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PANTHERA NEWSLETTER

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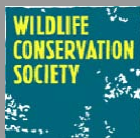
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Welcome to Panthera's Newsletter!

Panthera is an international nonprofit whose sole mission is the conservation of the world's 36 species of wild cats. Bringing together the knowledge and expertise of the world's top cat biologists, and working in partnership with local and international NGOs, scientific institutions, universities and government agencies, Panthera develops and implements range-wide species conservation strategies for the world's most imperiled wild cats.

Where Science Feeds Action, Leopards Win

Good news for leopards in South Africa! Over the past seven years, Panthera's Luke Hunter and Guy Balme have led the longest and most comprehensive leopard study ever conducted; and their findings have resulted in an effective conservation plan for these gorgeous cats.



At the start of the project in 2002, leopards were legally - but unsustainably - hunted by trophy hunters and illegally hunted by farmers because of the threat they pose to



livestock and wild game. In order to reduce leopard killings in the region, Panthera's scientists have worked with local policy makers to create sustainable conservation solutions. Our scientists proposed reducing the overall number of leopards hunted, advised that hunts be distributed more evenly across the region to avoid disproportionately impacting a single population, and urged that hunting female and young leopards be banned. In 2006, Panthera's recommendations were successfully implemented and by 2008 data showed that the plans were working! The study's findings were published in the latest issue of *Biological Conservation*.

Leopards are living longer, people are killing fewer cats, and the population is growing. Females are also having more cubs. Guy Balme believes that the continuous turnover from hunting put the population in chaos. Male leopards don't help raise cubs, but they do provide essential security for females who share their home, protecting them from new males who routinely kill cubs to improve the chances of mating. With the constant killing of male leopards, females were trapped in a cycle where resident males were not around long enough to guard the cubs from intruding males. Reducing the number of male leopards killed has helped to re-establish stability, and females now have a safe window in which to raise their young.

[Click here to visit this site in Google Earth](#)

To read more about this study, please visit:

<http://www.prweb.com/releases/Panthera/leopardconservation/prweb2685344.htm>

For more information about Panthera's leopard project, please visit:

http://www.panthera.org/munyawana_leopard.html

Male Snow Leopard Victim of Steel Jaw Trap



In early July, the Panthera/Snow Leopard Trust team at the South Gobi site in Mongolia received word from a local herder that a cat had been captured in a steel jaw trap. Sadly, these traps are set by herdsmen to catch and kill carnivores that they view as a risk to their livestock.

The team arrived at the site to find a wounded male snow leopard hiding in a cave with the trap still closed on his leg. The team successfully sedated the cat, removed the trap, treated his wounds, and released him back to the wild where they will continue to monitor his progress.

This incident, in conjunction with the loss of another radio-collared snow leopard killed by a herder last winter ([we reported this incident in our April newsletter](#)), has underscored the magnitude of the real threat that snow leopards face from human-wildlife conflict. Snow leopards are among many wild cat species that are injured or killed by traps and snares which indiscriminately catch, injure or kill anything that walks in their path. Panthera and the Snow Leopard Trust are working with the local herdsman to adopt measures that will protect their livestock from predators, showing that they can coexist peacefully with these majestic cats.

To learn more about Panthera's snow leopard programs, please visit: http://www.panthera.org/snow_leopard_programs_projects.html

Bamboo Protects Crops, Saves Lions



The Niassa Carnivore Project (NCP) is a Panthera supported conservation program located in Niassa, Mozambique, an area considered to be one of the truly last remaining wild places on earth. With roughly 1,000 lions inhabiting the reserve, Niassa is a rare place in Africa where the lion population is believed to be growing.

However, lions are facing increasing pressure from the expanding human population, and trophy hunting and illegal persecution is occurring at an alarming rate. In 2003, the NCP was initiated by Colleen and Keith Begg to secure the long-term future of the reserve's top predators. Over the past five years, their project has made significant progress toward this goal by reducing the illegal killing of lions.

Most local communities in the reserve plant maize and rice for subsistence. But these important crops are raided by bushpigs and warthogs, so villagers set wire snares in their fields to reduce the number of pillaging pigs. The bushpigs and warthogs draw lions to the fields, and sadly, many are also caught in snares resulting in injury or death. The NCP is using a traditional approach to overcome the problem. In the past, communities built bamboo fences to successfully keep raiding animals out of their fields, but bamboo is widely used for a variety of purposes, and stocks around villages have been severely depleted. The NCP is working with communities to explore the possibility of replanting fast-growing bamboo in old fields to create needed material for fencing. Data tell us that even simple barriers around fields greatly reduces the number of crop-raiding pigs; they provide an alternative to setting snares and remove the deadly threat snares pose to Africa's top predator.

For more information on Panthera supported projects, please visit <http://www.panthera.org/grants.html>.

From Desktop to Mountaintop: The Reality of Apple's Newest Icon

To check out Panthera's latest blog on the Huffington Post, visit <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/alan-rabinowitz>.

Panthera's Director of Media on WAMU's "The Animal House"



To hear photographer Steve Winter's adventures escaping charging grizzlies, surviving parasite infections, and traveling to remote landscapes in search of the perfect shot, listen to [The Dangers and Rewards of Wildlife Photography](#) from WAMU's "The Animal House".

To learn more about Panthera and how you can help save the world's wild cats, visit: www.panthera.org

To see more 'Panthera in the News', please visit:

http://www.panthera.org/news_and_events.html

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