

News Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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Bobcats Kept as Pets Prior to Arkansas River Flooding are now in “Relatively Good Condition,” Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge Says

Local Wildlife Refuge Provides Health Update on Newest Animal Residents

Eureka Springs, Ark. (June 11, 2019) – Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge (TCWR) says the rescued bobcats left behind in a flooded Sebastian County home are in “relatively good condition,” according to a full wellness exam conducted earlier in the week.

Eight-month-old bobcat brothers, Prince and Tony, were rescued in a joint effort by TCWR and the International Fund for Animal Welfare (ifaw) two weeks ago after flooding in West Central Arkansas forced the previous owner to evacuate and leave the pair behind.

In a press release distributed May 29th, TCWR stated the immediate concerns for Prince and Tony were malnutrition and muscle atrophy.

The bobcats had been taken from the wild by the previous owner when they were approximately one month old and fed strictly cat food, meaning their diet lacked the vital nutrients they should have gotten in the wild. They were confined to small crates the majority of the time, which caused the muscle atrophy in their back legs. It was also reported that the brothers were separated from each other due to aggression, but the team hoped that neutering them would alleviate that aggression and allow them to be reintroduced.

After spending Sunday and Monday performing the neuter and full exam under sedation, TCWR Staff Veterinarian, Dr. Kellyn Sweeley noted that Prince and Tony are on their way to ideal health. Because they were introduced to a proper diet immediately upon arrival to the Refuge, they have already begun to gain weight, with Tony weighing 27 pounds and Prince 23. Both were given a deworming treatment. The team is concerned about the presence of metabolic bone disease due to malnutrition, though the results from those blood tests will not be back for several days.

Prince and Tony will be reintroduced to each other in 1-2 weeks, after they have completely recovered from surgery.

In the meantime, TCWR Assistant Curator Laurie Vanderwal says, “They have both been playing with toys and seem to like cardboard boxes and spices, as well, and have been comfortably resting on blankets.”

To follow Prince and Tony's new life at TCWR, please "Like" Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge on Facebook or follow them on Instagram @turpentinecreek.

Donations to support their care can be made online at <https://www.turpentinecreek.org/support-us/donate-now/>, over the phone by calling 479-253-5992, or by mail to 239 Turpentine Creek Lane, Eureka Springs, Arkansas, 72632.

For photos and videos that can be used in print or video with credit given to Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge visit https://drive.google.com/open?id=1ueoXnur_XmRAdbyrG8zbXmT799hWNhJr

Previous Story:

Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge Rescues Displaced "Pet" Bobcats From Arkansas River Flooding

Eureka Springs, Ark. (May 29, 2019) – Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge (TCWR) team members traveled to west central Arkansas yesterday to pick up two male bobcats, Prince and Tony, who were being kept as pets, after their previous owner was displaced by Arkansas River flood waters. The organization partnered with the International Fund for Animal Welfare (ifaw) to conduct the rescue.

TCWR retrieved the bobcats, who are less than a year old, from a woman who explained police officers had rescued the animals just in time from a flooded home; their cages were submerged in water up to their bellies.

Under direction of the flood victim, police officers transferred Prince and Tony higher ground and placed them in the care of the woman who contacted TCWR at approximately 10 PM Monday night. Being unfamiliar with bobcat care, she began contacting other animal welfare organizations the next day in hopes of finding a trained facility to take them and was directed to Turpentine Creek.

After receiving the call and locating a route that wasn't impacted by flooding, Turpentine Creek team members set off on the rescue mission mid-afternoon Tuesday. Due to high waters, they were redirected several times before obtaining the bobcats and returning to the facility at approximately 11 PM Tuesday night.

Prince and Tony were allegedly taken from the wild in October of last year. TCWR's immediate concerns for the pair are nutritional deficiency from being fed only cat food by their previous owner, as well as evident muscle atrophy in their back legs. According to the woman who contacted TCWR, the previous owner had housed the brothers in "two little dog crates" and would occasionally allow them to alternate time in a small dog run.

As TCWR's staff veterinarian, Dr. Kellyn Sweeley, conducts full wellness exams for each of them, they will be quarantined in the onsite Jackson Memorial Veterinary Hospital to ensure they have no diseases that will transfer to the sanctuary's other animal residents. Currently, Prince and Tony have to be separated from each other due to aggression, but it is believed that neutering them may solve that issue and allow them to be released into a habitat together.

TCWR President, Tanya Smith, expressed gratitude for the outpouring of support and well-wishes the team received as they conducted the rescue, "Thank you to everyone who kept us in your thoughts yesterday during our travels and a special thank you to ifaw for your partnership during this rescue. We are happy to report that Prince and Tony, as well as the rest of us, made it home safe and sound late last night. We hope you will continue to support our newest animal residents by making a donation towards the lifetime care we will be providing them."

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Smith encourages the public to follow Prince and Tony's progress on Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge's Facebook platform and Instagram page (@turpentinecreek).

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About Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge

Founded in 1992, Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge is a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization operating one of America's largest big cat sanctuaries. The 450-acre refuge, located 7 miles south of Eureka Springs, is America's premier big cat wildlife refuge. Turpentine Creek does not buy, sell, trade, or breed our animals. We are a hands-off facility and do not allow contact with the animals in our care. We are accredited by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries, a member of the American Association of Zoo Keepers, a member of Tigers in America, USDA Licensed and Arkansas Game and Fish Licensed. Our Mission is to provide lifetime refuge for abandoned, abused, and neglected "Big Cats" with emphasis on Tigers, Lions, Leopards, and Cougars.

Additional Information Sources & Photos

<http://www.TurpentineCreek.org>

https://www.facebook.com/TurpentineCreekWildlifeRefuge/photos_stream

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