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PANTHERA NEWSLETTER

In This Issue

[Monks Put Faith in Conservation](#)

[When Technology and Science Don't 'Uplink'](#)

[Lost Lions of Nigeria](#)

[Cross Cultural Collaborations to Save Tigers](#)

[Cats Up Front and Center at the Mesoamerican Society for Biology and Conservation Meeting](#)

[Cat Tales: Panthera's Blog](#)

[Tune in to Nature's Greatest Defender](#)

[Vote NOW to Support Panthera!](#)

[Book Release](#)

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[Click here for our newsletter archives](#)

Quick Links

[Contact us!](#)

[About Us](#)

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.

Monks Put Faith in Conservation



In most cases, local people make the perfect partners for conservation. They know the landscape and everything in it better than most scientists, and they have lived there all their lives, and plan to stay (which helps in reducing turnover!).

Panthera's Vice President George Schaller recently returned from a five week trip to China where he worked with our partners at the Shan Shui Conservation Center, the Center for Nature and Society at Peking University, and the Qinghai Forestry Department to move our new snow leopard collaboration forward. One major objective of his trip was to engage three remote monasteries located close to snow leopard habitat, and to train the monks to collect data and monitor snow leopards and their prey. Schaller's team was hosted by three monasteries in south Qinghai (Tarhung, Gongya, and Gongsa) all of which are actively working to conserve local wildlife and provide conservation education to local villagers. Schaller and the team brought monks from each monastery to the field to



train them on identifying snow leopard scats and tracks, recording information from snow leopard kills, and surveying blue sheep and other prey animals. Involving local communities in conservation, to help actively collect information on wildlife, leads to greater awareness and education for the local community, and conservation scientists alike.

To learn more about Panthera's snow leopard programs, please [click here](#).

When Technology and Science Don't 'Uplink'



Recent uplinks from our GPS-satellite tracking collars (Northstar, Inc.) from two snow leopards highlight the frustrations we face as researchers using state-of-the-art technology. While technological advances often greatly benefit conservation science, sometimes our reliance on cutting-edge technology also comes at a price. When the GPS-satellite collars work well, they provide us with a rare glimpse into the lives of an elusive species. However, performance and reliability issues often arise. The Panthera team at South Gobi has received only one location each from two collared snow leopards over the past two weeks. With a properly working collar, the team should be able to pinpoint the location of each cat as many as three times a day, greatly adding to the data on each cat's range. The technical difficulties may be due to wear on the antenna, or possibly to battery power issues in Mongolia's extremely cold winter. It is difficult to determine the exact cause, but the team at South Gobi plans to re-collar the cats in January and recover the "missing" data. Panthera's field scientists provide a 'testing ground' for technology companies and we often work closely with manufacturers to increase the effectiveness of their products. In the meantime, a new test collar is being built and the team will deploy it this winter to see if the latest version is an improvement over our current collars. Finding the most effective technology is always a process, however, the benefits to conservation far outweigh the obstacles when it provides a rare glimpse into the lives of a secretive species.

For more information on Panthera's snow leopard programs, please [click here](#).

Lost Lions of Nigeria



In cooperation with the Nigeria National Parks Service (NNPS) and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Panthera launched the Nigerian National Lion Survey to establish the status of the species across the country. The survey has just been completed and tragically, has revealed a dire future for lions in the region. The objective was to survey the country's six Lion Conservation Units (LCUs) - areas which experts identified as possibly being important for lion conservation in west Africa - and estimate population size in the areas where lions were found. In the fall, the survey's Principal Investigator conducted fieldwork in the two remaining LCUs, Kamuku National Park and Falgore Game Reserve (GR). Sadly, no large carnivore sign was detected in either area. Instead, we found that the areas were heavily used by Fulani herdsman and their cattle, and by poachers. The team has concluded that only a total of two of the six LCUs delineated for Nigeria still harbor lions. In response, Panthera presented survey results and potential conservation measures to high-ranking wildlife officials and local NGOs at a workshop on the status of the lion in Nigeria. Panthera, in partnership with the NNPS and WCS, has begun planning strategies for the remaining lions in Nigeria, and we continue to expand our efforts throughout western Africa.

For more information on Panthera's lion program, please [click here](#).

Cross Cultural Collaborations to Save Tigers



Panthera tiger expert, Joe Smith, traveled from Sumatra to the Russian Far East to visit our partner, the WCS Russia Program, and to learn firsthand how they address human-tiger conflict. Smith was accompanied by Manwar Kholis, the leader of the human-tiger conflict mitigation team from the Tigers Forever project on Sumatra. The group traveled to the town of Ussuriysk to attend a veterinary workshop hosted by the Primorsky State Agricultural Academy. There, a team of international and Russian experts presented a series of lectures and practicals, and participants had the opportunity to compare notes on human-tiger conflict mitigation techniques and the methods that have proved successful in both Russia and Sumatra in recent years. After the workshop, the team moved north to the coastal town of Terney and the longstanding tiger research sites in this region of Primorsky Krai. Over several days, they radio-tracked a tigress with her three cubs and managed to get within one and half kilometers of the young family. The workshop proved a great resource for conservation scientists from Indonesia and Russia as the team shared valuable tools and techniques.

For more information on Panthera's tiger program, please [click here](#).

Cats Up Front and Center at the Mesoamerican Society for Biology and Conservation Meeting



In October, the University of Belize hosted the 8th Annual Congress of the Mesoamerican Society of Biology and Conservation entitled 'Conservation challenges in a rapidly shrinking planet'. As part of our mission to foster the next generation of felid biologists, Panthera sponsored a full-day special symposium on Felid Status, Ecology and Conservation in Mesoamerica, led by Dr. Howard Quigley and Roberto Salom. Organizers noted that this was the best-attended symposium of the week. Seventeen talks were presented, the majority of which focused on jaguars, and the day concluded with a keynote speech by Howard Quigley that highlighted the need for scientific collaboration in advancing neotropical carnivore conservation.

For more information on our jaguar conservation programs, please [click here](#).

Cat Tales: Inspiring Encounters with the World's Most Iconic and Endangered Cats

In October, Panthera gathered stories from our scientists, researchers, and partners to document their favorite encounters with big cats in the wild. Our most recent blog is a story by Panthera President Alan Rabinowitz, excerpted from his book, *Jaguar*.

To read Panthera's blog, please [click here](#).

Tune in to *Nature's Greatest Defender*, George Schaller on National Geographic Channel



Watch as George Schaller revisits some of the sites from his lifelong career

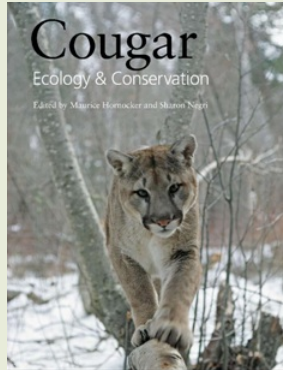
as a pioneering conservationist in a National Geographic special this coming Saturday, December 12th at 10PM.

For more information, please [click here](#).

Vote NOW to Support Panthera!

Chase Community Giving, a new Chase Bank program, will offer \$1Million to 5 charities. Voters decide which 5 charities will receive the award. To vote for Panthera, [click here](#) before December 11th.

Book Release



Announcing the release of *Cougar Ecology and Conservation*, one of the most comprehensive anthologies on cougar ecology to date, edited by Maurice Hornocker and Sharon Negri, with a foreword by Alan Rabinowitz.

To order, please [click here](#).

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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