



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"

Hundreds of members around the world!

Update No. 19: June 30, 2011

1. Confidence in the Foundation Continues to Grow: Halfway into its second year, the Foundation has matured into an institution that organizations and individuals with a stake in biodiversity conservation obviously have confidence in. This is evidenced by the recruitment of two new sponsors and the approval of follow-up grants by two 'old friends.' On May 27th, Ms. Justine Oller, Assistant Program Manager at the Panthera Foundation, wrote to say that our application for a grant to study the Arabian Caracal in Amran and Mahwit would be partially funded by Panthera's Small Cat Action Fund. In addition to the satisfaction of receiving Panthera's support for the Caracal study in the amount of \$5,020 we were especially gratified by the endorsement implicit in Ms. Oller's statement; "Our decisions are based on many factors, including technical reviews, budgetary constraints, and the conservation value of the proposed research, all of which your proposal demonstrated extremely well."

This encouraging correspondence from Panthera was quickly followed by further good news on June 8th when Dr. Keith Taylor, Deputy Chairman of the Abu Dhabi Chapter of the Emirates Natural History Group, wrote to say, "At last night's meeting, the ENHG unanimously approved the...application you submitted...for a grant of US\$ 3,000." As reported on the Foundation Website, a small portion of the grant will be used to provide further training for Mr. Waleed Al-Ra'il and Mr. Murad Mohammed, the Foundation's researchers in Hawf. Most of the funding, however, will be used to organize a series of Arabian Leopard workshops at five critical areas in Yemen. This is the second grant that we have received from our friends at the ENHG with the first one having partially funded the Oman training in November 2010. About that training Dr. Taylor wrote more recently, "I'm happy to pass on to you the comment I've heard from more than one committee member, that support of your foundation's training project last year is the best thing we've done with the club's money so far (in recent memory)." The Foundation is honored to have the support of the Abu Dhabi chapter of the Emirates Natural History Group and is encouraged to hear that the group's committee members are pleased with the outcomes of their support.

On June 9th, we were delighted to receive even more good news in the form of a letter from Rufford Small Grants Director Mr. Josh Cole stating, "I am pleased to advise you that the trustees of The Rufford Small Grants Foundation have approved a RSG grant of £6000." Both the Panthera and the Rufford grants will be used to augment the research efforts started by Hans Schmidt at Jebel Milhan with an expected outcome being the development of a conservation strategy for the Jebel Milhan Protected Area.



TOTAL E&P YEMEN Supports the Protection of the Arabian Leopard in Yemen

Finally, on June 26th Mohamed Bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund Manager Nicolas Heard wrote, "I am delighted to let you know that we will be able to provide you with a grant to contribute to your on-going work in Yemen." The \$10,000 continuation grant will be applied towards expanding our research in Hawf westward in order to attempt to establish the existence of ecological corridors linking the ecosystems in Dhofar and Hawf with the very rich habitat in Wadi Masilah, Hadhramawt. This is a monumental task that will require additional support, but the MBZSCF grant will provide us with the resources needed to increase the scope of our work in eastern Yemen. Of course, we are grateful to all of our conservation donors for providing us with the funds to further train Yemeni researchers and employ them in our efforts to protect the Arabian Leopard in Yemen.

That *all* of our recent grant applications that have thus-far been reviewed have been approved for funding demonstrates: 1) that the battle to prevent the extinction of the Arabian Leopard in Yemen is considered by many in the conservation community to be a worthy cause, and 2) that the Foundation's grant applications have merit in the eyes of conservation donors. However, we know of no conservation donors that fund core administrative costs and the grants that we have recently been awarded are no exception. Financial backing to cover proposal writing, project management, office expenses, communications, most equipment, and other routine overhead must come from corporate sponsorship and private donations. Unfortunately, these have dried up in the winds of change sweeping the Arab world so the Foundation is forced to operate in the red. In fact, it is this financial hurdle rather than Yemen's widespread unrest and the resulting uncertainty that poses our greatest challenge.



2. Ectelysis Works on Behalf of the Foundation: Mr. Nicolas Dunais, the founder and CEO of strategic advisory firm Ectelysis, is developing a system by which mobile phone providers in Yemen can contribute to the cause of Arabian Leopard conservation through their networks. High-level meetings are planned with executives who have already stated their interest in the system.

3. Save Yemen Flora and Fauna (SYFF) Strengthens its Ties with the Foundation: Following a tradition which began in the days of the Foundation's progenitor (The Yemeni Leopard Recovery Program), SYFF continues to publicize the plight of the Arabian Leopard in Yemen and the work of the Foundation on its website www.syff.org. SYFF Secretary Ms. Jowhara Zindani wrote on behalf of the NGO's governing board, "the SYFF team is proud to be affiliated with [FPALY] and hope to collaborate more in the future."

4. California Wildlife Photographer to Work with the Foundation in Hawf: On June 3rd, Foundation Executive Director David Stanton met with conservationist and wildlife photographer Mr. Sebastian Kennerknecht at the offices of Minden Pictures in Aptos, California. During the meeting the two discussed plans for Mr. Kennerknecht to visit Yemen for a period of three months starting in late October. Sebastian, who has extensive experience capturing Mountain Lions and other wildlife with high-resolution camera traps of his own design will work with the Foundation in an effort to obtain museum-quality photographs of Arabian Leopards and other endangered wildlife in and around the Hawf Protected Area. The project is being funded by Mr. Kennerknecht with logistical support being provided by the Foundation. However, additional backing is being sought to increase the number of set-ups and therefore the chances of success in this bold venture.



Juvenile male Mountain Lion © Sebastian Kennerknecht

"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

