

Sea Shepherd Conservation Society - Defending Oceans and the Wild Lives that Depend on Them

In a recent presentation, **Peter Hammarstedt of the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society** said he would follow **Captain Paul Watson** to the ends of the Earth - forever.

It is not surprising that Capt. Watson inspires this kind of loyalty as he is the founder of Sea Shepherd Conservation Society and one of the founders of Greenpeace. He has done more to save the wild beings of the sea than any other single person alive today. Perhaps only the late Jacques Cousteau did as much to bring to international attention the plight of all endangered ocean life.

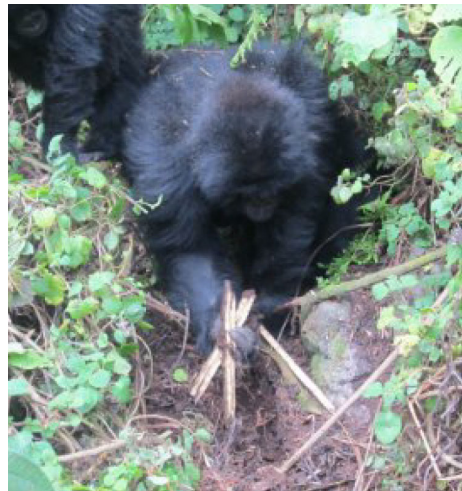
Among their often dangerous activities, Sea Shepherd's dedicated ocean-going crews have worked to defend whales from the mass slaughter inflicted upon them by Japan, Norway, and Denmark, sometimes even within waters designated as "sanctuaries" for wildlife; they have fought against the inordinate cruelty inflicted upon those gentle, super-sentient beings, dolphins, by the Japanese fishermen when they trap them en masse and hack them to pieces (as depicted so shockingly in the Oscar-winning film,

Sea Shepherd

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THE DIAN FOSSEY GORILLA FUND OBSERVES MOUNTAIN GORILLA YOUNGSTERS DISMANTLE TRAPS

REPORTED BY E.M. FAY



Baby gorilla breaking up snare trap. Photo by Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund

As one of our nearest animal cousins, gorillas have long fascinated humans. We are both members of the hominidae family; they are at once like us and unlike us. Certainly, they can grow larger than most humans, and yet they seem to live simpler lives than we do, with all our technology and self-perceived sophistication. But whatever the outward differences, there are myriad similarities between the gorilla and homo sapiens, perhaps more than we realize.

We humans often credit our species with being the only animal who thinks ahead, who makes complex plans, who analyzes our condition; i.e., we generally assume ourselves to have cognitive skill beyond that of other living beings. However, numerous scientific studies, as well as simple observation, have demonstrated that animals have a capacity for thought with which they are not always

credited. From fish to primates, observed behaviors reveal aptitudes not previously understood, except by scientists and others in intimate contact with the subjects.

In the small central African nation of Rwanda, the indigenous Mountain Gorilla has been under threat ever since humans discovered their existence. Although early Man may be forgiven for viewing the obviously powerful gorillas as a danger to himself, and therefore having sought ways to eliminate them, modern humans do not have that excuse. The work of such visionaries as Dian Fossey and her colleagues has educated us about the essential gentleness and intelligence of the predominantly herbivorous gorilla.

Although the consensus of public opinion has largely turned against the hunting of gorillas merely for "sport" or "trophies," the killing and/or capture of gorillas, both adults and children, has tragically continued in the form of illegal poaching. Poaching is one of the chief threats to the Mountain Gorillas' and indeed, all gorillas' survival, but so, too, is the conversion of natural land to agricultural use, with subsequent loss of gorilla habitat and food supply, as well as mining activities, which despoil the land and water resources, and disease, the latter of which can be caused by increased contact with humans.

Fortunately, the Rwandan government has recognized the critical nature of the situation and does provide consid-

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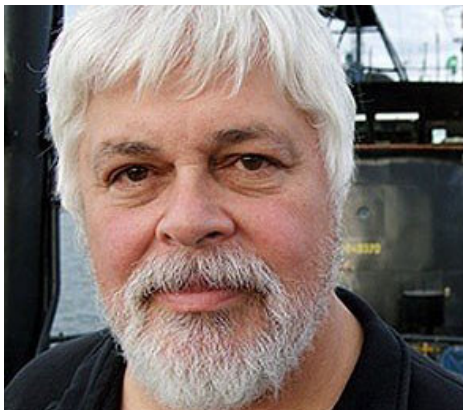
"The Cove"); and they have tried to stop the illegal shark-finning operations and extreme exploitation of sea turtles by Costa Rica.

Their gallant efforts are not appreciated by the governments of the countries that recklessly plunder the seas for commercial gain. Despite the certain knowledge that they are killing off species at an unsustainable rate, Japanese fishing fleets and fleets of other countries continue their blood-thirsty practices. When Sea Shepherd sends their own ships out to confront the despoilers of the oceans, they are met with violence and questionable legal prosecution.

In Frankfurt on May 13th of this year, Captain Watson was arrested, on a decade-old warrant issued by Costa Rica in retaliation for trying to stop shark-finning poachers at the request of the Guatemalan government. He was detained in Germany for 70 days, but fortunately, the attempt to extradite him to Costa Rica was thwarted when he forfeited bail. As of early August he was in an undisclosed location. Interpol has issued a "red alert" to its member nations with regard to the Costa Rican warrant. (A red alert is not itself an arrest warrant, and member nations are not compelled to abide by it.)

The original charge was "violation of ship traffic," now changed to the equally spurious "causing a danger of drowning or of an air disaster." This, because of the use of a water cannon, which did not threaten the lives of anyone, and was only employed by Captain Watson to dissuade the shark poachers.

Costa Rica was likely colluding with fellow rogue nation, Japan, in this bogus case against the leader of Sea Shepherd. As **Susan Hartland**, Administrative Director of SSCS, said, "Costa Rica has been acting as a puppet for Japan throughout this case and we expect that to continue. Japan is driving this effort in retaliation for our successful campaigns to stop them from whaling in the Southern Ocean Whale Sanctuary. **We've cost them millions of dollars and exposed**



Captain Paul Watson

their shame to the world because of their refusal to stop the slaughter of whales in an established sanctuary under the lie and loophole of 'research.'"

Japan tried to get Interpol to issue a red notice against Watson on their behalf, as well, but "Interpol recognized their attempts as politically motivated, so they were forced to settle for a 'blue' notice instead," Hartland said. "Japan tried to extradite him, they have brought suit against us in the US, they have harassed and arrested Sea Shepherd crew members, and charged them with benign or bogus offenses when they've had the chance."

Hartland concluded that none of this harassment will stop Sea Shepherd from returning to Antarctica with their ships and dauntless crews "of committed and passionate volunteers to shut down the Japanese whaling fleet."

Sea Shepherd's noble mission is to protect, conserve, and defend the oceans and the wild beings that live in and around them. They operate under the United Nations World Charter for Nature, and act legally against illegal whaling operations and other gruesome crimes against nature. Unfortunately, the importance of conservation means nothing to giant commercial fishing and whaling operations as they mercilessly loot the oceans of their living treasures and trash their wild habitat. Despite all that has happened to stop his efforts, Capt. Watson said on his website: "I am most honored to have served this cause to protect our oceans, for the one most basic of truths is this: If the oceans die, we die! It is as simple as that and, thus, to

me, there is no cause more important."

Knowing full well that his name on the Interpol "blue list" was a product of Japan's political machinations, Captain Watson issued this pithy statement:

"Give me my name on a blue list, the red list, the black list, or the death list, for it is preferable to the I-don't-give-a-crap list."

We urge our readers not be on the last list. Please help by visiting:

<http://www.seashepherd.org/> and make a donation today!

What you can do

Please write to the embassies of any nation that still hunts whales and dolphins, or exploits any wildlife. Tell them that you will not buy any of their exported products or visit their country as tourists unless they ban such barbaric practices.

Embassy of Japan:

2520 Massachusetts Avenue
Northwest Washington, DC 20008
(202) 238-6700

Embassy of Costa Rica

Embassy of Costa Rica in United States
2114 S Street, NW
Washington, DC 20008
(202) 234-2945 and (202) 234-2946

Embassy of Norway

2720 34th Street Northwest
Washington, DC 20008
(202) 333-6000

Embassy of Denmark

3200 Whitehaven Street
Northwest Washington, DC 20008
(202) 234-4300

On the home front, the **League of Humane Voters** works to get legislation passed to protect wildlife.

Please consider joining an existing LOHV chapter in your area, or starting a new one. Go to **www.lohv.org** or write to: LOHV, Box 562, New Paltz, NY 12561

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erable help to gorilla conservation efforts. As Erika Archibald, Ph.D., the Communications Director of the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund told us, "They have their own tracker teams, anti-poaching teams, veterinarians, and also run the whole national park and gorilla tourism. They do a lot of events and education as well, to protect the gorillas. They are clear that the gorillas are one of their main national treasures."

Such an understanding of the gorillas' value – not only as a tourism resource, but as individual beings with their own intrinsic worth – is essential if we are to save this magnificent species, something that the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund has been working indefatigably to do for several decades. Happily, there is another ally in this cause that people in the field have been aware of for some time: the gorillas themselves.

Over 40 years ago, Dian Fossey herself observed adult Silverback Gorillas breaking apart the structures of sharp, pointed-wooden snares that poachers had set up in the forest to catch gorillas. These cruelly devised snares had caused a painful death for many gorillas, and apparently, those individuals who saw their friends and family members caught in them and suffering, determined to dismantle the snares when they had the opportunity, for they did so and were seen to do so by Ms. Fossey and others. She wrote about the phenomenon in her brilliant and moving, best-selling book, "Gorillas in the Mist."

Although researchers knew that adults had figured out how to disarm the fiendish traps, it has now been reported and documented that young gorillas have learned the technique, too. Conservationists from the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund recently observed a pair of juvenile gorillas using the same skills as

their elders as they destroyed the diabolical devices meant to ensnare them. As reported by Veronica Vecellio, a Program Director from the Fund, in a July 17th posting on the Gorilla Fund's blog, a gorilla had been killed nearby in one of the traps a few days previously, so it is reasonable to assume that the youngsters had seen this and learned to be wary of them.

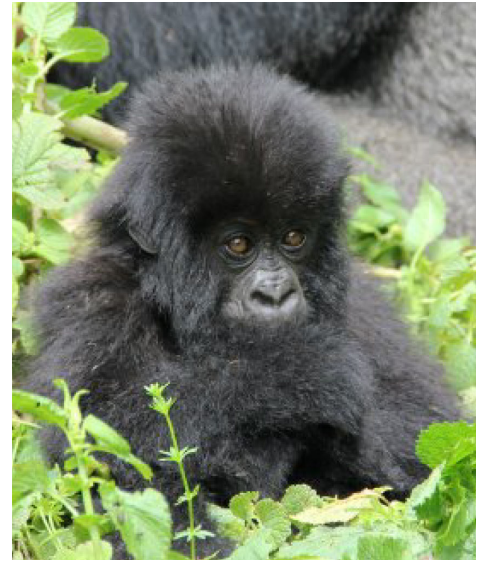
Veronica said, "We knew that gorillas do this but all of the reported cases in the past were carried out by adult gorillas, mostly silverbacks. Today, two juveniles and one blackback.....worked together to deactivate two snares, and how they did it demonstrated an impressive cognitive skill."

(Read the remarkable full account at: <http://gorillafund.org/blog>)

Wildlife Watch was thrilled to learn that these capable juvenile gorillas had developed this useful skill, but of course, it is a sad commentary on humanity that the innocent gorillas need to be aware of the danger that humans pose to their existence.

In the light of the many instances of intelligent, coordinated behavior by gorillas that have been witnessed by Dian Fossey and her colleagues, we asked Dr. Archibald if it was likely that the cognitive skills of gorillas are similar to humans. She replied, "I don't think that's something scientists will ever be able to answer, but we work only in the field and that is more of a question that would be investigated by scientists working with captive gorillas (such as in zoos)."

It does seem to us at Wildlife Watch that the more humans recognize the fact that gorillas – and other animals – have their own complex thoughts, feelings, and social structures, the more likely it is that we as a species will come to respect them and leave them to live their lives in peace. In the case of gorillas and other primates, we have so much in common that a certain amount of empathy should



The Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund tracks gorilla families and provides medical care and protection. This adorable baby was found to be missing. Please visit the website: www.Gorillafund.org for more information.

be a given. The hunting of gorillas is something that all persons of good will ought to deplore and work against. There *has* been a strong effort made towards conservation in recent years, but the problem of poaching will not go away by itself.

What can concerned people do to preserve the lives of the Mountain Gorillas of Rwanda? Wildlife Watch agrees wholeheartedly with Dr. Archibald of the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund: "Learn all they can, educate others, support groups that are working directly in the field to save gorillas, and try to influence others to lend support and to understand the connections of all life."

And remember we are not alone in this vital endeavour. As the example of the clever juvenile gorillas

showed us, and as Vecellio says, "Today we can proudly confirm that gorillas are doing their part, too!"

Please read about the important work being done by the Dian Fossey Gorilla Fund and find out how you can help at <http://gorillafund.org>

The Wildlife Watch Humane Award went to EMILY DEVRIES STETTNER

for her daring rescue of a robin high in a tree who was dangling by her foot.

Emily, who is 13 years old, climbed the tree by first standing on the shoulders of her mother, who was standing on a ladder propped against the tree. Then she crawled out to the end of the limb and clipped the string that held the little bird



captive. Expecting the bird to be injured, she was happily surprised when the bird immediately flew away. Emily then removed all of the string so another bird wouldn't suffer the same fate. Hooray for Emily and her Mom, Heidi.

R.O.C.K. - Rehabbers Offer Care and Kindness

Wildlife Rehabilitators are aware of the many perils facing individual wild animals in their daily existence. Some can be avoided by personal steps that we can take - others need to be dealt with through education or lobbying efforts.

Wildlife rehabilitators are **licensed by state game agencies, yet they are given no support**, and they

are **not allowed to charge for their "services."** Sadly, animals often come to the attention of rehabbers when they are found by people who either don't want them near their house or don't know how to help them. When the DEC, DNRs or police are called, they normally recommend killing or letting the animals die; and most veterinarians cannot take time from their busy schedules.

Friends of the Feathered and Furry Wildlife Center

By E. M. Fay



Wildlife in New York State, as elsewhere, is under constant pressure from human residents who share the region with them. As more people move from urban centers to "the country," more and more natural habitat is taken away from the animals who lived there first. Their food sources are depleted, too, whether they are herbivores, carnivores, or omnivores, because the food chain for *all* of us starts with plants, so when forests and meadows are cut down and paved over everyone who depended on those resources goes hungry. Plus, as we transect formerly wild lands with innumerable roadways, far more animals are killed as they cross to find water and food sources.

To add insult to injury, many of the humans who live in rural and suburban areas don't know how to live peacefully with wildlife. Sometimes, they are

frightened or annoyed by wild neighbors who pass through yards – animals who, after all, are only trying to find food and homes for themselves and their young ones. Those not willing to share the land with wildlife often either try to eradicate it themselves with poison, bullets, traps, and other lethal means, or they call government authorities such as the DEC or police and ask them to "get rid of" whatever wild neighbor is, to them, a "pest."

The sad consequence of all this is ever-increasing numbers of injured and orphaned wildlife. For over 20 years, many unfortunate victims of human thoughtlessness have been cared for by licensed wildlife rehabilitator and educator, **Barbara "Missy" Runyan**.

Missy established Friends of Feathered and Furry Wildlife Center in Greene County as a "second chance"

haven for helpless animals of all kinds. Animals are brought to FFFWC from all over the state. Missy has received calls at all hours of the day and night, asking her to pick up various individuals. Sometimes, helpless bear cubs are orphaned and left to starve when their mother is shot dead for merely searching for food in a dumpster.

Despite the difficulties, Missy makes every effort to respond. As she says, "Regardless of how they got here, they need our help!" Not all animals can be saved, but she strives mightily, and a remarkable number of them are rehabilitated and released back to their wild habitats. Those she cannot save are compassionately and respectfully euthanized.

Wildlife Rehabilitation is not for the faint of heart!

FFFWC has handled geese, ducks, woodpeckers, owls, fox, deer, falcons, snakes, songbirds, rabbits, hawks, turtles, and others. Besides the heart-rending aspect of much of the work, each species requires special diet, housing, environmental stimuli, antibiotics, recovery caging, and vet care, among other things. Countless hours are spent, day and night, feeding, cleaning, changing bandages, and caring for these innocent beings.

FFF Wildlife Center can not continue their work without donations.

Visit: <http://www.fffwildlifecenter.com>

You can also "friend" FFFWC on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/fffwildlifecenter>

Giant Tortoises Under Threat

By E. M. Fay

Tortoises are among the longest-living animals on earth. Land-dwelling turtles of the family

Testudinidae, they are vegetarian reptiles. Although they are found on 6 of the seven continents and on some islands, most of the approx. 40 living species are in Africa, especially in Madagascar. Giant tortoises are believed to have developed at least as early as the Cretaceous Period, over 100 million years ago.

Slow-moving under their high, domed shells, giant tortoises have sturdy legs. In certain folklore, they represent determination, deliberateness, long life, and wisdom. When countries and cultures were relatively separate from one another, traditional cultural beliefs afforded a certain amount of protection to this ancient race. As Mr. Herilala Randriamahazo, an official of Madagascar's Turtle Survival Alliance says, "People respected tortoises. They did not even touch them."

As man travelled more extensively around the world, however, and those humans from countries unfamiliar with giant tortoises "discovered" them, they tended to think of these majestic beings as just another resource to be exploited. Tortoises are now extinct on most of their former island homes because they were slaughtered for their meat and their shells. Their habitats were destroyed both by man himself, and by the introduction (by humans) to their islands of goats, pigs, rats, and other animals who ate their eggs and their young, and competed with them for food. Giant tortoises once native to some 30 islands in the Indian Ocean now have only one representative group living, those from South Aldabra Island.

In the Western Hemisphere, tortoises were plentiful on the Galapagos Islands until the late 19th century, but were later hunted to the point of extinction. And their habitat deteriorated when goats were brought in from the mainland.

There are several non-profit organi-



<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13799205>

zations working to try to preserve the dwindling number of giant tortoises left in the world. One of these is the Durrell Wildlife Conservation Trust, founded by the internationally-renowned naturalist/author, Gerald Durrell. Their focus is on the rarest, most endangered species and most fragile habitats, and they have been working in Madagascar for 26 years, trying to save the Critically Endangered Ploughshare Tortoise.

Poaching of many species of flora and fauna is an extreme problem on this large land mass off the coast of southern Africa that some have called Treasure Island, due to its rich biodiversity and hundreds of rare life forms that existed there for thousands of years – until man decided that making a profit from these treasures was more important than preserving them. In fact, in just the past decade, more than 600 new species have been discovered on Madagascar, but many are *already* endangered due to widespread pillaging.

As just one example, a huge increase in demand for pet tortoises from Asia may doom forever the very rare Ploughshare Tortoise. Their beautiful shells make them especially desirable as "exotic pets" to wealthy Asians, in particular, some paying as much as \$10,000 on the black market in Thailand and other countries. In order to save them from poachers, local villagers and a team from the Durrell WCT are purposely defacing the shells.

Richard Lewis, Director of Durrell's Madagascar program says the survival of these tortoises is "hanging by a thread" due to smugglers. Although they are officially protected under Madagascar's national laws, an explosion of illicit demand has forced his organization to take the drastic step of engraving numbers (painlessly) on their distinctive shells in order to make the animals worthless, at least as status symbols. Lewis expressed his personal sadness at having to deface the unique shells, but hopes that it will prove a deterrent to thieves. The DWCT has also placed radio transmitters on the Ploughshares it has released into the wild, to keep track of them in case they are stolen.

"Many local people are proud of their unusual national reptile," Lewis added, "and want to help save them."

Baly Bay National Park in Madagascar used to be considered a safe haven for tortoises, but poachers are becoming increasingly aggressive. Conservationists call these criminals "the Tortoise Mafia," as their numerous thefts threaten the native reptiles with imminent extinction.

The Tortoise Mafia are known to bribe corrupt government officials. Smuggling networks are not only selling the tortoises to foreigners as pets and baby tortoise shells to "traditional" doctors to make into alleged aphrodisiacs for men, but also profiting from a growing local demand for tortoise meat.

The head of Madagascar's Alliance of Conservation Groups, Ndranto Razakamanarina, has said,

"Everybody is eating them and everybody is trafficking them and as soon as people are brought to trial, there are Mafia organisations who help to get them out."

The numbers of tortoises being smuggled out of the country is alarming. Two poachers caught last year in southern Madagascar had 50 tortoises

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GIANT TORTOISES

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with them. 400 baby tortoises have been crammed into suitcases, and adults are taken into captive breeding programs in Asian countries. The thieves often raid an area in groups of up to 100 men, who pick up thousands of tortoises at a time. They are usually heavily armed, so can easily fend off attempts to stop them. As one conservationist said, "When a gang of poachers with guns and machetes come and take tortoises, the villagers are defenseless."

Conservation groups on Madagascar have made some strides in protecting the island's endangered tortoises, which include the Ploughshare, Spider, Radiated, and Flat-tailed species. But increasing economic woes in recent times have added to the problem: higher food prices are blamed for more Madagascarans eating tortoise meat.

Mr. Randriamahazo went undercover as a "tourist" to investigate restaurants in several towns. He found that tortoise had become "a favourite snack," and that the very same government officials who ought to be protecting the native reptiles from extinction were themselves buying it surreptitiously in restaurants. He was horrified to learn that a bowl of tortoise meat was sold for (the equivalent of) a mere \$2.50. Local streets were littered with countless shells, "an unfortunate sign of the insatiable appetite people have acquired for them." As a BBC report noted, "If tortoises do not end up in the rubbish heaps of restaurants, they end up in the suitcases of tortoise smugglers."

The government has been accused by a consortium of 27 national conservation groups of shameful complicity in the "looting and plunder" of natural resources, including the illegal trade in tortoises.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13799205>

The future looks bleak for giant tortoises, even if poaching were to stop immediately – an unlikely scenario given the profit incentive and apparent lack of government concern. Mr. Hasina Randriamanampisoa of the

Durrell WCT stated, "Even if the poaching stops now, the natural habitat is so vast, there are chances that the females cannot meet the males in the wild to mate and to have babies."

Other endangered large tortoises and turtles include the Burmese starred tortoise, which is on the International Union for Conservation of Nature's Red List of "critically endangered" species (<http://www.iucn.org>), eaten both by Burmese and Chinese; and the Giant Amazon River Turtle, also because it is widely poached, as well as habitat destruction.

Having survived for over 100 million years, it is tragic that giant tortoises seem likely to become extinct in the wild very soon because of greed and ignorance. The few who survive may do so while kept in wretched captivity and bred only so that their children may be eaten or destroyed for other nefarious purposes. Only a few animals such as crocodilians and sharks (and occasional anomalies such as coelacanths) are in a similar category as having survived relatively unchanged since prehistoric times, and of course, they, too, are exploited mercilessly.

To see a moving slide show and hear Durrell WCT Director Richard Lewis speak eloquently about the Ploughshare Tortoise, go to:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/nature/14293351>

E. M. Fay is Assoc. Ed. of *Wildlife Watch Binocular*.

Help Save the Giant Tortoise

Conservation work is not possible without the support of concerned people. There are numerous ways to help, such as joining conservation groups as a member or fundraising for them, "adopting" an animal by making a small regular donation, or volunteering your time. Any of these measures can make a significant difference to the tortoises and other animals, habitats, and local communities where they live.

For more creative ideas, go to <http://www.durrell.org/How-to-help>.

George, the Last Pinta Tortoise, Dies in Ecuador



"Lonesome George," a giant tortoise who is believed to be the last surviving member of his sub-species, died in June at Galapagos National Park in Ecuador. Originally from Pinta Island, part of the Galapagos chain, George has no offspring, so scientists fear that his kind is now extinct.

Although George was approximately 100 years old, that made him still a fairly young adult, as his sub-species can live to 200 years under normal circumstances. Unfortunately, giant tortoises are not often left alone to live their lives out fully.

Biologists at the Galapagos National Park tried for decades to help Pinta Island tortoises survive by introducing George to lady tortoises from similar sub-species. He lived with one particular mate for 15 years, but unfortunately, none of their eggs were viable.

Known worldwide as a symbol of the Galapagos Islands, the place of the tortoise in human-written history was made secure by Charles Darwin, whose notice of the differing appearances among island tortoises helped him devise his ground-breaking theory of evolution.

George was found dead in his corral by his long-time keeper. Cause of death is awaiting a post-mortem. His body will be embalmed so that future generations may see him.

If a concerted effort is not made *now* to prevent such extinctions as that of the Pinta Island tortoise – and animal extinctions are happening with disturbing frequency – then the next generation of humans will have nothing but the pitiful sight of all sorts of embalmed creatures.

Farewell, George. Your passing, and the extinction of your species horrifies and saddens us greatly.

Full story at:

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-18574279>

PEOPLE AND PLACES TO KNOW ABOUT

Please visit www.bonnifidedesigns.com
Bonnifide Designs by Bonnie Goodman.



Check out all the great items they have! I especially love the chicken necklaces that you can wear when you fight chicken laws in your town. Bonnie is heavily involved with veganism and spay/neuter in Livingston, Montana.

WILDLIFE WATCH NEEDS YOU!

Wildlife Watch needs your help more than ever to continue providing our vital services for helping injured and orphaned wildlife. In addition to our national hotline, Wildlife Watch lobbies for wildlife protection bills, does pick-ups locally, and contributes to the local rehabbers for their care of the babies we bring to them. Through our publication, the **Wildlife Watch Binocular**, Wildlife Watch emphasizes the unique spirit of individual animals and promotes wildlife watching as a means of spiritually and ethically relating to other beings, and as an enhancement of our life enjoyment.

Will you become a part of our team?

YES

<http://wildwatch.org/join/join.htm>

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We welcome letters/articles/photos for consideration.

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Let's go Wildlife Watching

BY JOE MIELE

I recently took a drive over to the Aguirre Springs National Recreation Area, which is nestled up against the eastern slope of the Organ Mountains, just east of Las Cruces, New Mexico. I went during the height of the summer when high temperatures limit the number of campers and day hikers. There is an abundance of wildlife in this area, and even the more popular trails are, at this time of year, frequented by jackrabbits and coyotes. On this day, I saw a coyote trot across an access road (western coyotes are smaller than their eastern cousins), and a rattlesnake sunning herself on a boulder, which would have made a great picnic table had the snake not found it first.

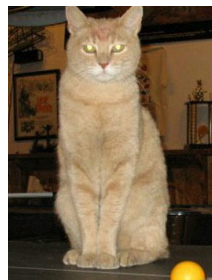


Instead, I took a break under a nearby tree and watched a few jackrabbits and lizards scamper by. Signs along the Baylor Pass trail warn visitors

not to venture off the well-maintained trails for the sake of safety and avoiding habitat degradation. If you find yourself in southern New Mexico, I recommend heading over to the Organ Mountains for a fantastic day of camping, hiking, and wildlife watching.

Joe Miele is a nature-lover who lives in New Mexico

Alaska's Popular Mayor: STUBBS THE CAT



for 15 years.

Talkeetna is a small town located near the base of Mt. McKinley, the tallest mountain peak in North America. As part of a designated historical district of Alaska, and with tourism an important part of the town's revenue, it is essential that the mayor be a personable individual, and Stubbs is certainly that.

As a kitten, the orange, part-Manx future mayor was part of a family that was put up for adoption from a box placed in Nagley's General Store. Manager Lauri Stec chose him and named him Stubbs because of his lack of a tail. Shortly after, when local townspeople didn't fancy any of the regular candidates for the mayoral office, Stubbs was offered as a write-in choice, and won the election handily.

Mayor Stubbs' duties are mostly cer-

emonial, so being a cat does not cause any difficulty with his tourist-greeting responsibilities, or keep His Honor from his preferred activities of napping, drinking catnip-laced water, and visiting various businesses in town.

There have been a few grumbles about his leaving fur here and there, and of sleeping on the job. However, such political heavyweights as former President Clinton and former V.P. Cheney have been caught cat-napping at important meetings, so when an actual cat does it, there is no shame attached.

And, most refreshingly in these days of dirty politics, Lauri Stec says of Mayor Stubbs, "He's honest." He may also be neutered, which would help him to avoid all the scandals to which other politicians have fallen victim.

Read more at:

<http://www.cnn.com/2012/07/17/us/alaska-cat-mayor/index.html>

If you decide to visit Mayor Stubbs to tell him what a fine job he is doing, then check out some of the other things you can do in Talkeetna: <http://www.talkeetnachamber.org/directory/hiking-walking-tours/alaska-nature-guides>



**NEED HELP FOR
INJURED OR
ORPHANED WILDLIFE?
CALL THE WILDLIFE
WATCH HOTLINE!
1-877-WILDHELP
(1-877-945-3435)**

Wildlife Watch maintains current lists of wildlife rehabilitators around the country. Our hotline helps us to help hundreds of people and animals annually.

Please help us by becoming a Wildlife Watch member for \$25 annually and please make an additional contribution for the R.O.C.K. Project that will be put into a fund and used to help a rehabber help wild animals. R.O.C.K. Project funds will be distributed at our discretion up to the amount available. You can contribute by PayPal by clicking here

www.wildwatch.org/join/contrib.htm

✓ Contribute by phone with a credit card. 845-256-1400

✓ Contribute by mail:
Wildlife Watch, P.O. Box
562, New Paltz, NY 12561

HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL

BY SUSIE FURMAN



Photo by Susie Furman of Mamma Ali and her fawn.

One morning last summer I spotted an injured doe. She was struggling to make her way across my lawn. She was a frequent visitor a.k.a. "Mamma Ali." Her foot was badly broken. It was lifeless and bleeding. She was limping terribly and leaving a trail of blood behind! My heart sank! How on earth was she going to survive the snow driven winter ahead? I wanted to help her in any way I could. I contacted **Wildlife Watch** for assistance, which led me to speak with several wildlife rehabilitators. They were so kind and knowledgeable. They gave me great comfort and assisted as best they could. Although no one could ever predict the fate of Mamma Ali, they shared their success stories with me. Each story gave me hope. Hope that Mamma Ali could live a good life once again.

Mamma Ali's visits were brief but I watched her closely. In time it was clear to me that Mamma Ali was making progress. Little by little, day by day she was feeling better. Her wound was slowly healing. She was adjusting well and persevering. Although she will never have complete use of that foot again, she can run like the devil when needed, and she travels with the herd holding her head high!

This spring, I am happy to say Mamma Ali gave me the honor and privilege of meeting her new addition! She is the proud mamma of a beautiful, spunky, new fawn! I am so happy for her and so thankful I did not lose faith in her. Mamma Ali was stronger than I thought. She truly had a will to live life and she is living it well!