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Happy 4th!

This beautiful Black Cap Lory belongs to proud owner, Phoenix member, Julie.
Welcome from the President

My name is Jeanne Hall, I am the President of Phoenix Exotic. Our monthly newsletters are provided essentially for our members who may not have access to our website in an effort to keep our membership well informed regarding organizational business and abreast of current legislation regarding private ownership.

The stated purpose of Phoenix per the articles of incorporation:
“…for charitable educational and scientific purposes; to educate the public in the necessary safety precautions and procedures for dealing with exotic wildlife; and to provide emergency assistance to exotic wildlife in need of care or relocation.”

In our monthly newsletters, you will also find information regarding husbandry, upcoming meetings, rescue, cage design, safety and much more.

If you wish to see any of our past copies of the newsletters, you may go to website, http://www.PhoenixExotics.org/. You can join the e-list at http://phoenixexotics.org/ then click on the link for E-groups email list. ENJOY!

-Jeanne Hall

Letter From Editor

Our monthly newsletter is a compilation of articles and posts from the Phoenix Exotic Wildlife Association, Inc. E-List. We are limited in the print medium to select only a few items.

Any published submissions have been granted prior permission for publication.

Our thanks goes to the “Associated Press” for granting a non-exclusive license to reprint materials online for the purpose of this newsletter.

We encourage member participation by submitting stories and photos of your animals to us with their expressed written permission to use the material for the newsletters and website. If you wish to remain anonymous, just express it with your consent. Thank you!

-Rhonda Kiker

Membership & Membership Renewal Form

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Rhonda Kiker
**Stranded Scuba divers chase off Komodo Dragon**
Submitted by (Blconnection) Sun Jun 8, 2008

Elena Neralairen threw rocks at an aggressive Komodo dragon and scavenged for mussels on a remote Indonesian island where she and fellow divers were stranded for days after being swept away in treacherous currents. The group, three from Britain and one each from France and Sweden, drifted 20 miles in sharp-infested waters before landing after nightfall on Rinca’s palm-fringed beach, their last chance to avoid being swept into the open ocean.

But the next morning, it became clear their ordeal was not yet over. They came face-to-face with a deadly Komodo dragon, which can weigh as much as 365 pounds, and scared the beast away by screaming and pelting it with rocks and sticks.

"It took my diving hood," a smiling Neralairen told The Associated Press on Monday, relieved to finally be heading home.

The Swedish tourist described how the five struggled to find food and water.

"We found some mussels, that's the only thing," she said, adding that there were no coconut or fruit trees on the tiny, near-deserted island.

The area where the diving trip took place, near the islands of Tatawa and Komodo, is famous for its rich marine diversity, including sharks, manta rays and sea turtles. But it is also known for its powerful and unpredictable seas.

Recommended only for experienced divers, it is in a place where the Indian and Pacific oceans meet, creating currents that converge and separate. Whirlpools and eddies can pull divers downwards.

Charlotte Allin, 24, told Britain's Daily Mail there were many times she thought she and her boyfriend, James Manning, 30, would not survive.

"But I quickly brushed those thoughts from my mind," said the British tourist, who later told her mother she was in a state of complete shock. "We had to keep our spirits up. I knew that if we lost hope of being found, that would be it."

After being caught in what felt like a rip tide, the five found a log and clung to it, roping each other together. They spent two nights on Rinca before rescuers aboard one of 30 boats searching the waters spotted them waving frantically on the shore.

The divers were taken to Flores island for medical treatment and with the exception of Kathleen Mitchinson, the British dive instructor left Monday for Bali island to catch connecting flights back home.

Komodo dragons, the world's largest lizards, can grow up to 10 feet long.

Attacks on humans are rare, but with its shark-like serrated teeth the Komodo's bite can be deadly. Their saliva is poisonous, with dozens of species of bacteria, so if a wound is not cleaned properly septicemia sets in within days.

There are believed to be 4,000 left in the world and they are only found in the wild on a handful of islands in eastern Indonesia.

Thousands of tourists visit the area each year to see the lizards in their natural habitat. They are normally shown around the arid and rocky island by guides who carry large, forked sticks to ward off the animals.

**That's Not a Coyote - It's a Wild Dog**
Submitted by (south zoo) Wed Jun 18, 2008

Helena, Arkansas (AP) - Mayor James Valley, who said last week the city was taking stray dogs to the St. Francis National Forest and turning them loose, has been targeted in a complaint by the Humane Society of Southeastern Arkansas that accuses him of animal abandonment, mistreatment and neglect.

A complaint signed by Ruby Burton, director of the humane group, was sworn out Monday with the Phillips County sheriff's office, in the form of...
an affidavit seeking Valley’s arrest on the charges, all misdemeanors.

State law requires an arrest warrant based on the complaint to be issued by a judge, and neither of two local district judges, who handle such misdemeanor cases, had acted on the matter by late Tuesday afternoon.

"During Memorial Day weekend, we received calls from concerned citizens about the welfare of the animals" at kennels located at the city sanitation and street department, said Gloria Higginbotham, director of the local Humane Society affiliate.

She said volunteers fed and watered the animals at the kennels over the holiday weekend. Higginbotham said she encountered the mayor on one of her trips to the kennel and told him the living conditions for the dogs were not acceptable.

"I also told him we needed a shelter and property. He told me he was taking the dogs to Storm Creek," Higginbotham said. "I told him, 'Don't take those dogs anywhere,' and to give me two hours to get some people to help remove them from there."

Within two hours, she said, the 10 dogs had been dumped in the national forest.

An effort to get the issue discussed at a June 10 City Council meeting was unsuccessful, Higginbotham said, though photographs of the conditions were passed around to council members.

Valley said he had received hundreds of angry e-mails and phone calls after he ordered the release of the dogs in the St. Francis National Forest, many of them using strong language.

"I stand by my decision," Valley said. "I was doing what was in the best interest of this community."

Valley said last week that the city would need $50,000 to $60,000 to open a new animal shelter.

**Lynx dies in tree at NW Trek**

Submitted by (blconnection) Tue Jul 1, 2008

Eatonville, Washington - A Canadian lynx climbed a tree at the Northwest Trek Wildlife Park at Eatonville and remained in the top branches for more than two weeks until it died.

After park workers found the carcass Saturday at the base of the tree, a necropsy showed the cat died of dehydration. It had no condition that would have prevented it from climbing down. Officials speculate the animal was simply afraid.

"I've been working in zoos with cats for more than 30 years and I have never seen or heard of anything like this," Deputy Director Dave Ellis said.

"Trek lynx have frequently climbed the trees in their naturalistic exhibit but have always come back down on their own. Several years ago we had a young male that fell out a tree and broke its leg but he was nursed back to health. That was the only other problem with lynx climbing trees in this exhibit since it opened over 20 years ago."

Throughout the time the cat was in the tree, keepers provided a variety of treats and enticements at lower levels of the tree to try to lure the cat down, but it never descended below the 60-foot level.

Research showed no other documented cases of cats staying up in a tree so long unless it was ill or injured.

The wildlife park has two remaining lynx.

A park spokeswoman, Cherilyn Williams, says workers put have sheet metal around tall trees to limit how high the cats can climb.
Giant panda habitat devastated by China Quake
Submitted by (south zoo) Wed Jun 18, 2008

By Tini Tran, Associated Press Writer
A Chinese forestry official said Tuesday that giant panda habitat in China’s Sichuan province, the endangered animal's main preserve, was devastated by last month's massive earthquake.

The world-renowned Wolong Nature Reserve and 48 others created in the province to protect the pandas and other endangered species were damaged by the quake, said Cao Qingyao, a spokesman for the State Forestry Administration. He said about 80 percent of Sichuan panda habitat suffered some degree of damage from the quake, which sent rocks, soil and vegetation crashing into river valleys. Losses to the wild population remained unknown, he said. "We still cannot reach some of the local habitats, so it’s impossible to assess the exact losses," Cao told reporters in Beijing.

The endangered panda is revered as a kind of unofficial national symbol in China, the only country in which pandas are found in the wild. About 1,600 of the animals live deep in steep bamboo covered mountains mostly in Sichuan and the neighboring province of Shaanxi. Another 180 have been bred in captivity. Wolong, which used to house 64 pandas, suffered heavy damage, with one panda killed and another still missing. The center remains closed to visitors, and might not open again until next year. Six pandas have been sent to another reserve in Sichuan, and eight have been sent to Beijing for an Olympics stay at the Beijing Zoo that was planned before the quake.

David Wildt, a panda expert who is chief scientist at the National Zoo in Washington D.C., said photographs showed severe damage to the animal's range, but called Cao’s 80 percent damage figure a guesstimate." The only way of knowing the full effect would be to send teams into the largely inaccessible area to check, he said. "A high priority would be to get field scientists into those preserves to make an accurate assessment of damage to habitat," Wildt said in a telephone interview from Washington.

Scientists at Wolong had said wild pandas' innate survival sense would alert them to take refuge from quake-triggered landslides on high ground, but Wildt said that had not been scientifically proven. "We really have no clue as to how any animal is going to respond in anticipation of an earthquake," Wildt said.

Yu Jinping, director of China conservation and education at Zoo Atlanta, said it could take years to accurately estimate the damage done to the panda habitat in the quake zone. "There’s no doubt the habitat has been heavily damaged," said Yu. "But it's almost impossible to reach these remote areas right now, so it's only a rough estimate." Yu said that most of the wild pandas are likely to survive because they can travel to find other sources of bamboo. "Although some areas were destroyed by mudslides and rocks falling down, I think most of them will be OK," Yu said.

The 7.9 magnitude quake killed almost 70,000 people and left 5 million homeless. Cao said 232 forestry workers were killed and that the quake also badly damaged forestry resources in the affected areas, with direct economic losses to the forestry business of $3.3 billion.

D.C.'s National Zoo helps make fertility history
Submitted by (south zoo) Wed Jun 18, 2008

By Brett Zonger, AP Writer
Washington (AP) - Scientists at the Smithsonian Institution’s National Zoo revealed Monday that they have reversed a vasectomy on an endangered horse to allow it to reproduce naturally, the first-known operation of its kind on
an endangered species.

Veterinarians said the surgery was performed in October 2007 on a Przewalski horse named Minnesota, and they confirmed May 6 that the surgery was successful. The horses are native to China and Mongolia and were declared extinct in the wild in 1970. Since then several hundred have been bred and reintroduced to the wild in Asia.

“This is kind of interesting turnaround,” said Dr. Sherman Silber, a St. Louis urologist who pioneered reversible vasectomies in 13,000 humans and helped with the horse surgery. “The human becomes the ‘test animal’. We’ve made so much progress because the human really is the perfect model.”

Luis Padilla, the zoo veterinarian who performed the reversal surgery in Washington, said the procedure was a first for this species and likely for any endangered species. A similar surgery was successfully performed while Padilla was a resident at the Saint Louis Zoo in 2003 on South American bush dogs, which resemble Chihuahuas. They are classified as vulnerable but not endangered.

The “temporary vasectomy” could have a significant impact on how animals are managed in captivity by giving zookeepers a new way to control the animal’s offspring without having to neuter them or use contraceptives that can change an animal’s behavior.

Minnesota, the 20-year-old horse, had a vasectomy in 1999 at his previous home at the Minnesota Zoo. A vasectomy may be performed on an endangered animal because of space constraints, the size of species or if an animal has already produced many offspring and its genes are overrepresented in the population, said Budhan Pukazhenthi, a reproductive scientist at the National Zoo’s Conservation and Research Center in Front Royal, Virginia.

Scientists later realized Minnesota was one of the most genetically valuable horses in the North American breeding program based on his ancestry. The Przewalski horse population is based on the genes from only 14 original animals.

Zookeepers hope to find a suitable female for Minnesota in July.

The breakthrough “could have a very significant effect on how this species is preserved,” Padilla said.

Still, reversible vasectomies carry notable risks, from putting a horse to sleep for each operation to placing the horse on its back for the surgery.

“I’m sure some people will look at it as a great way for managing species in captivity, and I’m sure others will look at it as something they don’t want to do,” Padilla said.

Cheryl Asa, director of the American Zoo and Aquarium Association’s Wildlife Contraception Center, said the reversible vasectomy could be useful in isolated cases but probably won’t be adopted broadly.

**Officials consider Montana permit for menagerie**

Submitted by (south zoo) Wed Jun 18, 2008

Helena, Montana (AP) - A Montana woman wants a state permit allowing her to exhibit exotic animals in Boyd, between Billings and Yellowstone National Park.

Corynne Freeman says her 16 species include an anteater, an African bushbaby, several kinds of tortoises and a squirrel-like animal called a sugar glider. Freeman recently moved the animals to Boyd, from her home in the Roundup area. She has a U.S. Department of Agriculture exhibitor's permit. The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks evaluated her request for a state permit and issued an environmental assessment released for public comment until June 27. The agency found a more comprehensive environmental impact statement is not necessary.
Highlighted In This Issue:

- That’s Not a Coyote - It’s a Wild Dog!
- Lynx dies in tree at NW Trek
- Giant panda habitat devastated by China Quake