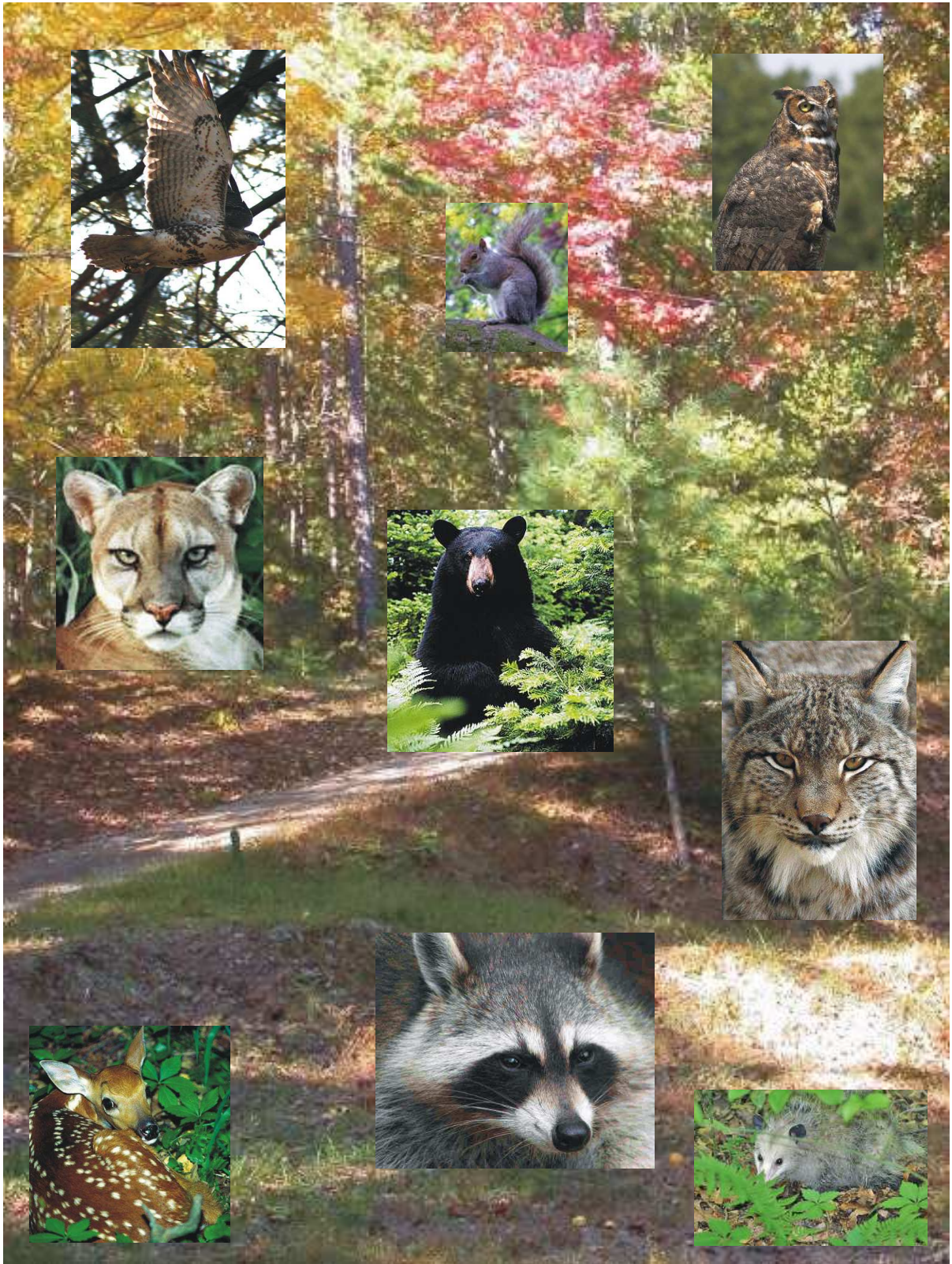


ELLIJAY WILDLIFE REHABILITATION SANCTUARY



ANNUAL REPORT 2008

The nation's premier natural-habitat refuge for wild animal rescue, rehabilitation, release and education

A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization

www.thewildlifesanctuary.com

ELLIJAY WILDLIFE REHABILITATION SANCTUARY

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ELLIJAY WILDLIFE REHABILITATION SANCTUARY

The Wildlife Sanctuary

Located in the foothills of the north Georgia mountains, The Wildlife Sanctuary in Ellijay is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to the rescue, rehabilitation and release of wild animals indigenous to North America. This 40-acre facility began over 35 years ago when its current director, Craig “Grizzly” Cylke, began bringing home injured animals as a young boy.



Today, in the state of Georgia, this sanctuary is the premier holding facility for the Eastern Panther, the rarest sub-species of cougar that is on the brink of extinction. It also houses the largest collection of both Eastern Panthers and Western cougars in the Southeast. The sanctuary maintains many other wild animals, including black bears, deer, squirrels, opossum, a northern Lynx, birds of prey and reptiles. It is the largest facility in the southeastern United States capable of handling large indigenous wild animals for rehabilitation and wild release. The 501 (c)(3) non-profit status was granted to the sanctuary in 1994.



Located in Ellijay, GA

Since its inception, the sanctuary has rescued, rehabilitated and released thousands of animals back into the wild. Sometimes an animal’s injuries are too severe to allow its wild release. In these cases, the sanctuary creates a comfortable living environment where these animals can live out the balance of their natural lives and be viewed and enjoyed by visitors during educational programs.



In addition to its lifesaving wildlife work, The Wildlife Sanctuary also conducts programs about wildlife awareness, wildlife rescue, animal rehabilitation, wild release or the long-term sanctuary care for the birds, reptiles and mammals that are too injured or human-imprinted to be returned to the wild. Over the past 14 years, staff members have conducted programs ranging from half-day tours to 8 weeks of summer camp for inner-city and foster children, inner-city school programs for 120,000 students in the Atlanta area, and in-school programs for grades K-12 in schools across the Southeast.



Craig “Grizzly” Cylke
Wildlife & Program
Director

Presently, the sanctuary is undertaking an expansion and complete renovation of its facilities. It is also using “*The Wildlife Sanctuary*” as its generic identity, since it will be conducting education programs in schools across the United States through podcasting. Some video snippets can be seen at its web site, www.thewildlifesanctuary.com.

New facilities at the sanctuary will include a raptor aviary (in progress), a food storage and preparation kitchen, an animal clinic, and a cougar pre-release habitat. Additional public access areas will include an enclosed welcome center and gift shop, an online store, a covered amphitheatre (currently open air), a snack shack and an enclosed education center. Some of the pre-release habitats may require the acquisition of additional land that is isolated from the rest of the sanctuary. Expansion of new and existing facilities is discussed in greater detail later in this report, and will be undertaken as funds become available.



Example of an Aviary

Mammals at The Wildlife Sanctuary

Eastern Panther

Lynx

American Black Bear

Western Cougar

White-Tailed Deer

Opossum

Other Mammals:

Gray Squirrel

Flying Squirrel

Skunk

Raccoon

Fox

Bobcat

Warning: On The Brink of Extinction

EASTERN PANTHER

Eastern Cougars are North America’s most endangered animal. Also known as the North American Cougar (*Puma concolor cougar*), they encompass the remaining populations of the cat almost universally referred to east of the Mississippi as the Panther. All subspecies that roamed from northeast Canada to the Gulf of Mexico, such as the Wisconsin Cougar that died out in 1925, are extinct except the critically endangered Florida Panther population.

The Wildlife Sanctuary has three Eastern Panthers, or about 3% of the remaining population of 100 animals. Today, the Florida Panther NWR project with the few panthers in the Florida Everglades, is the only active repopulation program in the U.S. *Bringing greater attention to this near-extinction condition and establishing an active repopulation program in the Southeast are two of the major goals of The Wildlife Sanctuary.*

Surprisingly, few people in the United States realize that a near extinct condition exists in North America. Most of the publicity about threatened species is devoted to exotic animals on other continents, such as the critically endangered Javan Rhino, or the endangered Snow Leopard in central Asia. Recently, the State of Georgia declared Eastern Cougars extinct in the wild in Georgia.

There are suitable wild release habitats in the southeastern U.S. for the repopulation of these reclusive cats in sparsely populated, mountainous areas of the southeast. Eventual release will require the approval and cooperation of various state agencies, the federal government, and local residents. Other milestones to achieve are finding genetically-diverse potential mates, several successful breedings, the acquisition and containment of remote land for wild reacclimation (pre-release habitats), and sustainable funding for the ongoing effort.

HOW YOU CAN BE PART OF THIS EFFORT

The Wildlife Sanctuary is seeking the support of foundations, corporations and individuals who recognize the importance of rescuing this critically endangered animal from the brink of extinction. Currently, there are no state or federal agencies funding this effort for the sanctuary. Those funds may be forthcoming when The Wildlife Sanctuary presents its case for the repopulation and conservation of the Eastern Panther.

However, The Wildlife Sanctuary has to prepare an Eastern Cougar repopulation and wildlife management plan. This plan is critical to saving this species, but it cannot be done without the help and interest of people like you. Please contact us for more information about what you can do in this vital conservation role.



Conservation status



Critically Endangered (IUCN 3.1)

Scientific classification

- Kingdom: [Animalia](#)
- Phylum: [Chordata](#)
- Class: [Mammalia](#)
- Order: [Carnivora](#)
- Family: [Felidae](#)
- Genus: [Puma](#)
- Species: [P. concolor](#)
- Subspecies: *P. c. cougar*

Trinomial name

Puma concolor cougar
(Kerr, 1792)

A Few of The Names of This Critically Endangered Cat:

- Black Panther, Caracajou, Catamount, Catawampus, Cougar, Deer Tiger, Deercat, Devil Cat, Eastern Cougar, Eastern Panther, Fire Cat, Florida Panther, Ghost Cat, Grey Lion, Indian Devil, King Cat, Klandagi, Long Tail (Erielhonan), Mexican Lion, Mountain Devil, Mountain Lion, Mountain Screamer, Painter, Panther (Eastern Panther), Plain Lion, Puma, Purple Tail, Quinquajou, Red Tiger, Silver Lion, Sneak Cat, Swamp Lion

Conservation Status: Threatened

Lynx

In 2000, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service designated the Lynx a threatened species in the lower 48 states. In North America, the Lynx, also known as the Canadian Lynx or Northern Lynx, is the mid-sized wild cat between the smaller Bobcat and the larger Puma. A fully grown lynx weighs about 40-50 pounds.

Taz, one of the oldest known living lynx in captivity at 15 years of age, resides at The Wildlife Sanctuary. This animal was born without inner ear drums in a captive breeding program in Wisconsin. Unable to be released into the wild, and not genetically suitable for breeding, it was adopted by The Wildlife Sanctuary. Now nearly blind due to degenerative retinitis, Taz is cared for daily at the sanctuary and is the Sanctuary's wild cat mascot.



Lynx (Canadian Lynx)

Conservation Status: Least Concern

American Black Bear

The American Black Bear is the most common bear in North America. It ranges from northern Alaska to Mexico, and from the Pacific to the Atlantic coasts. At present, there are 9 black bears at The Wildlife Sanctuary.

Currently, Georgia authorities have instructed the sanctuary not to intervene when a black bear has been injured in the wild, and “let nature take its course.” If that bear is a mother with cubs, not only will the mother likely die, but cubs under one year of age will die, too. They have not yet learned how to forage for food or survive through the winter, and typically stay with the mother until they are two years of age. Unfortunately, the most common injury to black bears is being hit by cars or trucks.

The Wildlife Sanctuary takes a different view of “let nature take its course.” The vehicle that hit the bear wasn't made by Mother Nature – it was made by man, and man should take responsibility to care for the injured bear and its cubs until they can be returned to the wild.

The Wildlife Sanctuary is working to resolve this conflict of interest with the appropriate agencies within Georgia, since the sanctuary is capable of rescuing and rehabilitating bears. It also has a bear habitat for animals that cannot be returned to the wild. The sanctuary is looking to establish a pre-release habitat, so bears can be released after their injuries have healed and observed to ensure they are capable of returning to the wild with an excellent chance for long-term survival.



American Black Bear

Meet Annie

The most famous bear at the sanctuary is Annie, who was rescued as a cub after poachers shot her mother. Intending to keep the cub, the poachers ripped out the cub's claws with a pair of pliers as Annie screamed in terror and pain at her dead mother's side.

These poachers also took a video of their exploits. It was later turned over to authorities by a concerned citizen. The poachers went to jail and Annie became a permanent resident of the sanctuary.

ELLIJAY WILDLIFE REHABILITATION SANCTUARY - Mammals

Conservation Status: Not Threatened

Western Cougar

The Western Cougar is the largest of the North American cats. It lives in a range extending from northwestern Canada to nearly all of South America. Males average 120 to 160 pounds, and females 75 to 110 pounds. They are solitary animals with large territories, up to 400 sq. miles for males and 100 sq. miles for females.

There are 10 cougars at The Wildlife Sanctuary, 7 Western and 3 Eastern (panthers). These animals are human imprinted, which means they cannot be returned to the wild. They are being studied for possible mating with the Eastern Panther if suitable Eastern Panther males are not available. This is one path to a captive breeding and repopulation program for the Eastern Panther.



Cougar

Conservation Status: Least Concern

White-Tailed Deer

The White-Tailed Deer is a medium-sized mammal found throughout most of the continental United States, southern Canada, Mexico, Central America, northern portions of South America as far south as Peru, and some countries in Europe. While its conservation status is of least concern, the reduction of habitat for human development has created new problems, including wasting disease and more frequent impacts with vehicles.

Each year, The Wildlife Sanctuary raises fawns that have lost their mother, typically to an impact with a vehicle. These accidents are on the rise in the eastern U.S. where the deer's main predator, the Eastern Cougar, has been nearly wiped out. The Sanctuary's Eastern Cougar repopulation program will help restore this balance.



White-tailed Deer

Opossum

The Opossum is North America's only marsupial, an animal that bears its young in a pouch, like kangaroos. Originally identified in Virginia, it has expanded its range west and as far north as Canada. It is now found in most states of the U.S.

Opossums are slow moving, nocturnal animals. They are often hit by vehicles. Experienced handlers know there may be offspring in the pouch of the female, and if the pouch was not run over, they may be alive. There may be as many as 25 babies in the pouch. If they are very young, all 25 will fit on a tablespoon.

Each year, The Wildlife Sanctuary raises and releases many baby opossums rescued from the pouches of females killed on the road. These marsupials are not one of the six common carriers of rabies.



Opossum

ELLIJAY WILDLIFE REHABILITATION SANCTUARY - Mammals

Other Mammals

The Wildlife Sanctuary rescues, rehabilitates and releases many other animals each year, including grey squirrels, flying squirrels, skunks, raccoons, foxes, and bobcats. The most common releases are the dozens of baby squirrels, deer and opossums the sanctuary rescues each year.

Many of these animals are brought into the sanctuary by people who have found them injured or abandoned. Others are rescued by the sanctuary staff, who can be called out in the middle of the night to capture an injured animal, sedate it, and transport it to the vet or the sanctuary.

Many of these animals would have died from their injuries if it weren't for the exceptional dedication and hard work of Dr. Francis Cipullo, Dr. Lyn Lewis, and the other veterinary professionals at the Appalachian Animal Hospital in Ellijay, GA. The Wildlife Sanctuary is deeply thankful for their support over the years.



Critter Pictures
Gray Squirrel (top right), Flying Squirrel (directly beneath); Skunk (above left), Baby Raccoon (above center), Fox (above right; injured), Bobcat (left), Coyote (right), fawn (bottom right).



Babies

Each year, The Wildlife Sanctuary raises and releases hundreds of orphaned baby animals, such as opossums, squirrels, flying squirrels and deer. Initially, they are bottle fed around the clock using small pipettes, eyedroppers, and small baby bottles. Many of these animals learn their foraging habits from their mothers. To ensure their successful release, sanctuary staff has to teach these little ones how to find food before they are returned to the wild.

April and May are the best months to visit the sanctuary to see the babies under care. By mid-summer, most will be released back into their natural habitat.

Raptors at The Wildlife Sanctuary

Great Horned Owl

Barn Owl

Red Phased Screech Owl

Red-Tailed Hawk

Other Raptors

Conservation Status: Least Concern

Great Horned Owl

The Great Horned Owl is the largest in the owl family. They range from Alaska to Newfoundland in the north, throughout the continental U.S. and Mexico, and into Central and many parts of South America.

Great Horned Owls do not actually have horns. These feathers on each side of the head grow to look like horns. These birds of prey are nocturnal hunters. Their eyes are fixed in their sockets, so they turn their heads almost 270 degrees from side to side. During pursuit of prey, they are focusing straight ahead and may be hit by a vehicle approaching from the left or right. Some are shot by irresponsible people (no self-respecting hunter would shoot an owl or other raptor).

In the past, The Wildlife Sanctuary has taken in Great Horned Owls and other birds of prey. Often, the injuries to their wings, joints or vision are too severe, preventing them from regaining their ability to fly or pursue prey. These raptors are kept at the sanctuary and cared for throughout the balance of their natural lives.



Great Horned Owl

Conservation Status: Least Concern

Barn Owl

The Barn Owl is the most widely distributed species of owl. It is found almost everywhere in the world except polar regions and desert areas. This owl is known for its eerily silent flight. It is called many names, including Common Barn Owl, Monkey-faced Owl, Rat Owl, White Owl, Silver Owl, Demon Owl, Ghost Owl, Death Owl, Night Owl, Heart-Faced Owl, Church Owl, Cave Owl or Stone Owl.

One of the tenets of The Wildlife Sanctuary is to treat and care for any injured wild animal rescued or received by the sanctuary, whether or not that animal is common or rare. Another principle is to return them to the wild whenever possible.



Barn Owl

Conservation Status: Least Concern

Screech Owl

The Screech Owl is found throughout North, Central and South America. There are over 20 distinct species within the Megascops genus, and new species are still being discovered. The sanctuary rescued a red-phased Eastern Screech Owl several years ago. Often called red *faced*, this individual has permanent damage to its vision.

“*Screechy*” was memorialized in the painting (right) and limited edition prints by award-winning artist Valerie Ettershank in 2008.



Screech Owl

Conservation Status: Least Concern

Red-Tailed Hawk

The Red-Tailed Hawk is one of three birds of prey known in the United States as the “chickenhawk” although it rarely kills chickens. It lives in a wide range of habitats and altitudes, including deserts, grasslands, coniferous and deciduous forests, tropical rainforests, agricultural fields and urban areas. It can be found throughout North and Central America.

Surprising to most people is that these large birds weigh less than 4 pounds. They are often seen near highways where grassy shoulders provide habitat for rabbits, field mice and other possible prey. While typically flying between 20 and 40 miles per hour, it can hit 120 mph in a dive pursuing prey.

Red Tailed Hawks are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. However, they are sometimes shot by irresponsible or bored hunters, or are hit by vehicles along roadways.



Red-Tailed Hawk

Other Raptors

The Wildlife Sanctuary is preparing to save injured birds of prey, including eagles, vultures, hawks, harriers, falcons, ospreys, owls, kites, and even caracaras. The sanctuary has designed a raptor aviary and staged recovery cages for the rehabilitation and wild release of these magnificent birds.

The most common injuries to raptors are wing or vision injuries, typically caused by some interaction with man. Wing injuries often can be rehabilitated, while most vision injuries cannot.

When wild release is not an option, these birds will be housed and cared for at Raptor Ridge, a section of the sanctuary above Cougar Canyon, devoted to the birds of prey.

When completed, the sanctuary will be recertified to rescue, rehabilitate and release birds of prey. This facility is discussed later in this report.

Reptiles at The Wildlife Sanctuary

Red Tailed Boa

Burmese Python

Black Rat Snake

Eastern Box Turtle

Conservation Status: Least Concern

Red Tailed Boa Constrictor

The Red Tailed Boa Constrictor derives its name from its color pattern, which consists of a ruddy brown ground color, becoming a rich brick red on the tail. It is found from northern Mexico to South America north of 35° south latitude.

Snakes are usually injured because they are burned by heat lamps or heat rocks designed to keep them warm in captivity but become too hot. If a boa isn't warm enough or is too warm, it will not eat. A rat put in as the snake's intended food will eventually become hungry enough and attack the snake; another common injury to snakes.



Red Tailed Boa

Burmese Python

The Burmese Python, one of the 6 largest snakes in the world, can grow to 23 feet in length and weigh over 200 pounds. This one was brought to the sanctuary after it grew too large to keep as a pet. This snake is not an endangered species and is common in Southeast Asia. It is a permanent resident at The Wildlife Sanctuary, since there is no legal habitat for it in North America.



Burmese Python

Black Rat Snake

The Black Rat Snake is the largest snake found in North America, growing up to 8 feet long. Like the boa and the python, this snake is a constrictor that suffocates its prey by squeezing it until the prey cannot breathe. It is an excellent climber, and can be found off the ground in mature trees with no low branches to aid in climbing. It prefers dense forest ground cover where it can hunt small rodents.



Black Rat Snake

Eastern Box Turtle

The Eastern Box Turtle is one of several subspecies of hinge-shell turtles commonly called box turtles. Turtles are often hit by cars as they cross roads to reach a mate or in search of food or new habitat. The shell has the capacity to repair itself when injured or damaged, although it is a very slow process. When these animals are brought to the sanctuary with broken shells, they require extra care during their recuperation.



Eastern Box Turtle

Programs at The Wildlife Sanctuary

Sanctuary Guided Tours

On-Site & Off-Site Programs

Nature Programs

Camping Programs

Future of Programs

Sanctuary Guided Tours

The Wildlife Sanctuary conducts guided tours by appointment. It is a controlled-environment habitat where the animals are provided room to roam and the humans are restricted. The intent is to keep the group small to limit the impact of the human presence. The sanctuary is not a zoo. It is maintained for the benefit of the animals.

The sanctuary is a place of refuge from humans and predators so that rescued animals can be nursed back to health and released back into the wild. Sometimes, an animal's injuries prevent its wild release. These animals live out the remainder of their natural lives at the sanctuary in safety and comfort. These are the animals observed during sanctuary tours.

The advantage to animals being observed in a sanctuary setting is that they can be viewed as wild instead of appearing tame or cute, which could lead to more of them being purchased as pets. A few of the animals at the sanctuary were pets and are human imprinted. If returned to the wild, they would likely seek out humans to obtain food. This would create a conflict that would end badly for the animals. Unfortunately, large carnivores raised as pets usually end up destroyed or caged when they become too expensive to feed or too difficult to control.

As man encroaches into their habitat, wild animals will be hunted to extinction because they are perceived as dangerous. This happened to many sub-species of cougar in the 1900's. Their natural fear of humans is their best survival defense against man.

On-Site & Off-Site Programs

Respect for the wild nature of animals makes the sanctuary an excellent forum for wildlife education. This is a key component of the operation of The Wildlife Sanctuary in Ellijay, GA. At its on-site outdoor amphitheatre, young and old alike can get an up-close view of these wonderful creatures.

The Wildlife Sanctuary uses some of its human-imprinted animals for a discussion of their wild nature and importance to the balance of the entire ecosystem. Over the years, The Wildlife Sanctuary has conducted presentations to thousands of schoolchildren in its outdoor education programs. Many of these are held at the amphitheatre each year. Others are presented at churches, schools, and businesses where the wildlife lifesaving message of the sanctuary can be heard.

In 2008, The Wildlife Sanctuary made its 20th appearance at The Apple Festival in Ellijay. It also revitalized its web site and is adding educational program video clips and podcasts. These will be exciting enhancements to its educational component, and will allow The Wildlife Sanctuary to reach an audience across the United States. Be sure to visit www.thewildlifesanctuary.com for more information.



ELLIJAY WILDLIFE REHABILITATION SANCTUARY- Programs

Nature Programs

The Wildlife Sanctuary idled nearly all of its nature programs in 2008 due to revenue shortfalls. Although these programs have been revenue generators in past years, they require a certain amount of set-up, maintenance, upkeep and marketing to be profitable.

These programs are often tied into the rescue, rehabilitation, release and education aspects of the sanctuary. Nearly all of them were designed to meet Quality Core Curriculum Requirements* (now called the Georgia Performance Standards) for grades 1 – 12. In 2008, the schools in Georgia had to cancel nearly all of their field trips due to the high cost of diesel fuel and other budget constraints.

The following programs were not active in 2008: Wildlife Identification and Rehabilitation, Aquatic Plant & Animal Studies, Native American Lifestyle and Village, Forest Life, Edible Plant Identification, Gold Panning and Basic Geology, Pioneer Living, Orienteering, Ornithology/Bird Watching, Astronomy/Star Gazing, and Native American Lore.

Camping Programs

The Wildlife Sanctuary idled nearly all of its camping programs in 2008 due to revenue shortfalls. Although these programs have been revenue generators in past years, they require a certain amount of set-up, maintenance, upkeep and marketing to be profitable.

The sanctuary has several camping sites, bunkhouses, and even authentic Native American teepees for campers. There is also a camp kitchen and hot shower facility.

In past years, The Wildlife Sanctuary's Camp Wildlife has had special guests from Channel 9's Nature Science Shows, Dollywood's Birds of Prey show, and The Rain Forest Critters.

Future of Programs

The nature and camping programs will remain idled until such time as funds become available to relaunch them and the economic climate improves sufficiently to support their success. While these are budgeted for 2009, it may be unlikely that these programs will operate in 2009. Unused budget resources will be reallocated to other areas of the sanctuary if the programs are idle.

At present, the sanctuary has an outside educator converting the Quality Core Curriculum Requirements to meet Georgia Performance Standards for grades 1 - 12. It is also converting a portion of the live programs it would normally conduct on-site into podcasts to reach a broader audience. It is anticipated that the content of the podcasts and a live question-and-answer session with the sanctuary director will meet the field trip standards of other states and become a launch pad for the Virtual Field Trip™ to schools across the nation.



ELLIJAY WILDLIFE REHABILITATION SANCTUARY

Projects at The Wildlife Sanctuary

Raptor Aviary

Virtual Field Trip™

Food Storage & Preparation Facility

Animal Clinic

Enclosed Welcome Center, Gift Shop & Online Store

Education Center & Covered Amphitheatre

Snack Shack

Cougar Breeding Program

ELLIJAY WILDLIFE REHABILITATION SANCTUARY - Projects

Raptor Aviary

The Wildlife Sanctuary is planning to complete the construction of its raptor aviary for the rehabilitation and wild release of rescued hawks, owls, and other birds of prey. This facility requires special fencing and netting to protect the birds as they relearn their flight skills. The aviary will be approximately 30x60 square feet at the base and three stories high.

Raptors are rehabilitated in four stages: confined quarters as their injuries heal, larger cages where they can begin to move around but not achieve flight, the aviary itself where full flight is possible, and then wild release.

The estimated cost to complete this facility capable of handling 6 to 9 birds, from healing quarters to the aviary, is \$74,500.



Example of Large Raptor Aviary

Virtual Field Trips™

The Wildlife Sanctuary is developing Virtual Field Trips™ that can be downloaded as streaming video into schools along with a live question and answer segment. This has been developed to answer the loss of field trips to the sanctuary and to broaden the reach of the Sanctuary's programs from local schools to any school in the nation.

The Sanctuary has applied for a trademark of the Virtual Field Trips™ concept. The content will include programs on each of the animals, particularly endangered species like the Eastern Cougar. These programs will be protected by copyright. There will be short introductory videos on each animal and separate full-length programs. There will also be an overview of Virtual Field Trips™ that explains to teachers how they can use this medium to satisfy requirements for each grade level.

The sanctuary has found a very economical way to create the programs, which can be broadcast free over the Internet. The live segment would be scheduled in advance, may include some of the animals that are more easily handled, and would be interactive with the audience, allowing them to ask questions and receive answers from the director of the sanctuary.

It is anticipated that there will be a small fee for the full-length programs that would include the live interactive segment. This would generate revenues to cover production costs and development of more programming.

The Wildlife Sanctuary believes that Virtual Field Trips™ will be well received by schools, and represents valuable intellectual property of the sanctuary. It also believes that education of young people is a critical element to protecting and preserving wildlife across North America and around the world.



Food Storage & Preparation Facility

Each month, The Wildlife Sanctuary serves about 2,000 pounds of meat and 800 pounds of feed to the animals at the sanctuary. In the spring, when babies are usually born, the sanctuary can also serve formula to as many as 200 orphaned squirrels, opossums, raccoons, deer, and other offspring.

At present, the sanctuary has very limited food storage and food preparation facilities. Since the majority of this food is donated, it is necessary for sanctuary staff members to pick it up and put it into storage on a regular basis to keep it from spoiling.

Having the food in storage is only half the process. Twice each day, sanctuary staff members must prepare the food for the animals and serve them. As with any food preparation, care must be taken so that food does not become contaminated. These animals are just as susceptible to foodborne illness as humans, but they are much less cooperative as patients.

The estimated cost to complete a facility capable of handling all of the food storage and preparation for the sanctuary is \$165,000. It would be housed in a building that would contain other facilities to serve the needs of the sanctuary.



Animal Clinic

The Wildlife Sanctuary has designed a building to house several support facilities. This design includes an animal clinic. The clinic would be along the lines of an outpatient care center, and not a full emergency and trauma care center. This outpatient center would be used to provide medical care for the animals at the sanctuary.

The sanctuary uses the services of a local veterinarian for all of its current medical needs. This has been a problem when routine care is all that is needed, because the animal has to be sedated and then transported to and from the vet's office. This makes even a simple tooth extraction very stressful on the animal.

The clinic would be built at the same time as the food preparation and storage facility, since both require highly sanitary conditions and equipment. Since the clinic would not be a trauma center, it would not require the diagnostic or surgical equipment for that level of emergency care. Such services would continue to be provided by a local veterinarian.

The clinic would operate only on an as-needed basis where a local vet would be scheduled to come in for non-routine situations. The cost of the clinic is being evaluated. If it is part of the same building as other facilities, it will cost considerably less than the construction of a stand-alone building.



Enclosed Welcome Center, Gift Shop and Online Store

The Wildlife Sanctuary currently has a 600 square foot open-air Welcome Center. It has a small store at its uncovered amphitheatre. In inclement weather, neither of these facilities provides comfortable protection for visitors. In addition, there is a very limited opportunity for visitors to purchase souvenirs at the sanctuary.

Establishing a comfortable, enclosed Welcome Center with a gift shop would create a new atmosphere and revenue stream that the sanctuary does not have today. The Wildlife Sanctuary intends to investigate the potential for a gift shop to determine if it would be cost justifiable.

Whether or not it has a gift shop, The Wildlife Sanctuary can have an online store to sell merchandise to the general public. This will be investigated as well to determine its viability as a sustainable revenue stream.

Education Center & Covered Amphitheatre

The Wildlife Sanctuary currently has an open-air amphitheatre with a stage and rustic seating for educational wildlife presentations. This amphitheatre also has been rented to church groups for outdoor services. However, it is not useful during cool or inclement weather. Since wildlife education is one of the primary purposes of the sanctuary, enclosed or covered facilities are more useful to its objectives.

The building under consideration for construction could include an education center for wildlife presentations anytime during the year. However, during favorable weather, an outdoor setting is more conducive to conveying the aspects of nature, although a covered amphitheatre with aluminum stadium seating and rails would be safer for use by the general public.

The sanctuary has been trying to locate used stadium seating from a school upgrading their facilities. If this is not successful, then the sanctuary will pursue funding for a new installation, or an upgrade of the existing amphitheatre with an indoor education center.

All of the projects at The Wildlife Sanctuary will require a capital projects plan and considerable support. When the sanctuary has a solid base of financial support for general operations, it will begin to develop its long-range capital projects plan.



Snack Shack

Depending upon the final configuration of facility buildings, the sanctuary may have a stand-alone snack shack for visitors to purchase food and drinks. This option may be fulfilled by vending machines inside the Welcome Center.

The sanctuary will not develop a building or operations costs for the snack shack until other capital projects planning is completed.

Special Project: Cougar Breeding Program

The Wildlife Sanctuary has observed cougar breeding programs in the Southeast as part of its effort to develop a successful program to repopulate the Eastern Cougar. The Eastern Cougar is on the brink of extinction, with less than 100 animals known to exist worldwide.

There are many challenges to establishing this program, including state and federal approvals to initiate the program, as well as release areas approved by local residents, in addition to county, state and federal authorities. These are the “red tape” hurdles.

In addition, there are “mother nature” hurdles. The critically low population of Eastern Cougars means that the remaining cats may be too closely related for breeding. Finding a genetically unique male will be exceptionally difficult. The only hope for the species may be to breed it with some of the larger Western Cougar. However, this may change some of the unique characteristics of the Eastern Cougar.

Then there are release issues. Most people don’t mind seeing one of these cats in a zoo, but few people want to have them released into the wild because they might encounter one. Given the large range of the cat, this is extremely unlikely. However, that large range presents another challenge – the ability of the cat to find a mate in the wild to continue the repopulation process.

All these factors aside, The Wildlife Sanctuary believes that this subspecies of cougar needs to be saved and reintroduced to remote wilderness areas of the southeastern United States where it once roamed. It will take a coordinated effort of people, corporate support, foundation funding, and government approvals to be successful.



Finances at The Wildlife Sanctuary

Summary of Financial Activities 2008

Comments from the Chairman

Pro Forma Financial Forecast

ELLIJAY WILDLIFE REHABILITATION SANCTUARY

Summary of Financial Activities 2008

Public Support & Revenues

Public Support - Donations	102,730.78
Other Revenues	14,937.41
Total Public Support and Revenue	117,668.19

Expenses

Shelter and Care	27,311.53
Educational Programs	20,916.55
Fundraising	14,960.22
General & Administrative	59,114.10
Total Expenses	122,302.41

Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets (5,641.43)

(Reviewed)



Dr. Cipullo examining a black bear. For over 20 years, he has volunteered his time to care for indigenous wildlife and zoo animals, including mammals, reptiles, and birds of prey.

Dr. Francis Cipullo Chairman of the Board

Dr. Cipullo is Chairman of the Board at The Wildlife Sanctuary. He is a graduate of the University of Florida and has been practicing veterinary medicine since 1987. He has completed internships at The National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland, and the Miami Metrozoo. His interests include internal medicine, avian, exotic, and wildlife medicine and surgery.

Dr. Cipullo is a member of the American Veterinary Medical Assn., the Georgia Veterinary Medical Assn., the Association of Avian Veterinarians and the American Association of Zoo Veterinarians.

Comments from the Chairman:

We are very excited about the future of The Wildlife Sanctuary. What began as the hobby of our Wildlife Director more than 30 years ago is now being restructured into a full-featured wild animal care center for the preservation and protection of indigenous wild species, along with the presentation of wildlife education that is vital to saving our wild mammals, birds and reptiles.

We have considerable work ahead of us, from habitat upgrades and expansion, to facility improvements to advance our care capabilities, through refinements in all our communications to the public about who we are and what we do.

Most important to our efforts is fundraising. The sanctuary has been under funded for too long, and can only move forward with support that is sufficient to accomplish its short-term and long-term goals. If 2009 is dedicated to anything, it will be dedicated to finding the hearts and minds we need to ensure that this sanctuary moves forward on a solid footing and operates well into the future for the benefit of future generations of wild animals and their geographic cohabitants (humans).

ELLIJAY WILDLIFE REHABILITATION SANCTUARY

Pro Forma Financial Forecast

The following pages contain a pro forma financial forecast for the basic operations of The Wildlife Sanctuary. This forecast is provided without the detailed explanations by line that it requires for a complete understanding of income and expense items. Many of the expenses are evenly spread across each month throughout the year, although this is not how they may actually be incurred.

The pro forma financial forecast was developed so that The Wildlife Sanctuary could build other cash flow model forecasts for expanded, future operations. It was developed from certain historical information and reasonable expenditures to identify a reasonable baseline for operating the facility. It is intended only as a guide, although the total annual expenditure of approximately \$300,000 is anticipated to be accurate for baseline operations.

The pro forma financial forecast contains limited revenues based on the historical performance of The Wildlife Sanctuary over the past several years. This level of revenues has been insufficient to allow the sanctuary to improve its operations. While there is a line item for state and federal government support, no such support has been obtained since 2002. There is currently an effort to aggressively pursue such funding from both the state of Georgia, specifically through the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, and various agencies of the federal government. It is believed that some funding can be obtained from these sources, although no amount could be reasonably forecast.

Most of the remaining sources of revenue have associated expenses. If the revenues are not realized, approximately \$20,000 in expenses would not be incurred. However, this would also mean that the sanctuary is not operating its educational programs, which would have a negative impact on the goals and purpose of the sanctuary. It is the intention of the sanctuary to promote and pursue these programs.

While a budget of \$300,000 is reasonable for baseline operations, it would be insufficient to fully staff the facility. There are several necessary positions that remain unfilled at this level of funding. The sanctuary has also operated for several years with revenues significantly below its baseline. To remain in operation, it has deferred salaries, some maintenance activities, and has acquired some debt. Consequently, fundraising will be a key focus of sanctuary operations in 2009 and subsequent years to correct these conditions.

Pro Forma Financial Forecast

Descriptions	Month 1	Month 2	Month 3	Month 4	Month 5	Month 6	Month 7	Month 8	Month 9	Month 10	Month 11	Month 12	YTD
54 Grounds Maintenance	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	150.00	1,800.00
55 Cage Maint & Repairs	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	6,000.00
56 Habitat Maint & Repairs	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	3,000.00
57 Supplies	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	12,000.00
58 Equip Maint & Repairs	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	1,200.00
59 Animal Liability Insurance								8,500.00					8,500.00
60 Permits & Registrations	125.00	125.00	125.00	125.00	125.00	125.00	125.00	125.00	125.00	125.00	125.00	125.00	1,500.00
61 Subtotal Animal Care & Maint	2,875.00	2,875.00	2,875.00	2,875.00	2,875.00	2,875.00	2,875.00	11,375.00	2,875.00	2,875.00	2,875.00	2,875.00	43,000.00
62 Program Expenses													
63 Camping Supplies	125.00	125.00	125.00	250.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	250.00	125.00	125.00	125.00	3,250.00
64 Camp Maint & Repairs	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	1,200.00
65 Amphitheatre Supplies	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	600.00
66 Amphitheatre M & R	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	1,200.00
67 Tour Supplies	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	300.00
68 Offsite Programs													
69 Meals	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	600.00
70 Lodging	400.00	400.00	400.00	400.00	400.00	400.00	400.00	400.00	400.00	400.00	400.00	400.00	4,800.00
71 Gas	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	6,000.00
72 Supplies	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	1,200.00
73 Porta-Toilets	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	3,000.00
74 Refunds	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	300.00
75 Subtotal: Programs	1,725.00	1,725.00	1,725.00	1,850.00	2,100.00	2,100.00	2,100.00	2,100.00	1,850.00	1,725.00	1,725.00	1,725.00	22,450.00
76 Promotional & Fundraising													
77 Web Site	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	3,000.00
78 Printing	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	600.00
79 Advertising	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	300.00
80 Postage & Envelopes	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	300.00
81 Marketing Literature	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	1,200.00
82 Videography	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	50.00	600.00
83 Memorabilia COGS	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	3,000.00
84 Travel Expenses	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	3,000.00
85 Sales Tax													
86 Subtotal: Promo & Funding	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	12,000.00
87 Debt Repayment													
88 Aged Accounts Payable	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	250.00	3,000.00
89 Aged Payrolls	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	12,000.00
90 Loans from Individuals	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	6,000.00
91 Loans from Banks	500.00	500.00	500.00	10,000.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	500.00	15,500.00
92 Loans - Other													
93 Subtotal: Debt Service	2,250.00	2,250.00	2,250.00	11,750.00	2,250.00	2,250.00	2,250.00	2,250.00	2,250.00	2,250.00	2,250.00	2,250.00	36,500.00
94 TOTAL EXPENSES	23,236.00	23,236.00	23,236.00	32,861.00	23,611.00	23,811.00	23,611.00	32,111.00	23,361.00	23,236.00	23,236.00	23,236.00	298,782.00
95 NET PROFIT/(LOSS)	(23,236.00)	(23,236.00)	(23,236.00)	(32,861.00)	(23,611.00)	(23,811.00)	(23,611.00)	(32,111.00)	(23,361.00)	(23,236.00)	(23,236.00)	(23,236.00)	(298,782.00)