

**Cats in the News. Cat News 82, 39. Supporting Online Material.**

**Malayan tigers and road mortality**

Fewer than 150 Malayan tigers remain in Malaysia. African swine flu is causing a decrease in their prey populations and tigers venture closer towards human settlements in order to find prey. As a result, human-wildlife conflict and road mortality of tigers is on the increase. The solutions are known – wildlife crossings, speed enforcement, prey augmentation and public awareness – but need to be implemented.

Source: The Sun Malaysia <https://t1p.de/iqfka>

**Siberian tiger detected in Changbai Mountain Nature Reserve, China, after 3 decades**

Changbai Mountain National Reserve is situated in northeast China's Jilin Province. After three decades of absence of the species, tracks of a Siberian tiger were detected in late November, and in early December, a picture was taken of a tiger.

Source: People's Daily Online <https://t1p.de/dcxpr>

**Clouded leopard conservation project launched in Pormawlai, India**

The Pormawlai Biodiversity Management Committee, together with a variety of partners, launched a new project on clouded leopard conservation. The project aims to conserve the habitat through sustained community engagement. To mark the launch of the project, a statue of a clouded leopard was unveiled in Pormawlai village.

Source: Syllad <https://t1p.de/7lwwq>

**Leopard population soars in Kafue, Zambia**

According to a report by Panthera, leopard population density in Kafue National Park, Zambia, has increased from 1.5 to 4.4 leopards per km<sup>2</sup>. Kafue is part of the world's largest Conservation Area – the Greater Kafue Ecosystem – which is approximately the size of Massachusetts.

Source: Good News Network <https://t1p.de/pajkn>

**First photographic evidence of manul in Himachal Pradesh, India**

A camera trap study by the Snow Leopard Trust produced the first photographic evidence of manul in Himachal Pradesh. The species was recorded at three camera trap sites in the Kinnaur region between 3,900-4,100 m asl. The cameras also captured images of snow leopards in the region.

Source: Snow Leopard Trust <https://t1p.de/5f035>

**Clouded leopards need more attention in Bangladesh**

There are no official records of clouded leopards in Bangladesh. However, Muntasir Akash from the University of Dhaka, has captured one clouded leopard in his camera traps in eastern Bangladesh in 2023. He also collected information on sightings and found reports of 10 sightings in 6 different districts since 2006. Akash believes that it is likely that clouded leopards exist in the Chittagong Hill Tracts bordering India.

Source: Mongabay <https://t1p.de/bxcfi>

**“Too many tigers and too much forest”, Nepal**

In late December, the Nepalese Prime Minister stated that the country had too many tigers and too much forest. The tiger population in Nepal tripled between 2010 and 2022 to 355 individuals. Forest

cover doubled since 1992 to 44%. According to the Prime Minister, 150 tigers and 30% forest cover suffices. The remarks come after a year where several changes to conservation laws have been suggested (e.g. permitting infrastructure development in protected areas). The changes were challenged at Nepal's Supreme Court, but the ruling is delayed.

Source: Mongabay <https://t1p.de/5zbva>

#### **Snow leopard population increasing in Kazakhstan**

Since 2019, the snow leopard population in Kazakhstan has increased by 26%. It now stands at 152-189 individuals – the highest estimate since the 1980s. The increase is the result of a snow leopard conservation project under UNDP which began in 2018. However, human activities remain the most significant threat to the survival of the species.

Source: The Times of Central Asia <https://t1p.de/4zxwl>

#### **Pumas die from avian flu in north-west U.S.A**

The Olympic Peninsula in the state of Washington, U.S.A., hosts an isolated population of about 200 pumas. In December 2024, two young individuals were found to have died from avian flu. A representative of the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission says that there could be a lot more cases that have not been found. Other mammals that have fallen to the disease in the area include bobcats as well as some cat species kept in captivity.

Source: KUOW <https://t1p.de/kwkij>

#### **Survey planned for Singapore's only wild cat**

The only wild cat occurring in Singapore is the leopard cat. Albeit considered Least Concern globally, in Singapore it is Critically Endangered with fewer than 50 individuals living in the country. In 2024, two sightings were reported from Changi. This year the construction of Changi Airport Terminal 5 is scheduled to begin. The Singapore Wildcat Action Group has now applied for a permit to perform a rapid survey of the Changi coastal area.

Source: The Straits Times <https://t1p.de/frfl4>

#### **Unlimited puma hunting proposed in Wyoming to help mule deers**

A proposal has been launched in Wyoming, U.S.A., to enable year-round indiscriminate hunting of pumas in the state: House Bill 286, "Mountain lion hunting season-changes". The bill would also allow the currently prohibited trapping, and hunters would no longer need a dedicated puma license, but just a regular antelope, deer or elk tag. The proposal aims to improve the situation of the struggling mule deer population. Evidence that the measure will actually help mule deer populations is lacking, or even tending to go the opposite way.

Source: WyoFile <https://t1p.de/chdsx>

#### **First detection of rusty-spotted cat in West Bengal, India**

A camera trap has recorded the first detection of rusty-spotted cat in the state of West Bengal, India. The camera trap was set for a survey on the status of pangolins. This is the ninth felid occurring in the state.

Source: The Times of India <https://t1p.de/6n7jf>

### **Human-tiger-conflict increases in Primorsky Krai, Russia**

Residents in Primorsky Krai are appealing to the authorities and call for action because tigers regularly enter villages and kill dogs. Natural prey has become scarce. Officials blame an outbreak of African swine fever in 2019, decimating local wild boar population by an estimated 75 percent. However, scientists say the cause lies in unchecked logging, destruction of Siberian pine forests and overhunting of the tiger's natural prey species. They question the official estimates of the ungulate population as well as the announcement in 2022 that Russia reached its goal of doubling the tiger population.

Source: Meduza <https://t1p.de/b1bip>

### **Leopard deaths increase in Pakistan**

According to unpublished data from WWF, 45 leopards were killed in Pakistan since 2019. This is the same amount as in the previous 12 years. It is suspected that the true number is even higher. The main motivation for killing leopards appears to be retaliation for attacks on livestock and sometimes even humans. Some provincial governments offer compensation payments, but the process is very bureaucratic and many victims appear to think that the amount of compensation is not worth the effort.

Source: The Guardian <https://t1p.de/gptxa>

### **Bobcats thriving in southern Arizona, U.S.A.**

A project researching the bobcat population around Tucson AZ, U.S.A., found that the population is doing very well. Collared animals had a survival rate of around 85% . Some cats even raised litters in Tucson's more urban areas. Some 90% of the residents had a positive attitude to bobcats in the Tucson area.

Source: 12 News <https://t1p.de/v8b87>

### **Tiger population in Maharashtra, India, quadruples since 2000**

During a debate at the assembly, Maharashtra's Forest Minister reported that the tiger population in the state had risen to 444 individuals – a four-fold increase from 101 individuals in 2000. The population increase also led to an increase in human-tiger conflict, incl. attacks on humans. The government will fund the erection of solar fencing for villages near tiger zones.

Source: The Hindu <https://t1p.de/mis6l>

### **Numbers of lions and leopard deaths in Gujarat, India**

The Forest Minister of Gujarat informed about the numbers of lion and leopard deaths in 2023 and 2024. At least 286 lions (incl. 143 cubs) and 456 leopards (incl. 140 cubs) died in those two years. The latest estimate of the lion population stood at 674 in 2020. Of the recorded fatalities, 58 lions and 153 leopards died from unnatural causes such as vehicle collisions or drowning in open wells.

Source: The Hindu <https://t1p.de/krktw>

### **Illegal jaguar hunting in Bolivia**

Bolivia is at the main stage of illegal hunting of jaguars in South America. Various cases are known, but the Bolivian Penal Code is weak and institutional capacity to enforce the law and to prosecute is lacking. More than half of all seizures that have been made since 2010 are somehow related to China, where fangs are used as talismans and other parts are used in traditional medicine.

Source: El País <https://t1p.de/udtpj>

**Study on fishing cats finds heavy metals in Sundarbans, India**

The study collected fishing cat scats and soil samples. The samples were found to contain heavy metals such as lead and chromium. The source of these metals appears to be the extensive use of chemical larvicides and industrial effluent. The analysis to find microplastics is ongoing. The final report is expected in April.

Source: Times of India <https://t1p.de/ydgcp>