

# Big Cat Chronicles

Summer 2022

Featured Animal

**Opie**

Male Tiger  
(*Panthera tigris*)  
Born 3/20/14  
Rescued 5/17/21

Read more about Opie on page 3.

**Donate Today!**



# Letter from the President

Founder Tanya Smith



As we welcome our 30th summer at Turpentine Creek, I want to thank all of you for your loyal support. You kept our mission intact throughout some incredibly challenging years, which we have faced together. Your generosity and unwavering belief in our team have allowed us to achieve so much good for the big cats and other apex predators that suffer neglect, exploitation and abuse in our country.

I want to extend a special thanks from our entire team to all of you who joined us this past April 29th and 30th to celebrate our anniversary. It was wonderful to see so many of you in person, and look back together on 30 years of rescue! In this issue, we will cover topics many of you have raised over the years, including what accreditation from the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries really means, why accredited sanctuaries and AZA zoos need to work together to better the care of captive wildlife, and what the best time of day is to visit TCWR.

Meanwhile, Dr. Kellyn finally can reveal the results of her initial exams on the big cats we rescued last May, along with an update on how they are doing today. We also introduce you to a panel discussion I'm proud to have taken part in alongside other female leaders of major U.S. accredited sanctuaries, moderated by TCWR Animal Curator Emily McCormack. It takes you behind the scenes with rescue photos and sobering facts that enforce why the real "Tiger Queens" are critical to ending the Big Cat Trade in this country.

Saving animals during a pandemic has been challenging; providing lifelong care for them after rescue, even more so. A special thanks to all of you who donated and joined our watch party to view our "Uncharted" documentary, about the miraculous rehabilitation journey of tiger cubs Jinx, Rosie and DOJ. Also, to all of you who donated to help us reach our \$16,000 NWA Gives 2022 total – your support has helped restore some of our badly depleted emergency fund, critical for future rescue response.

With restrictions easing this summer, we look forward to seeing more of you! A Wild About Wildlife Membership, with unlimited entry for you and your guests, makes it easy to visit TCWR often with friends and family. Each level includes valuable discounts on gift shop inventory, specialty tours and lodging.



None of the progress we've made over the past 30 years would have been possible without our TCWR Family of supporters. Our vision is within reach – together, we will end the Big Cat Trade!

Until next time,

*Tanya Smith*

Tanya Smith, President & Founder

**Donate Today - a monthly \$5 gift can save the lives of animals in need!**

## Your Support Gave Opie the Freedom to be a Tiger

Opie was born in 2014, at the same breeding facility TCWR took over during our 2016 Colorado Project. Sadly, the cub had already been sold or traded to the Wynnewood menagerie operated by Joe Exotic by that time. After its closure, Opie was shuffled to the Lowe's Tiger King Park in Thackerville, Oklahoma. When the US Department of Justice finally shut down that facility last May, he was one of 68 animals seized due to violations of the Endangered Species Act. At seven years of age, at last Opie's life was to be completely transformed.

Upon arrival at TCWR, we noted that Opie's front end was disproportionately large compared to his hind end. This could be a result of a lack of space to exercise during his formative years. Almost immediately, this enormous tiger quickly adjusted to his new freedom. Opie began using his wild instincts to sharpen his claws, destroying the logs in his habitat! He also began to stalk everyone, animal neighbors and staff alike.

During the warm months, Opie loves spending time in his pool. Meanwhile, he's become obsessed with the logs in his den and favors them over any of his enrichment toys. When he completely shredded a large log we'd provided him, we gave him a new one. This time, Opie decided to bring it from his habitat into his night house, resulting in it becoming lodged in the doorway. His insistent tugging actually bent the rebar! While it took work to repair, we are thrilled that he is reveling in being a wild tiger. To prevent a recurrence, when our team recently cut down a large tree we gave him the huge base of it to work on.

Eventually, we hope to reunite Opie with Lyla, the female lion he was housed with in Oklahoma, but we will take it very slowly. While he and Lyla show affection through the fence when she is in heat, we do not know if they lived together for any amount of time or whether they were simply put together for the purpose of hybrid breeding before rescue. Now that we have permission to neuter this big boy, we will proceed cautiously. Our hope is to reintroduce every pair from that rescue, so they no longer will have to alternate days in their habitats, but each neuter surgery runs roughly \$2,200. You can help fund this effort by donating today!

## Featured Animal: Opie



Almost immediately, this enormous tiger quickly adjusted to his new freedom, and began using his wild instincts! Opie enjoys stalking everyone, animal neighbors and staff alike. Eventually, we hope to reunite him with Lyla, the female lion he was housed with in Oklahoma, but we will take it very slowly.

Talk to your friends about the dangers of the black market cub petting industry today!



## RESCUING BIG CATS NATIONWIDE

### You Made our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Possible

Thanks to your support, we are celebrating 30 Years of Nationwide Rescue this year. We'd like to thank everyone who came out to celebrate with us on April 29th and 30th - you helped to make the event extra memorable!

The weekend kicked off at the Eureka Springs Brewery, where our team mingled with new and long-time TCWR supporters along with local Eureka Springs, AR residents, enjoying craft beers and fun food from Wingman.

Saturday's festivities included a magic show, music, and vendors with tasty snacks. Attendees enjoyed an Educational tour of the Refuge, included with their ticket, and were also treated to informative programs from our Education Team at booths inside our Discovery Area. Eureka Springs Mayor, Butch Berry, joined us and made a special presentation dedicating May 1st as Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge Day! Afterwards, everyone enjoyed educational activities, games and talks from our Team members, followed by folk music from talented local musicians Los Roscoes Ozark Blues, who played into the evening. The event wound up with a wonderful buffet dinner, with presentations by our team, a live and silent auction, and a screening of our documentary film "Uncharted" that follows the rehabilitation of Jinx, Rosie and DOJ tiger cubs.

If you were unable to attend, don't worry, we'll be celebrating all year! Come stay with us in our Safari Lodging, enjoy an Educational Tour or treat yourself to one of our behind-the-scenes Specialty Tours. You'll leave renewed by the energy of our incredible animal residents and inspired by their stories. Thank you for making our mission possible!

Click to Book  
Your Tour!

**BOOK  
NOW!**

# Answering Your Questions:

## Why did TCWR halt public feedings?

Over the past 30 years at TCWR, we have continually worked to increase our knowledge, making positive changes to improve the care of our animal residents. One of these changes was to stop public feedings, which could raise anxiety levels in our animals. Many of our animals are rescued from facilities where they never knew if or when their next meal was coming. At these places, they possibly had to fight for their food. Since we are here to give them a safe forever home, we want them to feel secure. By eliminating public feedings, our animals enjoy their meals in privacy, feeling unthreatened.

In another positive move, we have replaced public feeding with behavioral management training. Once a day, our Animal Care Interns train some of our big cats in the Discovery Area. These training sessions are completely voluntary for our animals, and several of them choose to participate! Training allows our Animal Care team to perform surface-level medical examinations without sedation. It's enriching for our big cats and encourages them to think differently, while lowering their stress levels.

Next time you visit TCWR, see if you can catch our behavioral management training. It's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity! Sessions are scheduled at 8:50AM daily, but are subject to change depending on animal care section switches or inclement weather.



## What is the best time to visit?

Although we house an average of 100 animals at the Refuge, the type and number of animals you will see during your tour will depend on the time of day, and the season in which you visit us. For example, tigers come from the cooler climates of Asia, which means they enjoy playing in their habitats on cold days. Lions, on the other hand, are indigenous to Africa and retreat to their heated dens when temperatures drop. Our jaguar, Bagheera, is indigenous to tropical and subtropical regions; consequently, he prefers warmer temperatures over cooler ones, similar to our leopards Spyke and Selbit. Meanwhile, our ligers (Fergy, Karma, Lakota and Mani, and li-liger Kyro) are a mixed bag when it comes to weather preferences due to their blended genetic lineages.

It's important to note that all big cats, like house cats, sleep an average of 18 to 22 hours per day. The best time to visit TCWR and see the most animals on the morning tours, before our felids settle in for long naps! While our bears are more active throughout the day than the big cats, Grizzly Bam Bam does tend to sleep in a bit longer than most.

Seasonally speaking, our bears are most active during the summer months, first emerging from their semi-hibernation state of torpor in early spring and gradually increasing the amount of time spent in their dens as winter weather approaches.

In the long run, anytime is a good time to enjoy the healing energy of our animal residents. Even watching a big cat nap on its bench gives you a sense of the trust and tranquility they feel in their beautiful Ozark home.



*Our ligers, like Fergy, are a mixed bag when it comes to weather preferences due to their blended genetic lineages.*

Click to Book  
Your Tour!

**BOOK  
NOW!**

You can book your stay at: [TCWR.org/stay-with-us/view-all/](https://www.tcwr.org/stay-with-us/view-all/)

# You are Making a Difference for Big Cats!

As you helped to spread awareness of the U.S. Big Cat Crisis, federal authorities began enforcing violations of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), seizing animals protected by it from major figures within the Big Cat Trade. These ruthless breeders then decided to sidestep accountability by inventing their own species of hybrids. Mating tigers with lions, or with already cross-bred individuals, these animals had a higher probability to suffer from mental impairments, sterility, certain cancers, cleft palates, vision problems, immune deficiencies, developmental deformities, and diminished life expectancy. All to exploit them further for profits.

Male liger Lakota was one of the lucky ones. In 2015, the owner of an unscrupulous Colorado breeding facility purchased the one-week-old liger cub from Joe Exotic's Greater Wynnewood. Lakota wound up at a true sanctuary when Turpentine Creek took over that facility in our 2016 Colorado Project. Due to your support, the young liger went on to receive proper nutrition and medical care. Today, Lakota loves to stalk and relishes tearing up enrichment boxes in his Discovery Area habitat.

Then, in September of 2020 things changed for all hybrids. After years of litigation, Indiana exhibitor Tim Stark was ordered by the courts to give up his 200 animals, resulting in our rescue of eight big cats. The significance of this case was the court's ruling that all hybrids are now protected under the ESA!

Due to this landmark ruling, another hybrid arrived at TCWR last May, after the U.S. Department of Justice confiscated 68 big cats in Oklahoma due to ESA violations. Kyro is a li-liger, the result of mating a male lion with a female liger (the hybrid offspring of a male lion and a tigress). Upon arrival, the two-year-old's instability caused him to constantly stumble and fall over. Realizing that the most common reason for these neurologic signs in young animals is vitamin deficiencies, Dr. Kellyn immediately started Kyro on high doses of critical vitamins before permanent damage occurred. Within three months, he was able to stand, run, and play! Today, Kyro loves life, and has a bright future due to your support.

To ensure that all the animals we rescue can get the lifelong care they deserve, please consider a recurring donation. Monthly donations give us a solid financial base, no matter what is happening in the world!

**GIVE  
NOW!**



*At rescue, Kyro constantly stumbled and fall over. Dr. Kellyn immediately dosed him with proper vitamins and within three months, he was able to stand, run, and play! Today, Kyro loves life, and has a bright future due to your support.*



*Male liger Lakota was one of the lucky ones. Due to the proper medical care and nutrition you've helped us give him, Lakota now loves to stalk, and relishes tearing up enrichment boxes in his Discovery Area habitat.*

## Big Cat Chronicles is Going Green for You!

As an Ethical Tourism Destination, Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge continues to look at ways in which we can cut waste to increase our sustainability. In addition to our downloadable adoption and sponsorship certificates, we are now happy to offer you the option of switching your printed quarterly newsletter subscription to digital delivery via email! If you prefer having a physical copy to keep and share, don't worry, we have no plans to discontinue our printed version at this time. We simply want to make this green option available to you.

To receive your Big Cat Chronicles digitally, starting with our fall edition, email [amanda@tcwr.org](mailto:amanda@tcwr.org) and she will get you all set up!



# Lodging Experience at TCWR

Throughout the years, Julie Howard's family and friends have enjoyed several of the lodging opportunities at TCWR. Their first experience was while tent camping in RV Spot #1. Julie recalls "Not only could we hear the lions caroling all night, but we also woke up to see Tigger peering at us from the habitat next door. That's when I realized just how magical TCWR really is."

After Julie's husband David passed away in February of 2021, she found herself visiting TCWR more often. "It was a solace to me. I wanted to share this special place with family and friends." That March, after advancing her Kenny Fellowship membership to the Hilda Jackson Society level, she and seven of her friends stayed in four of the Adult Safari lodges for a weekend. "They are beautifully decorated and incredibly comfortable. A short drive allowed us to eat at a couple of restaurants and shop in historic downtown Eureka Springs. We spent time relaxing around the fire pit, taking in the beauty of the Ozarks, and listening to the caroling of the lions."



Julie and seven of her friends, here pictured with Animal Curator Emily McCormack (bottom R.) stayed in four of the Adult Safari lodges for a weekend.

"They are beautifully decorated and incredibly comfortable."

During two trips that July and October, Julie brought in more people who had never visited TCWR before. "We stayed in three of the lodges. The hot tub was sublime, and a ghost tour at the Crescent Hotel was on the agenda."

At Thanksgiving, her late husband's family experienced TCWR for the first time. Some stayed in lodges while others stayed in their RV in Spot #1. Everyone enjoyed the amenities, and the Congo Lodge (where Julie stayed) became the meeting place where they shared leftover Thanksgiving dinner and lots of laughter. Short drives to local restaurants led to driving around to see the spectacular Christmas lights that were on display.

TCWR lodging prices include the tours, which Julie feels makes it very affordable. Lodging guests may once again explore the Discovery Area before TCWR opens for tours, which she feels is a real treat. Julie adds, "If you want a percentage off your lodging, consider becoming a Wild About Wildlife member. Not only will you get a discount on lodging, specialty tours, and the gift shop, you will be providing continued support for the care of the animals at TCWR. You become a part of some amazing work and feel like a 'member of the pride'. The experience and the perks make lodging at TCWR an incredible experience!"

TCWR lodging pricing includes the tours, which Julie feels makes it very affordable. Lodging guests may once again explore the Discovery Area before TCWR opens for tours.



Do you have treats for our residents? We accept in-kind donations!

# Letter from the Curator

Emily McCormack



Long-term care defines the work that goes into effect after each rescue, providing animals a lifelong home at a sanctuary. This can be a challenging and costly effort due to their previous lack of proper care. Often, medical issues could have been easily avoided just by adding vitamins & supplements to the animals' food, or by preventing the brutal and cruel effects which result from declawing. Most of the issues these animals face could have been prevented if laws were in place to protect their welfare.

While a tiger's lifespan in the wild might only be up to 12 years, with proper prophylactic care and veterinary exams, captive tigers are estimated to live 12-18 years. With the optimal daily care we provide at TCWR, our tiger residents enjoy living from 17 to 23 years of age.

Join us in celebrating a very special tiger resident, Ty. Ty came to the refuge from Coffeyville, Kansas, in July 2011 when TCWR received a call from a man who had been trying to start a sanctuary for big cats. He was unable to continue his mission due to financial reasons, and as a result, 11 big cats were in need of rescue. TCWR rescued five cats: four tigers and a ti-liger. Ty, Crysta, Little Tony, Crystal, & Noah were rescued after dusk, due to the extreme temperature, and traveled back to the refuge during the night. Ty is the only one still alive today. Remarkably, Ty will turn 24 years old this coming July 13th!

Over the years, Ty has been a favorite among many keepers and donors. He has a very sweet chuff but is also extremely timid. Ty wasn't a fan of large groups of people, so we moved him and Crysta down to Rescue Ridge. They lived a very peaceful life together until Crysta passed away in July 2021. These days Ty loves his neighbors, Avalanche and Hurricane.

Ty has benefited from regular medical exams along with dental procedures throughout his 11 years at the refuge. He has been part of our pain management program for many years, due to his arthritis. Your continued support in our efforts provides all the TCWR animals with the exceptional care they deserve throughout their lifetimes. We raise funding for the rescues, but depending on the animal and their condition, the cost per big cat each year can be upwards of \$10,000

annually. Through your recurring donations, you're not only assisting with the initial rescue, but the long-term care that provides each animal, just like Ty, the opportunity to live an amazing long life at the sanctuary. Thank you for all you do, and Happy Birthday Ty!!!!



*Over the years, Ty has been a favorite among many keepers and donors. He has a very sweet chuff but is also extremely timid, so we moved him to the peace and quiet of Rescue Ridge.*

Become a recurring donor today by visiting our donation page:

[TCWR.org/support-us/donate](https://TCWR.org/support-us/donate)

**GIVE  
NOW!**

# Tiger King Rescue Initial Medical Evaluations

Kellyn Sweeley, DVM

Last May, Turpentine Creek rescued ten big cats from the Tiger King Park in Oklahoma. In the following days, we performed a medical intake evaluation for each animal. After recently receiving permission from the U.S. Department of Justice to reveal details concerning the health of these animals, we wanted to pass this information on to you; you have made both their rescue and lifelong care possible.

We opted for observational assessments to allow each animal time to adjust to their new environment, as none were in a state where sedation, detailed examination, and further diagnostics were necessary. We immediately placed all the animals on appropriate fortified diets and added many of them to our pain management program, with extra nutraceuticals based on differing needs. We also screened for intestinal parasites and treated them as necessary.

Now, as time has passed, these animals have been put into rotation with the other TCWR residents for bi-to-triennial complete wellness examinations under sedation. Bagheera the jaguar has already had his completed. We will soon plan sterilizations to allow the reintroduction of some pairs without concerns of breeding. Currently, they are all doing well!

Here are their initial veterinary evaluations from May/June 2021:



**Kyro**, a 3-year-old male li-liger with a shortened snout, is missing the top half of his ears, likely from previous severe fly strikes (FS). His hind limbs have chronic calluses, no doubt from housing on improper substrates. The tip of his tail is dead and dried out (tail tip necrosis), and must be removed in the near future. Possible causes of this condition, which appears quite old, include frostbite or a traumatic wound. We treated him for moderate intestinal roundworm infection. Most pressing was his instability when standing or moving; he constantly stumbled and fell over. In young animals, the most common reason for these neurologic signs is certain vitamin deficiencies. Therefore, we immediately started Kyro on high doses of key vitamins before any permanent damage occurred. Luckily, within three months we saw major improvements in his ability to stand, run, and play.

**Simba** is a 15-year-old, moderately underweight male lion. He has kyphosis (excessive curvature) and stiffness of his mid-spine. He was reluctant to stand upright on his hind limbs and exhibited obvious weakness in his hind end when walking, with severe muscle loss. He was declawed on all four limbs. He avoided putting weight on his front right limb. All signs suggest moderate degenerative joint disease of the spine and limbs. Both hips and testicles have chronic calluses. His lower hind limbs have a large amount of scarring; most are likely the result of being housed on improper substrates, but others are not located in pressure areas and/or are unusually shaped. In particular, scars on his hind paws suggest a rope-like object being applied there in such a way as to cause permanent damage to the skin.



*Continued on next page . . .*

## Tiger King Rescue Initial Medical Evaluations (continued)

**Stevie** is a 7-year-old female tiger. She has scarring present on her ears, likely from previous FS. She also has scarring on her face and body with missing soft tissue to the third digit of her left paw, possibly caused by previous mates and/or enclosures. She has permanent bowing to her front limbs and her left hind limb has a mild angular deformity consistent with a history of Metabolic Bone Disease (MBD).



**Opie** is a 7-year-old, moderately underweight male tiger. He has a fracture to his bottom left canine. He has mild kyphosis (excessive curvature) and stiffness of his mid-spine with reluctance to stand upright on his hind limbs, but no other obvious weakness to his hind end. He is likely in the early stages of spinal degeneration. Chronic calluses are present on his elbows. He had a mild intestinal roundworm infection that we treated.

**Samira** is a 12-year-old female lion with moderate scarring present on her ears, likely from previous FS, and on the bridge of her nose, possibly caused by previous mates and/or enclosures. She has permanent bowing to her front limbs and her hind limbs display ankle valgus (knocked ankles), all consistent with a history of MBD. Chronic calluses on her hips and hind limbs are probably from improper substrates. She had a moderate intestinal roundworm infection and a tapeworm infection; both were treated.



**Lyla** is a 7-year-old, slightly overweight female lion with a history of recently giving birth prior to her rescue. She has scarring present on her ears, likely from previous FS, and on her body possibly caused by previous mates and/or enclosures. Chronic calluses on her hind limbs are likely from improper substrates. She had a moderate intestinal roundworm infection that we treated.

**Priscilla** is a 6-year-old female tiger. It was obvious at the time of rescue that she was near parturition (the act of giving birth). She has scarring to the edge of her left ear, likely from previous FS. She has permanent bowing to her front limbs consistent with a history of MBD. After 12 days of being at TCWR, she successfully gave birth to three tiger cubs. \*See article on page 16 for an update on these cubs.



**Bagheera** is a 3-year-old male jaguar. He was very stressed for the first couple of weeks after his arrival. The cursory evaluation revealed no major concerns and he was allowed time to acclimate. Upon further evaluation a month later, he did appear to be a fairly healthy jaguar.



**Mani** is a 12-year-old female liger. She has scarring to the edge of her left ear, likely from previous FS. She has permanent bowing to her front limbs consistent with a history of MBD.



**Jagger** is a 10-year-old male tiger with scarring on the bridge of his nose and muzzle, possibly caused by previous mates and/or enclosures. The abrasions to his temples were likely caused by chronic rubbing of the temples along enclosure material. This is most commonly associated with pacing caused by stress and boredom. Chronic calluses on his elbows are likely from improper substrates. His hind end is moderately underdeveloped. This could have been caused by a congenital deformity, a history of metabolic bone disease, another nutritional deficiency during growth, or a combination of these. He has permanent bowing to his front limbs consistent with a history of metabolic bone disease (MBD).

# Wild About Wildlife Membership Program

Help the animals that call Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge home and make it easy to visit them often with friends and family by signing up for one of our membership options, which include valuable discounts on gift shop inventory and lodging!

**Renew your membership in 2022 to receive your members-only 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary T-shirt!**

## The Hilda Jackson Society \$10,000+\*

Exclusive Yearly Membership Perks and Privileges

- The Hilda Jackson Society Membership Card
- Free Year-round entry for cardholder & 4 guests
- TCWR Yearly Calendar
- The Hilda Jackson Society decal
- 20% off of Gift Shop purchases
- Annual subscription to the Big Cat Chronicles
- Recognition on our website
- Exclusive member e-mails
- Exclusive HJS Members-only Facebook group
- Member events
- 50% off of lodging
- Private Tours with Senior Staff
- Recognition in and access to the Annual Report
- Senior Staff Liaison

Signup Gifts:

- Framed 8x10 photo of favorite animal
- The Hilda Jackson Society Shirt
- The Hilda Jackson Society Travel Mug

## Bam Bam Benefactors \$1,250 - \$2,999

Exclusive Yearly Membership Perks and Privileges

- The Bam Bam Benefactor's Fellowship Membership Card
- Free Year-round entry for cardholder & 4 guests
- TCWR Yearly Calendar
- The Bam Bam Benefactor's decal
- 15% off of Gift Shop purchases
- Annual subscription to the Big Cat Chronicles
- Recognition on our website
- Exclusive member e-mails
- Exclusive BBB Members-only Facebook group
- Member events
- 20% off of lodging
- 20% off on specialty tours for cardholder and up to 4 guests
- Recognition and access to the Annual Report

Signup Gifts:

- Framed 5x7 photograph of Bam Bam
- Bam Bam Travel Mug

## The Kenny Fellowship \$3,000 - \$9,999\*

Exclusive Yearly Membership Perks and Privileges

- The Kenny Fellowship Membership Card
- Free Year-round entry for cardholder & 4 guests
- TCWR Yearly Calendar
- The Kenny Fellowship decal
- 20% off of Gift Shop purchases
- Annual subscription to the Big Cat Chronicles
- Recognition on our website
- Exclusive member e-mails
- Exclusive KF Members-only Facebook group
- Member events
- 30% off of lodging
- Private Tours with Senior Staff
- Recognition and access to the Annual Report
- A Senior Staff Liaison

Signup Gifts:

- Framed 8x10 photograph of Kenny
- The Kenny Fellowship Shirt
- Kenny Travel Mug

## Friends of India \$300- \$1,249

Exclusive Yearly Membership Perks and Privileges

- The Friends of India Membership Card
- Free Year-round entry for cardholder & 4 guests
- TCWR Yearly Calendar
- The Friends of India decal
- 15% off of Gift Shop purchases
- Annual subscription to the Big Cat Chronicles
- Recognition on our website Exclusive member e-mails
- Exclusive FOI Members-only Facebook group
- Member events
- 10% off of lodging
- 10% off on specialty tours for cardholder and up to 4 guests
- Recognition and access to the Annual Report

Signup Gifts:

- Framed 5x7 photograph of India

\*To be part of a membership tier you must sign up for that Tier, donate the amount required to be part of that specific tier level and are encouraged to pledge to make a similar donation the following year.

\*\*Limitations on lodging dates may apply.

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

**100% of my donation goes to help the animals!**

**Your Contribution:**  \$25  \$35  \$50  \$100 Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**I would like to make my loving donation recurring:**  
 . - - - - - →  **Repeat Monthly**



**Order 2023 Calendars:** \$20 each X \_\_\_\_\_ calendars + \$5 S/H = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Choose your Wild About Wildlife Membership**

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  
 \$150/yr - Cougar/Leopard/Jaguar  
 \$150/yr - Lion/Tiger/Bear/Hyena

**Animal Sponsor:** TCWR no longer limits the number of sponsors per animal because sponsorships help all rescues.

- \$700/yr - Small Mammal/Bird  
 \$1,000/yr - Small Cat  
 \$2,200/yr - Cougar/Leopard/Jaguar  
 \$2,500/yr - Lion/Tiger/Bear/Hyena
- 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!**

## TCWR Interns are Crucial to Our Mission!

Alesha Orsburn dreamt of interning at Turpentine Creek to help big cats who suffered neglect and abuse. Tigers have been her favorite animal since childhood! Now in her second Animal Care Internship, Alesha acknowledges the hard work involved but feels that seeing and working with them in person is fantastic.

Of her many tasks, Alesha's favorites are preparing diets and feeding the animals. "Preparing their designated food, medications, and vitamins has made me feel closer to the big cats and bears." While she acknowledges that feeding apex predators can be scary, "it is quite an adrenaline rush when a big cat screams as I slide their dish into their food slot!" It makes her happy to be part of what makes them happy.

Alesha has many favorites, but liger Fergie and white tigress Payson have a special place in her heart. "Fergie is always excited when we come to feed, clean, or check locks. She also loves to stalk us! Payson acts like the queen of her habitat, and is very protective of her place." Alesha notes that every cat here deserves our utmost respect.

She also stressed the importance of interacting with our visitors. "Sharing the animals' stories, being their voice, is one way to help stop the monsters who are abusing and neglecting them." She feels that people have a right to know what may be living in their neighbor's backyard and can help protect these exploited wild animals.

Alesha fell in love with the TCWR animal residents and has learned so much, so she applied for a second internship despite the hard work and long hours. "I would like to thank Emily McCormack for giving me a chance to prove myself to TCWR, to her, and to these big cats." To learn how you can sponsor our internship program, vital to the care of our animals, contact Sandy Ames at **479-372-3278** or email [sandy@tcwr.org](mailto:sandy@tcwr.org)!



*Alesha fell in love with the TCWR animal residents and has learned so much, so she applied for a second internship despite the hard work and long hours.*



Each year we design an all-new calendar featuring every resident's birthday, Refuge events, wildlife holidays and U.S. Government holidays. Big, vibrant 12-by-9-inch pages featuring Refuge inhabitants will brighten the 12 months ahead and keep your favorite big cats close to your heart.

Turpentine Creek calendars make excellent gifts for the animal lovers in your life! Pre-order yours today using the enclosed form, or through our web store:

[Shop.TurpentineCreek.org](http://Shop.TurpentineCreek.org)

**SHOP NOW!**

## Your Choices Make a Difference for Animals

Because no governing body regulates the term “Sanctuary,” any facility can call itself a sanctuary, and many do. This can leave animal lovers asking: How can I tell a true sanctuary from a pseudo-sanctuary, which is harmful to animals?

A pseudo-sanctuary may have the word sanctuary in its name; it may even rescue animals, but it still exploits them through breeding or selling its animals for profit. Such facilities often state that they breed their animals in the “interest of conservation.” The reality is that big cats born in these facilities can never be released into the wild; they are not genetically pure and therefore are of no value to the preservation of the species.

These facilities also frequently provide downright dangerous experiences to both humans and animals. Practices such as photo-ops, cub petting, or swimming-with-tigers not only can transmit zoonotic diseases, they may endanger a customer’s life. Those ending in tragedy for humans routinely result in euthanasia of the animal. It is essential to ask questions before you visit, to ensure that you are only visiting true sanctuaries that do what is best for the animals. You can make a difference through your choice! Through ethical tourism, you can change the lives of animals by refusing to partake in their abuse. In time, your choices will help end the exotic animal trade!



*Practices like cub petting photo-ops not only transmit zoonotic diseases but may also endanger a customer’s life. Those ending in tragedy for humans routinely result in euthanasia of the animal.*



*It is essential to ask questions before you visit, to ensure that you are only visiting true sanctuaries that do what is best for the animals. Through ethical tourism, you can change the lives of animals by refusing to partake in their abuse.*

## This is What Contentment Looks Like!

The animals we rescue at Turpentine Creek share past lives that are far from ideal; most have suffered neglect, exploitation, and even abuse. Sometimes it’s simply out of ignorance, when a private “collector” thinks he or she can provide for the needs of a large carnivore “pet.” The sad truth is that the physical and financial demands of caring and feeding an apex predator are far more than most people are able or willing to provide. Some of our animals were illegally trafficked as tiny cubs, stolen from the wild. Others were forced to perform in circuses or roadside shows. Usually the motivating factor is greed. These animals are not pets or “things” to use. They are sentient living creatures that deserve better than the conditions they are so frequently found in.

At TCWR, animals find a lifelong home where they are cared for according to their needs. Our Animal Care Team develops a meal and care plan for each animal on an individual basis, according to their species, age, physical condition, and any existing medical issues. Habitat assignments are also determined by the animal’s unique needs. Variables like the type of terrain (hilly or flat), animal adjacencies, an animal’s stress level, along with its degree of socialization are all taken into consideration when determining placement. Likewise, we provide enrichment in response to individual preferences - some like water, some don’t, some prefer boxes over balls, or perfumes over spices... whatever the animal’s preference, we always strive to provide them with the best quality of life possible in captivity!

Your monthly donations ensure that all the animals at TCWR will continue to receive the lifelong care they deserve.



**Donate today to be a positive change for big cats!**

# Tiger Cub Update



DOJ



Rosie



Jinx

Tiger cubs DOJ (named after the US Department of Justice), Jinx and Rosie were born to tigress Priscilla on 5/20/2021, just 12 days after her arrival at TCWR. She was rescued, along with four other females and a neurologically challenged liger, by the US Department of Justice in stage one of their two-part seizure of 68 big cats from the Tiger King park in Oklahoma.

It was touch-and-go for the cubs' first two months, while they endured intensive physical therapy from our team to correct contracted tendons in their hind legs that made walking impossible. As time ran out to safely handle them, the cubs' condition miraculously began to improve! By last winter, the trio had completely recovered, and was constantly up to something; running and playing, or stalking and pouncing at their care team.



By spring it became almost impossible to tell them apart from their mother at first glance. DOJ is certainly the largest of the trio and the fluffiest. Now, all three can climb to their top bench, and at times drive their mother crazy with their juvenile antics!

As they've grown, we have adjusted their diet appropriately. At first, we introduced cut-up raw meat, gradually adding ground-up bone while closely monitoring them. As time went on, they graduated to raw chicken wings, and finally to 'big tiger' meals of bone-in leg quarters. These days, the cubs are eating close to Priscilla's 12 lb. daily portion - 7.5 lbs. each day for DOJ and Jinx, and 7 lbs. for Rosie! Due to their different personalities and eating styles, we must feed the cubs separately. While the boys wolf down their portions, Rosie tends to play with hers, tossing it and chasing it before finally daintily crunching it down.

As they've matured, all three cubs have come to accept and trust their care team. DOJ still makes crazy noises but has lost his shyness, yowling to talk to his caretakers. He is especially fond of Carly Hepburn and runs to chat with her when she approaches their fence. Rosie, who'd required the most intensive therapy, forged a close bond with Dr. Kellyn. Meanwhile, Jinx bounds to greet Emily McCormack whenever he spots her. These three tigers now have long, happy lives ahead of them because of your support, and belief in our team. By adopting or sponsoring one of them, you can ensure they'll receive the lifelong care they need and deserve!

**Adopt or Sponsor Today!**



# Tabby Tigers: The tigers that should NOT exist!

Tabby tigers are not a separate species of tigers. They are called 'Golden Tabby' or 'Strawberry' tigers because of their golden to light brown fur coloration and are usually not found in the wild. Tigers, being ambush predators, heavily rely on their camouflage capabilities to hunt down their prey; therefore, any different fur coloration besides the dark orange with black stripes would cause them to lose their disguise. This would lead to less successful hunts and eventually cause them to starve to death. This type of color occurs due to the 'Wide Band Gene.' This is a double recessive gene, meaning both parents carrying this would result in a tabby offspring, one being white and the other orange.

Disreputable U.S. breeders mate them deliberately to create tabby tigers for entertainment purposes, to exploit them for profits. These ruthless operators do not care about genetics and keeping different species of animals separated. Approximately 30 tabby tigers currently exist in captivity in the US. At TCWR, we have rescued two tabby tigers: Tigger, a male who lives in his habitat on our tour road & Khaleesi, a female who lives in the Discovery Area. You can learn more about their stories while you visit them at TCWR!



*We rescued Tigger in 2019, along with five other tigers bred for cub-petting. He and his habitat-mate, orange tiger Floyd, can be found living happily in their tour loop natural habitat.*



*Tabby tiger Khaleesi was rescued during our 2016 Colorado Project. She lives in our Discovery Area.*

**A special thanks to our friends at Tyson Foods and Lowe's for their generosity in providing TCWR with in kind donations!**

For years now, Tyson Foods has provided our animal residents with both bone-in and boneless poultry. While some of our big cats must receive boneless meat coupled with nutritional supplements due to digestive issues stemming from their genetics and past malnutrition, others greatly benefit from the nutritional density of a whole prey diet as they would in the wild. Our big cats eat an average of 8 lbs. daily. In 2021 alone, we fed our residents 202,466.25 lbs. of meat (average of 554.7 lbs. per day)! Even with in-kind support, food costs for our animals totaled almost \$70,000 last year. Without the generosity of Tyson Foods, our meat costs would be astronomical!



At the same time, we are deeply grateful for the wonderful gift of Christmas trees from Lowe's last winter. Big cats revel in the smell and texture of the pine needles, which encourage them to sniff, bite and even roll on them. The bristly texture of the pine needles are just the thing to scratch those itches that can't be reached! They also use the trees as new hiding spots for stalking.

Community support from local businesses is key in facing the challenging times we are in. To learn more about how your business can help TCWR with in kind donations, contact [david@tcwr.org](mailto:david@tcwr.org)!

Miles



## Your Real Tiger Queens!

The “Tiger Queens” video presents a candid discussion among the dedicated women who have spent most of their lives operating legitimate, fully-accredited sanctuaries. They work continually to provide the best lifelong care possible for the tigers, lions, leopards and other wild felids that they rescue from neglect, exploitation and abuse. Their heartfelt and revealing testimony is moderated by Turpentine Creek’s Animal Curator Emily McCormack, and features our President and Founder Tanya Smith, along with other female leaders within the U.S. Big Cat Sanctuary Alliance including Bobbi Brink (Founder & Director at Lions, Tigers and Bears in California); Lisa Stoner (Co-Founder at Forest Animal Rescue in Florida), and Tammy Thies (Founder & Executive Director at The Wildcat Sanctuary in Minnesota).

It has been widely established through various studies that there are at least twice the number of tigers suffering in exploitative roadside zoos and languishing inside shoddy backyard cages throughout the US than the estimated 3,500 left in the wild, globally. Our team at TCWR spreads awareness of the critical need for national legislation to regulate private ownership of big cats, and the deplorable conditions they exist in within the ruthless Big Cat Trade. Now, the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) has helped create and present this unprecedented, in-depth discussion in partnership with the Big Cat Sanctuary Alliance to dispel the glamorized misconceptions put forth by social media posts featuring people interacting with big cats and productions like “Tiger King.” These women are uniquely

qualified to tell us the unvarnished truth of the tragic consequences for the animals that are being relentlessly exploited for profit. They honestly explain the depth of commitment it takes to run a true sanctuary and tell what you can do to stop the exploitation of big cats.

To watch, go to:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZGOgHMa7MFs>



Shakira II

*Shakira II, fondly known as “Mama” was ruthlessly forced to endure multiple pregnancies during the normal timeframe it would take to rear just one cub. She is the known mother to at least five tigers we rescued her with during our Colorado Project of 2016.*

Click to  
Watch!



Schedule your next trip to the Refuge to see these beautiful animals in person!

## What to Do if You Encounter a Mountain Lion (Cougar)

While TCWR provides lifelong care to cougars that could never survive on their own, remember that North America also hosts a wild cougar population. If you encounter a wild mountain lion, remember that your goals are to convince it that you are not prey, and that you may be dangerous.

Never approach a mountain lion; most will try to avoid a confrontation, so give them a way to escape. Meanwhile, resist the temptation to run away; that will only stimulate its instinct to chase. Instead, stand and face the animal, and try to make and maintain eye contact. If you have small children along, try to pick them up, without bending over or turning away, so that they don't panic and run. It is important to remain standing, as a person squatting or bending over resembles a four-legged prey animal.

At the same time, do all you can to appear larger by raising and waving your arms slowly, and opening your jacket if you are wearing one. To convince the cougar that you are not prey and that you may be a danger to it, throw stones, branches, or whatever you can reach without crouching or turning your back, and speak firmly in a loud voice.

Finally, if attacked, fight back! Others have fought back successfully with sticks, caps, jackets, garden tools and even their bare hands. Since a mountain lion usually tries to bite the head or neck, it's critical that you remain standing and face the attacking animal. Remember to stay alert in nature; learn more about this fascinating North American native at: <https://education.turpentinecreek.org/species-information/cougar/>



*While TCWR provides lifelong care to cougars that could never survive on their own, like Sasha who was raised in a Bronx, NY apartment prior to rescue, please remember that North America also hosts a wild cougar population.*

## What is GFAS Accreditation? Why Is It Important?



*Since being rescued in 2016 during our Colorado Project, Bosco has enjoyed the many benefits to his health and happiness of living out his life at TCWR, a GFAS accredited sanctuary.*

The purpose of the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) is to ensure that animals in captivity receive the highest standards of care during rescue, rehabilitation, and for the duration of their lifetime. GFAS is the only globally recognized organization for certifying that a facility meets the established standards of excellence, and the only one to recognize those who do qualify as a true sanctuary.

GFAS requires that facilities demonstrate adherence to standards of animal care including housing, veterinary care, nutrition, animal well-being and handling policies; standards on physical facilities, records and staff safety, site visits, ethical practices in fundraising and more! GFAS offers two levels of memberships within their organization: Verified and Accredited. TCWR is an accredited Sanctuary. Accreditation provides additional clear objectives and measurable outcomes to assess performance and how to make improvements. Accredited facilities (such as TCWR) must not only meet the requirements of verification but also the more rigorous standards of accreditation.

TCWR is a USDA licensed facility for exotic and native wildlife, accredited by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS), and a founding member of the Big Cat Sanctuary Alliance (BSCA). It is our Vision to end the Big Cat Trade within our lifetime, so that we may preserve and protect these magnificent creatures for our children's future, and for generations to come!

# You Help Enrich our Animals' Lives!

We'd like to thank each of you who have given so generously to our in-ground pool project. These swimming pools provide a necessary form of enrichment for our big cats, who love to splash around and 'drown' their toys in their pools each summer. Our bears also love cooling off in their pools! Thanks to your generosity, we have already completed six natural-looking pools. Our team constructs these spacious pools with graduated depth for easy access and native rock features for scratching, using water-proofed cement that will last decades. With 19 pools funded to date, we will be constructing pools throughout the tour loop habitats in 2022. Eventually, we hope to install this unique form of enrichment in all 58 habitats to accommodate different species.



**Peyton**

*Tigress Peyton demonstrates how captive big cats love to splash around and 'drown' their toys in their pools each summer. The graduated depth of our in-ground pools offers easy access to animals who suffer from arthritis, like the triplets.*



**Mack**



**B.B. King**

*Tiger Mack enjoys the spacious pool he shares with brother BB King, which offers them native rock features to encourage scratching. We use water-proofed cement that will last decades.*

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

## Your Support Gave Jake Freedom!

Jake was the last animal rescued by TCWR during 2021. After police confiscated the young serval along with 356 other animals from an illegal petting zoo in Oklahoma last July, it took five months for their court case to conclude. Finally, the Big Cat Sanctuary Alliance reached out to TCWR, and Tanya and Scott were able to bring the 2-year old African Serval to his forever home at Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge.

Since it was December when Jake arrived, he chose to remain snug inside his heated building. Here, he has perches to lay on, toys, and a litterbox. However, Jake soon grew curious to test his new freedom, and began exploring his grassy habitat undeterred by the winter elements! Curiously, Jake has very fluffy fur compared with our other servals.

At first Jake hissed at his caretakers, but as time went on he relaxed into the sanctuary routine. These days this chatty serval enjoys meowing at his neighbors. His favorite spot in the entire habitat is his hammock, where he can observe everything going on around him while remaining inconspicuous. Like all healthy young boys, Jake loves food, and he eats very fast. You can meet Jake and observe his natural behaviors by taking our educational tour!



Click to  
Buy Tickets

**BOOK  
NOW!**

## True Sanctuaries & Zoos Work Together, for Wildlife

TCWR Animal Curator Emily McCormack first spoke at an American Zoos and Aquariums conference over a decade ago. We felt our presence there was important because most zoo people at that time categorized all sanctuaries as no better than roadside zoos. As more sanctuaries began taking the steps to become fully accredited by the Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS), as TCWR did in 2017, that perception has changed. We played a big part in changing those attitudes.

In January of 2016, TCWR hosted a two-day behavioral training workshop. Emily shared proper techniques she had instituted at TCWR with regional AZA zoos, to alleviate stress in their animal populations. AZA attendees included staff from the Little Rock Zoo, the Rosamond Gifford Zoo of Syracuse, NY, the El Paso Zoo of Texas, and Omaha's Henry Doorly Zoo. Then in 2019, we hosted Animal Behavior consultant Margaret Whittaker, who works with accredited zoos around the world. The premise is simple; training and enrichment are complimentary.

Today, accredited sanctuaries and AZA zoos realize that we share the same values and that the strict standards required from GFAS align with AZA standards. We both strive to ensure that the animals we care for can enjoy the best quality of life possible. That is why, when the Henry Doorly Zoo chose to focus on their Amur tiger species survival plan, they reached out to Turpentine Creek to rehome white tigress Payson in 2018.

The similarities between zoos and true sanctuaries continue to grow, with some AZA zoos now even doing rescues. There is so much knowledge we can share, from nutrition to veterinary practices, along with enrichment methods that will continue to benefit all the captive wildlife we care for.



# Ways You Can Help Provide for TCWR Animals



Many of you ask how you can help TCWR animals in addition to your financial support. Keeping large apex predators mentally stimulated in captivity requires weekly changing enrichment, in addition to the large natural habitats and summertime water features we provide. There are many items you can purchase or collect for our animal residents to brighten their lives! From colognes and kitchen spices (no salt, pepper, or 'hot' seasonings) to cardboard boxes, tubes, and burlap sacks. When in season, watermelons, pumpkins, and Christmas trees are especially welcome. Big cats attack melons and pumpkins as 'prey,' while bears view them as mouth-watering treats. Fir trees offer sensory stimulation for all our animals!



Likewise, the large plastic toys you see in our animals' habitats to relieve boredom regularly need replacing for safety. Snowball tiger and Rambo hyena are notorious for shredding these heavy-duty toys in a matter of days! Feel free to order your own, and ship to TCWR Attn: Animal Enrichment, 239 Turpentine Creek Lane, Eureka Springs, AR 72632 at [BoomerBall.com](http://BoomerBall.com) or [WildLifeToyBox.com](http://WildLifeToyBox.com), or email [mary@tcwr.org](mailto:mary@tcwr.org) for suggestions!

Other items that ship well are Peanut butter, applesauce, whole coconuts, and shelled plain peanuts. When planning your next visit, you may want to drop some treats off at our gift shop for the animals, such as avocados, apples, grapes, and melons; all are delicacies that liven up mealtimes for bears.

If you are a social media whiz, please contact our Communications Director, David Enden at [david@tcwr.org](mailto:david@tcwr.org). Many supporters have reached out wanting to help in this area. The best way we can do that is by working together! You can find more creative suggestions on our donations page at [TCWR.org/donate](http://TCWR.org/donate)

Thank you for helping us help them!



**GIVE  
NOW!**

Turpentine Creek Foundation, Inc.  
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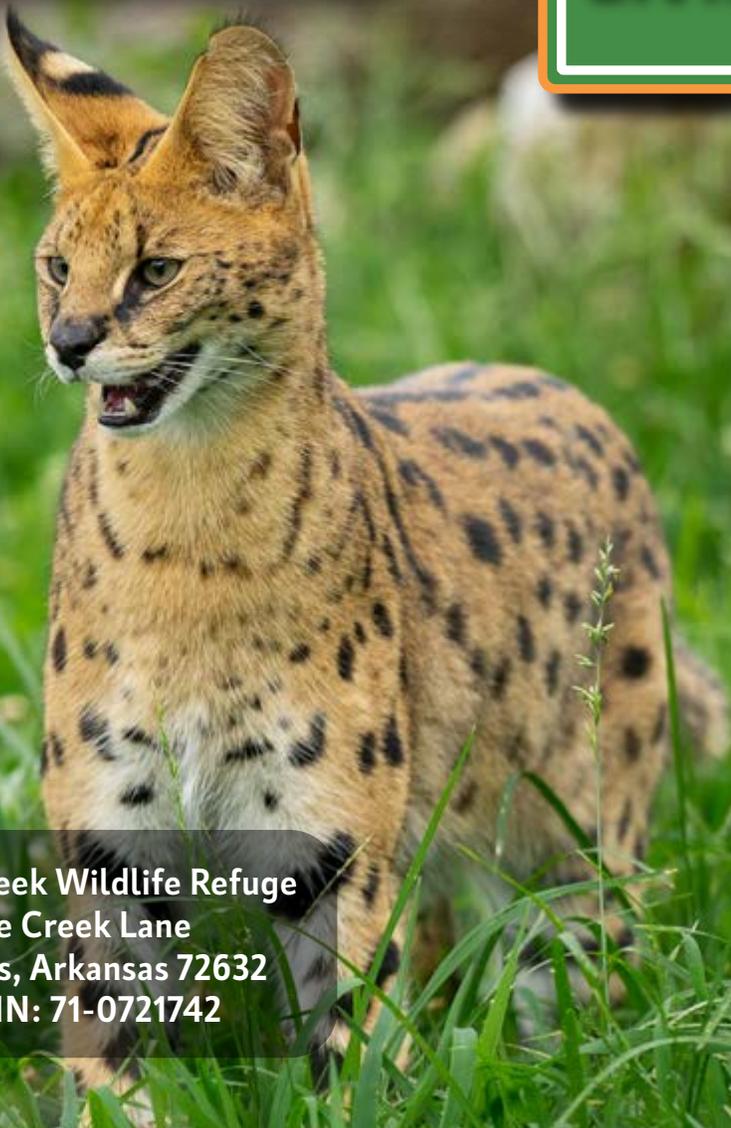
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## Your Legacy can Transform Lives!

By joining the TCWR Legacy Giving program, you can continue to help Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge rescue animals and provide them with the best quality of life possible in captivity. Your legacy gift will help ensure that all of our current and future animal residents will live out their lives in peace and safety, cared for and respected as wild animals.

To learn more about leaving a Legacy of Giving to ensure a brighter future for all the animals, we love, visit [TCWR.org/legacy-giving/](http://TCWR.org/legacy-giving/)

**LEGACY  
GIVING**



*Sammy*



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