

## **Cats in the News. Cat News 79, 39. Supporting Online Material.**

### **Nepal: More tigers have led to more conflicts**

Nepal has been able to successfully conserve its tiger population and managed to increase its numbers by nearly three-fold since 2010. However, this has resulted also in an increase in human-tiger conflict. As a result, 18 “problem tigers” have been captured. Keeping them in captivity costs the country almost 100,000 USD per year and new solutions are investigated ranging from sport hunting “problem tigers”, gifting them to zoos, establishing rescue centers, or simply culling them.

Source: Mongabay <https://t1p.de/4mope>

### **First caracal GPS collared in Turkey**

On 18 February 2024, a caracal was captured and equipped with a GPS collar for the first time in Turkey. The project aims to investigate the state of the habitat and the wildlife Muğla’s Marmaris district after large wildfires occurred in 2021/22.

Source: Hürriyet Daily News <https://t1p.de/ma2te>

### **Golden tiger in India worries conservationists**

A “golden” tiger was spotted in Kaziranga National Park, India. Golden tigers are the result of a recessive gene and might indicate increased inbreeding in the population. Golden tigers are extremely rare: there are an estimated 30 golden tigers worldwide in captivity. Kaziranga NP claims it has four golden individuals – the only ones known from the wild.

Source: CNN <https://t1p.de/76iyq>

### **Seven new UN World Restoration Flagship areas incl. important tiger area**

The World Restoration Flagship awards are part of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration run by UNEP and FAO. The selected initiatives are eligible for technical and financial support from the UN. The initiative began in 2022 with a first 10 selected areas and new areas are added every other year. The seven new areas in 2024 include the Terai Arc Landscape shared by India and Nepal. A conservation programme for the area was launched in 2001 and has managed among other successes to more than double its number of tigers to 1,174 individuals.

Source: UNEP <https://t1p.de/Oiojo>

### **First Global Cheetah Summit held in Ethiopia**

From 28–31 January, more than 130 experts representing more than 80 institutions gathered in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, for the first Global Cheetah Summit. Of 33 identified populations, only 2 are deemed to be viable in the long term. The Summit resulted in the Addis Ababa Declaration for Global Cheetah Conservation which emphasises the urgent need for enhanced conservation efforts to protect cheetahs.

Source: Cheetah Conservation Fund <https://t1p.de/ott8z>

### **Highest elevation record of Asiatic golden cat**

An Asiatic golden cat was pictured by a camera trap at an elevation of 4,415 meters in the Yarlung Tsangpo Grand Canyon National Nature Reserve, Metog county, China. The survey was performed with 304 infrared cameras. It created more than 300 records of Asiatic golden cat at 105 different locations, ranging from 812 to 4,415 meters in elevation.

Source: *China Daily* <https://t1p.de/6scpz>

### **India publishes *Status of Snow Leopard in India***

In 2019, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change launched the “Snow Leopard Population Assessment in India (SPAI)” programme. Sampling over 1’971 camera trap locations led to the identification of 241 individuals, resulting in an estimate of 718 individuals across India. More than half the population is estimated to occur in the Union Territory of Ladakh. This is the first ever rigorous examination of snow leopard population in India.

Source: *Wildlife Institute of India* <https://t1p.de/3n8aa>

### **Uganda Government seeks money for "breeding" lions**

The Uganda Wildlife Education Centre (UWEC also known as Entebbe Zoo) requested US\$ 10 billion (= c. US\$ 26.5 million) for establishing facilities within a few protected areas, including Queen Elizabeth, Kidepo, and Murchison Falls National Parks. The UWEC is looking at the possibility of releasing 15 lions into the wild every two years in an attempt to tackle the ongoing lion population decrease. About 120 lions are lost per year to various anthropogenic causes.

Source: *Monitor* <https://t1p.de/zc497>

### **Senate of Indiana, U.S.A., to discuss opening bobcat hunting**

Then Senate chamber of the state of Indiana, U.S.A., will debate a bill proposing the establishment of a hunting season for bobcats. The preparatory Senate’s Natural Resources Committee has accepted the proposal by 7–1. If the bill is accepted, the Department of Natural Resources would have to define a hunting season by mid-2025.

Source: *IndyStar* <https://t1p.de/xb680>

### **ZIMS-Training session to help save the Arabian leopard**

The Species360 Zoological Information Management System (ZIMS) platform covers data on husbandry, medical and population management. The Royal Commission for AlUla (RCU), Saudi Arabia, had organised a training workshop together with Panthera with a focus on the Arabian leopard.

Source: *Species360* <https://t1p.de/nedwk>

### **Tiger recorded in Buxa National Park, India, after years of absence**

No tigers had been recorded in Buxa National Park, West Bengal, India, for 23 years, before one was sighted in December 2021. However, it remained at that single record, until recently. On 28 December and 31 December, a tiger was captured by camera traps in the park. It is hoped that the increased prey

base, expanded grasslands and controlling of human interaction will enable the definite return of the species.

Source: *The Indian Express* <https://t1p.de/m4a2k>

### **Snow leopard declared to be national symbol of the Kyrgyz Republic**

On 30 December, the president of Kyrgyzstan signed a decree declaring the snow leopard as a national symbol of the country. This should result in increased conservation efforts by all government organisations for the species in the country.

Source: *DownToEarth* <https://t1p.de/5flk2>

### **First tiger reproduction recorded in Salak Phra Wildlife Sanctuary, Thailand**

A camera trap recorded a tigress with two cubs at Salak Phra Wildlife Sanctuary, Thailand. This is the first record of reproduction in this protected area. The cameras had previously also captured thrice an adult male tiger. Cameras were set in 7 protected areas and generally show an increase in the tiger population.

Source: Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation (Facebook) <https://t1p.de/ct4gz>

### **India seeks to introduce further cheetahs, this time from Kenya**

In the frame of the state visit of Kenyan President to India, it was announced that India is seeking to acquire cheetahs from Kenya. There is yet no number of individuals nor a timeline for the plans. India had released 20 individuals since September 2022 in an attempt to reintroduce the species to the country. Of these 20 animals, six have died and the others had to be recaptured to treat skin infections detected in three of them.

Source: *Deccan Herald* <https://t1p.de/5metp>

### **Rare footage of courting jaguars captured in Belize**

The British Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) funds a wildlife monitoring project in a training area used by the British Army in Belize. Their cameras caught rare footage of courtship behaviour of a pair of jaguars. The ongoing project is a partnership between the DIO, the British Army Training and Support Unit Belize, and Panthera and aims to monitor the impact of the British Army's training on the environment.

Source: *Defence Infrastructure Organisation* <https://t1p.de/fdjnt>

### **Canada lynx returning after megafire, U.S.A.**

In 2006, the Tripod Fire destroyed some 175'000 acres of forests around Methow Valley in the state of Washington. First studies started in 2011 and found barely any signs of lynx using the burned area. A new 3-year-project started has collared lynx to study their habitat use. First results indicate that after 17 years, the forest may have regenerated enough to offer habitat again for lynx and its prey.

Source: *Methow Valley News* <https://t1p.de/0hyt8>

## **Two kinds of mistaken identity threaten small cats in India**

Knowledge about some of the smaller cat species is sparse in Indian communities. For example in Ladakh, Eurasian lynx have repeatedly been described with the local name of the Tibetan wolf. If young wild cats are found in the wild, often there are two possible outcomes: they are either mistaken for the young of domestic cats and taken home to “save” them (and can often not be rehabilitated), or they are mistaken for young ones of larger, more dangerous cats and killed. Awareness and education campaigns may help mitigate this threat as seen e.g. for the fishing cat in West Bengal.

Source: Mongabay India <https://t1p.de/5txyf>

## **Camera trap study on small cats launched in Dehing Patkai NP, Assam, India**

Dehing Patkai National Park is known to house eight cat species: tiger, leopard, mainland clouded leopard, Asiatic golden cat, mainland leopard cat, jungle cat, marbled cat and fishing cat. However, the last comprehensive study dates back to 2010. Now, the forest department has initiated a survey using 95 camera traps to study primarily the small cats of the park.

Source: Mongabay India <https://t1p.de/u0wbr>

## **Roadmap to Closing Captive Tiger Facilities of Concern**

A coalition of organisations has created a Roadmap to Closing Captive Tiger Facilities of Concern. The coalition consists of AZA, EAZA, EIA, Four Paws, Panthera, WCS, WildCats Conservation Alliance, Wildlife Justice Commission, WWF and ZSL. “Tiger Facilities of Concern” are facilities that keep or breed tigers for the commercial trade in tigers and/or their body parts or derivatives. The Roadmap was presented and discussed at a side event of the 77<sup>th</sup> meeting of the CITES Standing Committee.

Source: e.g. EIA <https://t1p.de/qwh00>

## **The hidden guigna in Tepuhueico Park, Chile**

The article illustrates the situation on Chiloé island. The author visited the island for three days in search of guignas. He spoke to park rangers, ecotourism operators, nature photographers, local residents, and conservationists. He found traces of the cat’s presence, but also prejudice and threats. He found people who are fully committed to the protection of this Vulnerable species, and a glimmer of hope that wildlife-oriented tourism may help to overcome the long-standing beliefs and detrimental behaviour towards güiñas.

Source: El Mercurio Domingo newspaper <https://t1p.de/tuyib>

## **Reducing conflict with small wild cats**

The Colocolo project seeks to help wild felines by improving chicken coops and providing Mapuche hens. The Mapuche hen does not have a tail and has colours derived from red, which makes it much more difficult for wild cats to hunt it than a common hen.

Source: El Mercurio Domingo newspaper <https://t1p.de/obziz> & Mongabay <https://t1p.de/4fswq>,