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Safe Haven

Screech

Special points of interest:

- Safe Haven was in the news on October 26th to discuss the recent events in Ohio.
- Tecumseh was on the cover of the *Greenville Journal* on October 28th.
- We are looking for a new logo design. Contact us if you or someone you know is an artist willing to help.
- Come see us and many animal organizations at **Petco** by Cherrydale on Dec 3rd.
- Safe Haven still needs volunteers as well as chain link fencing to continue work on our cat compound.
- The new area for the cats has been named The Lofink Feline Forest Compound in recognition of the Lofink family's hard work and dedication to Safe Haven.
- Now that our Kaytee Bird food supply has run out we could use donations of parrot seed mix.

We provide educational programs for schools, scout troops, birthday parties and many other events. If you are having an event or know a teacher, troop leader or anyone else that might be interested please contact us for more information.

Safe Haven & Educational Adventures, Inc.

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Large Carnivores as Pets? by Kim Chiswell

I had another whole article started but after the recent events in Ohio, I decided it was worth rewriting. On Wednesday, October 26th I received a call at 7:00 am from one of the zookeepers at Greenville Zoo. She said I needed to turn on the news because she was sure that I was going to be getting calls about what had happened. As you may know by now, a man in Ohio was found dead and all of his animals, many of them dangerous carnivores, had been set loose. The authorities had no choice but to kill most of them for human safety. My friend was right; a couple hours later I received a call from channel 7 asking me if they could come out to talk to us. After all, we are the antithesis of what was going on in Ohio. Large dangerous carnivores do not belong as pets. Most of the people that do get exotic animals as pets get them when they are young and small and do not fully understand what is needed to properly contain and care for the animal as adults. This isn't just for large cats. We have a number of snakes here for that very reason and every time you hear on the news that a snake has gotten out, ask yourself how it was in a position to get to out in the first place.

The strength and abilities of a dangerous carnivore are not lost on us here at Safe Haven. Nigel and I have worked with dangerous animals throughout our careers and know how to properly prepare for such an animal. A sanctuary in West Virginia had to down size due to loss of funding and was finding new homes for their cougars. Not only were we offered a cougar but an enclosure to go with it. It took a year in planning and a few trips to West Virginia just to pick up fencing. The enclosure is industrial grade chain link with a top on it. But that's not all that's involved. There has to be no movement in the fencing and that includes being buried and/or staked down at the bottom. All of this has to be triple

checked before the cat can be introduced. Thanks to many volunteers, especially Bob and Bo Lofink, many hours were put into the new home.



Above: Tecumseh, a cougar from Cooper's Rock Mountain Lion Sanctuary.

In August of 2011, Tecumseh, a cougar travelling from West Virginia was introduced to his new home here at Safe Haven. Tecumseh was born specifically to be sold into the pet trade to anyone that wanted the novelty of an exotic cat. To do this he was taken from his mother within 24 hours of birth and hand raised for only a few weeks before he was to be taken to auction. At only a couple weeks old he would be an adorable (and still very small) kitten so no one would truly see how fast they grow until it's too late. Some volunteers learned of this kitten and raised enough money to keep him from going to the auction. It was then discovered that he was being fed chicken flavored baby food. Those volunteers donated him to Cooper's Rock Mountain Lion Sanctuary. They had an extremely difficult time with him to get his nutrition back to where it should be. That was back in 1997; now it's he's a very healthy 14 year old boy.

Cougars are also known as mountain lions, pumas, panthers and catamounts. They are found in the wild here in the United States, mostly out west with (very

Who's New

Tecumseh is not the only large cat here at Safe Haven. Back in the spring Dakota, a 1 year old male Bobcat joined us. Although Bobcat's are not nearly as large as cougars they are still a dangerous cat to have around due to sharp teeth, large claws and an unpredictable personality. Dakota is patiently waiting his new enclosure to be built beside Tecumseh's.

We have also received 2 new Double Yellow Amazon Parrots. They came from different households but are both here for similar reasons. Sam's owners passed away and Brandi's owners moved to an assisted living facility. In both cases the children of the owners did not want the bird for themselves. Sam is our oldest bird and is nearly 60 years old. All

of our other birds are under 30 years.

Also added to the birds is Mozart a Blue and Gold Macaw that is only 3 years old but learning quickly. His favorite thing to say is "peek-a-boo". After several days of bad storms a woman found an African Gray Parrot had landed on her back deck. None of her neighbors was missing (or even had) a bird so "Stormy" (as we've come to call him) now lives with us.

Among the reptiles, we've acquired a Burmese Python, 2 Ball Pythons and a Copperhead that had been confiscated or turned into a local county animal control office. We also had an extremely large Albino Burmese Python donated. She is over 13 feet long and weighs over 100 lbs.

In the spring we noticed that one of our Common Marmosets was pregnant. Apparently her birth control implants did not last as long as they did in the other females. In July, 2 babies were born to Valentino and Audrie. Valentino was an excellent father, despite having been hand-reared himself. In Common Marmoset families it is the father that carries the young around all day. The babies only go to their mother to eat.



Above: Dakota, a Bobcat

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www.facebook.com/saf havenanimals

Thank you to everyone that volunteered and participated in our Halloween Adventure Day.

Tecumseh cont'd

few left in Florida (aka the Florida Panther). They can live to be about 20 years old in captivity. They can jump straight up about 18 feet and land on something as small as a telephone pole. Even at 250 lbs their run is silent through the trees. Cougars are also the largest cat that can purr.



Above: Tecumseh, a cougar.

We have put a great deal of time and resources into one single carnivore. I can't imagine how one person could possibly deal with so many as there were in Ohio. While some animals certainly don't belong in the private home, the message is still the same: know what you are getting into. Too often pets are purchased on impulse when even something as small as a sugarglider needs careful thought and proper knowledge before the animals is even purchased. For as beautiful as Tecumseh is, he is equally as dangerous. To us he represents all the animals here at Safe Haven. He is the reason we are here.

Safe Haven will be having a volunteer meeting for all past, current and future volunteers. If you or anyone you know is interested in volunteering please let us know. Volunteers are needed for education, computer work, and construction as well as animal care. (Meeting date has not been set).

Trivia Questions

What is the most abundant wildcat in the United States?

Answer will be given in the next newsletter.

Answers from previous question:

An Old World Monkey is found in Africa and Asia. A New World Monkey is found in South and Central America. There are also differences in nostrils, dentition and other physical characteristics but the most notable is that some of New World Monkeys have a prehensile tail; none of the Old World Monkeys have this.

Thank you!

We would like to thank our families, friends and volunteers for all of your hard work and support. Without you, Safe Haven would not be possible.

Honorable mentions:

Bob and Bo Lofink

Chris Prindle

Solomon Wise

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