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Animal Keepers'Forum 30th Anniversary



1974 to 2004

From the Editor

Dear Readers,

It is with great pleasure that we bring you this special double issue of *Animal Keepers' Forum* dedicated to the Cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*). As you will note, this edition combines the regular July and August 2005 issues of *AKF* into one. Therefore, the next regular issue of *AKF* will be the September 2005 edition. You will also note that this special issue does not contain any of the regularly seen columns and features of a standard *Forum* - Scoops, Coming Events, Enrichment Options, Reactions, Opportunity Knocks, etc. These regular features of the journal will return in the September issue. In the meantime, you may check the AAZK website (www.aazk.org) for an updated listing of coming events, conference information and job listings.

An issue such as this would not be possible without the interest, support and contributions made by the authors included here. The articles run the gamet from hand-rearing milk formulas to cheetah conservation efforts in the wild to captive breeding strategies and husbandry in zoos around the world. This issue contains an enormous amount of information on cheetahs that I hope you will find interesting, educational, and hopefully, useful in expanding your base of knowledge about this endangered species. I want to thank all of the authors for their willingness to share their experiences and expertise. I would like to especially thank *AKF* Associate Editor Kayla Grams for her efforts in contacting potential authors, offering suggestions and ideas along the way as the issue came together, and for always believing that this particular issue *could* happen. My thanks also to *AKF* Associate Editor Mark de Denus for his assistance in gathering and verifying information for the article on cheetah websites. In the world of the Internet change is constant, but at the time of publication, all of these sites were active and reachable via the Web. Thanks also to AAZK Administrative Secretary Barbara Manspeaker for proofreading for this issue.

Special thanks need to go to two outstanding artists who have shared their bountiful talents with us for this issue. Elena Chelysheva, former Lead Cheetah Keeper at the Moscow Zoo, has provided our spectacular cover art. Elana continues to be involved in cheetah research and conservation - you can read more about her in the *About the Cover* section below. As an editor, I seriously tried to figure out a way to have two covers for this particular issue since I also received a beautiful and creative piece of cheetah artwork from Yoshi. Yonetani from the Zoo Design & Education Lab (ZOO-Del) in Kobe, Japan. Because I wanted to include Yoshi's artwork in this special edition, it appears opposite as the lead-in page for this issue. Thanks both to Elena and Yoshi for sharing their artistic talents with us.

Following publication, a limited number of extra copies of this special issue will be available for sale. Price per copy will be \$10.00 US which includes domestic postage. Additional postage will be required internationally and will vary depending on the country. Please contact me at akfeditor@zk.kscoxmail.com if you are interested.

I hope you enjoy this dedicated issue of *Animal Keepers' Forum*.

Susan D. Chan AKF Editor

About the Cover

This month's cover features the Cheetah (Acinonyx jubatus) drawn by Elena Chelysheva of Russia. Elena was Lead Cheetah Keeper at the Moscow Zoo, eventually becoming Curator of the Mammal Department for the Conservation Centre of Endangered Species. She worked in Namibia at CCF and as an assistant researcher at the Masai-Mara Cheetah Conservation project in Kenya. Elena is currently working towards her PhD. Cheetahs have unique calls, one of which is a chirping or a yipping high-pitched call they use in order to locate one another. Mothers will use this call to locate their lost cubs. Cheetah cubs are born with distinctive fur that covers their neck, called a mantle. There are many theories to its function, one of which is that it serves as camouflage in grassy habitats. Thanks Elena!

