

# CAT NEWS

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Edited by Peter Jackson

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  SPECIES SURVIVAL COMMISSION  
**CAT SPECIALIST GROUP**  
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# Snow Leopards Outwit Hunters

Trophy hunters failed to shoot any of the five designated livestock-raiding snow leopards in Mongolia last year, according to Bertrand des Clers of the International Council for Game Conservation and Wildlife.

Under the programme begun in 1986 a quota of five snow leopards, which had to be confirmed stock raiders, was made available to hunters. The fee payable for each snow leopard killed was fixed at US\$11,200, or US\$7,840 if the animals was

wounded. The proceeds had to be channelled to livestock owners.

The International Herald Tribune reported on 27 January that snow leopard hunting was no longer permitted, but this could not be confirmed at the time of going to press.

According to des Clers there are a minimum 2,000 snow leopards in Mongolia, but David Mallon, who has carried out surveys, puts the figure at under 1,000.

## Snow Leopard Studbook

There were 378 (194.184) snow leopards in captivity at the end of 1984, according to the latest studbook produced by Leif Blomqvist of Helsinki Zoo.

The total includes snow leopards in Chinese zoos for the first time.

During 1985 35 litters were born – 22 in North America; seven in Europe; four in the USSR; one in Australia; and one in China. Of the 78 cubs (36.33.9) mortality was 48.7%. Blomqvist speculates that the high cub mortality might be due to the North American Species Survival Programme (SSP), which has restricted the number of breeding animals in order

to prevent an explosion of captive stock. Under-represented lines have been selected by using animals with poor breeding results instead of "safe" breeders. Citing a breeding success of 78% in North America in 1983 compared with 41% in 1985, Blomqvist expresses the opinion that the North American programme is able to experiment with its breeding potential. Some lines are over-represented in the stock and their future breeding should be diminished in order to make room for other under-represented and often poorer breeders to reproduce.

(*International Pedigree Book of Snow Leopards, Vol. 5, Helsinki Zoo 1988*)

## Snow Leopard Conference in Alma Ata

An international conference on snow leopards will be held in Alma Ata, capital of the Kazakh Republic of the USSR, from 2-7 October 1989. The conference, sponsored by the Alma Ata Zoological Garden, will focus primarily on captive management of snow leopards. Those interested in attending should contact The Director, Alma-Atinsky Zoo Park, Alma Ata 7,

Klevernaya ul. 166, Kazakh SSR, 480007 USSR, or Dr Leif Blomqvist, Helsinki Zoo, 00570 Helsinki 57, Finland.

If the conference takes place, it is hoped to have an associated meeting of the Cat Specialist Group, especially to meet our Soviet colleagues, possibly in Moscow, before or after the Alma Ata conference.

## Leopards in Turkey

Leopards have been sighted in recent years in southwestern Turkey, according to a report from a professional guide.

The leopards would be the Anatolian subspecies *Panthera pardus tulliana*, which is critically endangered.

The guide, Vedat Palendoken, states that people had seen leopards on the Dilek peninsula, which points to the Greek island of Samos. South of the Dilek hunters reported seeing two or three leopards around Mugla and north of Marmaris. Most leopards are found near Hakkari, near the border with Iraq,

where 8-10 are seen every year. One hunter said he had seen a black leopard. Palendoken says that he cannot vouch for the reports but they appeared to be serious.

The report was made available to the Cat Group by Jeffrey R. Short, Jr, who knows Turkey well. He says that Palendoken visits almost all parts of Turkey, except for Hakkari, which is also known as Kurdistan and has been closed to visitors for many years.

## Leopard Prey in Panda Areas

Leopards in the Wolong Panda Reserve in China's Sichuan Province do not prey much on the giant panda, and red panda appears to be only a minor component of leopard diet, according to Donald G. Reid of the Department of Biological Sciences, University of Calgary, Canada, and Wang Wei of the Chinese Ministry of Forestry.

They report that although Schaller *et al.* (1985) found that leopards preyed on young age-classes of giant panda *Ailuropoda melanoleuca* in Wolong, judging by analysis of droppings, no traces of giant panda were found in droppings

from 1985-87. The red panda *Ailurus fulgens* was a minor component during this period.

Tufted deer *Elaphodus cephalophus*, which were the most frequently identified prey in 1981-1983, was replaced by bamboo rat *Rhizomys sinense* as the most frequent prey – it had not been recorded in 1981-1983. The authors suggest that the shift to bamboo rat might reflect diminishing availability of the deer, perhaps because of poaching. However, the relative proportions of the two species did not change markedly from 1985 through 1987. At least one leopard appeared to take both