. During our session, I noticed an irritation on his back knee. Several things in his environment could have caused it (i.e., a bee sting, a scratch from his bench, etc.). We monitored it closely, but one night it flared up and he began to groom the spot. This aggravated it and eventually the irritation became a large, hairless, red raw spot. We began antibiotics and pain relief medications, but our veterinarian felt the best remedy would be to apply an ointment to his knee. Keep in mind that TCWR is a no contact facility and none of us would ever want to rub a salve onto the knee of a full grown male leopard!





As a result of Spykes participation in our Behavioral Management Training Program, we were able to treat a sore spot on his back leg safely without sedation.

Our team brainstormed how to help Spkye without sedation or stressing him out. In the end we simply taped two tongue depressors together, knowing if he somehow grabbed them he would come to no harm. I asked Spkye **side**, gave him the command for **touch**, and a second staff member used our fancy new tool with ointment on it to rub the wound. We repeated this two to three times a day for a couple of weeks, but very quickly saw positive results. Spkye seemed to enjoy the small massage, and would stretch out his leg for us to reach better. His comfort with us is something we do not take lightly - this is a fully wild predator with amazing natural instincts. We always praise Spkye for his patience and continue to positively reward all the good things this boy can do.

Since this sore spot has healed I have noticed an overwhelming change in Spkye when it comes to training. He recognizes my voice and the sound of my footsteps, and loves to stalk me, hoping that I am bearing treats. He can get frustrated learning new commands, but it's important to take it slow and always go back to the basics when things seem overwhelming for him. Using these methods, along with a positive environment, Spkye has progressed to a **tail** command. He allows us to use a rebar to pull the last 6 - 8 inches of his tail through the fence and then do various **touch** commands. Dr. Kellyn has been able to palpate his tail, applying pressure to prepare him for what's to come - hopefully, an awake blood draw. At TCWR we must sedate all of our animal residents to get blood, but with enough proper training we hope to draw blood and get results right through the fence line. We could be years away from this step with Spkye, but it is important to look to the future and have big goals!



Spkye is one of the all-stars of our Behavioral Management program. After nearly five years of reward based training he knows many behaviors, including paw and side, which helps us provide him with great care.



Spkye has progressed in his training to the point where Dr. Kellyn Sweeley can not only provide his annual vaccinations without stress but also access his tail. Our future hope is to potentially do blood draws through his tail for any blood test needed without sedation!

Donate to create a better future for the animals that call TCWR home.

A Year of Luxury at Their New Forever Home

Remington & Luna



Remington and Luna are quite settled now, here at Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge. We celebrated their first anniversary at the Refuge at the beginning of January. What a change the year has made for them. While we celebrate their many successes, we also pause for a moment and mourn the loss of their cub mates, Rory and Rajah, the unfortunate ones that did not survive to be rescued.

Rescues can be tricky business. There are instances when time is critical. A hurricane is barreling in, and caged bobcats need a sanctuary. An owner is aging and cannot continue the laborious task of constant care. The federal or state government takes action, and we rescue under a court order. There could be months of planning or hours. We must be ready at a moment's notice.

There is always a game plan, and the tools necessary to perform a rescue are all readily handy. Trailers and gear are kept in tiptop shape and neatly organized. Team members know their roles, both those that go and those that stay behind. After all, there is still the matter of running a sanctuary that is home to approximately ninety animals, mostly large cats.

Sometimes though, we don't make it in time. Rory and Rajah, due to court delays, died from a purported weather-related escape months before Remington and Luna made it to safety. Diesel, a tiger, rescued in Oklahoma in 2019, died from a tick-borne illness within days of arrival. With early treatment, he could have lived. A mother tiger being shifted from Florida to evade confiscation – part of the same facility with Luna and Remington – gave birth to three cubs that died in the hot transport trailer en route to Oklahoma.

Today, Luna and Remington are a happily united pair in an extensive and spacious habitat with lots of trees. Tigers are the cat family's water lovers, and usually, our tigers love the pools we provide them, filled with fresh cool water in our hot summer months. Not Luna and Remington. Forced as cubs to swim for hours to entertain tourists, they avoided their pools. And then, at the end of June, Luna began taking dips into her pool. To see her overcome her fear and discover what is a natural joy to her kind is such a reward.

With your help, even a donation of \$5 a month, we can always stand ready to rescue a cat in need. We will continue to mourn the ones that we can't help and give futures of hope and healing to the ones we can.

Please give what you can - a monthly \$5 gift helps animals in need!

Scent Enrichment

Here at Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge, our animal residents love scent enrichment! Scents are essential in stimulating their natural behaviors. Whenever cats smell something they are interested in, they will make what we call a "stinky face," also known as a *flehmen* response. Cats have a Jacobson's Organ in the roof of their mouths that acts as a second nose, so whenever they curl their lips back and stick their tongues out, that means they are taking in a smell! Cats use this organ to recognize a female in heat, sexual maturity, or competitors in the area. Our scent enrichment encourages our animals to use this response and to investigate their surroundings.

Our cat's favorite smells include kitchen spices such as cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, and so much more. If you have kitchen spices that have expired, you can donate them to Turpentine Creek for the animals to enjoy! They love perfume as well. Our tiger's favorite perfume is "Obsession," by Calvin Klein. Next time you visit Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge, be sure to look out for a "stinky face," and know that our cats are using their natural instincts!



Avalanche

Avalanche investigates new leaf pile scent enrichment by burying his entire head in it.

Please Welcome Your Spring 2021 Interns!



Back Row Left to Right

Clementine Mulvihill Oregon State U. BS Zoology June 2020	Jessica Vineyard <i>Education Intern</i> Henderson State U. BS Natural Resource Management May 2019	Maria Foster Louisiana State U. BS Field & Organismal Biology May 2018	Katline Ronsse Washburn U. BS Biology May 2020	Kayleigh Williams Michigan State U. BS Zoology May 2020	Jade Schleicher U. of Wisconsin BS Biology May 2017	Shelby Boyle Miami University BA Zoology May 2019	Leah Wineland U. of Arkansas BA Theatre December 2014 & Miami U. MS Biology	Abby Fincher College of the Ozarks BS Conservation & Wildlife Management/ BS Ecology & Field Biology May 2019
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Front Row Left to Right

Molly Seeberger Ohio Wesleyan U. BS Zoology May 2020	Arpan Paul Manchester U. BS Environmental Studies May 2020	Yarelis Nazario U. of Puerto Rico BS Animal Science June 2019	Molly Schneider Old Dominion U. BS Marine Biology December 2018	Carly Wallace Thompson California State Polytechnic U. BS Biology May 2019	Irene Gonzalez U. of Puerto Rico BS Animal Science May 2020	Robin Durphy Missouri State U. BS Wildlife Biology December 2020
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Avalanche & Hurricane



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