

# Big Cat Chronicles

Winter 2023



Featured Animal

## Ungowwa

Female Lion  
(*Panthera leo*)

Born 5/10/08

Rescued 9/18/20



Read more about Ungowwa on page 3.

An update from Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge: A GFAS Accredited Facility for the Vanishing Breeds of Big Cats.

# Letter from the President

Founder Tanya Smith



As we approach the Winter of 2023, I am thrilled to see our shared dream to rescue more animals become a reality as we near completion of our Freedom Field expansion! These 44 new natural habitats will offer lives of freedom to generations of wild cats. With an average of ½ acre each for the Big Cat enclosures, they are the most significant habitats we have built to date! None of this would be possible without you supporting this project – you are funding freedom, and I cannot begin to thank you enough.

Over the years, you have helped us rescue over 500 animals, transforming their lives. We've watched animals repeatedly change from fearful and hopeless to trustful and serene. Now, we welcome the BCR tigers, who are well acquainted with true sanctuary life, and together, we will ensure they continue to receive the high level of care they are accustomed to.



Max, Kimba, and Simba arrived on September 29 and settled into their new habitats in Freedom Field. Soon to follow were Aria, Dutchess, and Jasmine. By the end of this year, we hope to have all 32 BCR cats settled in their new homes for the winter, with snug, heated dens for the big cats and native species and heated buildings for the African cats.

Opening our arms to rescue more animals is a beautiful and noble thing for all of us. Yet, that brings me to the second part of our mission – holding up our promise to care for them for the rest of their lives with the best care possible in captivity. We continually strive for that at TCWR and can only continue to do that with your help.

We are facing our most challenging last quarter as a sanctuary this fall. Donations are seeing a nationwide downturn this year. Yet, we will have 120 animals depending on us for a regular proper diet each day, clean habitats and water, and warm dens to keep them comfortable throughout our cold Arkansas winter.

I am grateful for all you've made possible through your generosity – we have achieved miracles together for these animals! As you make your holiday preparations and plans with family and friends, please include an end-of-year gift for the animals that depend on us for their lives.

Enjoy our winter stories, and thank you from the bottom of my heart! Until next time...

Sincerely,

*Tanya Smith*

Tanya Smith, President & Founder



Check out our education resources: [Education.Tarpentinecreek.org](https://www.Education.Tarpentinecreek.org)

# Ungowwa

## Your Featured Cat!



We rescued lioness Ungowwa alongside male tiger Glacier in September 2020 with six other big cats from a shut-down Indiana 'pay to play' facility. A federal judge ordered their removal due to multiple USDA and Endangered Species Act violations, including owner Tim Stark's inhumane declawing procedures and premature removal of cubs for photo ops. While mating of a tiger and lioness would not occur in nature, Stark likely paired these two to produce hybrids called Tigons. These animals suffer many health issues, but sell for higher profit because of unique markings and smaller size.

Ungowwa, like her rescue mates, required treatment for worms and exhibited high food aggression upon arrival. Since her reunion with a neutered Glacier in early 2021, relaxing in their spacious natural habitat paired with dependable daily feeding and care has transformed this 15-year-old lioness from untrusting and fearful to relaxed and playful.

Lions, the only social big cats, are incredibly stubborn and lazy. Ungowwa, unlike most lions, prefers her personal space. She enjoys cold weather and loves to play in the snow! This maverick lioness allows Glacier to curl up next to her during the winter (likely enjoying his warmth), but in other seasons prefers to nap in the sun all day undisturbed. She's always curious about new enrichment items and will take turns investigating them with Glacier.



*Relaxing in the spacious natural habitat she shares with Glacier, paired with daily feeding and care, has transformed Ungowwa from untrusting and fearful to relaxed and playful.*



*Unlike most lions, Ungowwa enjoys cold weather and loves to play in the snow! She prefers to interact socially with her keepers only when treats are involved.*

Ungowwa prefers to interact socially with her keepers only when treats are involved. Since she eats much faster than Glacier, we separate them during mealtime. As soon as we open the transfer door, she barrels past him as she attempts to rub against him to check his food dish for any extra pieces he may have left! She's even ducked under him, lifting him off his feet, and he tolerates her single-mindedness well!

Because of your generosity, Ungowwa will never be forced to mate and have her cubs ripped away for profit. Because of you, she and her rescue mates stepped on the grass for the first time and now live each day on their terms. Your support grants Ungowwa and all the animals we rescue the best quality of life possible in captivity.

Recurring donors are the foundation of the Refuge, thank you!

# Your First BCR Cats Spotlight: Kimba!

Male tiger Kimba and rescue mates Simba and Max will live in our spacious Freedom Field habitats for the remainder of their lives. Their long journey to freedom was complicated and, for Kimba, horribly traumatic.

Kimba was born into the Guatemalan circus in 2017, just as their government banned the use of circus animals. At first, the Hermanos Ponce Circus went on the run. Then, in June 2018, Animal Defenders International (ADI) and authorities located the circus and began the transfer of the animals to a temporary rescue center in Guatemala. Sadly, during their handover, circus workers brutally attacked Kimba; the ADI team intervened, but the ordeal was devastating for the young tiger. To this day he is very fearful and aggressive with humans.



That November, Big Cat Rescue (BCR) learned of the tigers' plight and offered to rescue the three tigers, sponsoring their care until red tape could be sorted for their transfer to Florida. On November 25, 2019, the three former circus tigers finally arrived in Tampa. For over three years, they have basked in sanctuary life. Kimba and his rescue mates made their final journey to TCWR this September.

The TCWR Animal Care Team has had decades of experience dealing with traumatized big cats. A prime example of the dramatic transformations we have seen is that of Shakira II. Animal Curator Emily McCormack spent hours each day softly talking to the wildly distressed tigress after her rescue in 2016. Shakira II had been exploited in a circus act, surrounded by fire, flashing lights, and a loud audience, then subjected to two years of forced breeding that produced four litters stolen from her for cub petting profits.

Seven years later, we continue to adjust our weed-eating and tick-spraying schedule for Shakira II to first in the morning while she's still in her night house to cause her the least stress. When we must lock her up due to storms, we approach on foot vs. driving a truck near her. The extra efforts have worked wonders. Now, Shakira II enjoys lounging on her habitat bench and greets her care team with "chuffs." On hot days, this beauty loves playfully splashing in hose showers, exposing her vulnerable belly as the ultimate sign of trust.

We hope to give Kimba and all the animals suffering trauma from their past lives the individualized care they need to live their best lives. You are the reason these transformations are possible. Thank you for your support and your belief in our team.

## ORDER TODAY!

The official **TURPENTINE CREEK CALENDAR** featuring every resident's birthday, Refuge events, wildlife holidays and 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 form on page 15, or through our web store:

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



# Letter from the Curator

Emily McCormack



This August, Dr. Kellyn and I traveled to Tampa, FL, to acquaint ourselves with all the cats who would soon be traveling to their new permanent home at TCWR. We met BCR keepers, volunteers, and veterinarian Dr. Justin Boorstein to learn about the cats' histories, their personalities, and any ongoing medical conditions or mental trauma they suffer so we could prepare ourselves to continue the best care possible for each animal. I also wanted to reassure the BCR team that they are always welcome to visit TCWR and check in on the beloved animals they took such special care of.

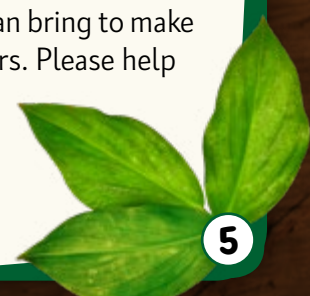
During our quick two days at BCR, we had a chance to meet and observe each of the cats in their habitats, noting their favorite places to relax their behavior around their keepers, and learned what enrichment activities and toys each animal favors.



Jamie Veronica, the President of BCR, and her partner Victor traveled back to TCWR with us to see firsthand the extraordinary work going into building the BCR cats' newfound freedom. Back at Freedom Field, we threw ourselves back into work alongside the construction crews to prepare the new habitats for our new cats. Our goal for the winter was to complete the construction of these expansive enclosures and ensure each cat would have a warm, heated den. I've been thrilled with how functional the night house roof overhangs have proven; in summer, it has been a good ten to fifteen degrees cooler in this shady space in their night houses. The overhangs will provide the cats with a dry outdoor space protected from rain, sleet, and snow this winter. Over time, we plan to install the inground pools. By spring, we will begin installing benches and rock nooks, planting reed grass for more privacy, and erecting shade cloths while the fast-growing oaks we planted mature.

Like every animal TCWR has ever rescued, their care will be individual. Even though the cats are coming from another accredited sanctuary, it is still the beginning of a new journey that will require patience, dedication, and a deep understanding of each animal's specific needs. After traveling to BCR, we learned a tremendous amount about each cat relocating to TCWR, along with their favorite toys, perches, or anything else we can bring to make this transition smooth. Freedom Field is becoming a reality because of you, our TCWR supporters. Please help adopt, sponsor, and spoil our new residents so they can thrive in their new environment and call TCWR their forever home.

**Together, we are making a difference!**



# The Future of Freedom at TCWR

The past ten months have been incredibly productive ones at TCWR. We are nearing completion of our most ambitious habitat expansion ever! Spanning 13 acres, the 44 new habitats will average ½ acre in size for the Big Cats, granting lifelong freedom to dozens more wild cats over the coming years.

Building new habitats has been part of our strategic plan since we began our campaign in 2020. The passage of the Big Cat Public Safety Act (BCPSA) late last year, coupled with the offered help of Big Cat Rescue to accommodate their remaining cats, moved this project to the front burner. We recognize the need for more space among the remaining accredited sanctuaries. To stay true to our mission, we must prepare for a worst-case scenario that could involve large-scale rescues, including building double night houses in every new habitat.



**New African cat heated buildings**



**Covered night houses for the Big Cats**



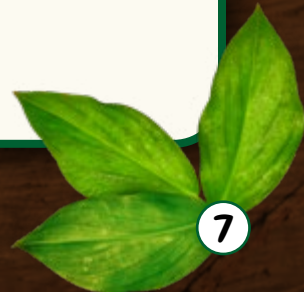
Turpentine Creek has two main objectives for our mission. The first is to rescue animals from lives of neglect and abuse. Afterward, we provide them with a permanent home and allow them to live on their terms as wild animals. While TCWR is known nationwide as a rescue facility, most of our daily focus is on the second part of our mission. Our work includes:

- Daily caregiving through animal husbandry.
- Individually prepared diets to grant proper nutrition.
- Regular wellness exams and necessary veterinary care.



Our goal is continually improving the care we offer captive wildlife to give them the best quality of life possible. US Fish & Wildlife USFWS anticipates that thousands of big cats that are now being held illegally will need rescue as the BCPSA is enforced. We also are receiving more rescue calls for smaller wild felines, and must prepare for them as well.

Developing Freedom Field is TCWR's commitment to its mission, especially the most critical part of our mission: providing a life-long home. This massive project is over 83% funded, with naming rights still available. Your end of year gift will allow us to give our new Freedom Field cats the lives they deserve!



# Aria, Dutchess, and Jasmine to Call TCWR "Home"



Aria

Aria was privately owned and suffered from malnutrition and muscle atrophy when BCR rescued her. The care she received at BCR over the years restored her health.



Dutchess

Dutchess was rescued from a terrible Ohio roadside zoo by BCR. Her favorite enrichment items are spices such as apple pie and pumpkin.



Jasmine

Jasmine was rescued alongside Dutchess, and loves pumpkin enrichment.

This fall, we welcomed Kimba, Simba, and Max as the first to call Freedom Field "home." We decided to move these three cats first due to their traumatic history of abuse in the Guatemalan circus and the need to give them more time to acclimate to their new life at TCWR. While we were excited to welcome the first three cats from Big Cat Rescue (BCR) to the Refuge, the team immediately returned to work preparing for the next three tigers, Aria, Dutchess and Jasmine. We expect these three to have a much easier adjustment period, mainly because of how well their personalities will fit into life here.

Aria was privately owned and likely spent her younger years in a cub petting facility. Her owner refused to comply with USDA regulations, resulting in Aria receiving horrible care. Upon her rescue, she had terrible injuries that BCR needed to treat, muscle atrophy, and joint issues due to improper nutrition. Over the years, she became very healthy again, given the care and attention at BCR.

BCR rescued Jasmine and Dutchess together. They were part of BCR's behavioral training program and love enrichment. Jasmine likes pumpkins, while Dutchess prefers spices such as apple pie and pumpkin. The two were privately owned by an Ohio-based individual who ran Tiger Ridge Exotics in 2015. Ohio passed numerous laws for exotic animals in response to the 2011 Zanesville Massacre, where a private owner let 49 exotic animals loose before taking his own life. With no training on exotic animals, local authorities had to euthanize them as they ran loose throughout the community. Although grandfathered into the new Ohio laws, Tiger Ridge Exotics received numerous animal welfare violations and refused to cooperate with authorities. In 2015, all of his animals, including Dutchess and Jasmine, were seized by the Ohio Department of Agriculture, and eventually, the two went to BCR.

The Big Cat Public Safety Act also grandfathered in many exotic animal owners who had registered their animals before June 2023. Like in the case of Tiger Ridge in Ohio, many private owners and roadside zoos are out there possessing dangerous animals and not complying with the regulations. With our expansion of 44 habitats in Freedom Field, TCWR will continue to be a beacon of rescue and provide sanctuary for many years. Through your continued donations and support for our capital campaign, we can ensure a brighter future for animals in years to come.



# Letter from the Veterinarian

Dr. Kellyn Sweeley, DVM

With the transfer of rescued animals from one accredited GFAS sanctuary (BCR) to another (TCWR), the usual mysteries and unwanted surprises concerning veterinary care, behavior, and overall health we often see in new animals at TCWR are nearly obsolete. The fear of unknown infectious agents like parasites and viruses entering our established population's health is gone. Though, as with any new arrivals, a 30-day quarantine is our policy, there is little need for concern over any newly received BCR animals. We have records of their last vaccination dates, deworming schedule, last parasite treatment, and any past and ongoing present concerns.

At TCWR, all environments containing animals are routinely treated with animal-friendly insecticides to kill ticks, fleas, and other insects. A few of our residents receive oral ectoparasite prevention due to their higher risk of exposure. However, most of our animals do not, as costs would be astronomical to treat the entire population; a single oral treatment of a tiger costs around \$210.00 to \$280.00. Luckily, we find that treatment of the environment is more than efficient at preventing fleas and ticks. However, as BCR will continue to support animal care for their cats after transfer to TCWR, those cats will continue to receive oral ectoparasite prevention on top of routine environmental treatment.

While it is a relief not to start from scratch concerning the BCR cats' medical histories, as with any animal population, these cats have extensive medical backgrounds. I'm sure BCR had its share of surprises when first taking in many of their rescued residents. I had the pleasure of discussing a few of the more interesting cases with BCR's veterinarian, Dr. Justin Boorstein, when Emily and I visited the sanctuary this past August in anticipation of the transfer of animals. These animals' stories of survival and rescue are inspiring, and we cannot wait to share them with our TCWR audience.

As with any animal, veterinary care will always be needed in their life, no matter how well they were cared for. Unfortunately, illness always happens at some point, and supportive care in pain management and nutrition is needed with an aging population. We now have the responsibility to put the highest standard of care towards these animals along with all other TCWR residents, which we cannot achieve without help from our supporters.

Adding 32 new animals includes taking on 32 mouths to feed, bodies to care for and house, and brains to keep active and healthy. We ask for your continued support to do all of this and more for these animals, including the future animals we can now house and rescue in our new Freedom Field.



# Challenges of Lifelong Care

When we rescue animals from the exotic animal trade, their journey to heal from inbreeding and abuse has just begun. Our job is to alleviate their emotional trauma and pain from injuries, congenital defects, chronic illness, and arthritis from being declawed. Giving them the lifelong care they need is truly the meaning behind Rescue to Refuge.

While we perform annual wellness exams, most of the cats we rescue suffer ongoing health issues. Our animal care team mitigates these conditions daily to provide each animal a good quality of life. Tigers like Thurston, who was declawed and had his teeth filed down, are on our Pain Management Program. Other animals, such as tigress Luna, come with past injuries that were improperly treated. As a cub, Luna was forced to swim and interact with guests in a pay-to-play attraction at a roadside zoo. Sometime after her rescue, she began limping. The x-rays we took revealed metal rods in her leg, likely a treatment strategy for breaking it. Because she was still growing, one leg developed longer than the other, stressing the opposite hip and creating arthritis. Luna will receive pain management for the rest of her life, consisting of joint supplements and narcotics.



Luna

Luna came from a roadside zoo that forced her to swim and interact with guests. Due to her improperly treated injuries, we have put Luna on lifelong pain management for quality of life.



**Blackfire & Peyton**



**Rocklyn**

Rocklyn requires lifelong special care, including mineral oil and stool softeners for her narrow pelvis, a special diet, and joint supplements along with narcotics for pain management.

Over the years we have had other severe cases necessitating lifelong care and pain management. Upon arrival in Colorado for TCWR's 2016 rescue of 115 animals, we found four-month-old Blackfire, Rocklyn, and Peyton lying on the floor, unable to walk. Their hind legs had multiple fractures due to metabolic bone disease caused by a lack of calcium. We put the cubs on our Pain Management Program and a proper diet with the nutrients needed to heal their bones until they could stand on their legs and build muscle. Today, Blackfire, Rocklyn, and Peyton run, jump, and play in their habitat, but they still need special care. The trio have narrow pelvises, so they will require mineral oil, stool softeners, a special diet, joint supplements, and narcotics for the rest of their lives. **Through your continuous support, we can continue to provide all of our animals with a second chance at life, year after year.**

Thurston, who was declawed and had his teeth filed down, is also on the Pain Management Program.



**Thurston**



# From Loss to New Prides

Over the years, TCWR has welcomed many lions to our family after rescuing them from the exotic pet trade. Sometimes, they come in mating pairs from breeding facilities, but they often come by themselves despite being social creatures. It is extremely dangerous to introduce lions in captivity. In the wild, females are born within their pride, so they immediately build social bonds. On the other hand, males move from pride to pride, fighting other males, and even females, to take their place among the rest. At TCWR, we will leave mating pairs together after implementing birth control. The solitary lions can bond with their neighbors through the fence and communicate by caroling each day.



In 2016, TCWR rescued Daniel and Chloe during the Colorado Project, and the two were inseparable. Daniel was a beautiful male lion missing his right eye due to a previous injury. You can say he always had his left one on Chloe as the two were highly bonded and were rarely seen apart. During Daniel's decline, Chloe stayed by his side in their habitat, skipping meals as if she knew her partner's time had come. After we lost Daniel, Chloe took time to adjust, and her keepers were right by her side to help with the transition. More recently, Chloe began to show similar behaviors reflecting Daniel's decline. She refused to come into her night house and to eat. Our team rushed her to the Veterinary Hospital; however, everything turned out to be just fine. The Animal Care Team used the opportunity to move Chloe down to Rescue Ridge, right next to Simba. Simba is a seventeen-year-old male lion and one of thirteen animals TCWR rescued from Tiger King Park in 2021. Residing at Rescue Ridge, Simba is a highly social lion who loves interacting with his neighbors and keepers.





When Chloe began to skip meals, we performed an exam, and everything checked out fine. It turned out that moving her to Rescue Ridge next to lion Simba was exactly what she needed.

As Chloe explored her new habitat, Simba crept out of his den and stopped with a sudden look of awe. Recognizing he had a new lion neighbor, Simba sprinted out to greet Chloe. He continued to make lion noises, rub his face, and flirt with her. A bit taken back at her extroverted neighbor, Chloe responded with a polite stare and a flick of her tail. We try our best not to anthropomorphize; however, it appeared evident that the two were very happy with their new living arrangements. Now, you can find the two socializing at Rescue Ridge, which we encourage you to visit on one of our Caravan Tours!

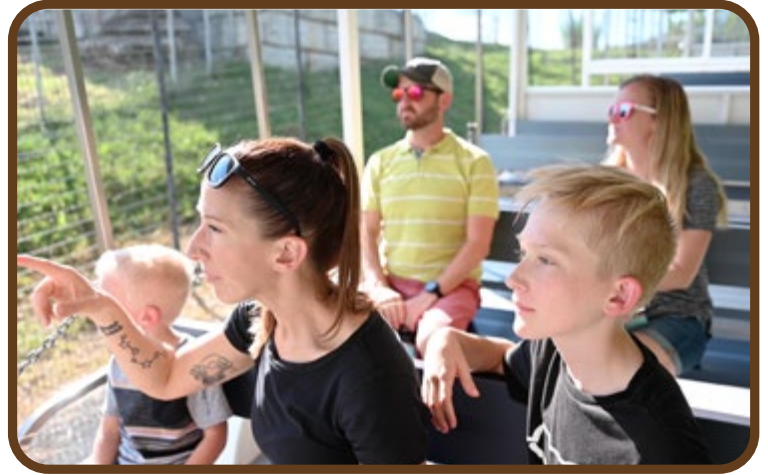
Simba is a highly social lion who loves interacting with his neighbors and keepers.



# Are you a Member of Turpentine Creek?

Imagine being able to bring your friends and family to the Refuge to introduce them to your favorite animal. Is it Spyke? Is it Shakira II? You can help your close circle learn about the cats' individual stories and connect with them too. With all the memberships on this page, you get free entry to TCWR for you and four guests all year long. These memberships also include discounts for lodging, the gift shop, specialty tours, and more. Become a Wild About Wildlife member today and be the voice of the animals, bringing your friends and family into our world together.

[TCWR.org/support/memberships/](http://TCWR.org/support/memberships/)



## 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. Members may bring up to four guests each time they visit, and receive valuable discounts on lodging, specialty tours and our gift shop inventory!

### All Members Receive:

Free year-round entry for cardholder & 4 guests, TCWR yearly calendar, an annual subscription to the Big Cat Chronicles, recognition in our annual report and website, and exclusive member e-mails & events.

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

- Friends of India membership card & decal
- 15% off of Gift Shop purchases
- 10% off lodging
- 10% off on specialty tours for cardholder and up to 4 guests
- Framed 5x7 photograph of India

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

- Bam Bam Benefactor's membership card & decal
- 15% off of Gift Shop purchases
- 20% off of lodging
- 20% off on specialty tours for cardholder and up to 4 guests
- Framed 5x7 photograph of Bam Bam
- Bam Bam Travel Mug

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

- Kenny Fellowship membership card & decal
- 20% off of Gift Shop purchases
- 30% off of lodging
- Private Tours with Senior Staff
- A Senior Staff Liaison
- Framed 8x10 photograph of Kenny
- The Kenny Fellowship Shirt
- Kenny Travel Mug

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

- Hilda Jackson Society membership card & decal
- 20% off of Gift Shop purchases
- 50% off of lodging
- Private Tours with Senior Staff
- Senior Staff Liaison
- Framed 8x10 photo of favorite animal
- The Hilda Jackson Society Shirt
- The Hilda Jackson Society Travel Mug

\*To be part of a membership level you must sign up for that level, donate the amount required to be part of that specific 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



Go Paperless: You can opt to receive this newsletter by email. Enter your address here: \_\_\_\_\_@\_\_\_\_\_

Choose Your 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: \_\_\_\_\_

\$150 Pride Membership - You and 3 guests get a full year of visits to the Refuge. **BEST ADMISSION VALUE!**

\$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

Adopt or Sponsor an Animal Today!

Printed Animal Adoption:

- \$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.

- \$1,000/yr - Small Cat
  - \$2,200/yr - Cougar/Leopard/Jaguar
  - \$2,500/yr - Lion/Tiger/Bear/Hyena
- Sponsorship includes Pride 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!

# You Can Fund a Brighter Future for Wild Cats with Naming Rights

One of our supporters from New Mexico recently funded ¼ of a small cat habitat in Freedom Field for \$12,500. Ron has been glad to be connected with TCWR since 2015 and hopes to for many more years. He had been mulling over how to support our Freedom Field expansion. Several factors motivated Ron's decision to make his largest single donation ever: the funds became available, his other interests were on hold for the time being due to life circumstances, and he recognized that the project was a new ground-level endeavor for TCWR. Plus, his financial advisor always encourages him to spend more on things he likes!

Naming plaques inspire others to give to a project. A family plaque can instill advocacy for wild cats in children and grandchildren. The funds help cover construction costs and help us maintain the habitats and buildings and replace equipment. In Ron's case, he opted for a personal message on the plaque, "Amigo de Los Gatos." In addition, he feels the naming plaques give donors a personal connection with the animals they are supporting, a feeling of overall stewardship.

Ron believes that TCWR is a well-managed organization working at the forefront of a cause we all have hope and passion for: forging a brighter future for wild felines. "If we all stay the course...I think TCWR and other accredited sanctuaries can make a difference. I'll do my best to continue to support as much as I can!"

TCWR is in Ron's estate plans, which is another way to ensure his legacy as "Amigo de Los Gatos" will continue helping wild cats for years to come!

Fergie



## Your TCWR Legacy: A Brighter Future for Wild Cats

**Calls for future large-scale rescues are becoming more likely as officials continue to enforce the laws protecting big cats. By remembering Turpentine Creek in your legacy, you'll allow animals suffering in desperate situations to live out their lives in freedom!**

**Your Legacy will help us continue to provide the animals we rescue with the best lifelong care possible in captivity! By informing us of your intent to include TCWR in your legacy, your name(s) will be included on a plaque on the TCWR Legacy Wall in our new education center and museum.**

**To learn more about joining our Legacy Society, visit: [TCWR.org/legacy-giving/](https://TCWR.org/legacy-giving/)**

Opie



LEGACY GIVING



# Memorial Sponsorship Opportunities

TCWR offers Memorial Opportunities, onsite at the Refuge, to ensure that your continuous support will forever remain part of our mission.



Memorial Options



**Memorial Stone**  
\$200

River Rock Custom Engraved Stones are made from all-natural stone. Your message is engraved into the rock and then colored. The TCWR Team will work with you to determine placement on the Refuge property for your loved one's memorial.



**Memorial Rock Urn**  
\$1,200

Memorial Rock/Stone/Urn with a sealable internal cavity for the safe-keeping of a loved one's ashes. The TCWR Team will work with you to determine placement on the Refuge property for your loved one's memorial. We have select locations available.



**Memorial Park Bench**  
\$1,680

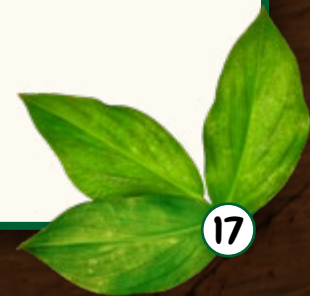
UV Coated benches will last forever. Thermoplastic coating & comfortable 12" wide seat. We can offer a limited number of memorial park benches around the TCWR property.

**Memorial Picnic Table**  
\$2,450

Composite material lasts forever. We can offer a limited number of this memorial option around the TCWR lodging area.



\*\*\*Please allow 6-8 weeks for installation.



# Giving Tuesday! November 28, 2023

How does a private behind-the-scenes tour of the Refuge sound? What about a weekend getaway in our Safari Lodging? Or a paw painting print from one of the rescued cats? This year, for Giving Tuesday, we need to raise \$100,000 to fund freedom! With our new 44 habitats, we need your help to provide our expanded population with long-term care at the Refuge. A generous donor will be matching up to \$48,000 for us! Because our admissions and lodging cover our operating expenses, 100% of your donation goes to caring for the cats, and you are automatically entered to win prizes like the ones above!



## The TCWR Animals Need Your Voice!

Our team is humbly grateful for your continued passion for the animals we rescue and your belief in our work. By reaching out to just one of your peers, you can help us make this last quarter the one that doubles our donor base!

Please make it your goal between now and December to:

- **Tell at least one of your peers about our mission.**
- **Explain to them why you feel it is essential to support our organization.**
- **Then, ask them if they would make even a modest tax-deductible donation before December 31!**

They will then start receiving our Big Cat Chronicles to learn more about the exciting things happening at TCWR and become acquainted with the animals you help give second chances at life.

**With your help, we can continue to give wild cats a brighter future.**



**Follow us on social media:**



# The Ivy League of Animal Care

Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge's internship program began almost 30 years ago and has grown into the most reputable program in the world. TCWR interns come from around the world to learn the highest standards of care for exotic animals in our post-graduate boot camp.

During their time here, they learn about animal husbandry, including safety, diets, education, behavior, enrichment, veterinary medicine, enclosure design, and more. The program teaches them how to work in different stressful environments, regardless of the weather conditions. Since they also live together on the property, it challenges them to develop their skills in teamwork, building relationships, and efficiency. After the internship, our alums move on to work for the best accredited animal institutions in the country, or they return to their studies to become veterinarians.

The program's most significant offering is the community and network formed among our alumni. The relationships built during their time at TCWR last a lifetime. For example, several TCWR alums and former staff returned to the Refuge for their annual Fantasy Football Draft last August. Typically a remote event, they returned "home" to reunite and see all we had accomplished in their absence. Some even brought their children, the next generation of animal advocates.



*TCWR Alumni and former Animal Care Staff showed a sense of community in August, returning to the Refuge to host their fantasy football draft together.*

## Please Welcome Your Fall Interns!



### THIRD ROW

<b>Nathan McCaslin</b> U. of Central Missouri BS Biology	<b>Mia White</b> California Polytechnic State U. BS Animal Science	<b>Kyle Burks</b> University of Arkansas BS Biology	<b>Jane Rendleman</b> Beloit College BA Biology	<b>Noah Urbanek</b> PennWest University BS Environmental Studies
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### SECOND ROW

<b>Terri Johnson</b> University of Arkansas BS Agriculture, Food & Life Science	<b>Andria Dry</b> Fort Hayes State University BS Agriculture	<b>Javier Guevara</b> California Polytechnic State U. BS Animal Science	<b>Aspen Martinez</b> Friends University BS Zoo Science	<b>Camryn Berg</b> Luther College BA Biology & Theater
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### FIRST ROW

<b>Madelyn Beehler</b> Brigham Young U. BS Life Science/Zoology	<b>Vanessa Flores Sanchez</b> Fort Hayes State BS Biology	<b>Madison Gomez</b> Texas A&M University BS Biomedical/Pre-Vet	<b>Odette Rivera</b> Christian Brothers U. BS Biology	<b>Jo Brown</b> Oklahoma State U. BS Zoology	<b>Allie Larkin</b> Clemson U. BS Biology	<b>Sharon Schottler</b> Universidade Estácio de Sá Degree in Veterinary Medicine
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# Rescue, Transition Periods, and Transformation

When we rescue an animal, our experience is that we are taking them from a bad situation and replacing it with a sanctuary. But from the cat's perspective, we have just uplifted them from all they have known and placed them in a new environment. For territorial species like felines, this adjustment can be difficult, especially since they have all come from traumatic experiences before their rescue.



Shakira II

Bagheera



All rescued animals require some transition period to acclimate to their new life at the Refuge. In the case of Shakira II, we altered our entire cleaning and lawn care schedule to help ease her transition as she learned to trust in people again slowly. By taking these extreme measures, TCWR helps rescued animals transform and overcome their previous traumatic experiences. Bagheera, the black jaguar, had lived in a small enclosure bullied by two lions. At the Refuge, we facilitated his transformation by giving him his own habitat. The black cat had agency over his space for the first time and did not have to share the toys he now obsesses over. Even the most aggressive cats we rescue experience a transformation through TCWR's transition process. It just takes time for the abused animals to learn that they can trust people and be safe.

We look forward to similar transformations as we welcome our new Guatemalan tigers from Big Cat Rescue to Freedom Field. They will need time to claim their new homes and familiarize themselves with life at the Refuge. We expect they will let go of this history of severe physical abuse and learn to trust the Animal Care Team at Turpentine Creek over time.



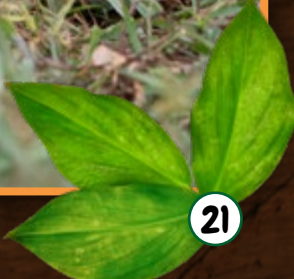
Simba



Max



Kimba



Recurring donors are the foundation of the Refuge, thank you!

# Giving Tuesday Fireside Chat

Join us online!

Tuesday Nov. 28th at 7PM CST

Featuring our Documentary Finding Freedom - Part 1  
and the premiere of Finding Freedom - Part 2.  
Live Q&A to follow.

## Funding Freedom for the Holidays!

*By purchasing your holiday gifts through the Refuge, you are directly helping to Fund Freedom for all the animals at Turpentine Creek. Check out our online gift shop today, and check back for frequent product updates and deals during the holiday season!*

Ceramic  
Camp-Style Mug



Stained Glass  
Tiger  
Ornament



Fred the Tiger Sherpa  
Lined Throw



Amazing Jungle Run Game



# Exotic Pet Statistics

The exotic pet trade has become increasingly more common in recent years, estimated to be worth \$30.6 - \$42.8 billion annually. Due to demand, these exotic animals are taken from their respective ecosystems and exported to wealthier nations - like Europe and the US. Even though international regulation exists, the lack of coordination between the lower levels of governance has allowed this industry to soar in popularity. Commonly, regulation of exotic animals focuses more on human safety, and there is little discussion concerning the animal's health or how they're kept.



TCWR rescued Dillian in 2006 from a private owner who had purchased him from a breeder. The malnourished one-year-old bobcat had accidentally attacked the owner's five-year-old son, luckily inflicting only minor injuries. Shaken, the family realized the capability of this small predator and felt it was in Dillian's best interest to be rehomed to a reputable sanctuary. Sadly, this isn't the first time, nor will it be the last time we hear this type of story.

Exotic animals have become desired commodities and are displayed vastly throughout physical markets. Since 2012, social media platforms have radically changed how individuals perceive exotics and are almost untraceable, providing anonymity for both sellers and buyers. However, in response to this growing concern, organizations like TRAFFIC and the WWF have formed global coalitions to end wildlife trafficking - uniting companies like Google, eBay, Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok to be part of the solution.



15%

15% of exotic pet owners became interested due to social media



11x

The USA has a wildlife trade participation rate 11x higher than other countries



17

17 million exotic pets are owned across 9 million households in the USA

## Exotic Animal Laws by State



■ Comprehensive Ban     ■ Special Licenses  
■ Partial Exotic Pet Ban     ■ No Ban for Exotic Pets

## ▶ Number of Exotic Pets Captured (Now Invasive)

11,000

Exotic pet pythons caught in the Florida Everglades

24,699

Lionfish caught across the Atlantic coastline

14,536

Exotic pet iguanas caught in one year



## ▶ A first for the books:

- 38% of exotic pet owners do not consider any of their pets to be "exotic"
- 9% of exotic pet owners own a non-domesticated cat
- 15% of exotic pet owners also claim to be pet breeders
- 42% of exotic pet owners purchased their pet from a pet store, followed by 22% who acquired the pet from a friend or neighbor
- 10 small exotic cats that can legally be owned as pets in the United States: servals, bobcats, caracals, lynxes, ocelots, fishing cats, Geoffroy's cats, jungle cats, Asian leopard cats, domestic cat hybrids

# Your End-of-Year Giving is Urgently Needed

Rescue is only a tiny fraction of what TCWR does to achieve its mission. Coming from the exotic pet trade, most of these animals we rescue suffer from trauma, birth defects, illness, and abnormalities that result from a lifetime of inbreeding and abuse. Our efforts center on the daily care necessary to give these animals a second chance at life.

*This winter, the TCWR animals need your help desperately. As we struggle through dire economic times, only you can ensure they will continue to get the care they deserve.*

## Please support them through our end-of-year giving tiers Rescue, Care, and Protect.

When you give through this program, you are automatically entered for a chance to win under each fundraiser category. Winners will be selected in a random drawing the first week of January. An additional entry is made each time you give!

[TurpentineCreek.org/EOYgiving](https://TurpentineCreek.org/EOYgiving)



### Rescue

Goal: \$100,000

Help us cover transportation costs, unforeseen provisions, and critical equipment for emergency care of rescued animals. This is especially needed for Witness Protection animals we cannot fundraise for.

**Giving Range: \$100-\$1500**

**Prizes: 1-night stay**



### Care

Goal: \$300,000

Initial exams, crucial surgeries, treatment for medical conditions including deworming, spaying or neutering. Also includes enrichment, food, flea and tick prevention, equipment maintenance, and more.

**Giving Range: \$1500-\$5000**

**Prizes: 1-night stay + private tour**



### Protect

Goal: \$500,000

Annual wellness exams, including x-rays, dental checkups and cleanings, vaccines, medications, supplements and surgeries. Protect also includes habitat maintenance, electricity for bear habitat fencing, den heating, along with staff time.

**Giving Range: \$5000+**

**Prizes: 1-night stay  
+ private tour + dinner with staff**

Your support helps big cats like Chief find  
their forever home in the Ozarks!



# Surviving Change and Building Better Relationships

While the world is ever-changing, mission-based nonprofit organizations must be creative and think proactively. TCWR fully embraces this forward-thinking through our Capital Campaign and how we use new technologies to build better relationships with our donors and provide value for your generous support. Throughout the last year, we have spent countless hours behind the scenes learning about these new technologies, creating business partnerships, and making decisions with the sole purpose of giving back to our supporters.

You have seen some of these through the launch of our new website, the Roar Box Subscription program, the Fireside Chats, and more. Our goal is to use technology to connect the Refuge and the animals we rescue with our supporters around the world. In 2024, we will be rolling out more technologies to minimize operational costs, increase our donation revenue, and, most importantly, create more meaningful connections with all of you - our supporters.



*We look forward to these changes and the opportunity to bring everyone around the world into our lives here at the Refuge.*

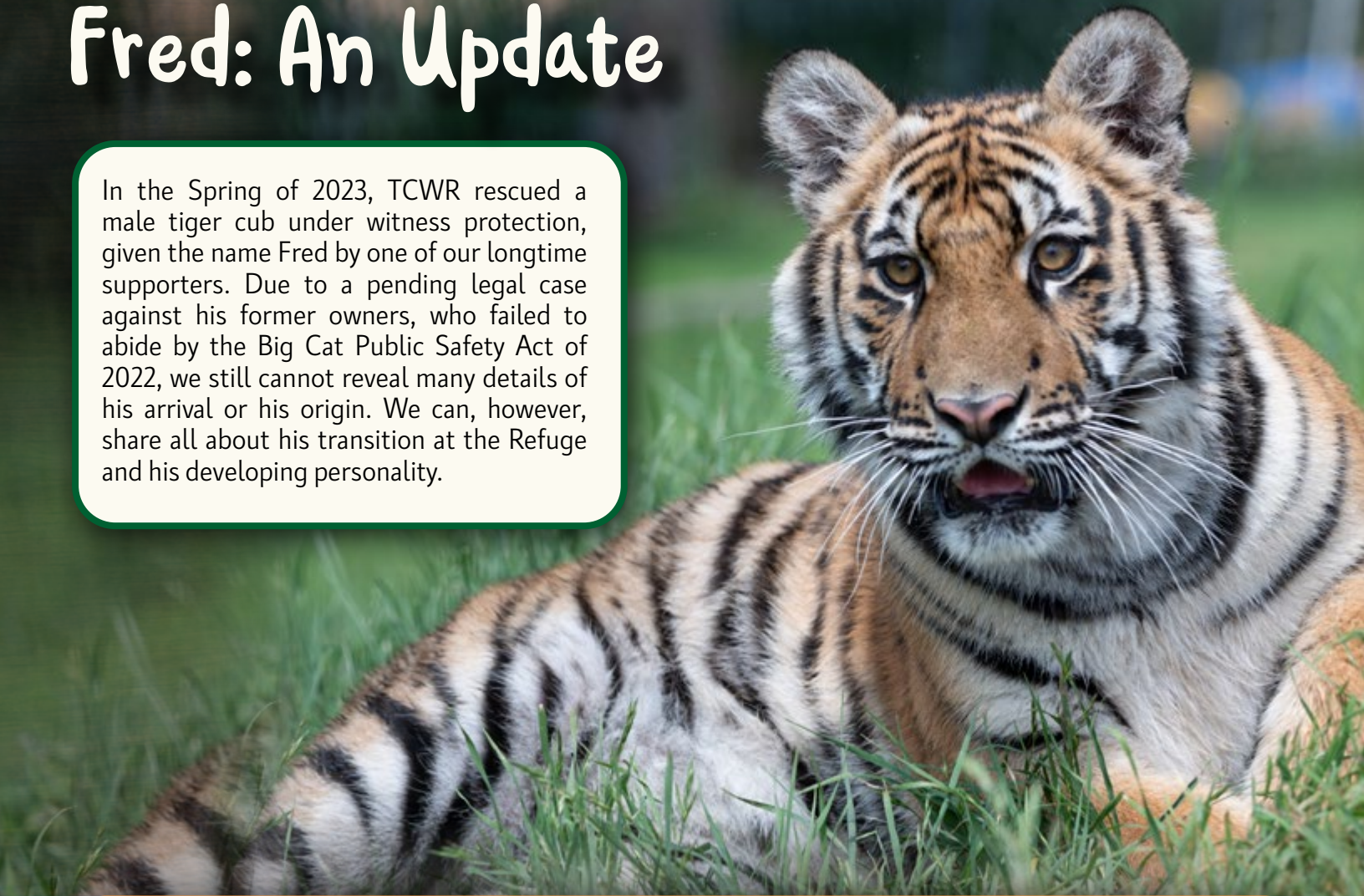


**Help us, help them!**  
**Follow us on your favorite**  
**social media.**



# Fred: An Update

In the Spring of 2023, TCWR rescued a male tiger cub under witness protection, given the name Fred by one of our longtime supporters. Due to a pending legal case against his former owners, who failed to abide by the Big Cat Public Safety Act of 2022, we still cannot reveal many details of his arrival or his origin. We can, however, share all about his transition at the Refuge and his developing personality.





Fred was amazed by how much space and freedom we gave him in his new habitat, located on our tour loop with the other adult cats. He loves playing with his toys! The cub became obsessed with his in-ground pool throughout the summer, which a donor's generosity made possible in this habitat.

Slowly, Fred is behaving more and more like a tiger, eagerly stalking and running any target he sees. He loves showing off in front of his larger neighbors, charging across his habitat, sometimes through his pool, and fearlessly interacting with them through the fence. Occasionally, his neighbors will join in, playing back by running along the fence line.

Fred's transition to sanctuary life is going as perfectly as can be. Animals rescued under witness protection like Fred can financially strain the Refuge because we cannot tell their story. But with your continued support and contribution to our new Witness Protection Program, we have been able to help Fred find his tiger instincts and live a sanctuary life. Fred is now available for adoption on our online store!

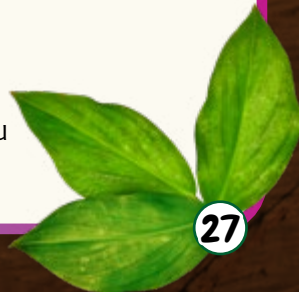


## Stay With Us This Winter



Turpentine Creek, nestled in the Ozark Mountains, is not just a sanctuary for animals but a sanctuary for people. Join us this Holiday Season and witness spectacular mountain views, as you relax surrounded by nature and observe our rescued animals joyfully playing in their habitats, enjoying the cooler temperatures.

Our various lodging accommodations offer options for the whole family or a party of two adults. With add-on packages, you can create your perfect winter getaway to recharge in nature.





Turpentine Creek Foundation, Inc.  
239 Turpentine Creek Lane  
Eureka Springs, AR 72632  
479-253-5841

NON PROFIT  
US POSTAGE PAID  
MODERN LITHO PRINT

Please donate by  
December 31<sup>st</sup>!



Turpentine Creek Wildlife Refuge  
239 Turpentine Creek Lane  
Eureka Springs, Arkansas 72632  
Federal Tax/EIN: 71-0721742

**Naula**