

# KARATASI

## THE FOX ON STILTS

One of the most enigmatic and elusive species at White Oak is the maned wolf (*Chrysocyon brachyurus*). Nicknamed the 'fox on stilts', the maned wolf has been a quiet success story at White Oak for many years. There have been 41 pups born at the Conservation Center since 1988.

Native to the tall grasslands of South America, maned wolves with their long reddish coats and distinctive black manes, are the tallest of the wild canids. Their long legs serve them well in their grassland habitat.

Although they are in the canid family, maned wolves are unlike other members of that family such as foxes and wolves. Maned wolves are omnivores, eating small mammals, birds, fish and vegetation. Some studies have shown that up to 50% of a maned wolf's diet consists of tubers, sugar cane and a tomato-like fruit called the 'wolf apple'. Also, unlike other wolf species, the nocturnal maned wolf is considered solitary, with males and females sharing territories but not necessarily hunting in packs.

Even with its striking color and long legs, one of the most distinctive characteristics of the maned wolf is its odor. Both males and females mark their territories by urinating or rubbing on vegetation leaving an odor many equate to that of a skunk. At White Oak, it's always easy to know when you are near the maned wolf enclosure, even before seeing the animals!

With their unusual looks and behaviors, maned wolves are one of the most challenging species to keep in a captive situation. The Conservation Center at White Oak has led the way in managing these mysterious creatures.



Maned wolf litters average 2 - 6 pups in size. They are completely black with a white tip on their tails at birth and weigh approximately 300 grams.



The Conservation Center at White Oak is one of the first to allow both parents an opportunity to care for the pups. Historically, maned wolf pups were hand-raised in most U.S. and European facilities.



At six months of age, the pups begin to resemble their parents, and will weigh 50 - 65 lbs. as adults. They are the only members of the genus *Chrysocyon*, which means 'the golden dog'. The wild population is listed as Vulnerable by IUCN mainly due to habitat loss, car strikes and disease from domestic dogs.

# From the Shed

Dear White Oak Friends,

From our back yard in Florida to Indonesia and Thailand, our team and programs are connecting the animals and people at White Oak with crucial conservation work around the world. In this issue of *Karatasi* we highlight some of our thriving animal programs including the maned wolf and Florida panther. We also thank our friends, new and old, who attended our very popular Breakfast with the Beasts series this summer, which included a sunrise breakfast on the St. Mary's River and the always intriguing cheetah run demonstration.

The Emerging Wildlife Conservation Leaders course met again at White Oak in April 2012 and Conservation Coordinator Brandon Speeg recounts his project to tackle illegal wildlife trade in Thailand. Brandon and his team raised funds and designed a training program with authorities in Thailand to help them reduce wildlife trafficking. Dr. Scott Citino reports on his participation with a historic Sumatran rhino birth at the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary, only the fifth ever documented in captivity for the species.

As the country continues to experience economic uncertainty in 2012, the Howard Gilman Foundation (HGF) which owns and operates the Conservation Center and White Oak, has not been immune to the challenges of the times. The decision to investigate the potential sale of White Oak Plantation does not necessarily impact White Oak and the Conservation Center negatively, as the strength of our conservation programs and the dedication of our team has broad appeal and significant relevance to any prospective buyer. With HGF's backing and the support of our many friends, the programs of the Conservation Center continue to prosper and make important contributions to wildlife conservation.

Connecting with people to create understanding about the value of wildlife is the key to successful conservation. At White Oak we make those connections every day. With tours and experiences, courses and training programs, we share our passion and inspire our guests through the eyes of the animals we care for. The animals and staff directly benefit from your visits and support, which help us offset our costs and ensure our future. We encourage you to come see us with your family and friends, keep an eye out for upcoming exciting events at White Oak this fall, and let's stay connected.



Steve Shurter, Director  
the Wildlife Conservation Center at White Oak

## **White Oak Conservation Center**

conserves and sustains some of the earth's rarest wild animals through innovative breeding, training, research, education and field programs that contribute to the survival of wildlife in nature.

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**KARATASI** means paper  
in Swahili; recognizing the  
catalytic support from  
Howard Gilman &  
Gilman Paper Company  
for wildlife conservation.





## How Long Have You Worked Here?

A question frequently asked of staff members at the Conservation Center at White Oak is “How long have you been here?” White Oak’s Conservation Center has been in existence for 30 years and some of its staff members have been here for most of those years.

Many of the Conservation Center’s employees arrived at White Oak with several years of experience at other institutions. Collectively, the 16 members of the Conservation Center’s full time staff represent nearly 331 years of wildlife experience. The average wildlife work experience of the group is 21 years. The knowledge and resources that come from such experience contributes to the success of White Oak’s programs and represents the dedication the staff has towards conservation. It is one of White Oak’s greatest contributions to the conservation community.



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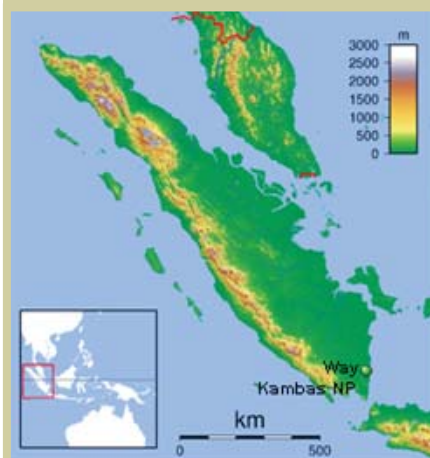
## Historic Birth in Indonesia

*In June, Staff Veterinarian, Dr. Scott Citino, traveled to the island of Sumatra to assist with the birth of a Sumatran rhino calf to be born at the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary (SRS). The birth was the first for the staff at SRS and only the fifth ever in captivity of a Sumatran rhino. What follows is an accounting by Dr. Citino of his experience.*

For those of you that have never travelled to South East Asia, the trip can be quite long and tiring! My adventure started on June 21, 2012 at around 11:00 am with a flight from Jacksonville to Chicago. After arriving in Chicago, I soon found out that my next flight to Hong Kong was delayed due to mechanical issues. A 4 hour delay and a 14 hour flight due to a strong head wind caused me to miss my next flight in Hong Kong by 5 hours, and the next flight to Jakarta that I could get was in 13 hours! Getting into busy Hong Kong at about 11:00 pm, no hotel or lounge rooms were available anywhere in or around the airport, so I settled in for the night on an airport bench.



After very little sleep, I was able to enjoy first light in the morning with a beautiful view of the mountains surrounding Hong Kong airport enveloped in storm clouds.



My next flight of 6 hours to Jakarta was uneventful, and I just had a 3 hour layover until my final short flight from Jakarta on the island of Java to Bandar Lampung on the island of Sumatra. Getting off the plane in Sumatra, I was greeted by the hot and humid climate and received a warm welcome from Inov, the International Rhino Foundation (IRF) Indonesian liaison and Arief, the leader of the rhino protection units (RPU's) in Sumatra.

During the 2 hour drive from Bandar Lampung airport to Way Kambas National Park, I was told

that Ratu had given birth to a male calf at about 12:40 am June 23, 2102 during my restless night in Hong Kong. I was excited to hear that the birth went quickly without problems and the calf appeared strong and healthy and nursed within ½ hour after birth.



**"This is a historic birth because Sumatran rhinos are on the brink of extinction,"** - Novianto Bambang, director of biodiversity conservation at Indonesia's Ministry of Forestry. Biologists estimate that only 150 to 200 individuals survive in Indonesia and Sabah, Malaysia

Assisting the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary's veterinarian, Dr. Dedi Candra, with the birth were Australian veterinarian Dr. Benn Bryant of the Taronga Conservation Society and Paul Reinhart, a rhino keeper at the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden who had assisted with three other captive Sumatran rhino births before this one. IRF's executive director, Dr. Susie Ellis, was also on hand for the delivery and took advantage of this rare opportunity to harvest valuable stem cells from the placenta.



While at SRS, Dr. Citino (right), Dr. Ellis (left) and Paul Reinhart (top) went out into the nearby forest by boat with the rhino protections units (RPU's).

I arrived at the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary headquarters in Way Kambas National Park at about 7:00 pm as it was getting dark – the total length of my trip had been about 45 hours to travel half way around the world! Both Ratu and her calf were under 24-hour video surveillance using a new DVR surveillance system that had been put in place specifically for the birth, so I was able to see mom and baby on a monitor as soon as I arrived. We all celebrated this amazing birth for awhile, and then, I fell asleep quickly that night and awoke



*...continued*

the next morning to the calls of siamangs in the trees outside my window. Dedi, Benn, Paul, and I went to see Ratu and her baby early that morning and found the calf to be very curious and Ratu very trusting of us being close by, so Dedi and Ratu's keeper were able to go into the enclosure and coax the calf to them. Dedi was then able to examine the baby, trim its umbilicus, and treat its umbilicus to prevent infection. We then watched the calf grow before our eyes over the next few days, as healthy rhino calves generally gain 1.5 to 3 lbs/day.

Later that week, the Indonesian Minister of Forestry named the calf, Andatu. The name Andatu is a combination of both parents' names. Andalas, the calf's father who was born at the Cincinnati Zoo, is an Indonesian word denoting the island of Sumatra, while Ratu, the calf's mother who was wild born, means Queen. The baby's name is also a shortening of the Indonesian term "Anugerah Dari Tuhan" and translates as a "Gift from God". It is quite a fitting name as earlier this year, Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono officially declared 2012 the International Year of the Rhino.

Andatu's birth, the first birth ever of a Sumatran rhino in captivity in Indonesia, offers renewed hope for the future of Sumatran rhinos, whose numbers in the wild have dwindled to 200 or less. Managed breeding at the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary and other special facilities is an integral component in the global management of this species. Andatu is truly a treasure for the people of Indonesia and a shining light for Indonesian forest and rhino conservation.

*To follow Andatu's progress, visit the International Rhino Foundation's website: [www.rhinos.org](http://www.rhinos.org)*



*Andatu gets his first exam from Dr. De Di Candra, SRS veterinarian, and his keeper.*



*Ratu allows Andatu to nurse.*



*Andatu was estimated to weigh approximately 60 lbs. at birth. He may gain up to three lbs. a day!*



*Just over 3 weeks old and already 100 lbs.!*

*- photo by Dr. Dedi Candra*



## WO Conservation Coordinator involved in Law Enforcement Training Workshop that ends in Illegal Wildlife Trader's Arrest

*In March, Brandon Speeg, Conservation Coordinator at White Oak, traveled to Thailand to participate in a law enforcement training program targeting the illegal trade of slow lorises in Pattaya, Thailand and other cities in southeast Asia. Brandon went as a part of a group conservation campaign for Emerging Wildlife Conservation Leaders (EWCL). The law enforcement training was funded by FREELAND, WWF AND IFAW (International Fund for Animal Welfare.) What follows is his report.*

EWCL training program helps jump-start early career conservation professionals through a combination of skills training, networking opportunities with peers and established practitioners and the completion of a global wildlife conservation initiative. EWCL training addresses a long-standing need for capable leaders in the conservation field who are equipped with a full arsenal of skills to launch well-rounded and successful conservation campaigns and build successful leadership careers in the wildlife conservation profession.

The two-year training program entails a week of training each year, as well as a final two-day training and graduation ceremony. Throughout the two years, participants will work in teams to develop, implement and evaluate a wildlife conservation project in the United States or globally. White Oak is a supporter of EWCL and the two training sessions are held here.

My role in the training was to deliver a presentation and provide expertise about slow loris biology, conservation threats, and to help officers learn to identify and care-for confiscated slow lorises. During the training, I also helped with logistics and was involved in the law enforcement action that lead to the arrest of two slow loris traders. After confiscation of the animals I identified the species (*Bengal slow loris*).

FREELAND, in collaboration with the Emerging Wildlife Conservation Leaders (EWCL) Slow Loris Group conducted an investigation training program for local law enforcement to combat the rampant illegal trade of the slow loris species in Southeast Asia. Four of the five *Nycticebus* species are recognized and evaluated by the IUCN as vulnerable, and the Javan slow loris (*Nycticebus javanicus*) is listed as endangered, due to habitat loss and overexploitation. The training was conducted in the slow loris trade hub of Pattaya, Thailand. Slow loris populations in multiple range states, including Vietnam, Cambodia, and Lao PDR are directly impacted by organized crime syndicates. To support and empower officers responsible for enforcing wildlife laws, the workshop included technical training from former enforcement officers on investigation strategies and tools, and specific information on slow loris identification, handling, and deposition of confiscated animals. Participants used these new skills during an investigation operation into the Pattaya slow loris trade. Similar on-the-job trainings conducted by FREELAND, have contributed to arrests of key figures in the Southeast Asia wildlife trade. The workshops were hosted and facilitated by local partner FREELAND with the EWCL Slow Loris Group creating wildlife trade educational materials, conducting slow loris specific training, and providing logistical support.



*Brandon Speeg gave a lecture on the biology of the slow loris as well as methods for identifying different species of slow loris.*



*Slow lorises (genus *Nycticebus*) are nocturnal, arboreal primates ranging from Northern India to the Philippines (Nekaris and Bearder 2007). Five species of *Nycticebus* are now recognized and evaluated by the IUCN, with four of the five species listed as vulnerable, and the Javan slow loris (*Nycticebus javanicus*) listed as endangered (IUCN 2010). All five slow loris species are threatened by habitat destruction and over-harvesting for the illegal pet and traditional medicine trades (Nekaris and Nijman 2007; IUCN 2010). *Nycticebus* species are the most commonly encountered protected primate in wildlife markets across Southeast Asia (Shepherd et al., 2005; Shepherd 2010). The frequent occurrence in wildlife markets and low encounter rates in the wild resulted in all five species being transferred to Appendix I in CITES in 2007 (Nekaris and Nijman 2007; UNEP-WCMC 2011). Trade in CITES listed wildlife in Southeast Asia involves millions of animals annually, with Thailand recognized as a major international trade hub for illegally traded wildlife (Nijman and Shepard 2007; Nijman 2010; Nijman and Shepherd 2011). Within Thailand, centers of the illegal pet trade are located in transportation and tourist hubs, such as Phuket, Bangkok, and Pattaya. Non-endemic species of slow loris, such as pygmy slow loris (*Nycticebus pygmaeus*), have recently been seized in Pattaya, indicating the existence of international supply routes from Vietnam through Cambodia, and the involvement of transnational smuggling syndicates (FREELAND 2010).*



In May, we received notification from Mark Lotz, Panther Biologist for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission, that they had recently captured a photo on their camera trap of Florida panther 113 (FP113) and her 8 - 9 month old kitten (*above*).

This news is important not only because it shows a young panther being raised successfully by her mother, but also because that mother, FP113, was rehabilitated at White Oak in 2002/2003. She arrived at White Oak in October, 2002 after being orphaned. She was released back into the wild on August 20th, 2003.

Without the rehabilitation facilities at White Oak, panthers like FP113 might not have had a second chance to contribute to the success of this endangered species. There are currently two young Florida panthers living at White Oak in our conditioning pen. They will be released into the wild in the fall of this year.

With summer upon us, we frequently get questions about how our animals deal with the heat. Many of our species are found in similar climates in the wild so they are well adapted to the weather that a summer in Florida can deliver.

Giant eland have a large flap of skin on their necks called a dewlap that helps them to release excessive heat; similar to the way a radiator works for a car. Blood flowing through the dewlap cools more quickly than in other parts of their body. That cooled blood helps to keep the eland's temperature regulated. Additionally, the giant eland's body temperature can vary as much as 11 degrees during the day with no ill effects on the animal.



The stripes on a Grevy's zebra not only work as camouflage but the black and white pattern deflects and absorbs the sun's heat, helping the zebra to thermoregulate, minimizing dehydration in the heat.

White rhinos roll in the mud to protect their skin from the sun and to cool off. The calves in the herd have been known to get in the mud at only a few days old!



This fall White Oak will launch a new event series, "Sunset Safari". Guests will join Conservation Center staff for a tour of the wildlife area as the sun sets and the animals are most active. Evening is the perfect time for photographs, and the tour's open-air trolleys provide a great view to capture the magic of White Oak at sundown. The 600 acre Conservation Center is one of the world's premiere wildlife breeding, research, and training facilities, and is located along the St. Mary's River in northeast Florida.

After the tour, guests will enjoy cocktails and hors d'oeuvres and a gourmet dinner in one of White Oak's beautiful dining areas- the beautifully appointed Great Hall formal dining room, or the outdoor Pavilion located along a scenic stretch of the St. Mary's River. This event is ideal for couples looking for a unique dinner experience or wildlife enthusiast searching for that perfect zebra picture.

Three events are scheduled:

- Saturday, September 22th, October 13th and November 17th
- 5:30-8:30pm September and October dates. 4:00-7:00pm in November
- \$175 per person and \$300 per couple
- Overnight packages are available, call the number below for pricing information.

Tickets can be purchased by calling 904-225-3285



Guests can combine the Sunset Safari with an overnight stay in one of White Oak's distinctive guest houses to create a weekend to remember. Or to book a stay at White Oak anytime, contact us by calling 904-225-3285.



The Wildlife Conservation Center at White Oak  
581705 White Oak Road  
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## The Wildlife Conservation Center at White Oak New Arrivals January 2012 - August 2012



*One of two Grevy's zebra foals born at White Oak*



*One of two white rhino calves born at White Oak*

*One of  
two giraffe  
calves born  
at White  
Oak*



*One of two okapi calves  
born in June*



*Wattled crane chick  
hatched in January*

Past issues of Karatasi are available on our website at [www.whiteoakwildlife.org](http://www.whiteoakwildlife.org)

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