



Foundation for the Protection of the Arabian Leopard in Yemen

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"Working to ensure a sustainably managed wild population of Arabian Leopards living in harmony with local communities in Yemen"

"Friends of the Arabian Leopard"

Nearly 200 members around the world!

Update No. 10: September 18, 2010

Dear Friends of the Arabian Leopard,

It is great to be back in Sana'a where most of the foundation's good work originates. In spite of the recent lull in activity, the autumn is gearing up to be pivotal in helping us achieve our objectives. We are fortunate to be hosting guest researcher Malini Pittet to help get the Hawf project off the ground, are gearing up for the Oman training, and working on several other crucial initiatives.

With best wishes and many thanks for your continuing interest and support,

David

1. Guest Researcher Malini Pittet Arrives in Sana'a:



We are thrilled to be hosting Malini Pittet, a graduate student from the Durrell Institute of Conservation and Ecology in Canterbury, Kent. Malini arrived in Sana'a on September 15th and will be staying in Yemen until December 12th during which time she will utilize her extensive experience in conducting trail camera surveys. Malini has established and monitored trail camera arrays of up to 26 cameras in the Peruvian Amazon and at several locations in India. Of special relevance to our work is Malini's experience in leading a 6 week Tiger census at Periyar National Park in India. While we have previously referred to Malini's tour as an "internship," it is clear that we stand to learn a lot from her wide experience in conducting trail camera surveys. Malini's other relevant work includes tracking radio-collared wild Boars and volunteering for two years at a wild bird hospital in Switzerland. She has also guided nature tours in Bandipur National Park, India. While in Yemen, Malini will deploy four of the digital trail cameras developed by her father for the Center for Electronic Design and Technology at the Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore.

2. Dancing to save Yemen's National Animal: The Sana'a Ballroom Dancing Group has generously donated \$240 to the foundation. This donation will be utilized to partially support Malini's "internship" and therefore comes at a very opportune time. Thank you to all of the group's members for supporting the foundation while "tripping the light fantastic."



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3. The Pitfalls of Camera Trap Surveys: Until recently, the foundation had five cameras in the field, one in the Hadhramawt and four on Jebel Milhan. Unfortunately, we had to recall two of the Milhan cameras when it became clear that our contractor there didn't quite "get it." On one camera alone, he managed to capture 526 self-portraits in less than a month. Obviously, a bit more training is in order.



4. Modest Success on Milhan: In addition to the portraits, our contractor did manage to capture a few wildlife images that we have tentatively identified as a Small-spotted Genet* (left) and a possible Blanford's Fox (right). While leopards are our main quarry, and we seek clearer, more definitive images than these, documenting all life in our study areas is very useful. As we deploy more cameras monitored by better-trained workers, our understanding of the wildlife that utilizes these areas will, in theory, improve (*NB: The date on the genet photo is incorrectly programmed).



"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." - Margaret Mead

