



NEWSLETTER

BEARS MATTER

Issue 12, Jul/Aug 2016

'Adopt an animal, become its voice, learn everything you can about it and work with people that want to better its existence, too.' Anon

Welcome to the twelfth edition of Bears Matter - 2016 is flying by! We have been working really hard here at WBF to continue to help as many bears in need around the world, as possible. We have some very exciting new projects to tell you about and updates on what we have been doing this year so far and what your invaluable support has helped us achieve since the last newsletter.

To be most effective, we have decided to distribute our funds slightly differently from now on. Rather than making general donations, we are going to fund specific projects, items of equipment or appeals.



Photo courtesy of NLWS

In June we answered an appeal by our friends at Northern Lights Wildlife Shelter, for donations to help feed a "full house" of cubs. The shelter picked up a trio of orphaned cubs, adding to the 13 already in the shelter's care. At \$50 a week per bear for milk formula, their bills were soaring! We sent \$300 to help feed the triplets for two weeks.

The cubs had been spotted near Chapman Lake, wandering for several days, with no mother in sight. Angelika and Peter Langen from NLWS managed to rescue all three and keep the siblings together. They will be in their care for a good few months yet, so we were glad to help with the milk costs.

To donate toward the bear cubs' milk costs, visit www.wildlifeshelter.com

JAPANESE BEAR PARKS

As a very small charity, we consider very carefully which projects to support, in order to make sure that your generous donations are used to help bears in the most efficient way. One of the projects we are considering for 2016 is one that is not often in the headlines - the worrying welfare concerns in Japan's Bear Parks.

Lesley met with Georgina Allen, Director of Projects and Development, Wild Welfare, at the Advancing Bear Care Conference in Vietnam last year. Georgina had been researching some of the poor conditions found in these parks, which has resulted in poor welfare and health for many captive bears.

We are in regular contact with Georgina and are setting some funds aside to support her work, particularly with a view to funding enrichment items to improve the conditions for the bears. We will keep you informed as we get updates.



As Georgina said:

"Bears are fairly robust animals and can survive in poor environments - meaning they continue to suffer poor welfare within these parks. It was distressing to see so many bears survive in such miserable environments, while the public seemed unaware of their suffering"



THE WORLD'S RAREST BEAR

Announcing a new Beneficiary



The Gobi bear is the rarest bear in the world today. In 2013, there were only 22 left in the wild. There are no Gobi bears in captivity. They have found a way to live in one of the most extreme environments on the planet - the only bear of any kind that dwells exclusively in desert habitat.

The people of southwestern Mongolia have long known of the mysterious animal they called mazaalai, but credible reports were mixed with tall tales of a shaggy, humanlike creature roaming the wildest reaches of the desert. Not until 1943 did a Russian scientist-explorer confirm for the outside world that Gobi bears actually exist.

Just a few years ago estimates put the number of Gobi Bears at as many as 50; the recent figure of 22 survivors comes from a population survey just completed by the Mongolian government and wildlife experts.

We are delighted to announce that MongoliAid International has become our newest beneficiary. MongoliAid International is a small charity founded in 2009 and is funding the 2016 Gobi bear supplemental food distribution programme in conjunction with the MAMA NGO, the Gobi Bear Research Project and the GGSPA Park Administration.



Each food drop cost \$2425 USD, which includes the hire of two trucks for approx eight days, 1000L of fuel, the hire of helpers, food and a satellite phone hire. The Winton Bear Foundation will be providing funding for one of these eight days.



Barry Jiggins from MongoliAid International tells us the food drop consists of bags of pelletized biscuits that are manufactured in a small village near the Gobi Protected area by a small Mongolian NGO that grows vegetables near a desert oasis.

The formula involves maize and dry tomato husks and is something that is being monitored closely to see if the pellets are being found in their scats. Apparently they don't like honey as it is alien to them.



We are very excited to be supporting this project and we will bring you updates as and when we get them.

All photos courtesy of MongoliAid

THE SMART AND VERY BRAVE LITTLE CUB

Early this year, Heather Bacon, WBF Board Member and highly experienced bear vet, brought to our attention the plight of a little bear in Myanmar named Nyen htoo (Nyen too) meaning 'smart one' in Burmese. The little cub, around 5 months old, was found alone - its mother probably a victim of poachers. He was taken in by the ThaBarWa meditation centre to save him being sold on into China. He was found with a terrible swelling on his tongue making it incredibly difficult for him to eat.



The centre gave him antibiotics, which sadly had no effect, and he could only be fed liquids; milk and mashed bananas. The swelling on Nyen htoo's tongue was growing every day and local veterinarians in Myanmar just did not have the experience in this sort of advanced surgery. Heather Bacon was alerted to his plight and asked if the Winton Bear Foundation could help.

Heather believed the swelling was a blockage of the cubs salivary gland which was causing a build up of fluid. With treatment his chances were good, without treatment he would eventually die.

Therefore WBF donated £500 to the cost of Heather travelling to Myanmar to treat the cub and together with Free the Bears and Giving a Future Animal Aid the balance of the costs was covered. We also launched an appeal to raise funds for the ongoing care costs of the cub which to date, has brought in an additional £531.75.



In June, Heather travelled to Myanmar to treat the cub, performing two surgeries. She found that the cub's tongue was very damaged with severe dilation of both sublingual salivary ducts and blockage of both ducts. In addition the tissue surrounding the ducts was very, very oedematous, making it difficult to evaluate fully. She removed some of this excess oedematous (swollen) tissue and marsupialised the salivary ducts. It was suspected the cub had very low blood protein due to malnutrition and this can exacerbate swelling. One of the little cubs feet was very swollen as was his penis.



It was hoped that the remaining swelling would reduce with anti-inflammatory medication and instructions were left, emphasising the importance of a high-protein diet.

Heather is in regular contact with the clinic and the monks to monitor the ongoing care and recovery of the cub.



We are keeping our appeal open to continue to raise funds for the ongoing care of Nyen htoo. If you would like to donate you can do so via our website or paypal <https://www.wintonbearfoundation.org/how-you-can-help/donate-contact> or our dedicated appeal page on MyDonate <https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/myanmarbear1>

Please quote "CUB APPEAL" in your message or payment reference.

LOO-KING TO MAKE LIFE SAFER!

We are also equally excited about another new project we are embarking on this year...

Back in January, after an article appeared in the Times of India, we reported on the incursion of sloth bears into the life of the local people in rural India. Many villages in this part of the world have no latrines and culture dictates that women and girls have to rise before dawn or wait until dark to go outside to relieve themselves. In the countryside they are in danger of attack by animals or bandits.

This prompted WBF to team up with the Five Sisters Zoo in West Lothian, home to rescued ex-circus bears Carmen, Suzy and Peggy to collaborate with the well-established Toilet Twinning charity campaign which raises awareness of the sanitation crisis facing the world's poor.

WBF and Five Sisters Zoo are jointly meeting the £240 cost of sponsoring a toilet block in Parsauni Baij School in India an area where there is a high risk of human-animal conflict. This will help to improve hygiene, reduce the possibility of attack, protect humans and bears, empower women and girls and encourage children to attend school.



With the help of Toilet Twinning, toilets in the zoo's Brown Bear Café will be twinned with a new toilet block at the school. We will receive a certificate picturing the latrine block we are sponsoring and showing its google map co-ordinates. The certificate will be exhibited in the toilets at the Brown Bear Café at the Zoo.

WBF and Five Sisters Zoo will receive a picture of the toilet block they are sponsoring together with the google map co-ordinates of where it is.

We are very excited to be teaming up with the Five Sisters Zoo, supporting this unique initiative to help protect wildlife and help some of the world's poorest people.

The Winton Foundation



for the Welfare of Bears



To learn more about Toilet Twinning visit their website at www.toilettwinning.org



TOPPING UP 'THE HONEY POT'



Because the Bear Foundation is progressing so well, so quickly, we've decided to have a dedicated fundraising section in the newsletter. This will cover events that have happened, are coming up and ways in which you can help. Funds raised are put into a pot of funds affectionately known as 'The Honey Pot.' These funds are then distributed at regular intervals to projects around the world, working to help bears and protect them from abuse and cruelty.

BEARS MATTER MONTH 2016



Bears Matter Month **'Life through their eyes'** Feb 14th - Mar 13th 2016

If you haven't already done so, please like and share our Facebook page. Julia Attwood, our Facebook Co-ordinator continues to do a fantastic job promoting our work and turning our page into an incredible educational tool where you can learn something

new about bears, nearly every day!

www.facebook.com/WintonBearFoundation/

Also don't forget our new YouTube channel where you can catch up on all our video clips and promotional film.

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=the+winton+foundation+for+the+welfare+of+bears

We held another incredibly successful Bears Matter Month at the beginning of the year. Now in its fourth year it is one of the biggest events in our calendar. This year saw us doing our usual beneficiary showcases and numerous informative features on our work and bear themed work around the world. As usual, we marked International Polar Bear day as well as holding our usual online raffle to mark International Save Bears Day. This year's raffle raised £325. Thanks go to everyone who donated prizes and took part. Congratulations go to Joanne Rothery who won our first prize 'Frank'.



Jo Rothery pictured with 'Frank'

Will You Give It Five?



Help us celebrate our 5th birthday
Fundraise around the number 5
Contact us for more information

Give it Five

We are continuing our 'Will You Give it Five' initiative until the 10th October this year. Launched to mark our 5th birthday it will continue through our anniversary year. There is still plenty of time to join 'Team High Five' and carry out any fundraising activity around the number 5.

It could be anything from simply donating £5, saving £5 of loose change, getting five friends to 'like' our Facebook page or giving £5 a month throughout the year, to holding five coffee mornings or doing a sponsored five-mile walk, run, swim, cycle or row. You could come up with an innovative fundraising idea of your own centred on the figure five, or you might want to go for multiples or combinations that add up to five such as a sponsored weight loss to shed 10lbs (2x5), donate £20 (4x5) or cycle three miles, walk two to make up the five.

Please let us know if you'd like to take part.

WBF Founder Lesley Winton will be doing a 5km swim for Give it Five. Swimming a distance of 5km is the equivalent of just over 3 miles. This will be 200 lengths of Lesley's local 25m pool. She is aiming to do it on October 4th, which is World Animal Day.

The picture (right) is "Big and Little Dipper", by Marco Mattiussi, National Geographic Your Shot



Some of our lovely supporters made very helpful (?) suggestions to motivate Lesley on her swim. One suggested making a bear costume to swim in, another a mermaid costume, another suggested imagining a black bear swimming along beside her. Another suggested, if things got really tough, to imagine a polar bear swimming behind her, to which another supporter suggested making her a seal outfit. Lesley's reply 'Just stick Hugh Jackman at the other end of the pool and I'll be finished in no time!'

Lesley's target is £1000 and to date she has raised £450. If you would like to sponsor Lesley, please do so via our website or her MyDonate fundraising page <https://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/lesleywinton>

'Bears Matter' Newsletter

If you have not already signed up for our newsletter and our regular updates please let us have your email address and we will add you to our mailing list. Thanks go to Jo Rothery for her invaluable assistance with the production of ***Bears Matter*** and her help and guidance with press releases to ensure a mainstream media presence.

How to contact us or for further information:

By Post - The Winton Foundation for the Welfare of Bears (SCIO), 54 West Windygoul Gardens, Tranent, East Lothian, EH33 2LA, U.K. **By e-mail:** info@wintonbearfoundation.org **Website:** www.wintonbearfoundation.org
www.fosteringcompassion.org

Telephone: +44-(0) 1875 614 899 or +44-(0)7904 733 137 **And don't forget – Facebook too!**
Please make any cheques payable to 'The Winton Foundation'

You may also recall that our biggest fundraiser last year was our 'LOTS of Love' event which combined an auction and a raffle. One of the main items we auctioned was the Exclusive Bear Experience at the Five Sisters Zoo getting 'up close and personal' with Carmen, Suzy and Peggy.



Carmen



EXCLUSIVE BEAR EXPERIENCE!

An awesome opportunity to join the Keepers at the Five Sisters Zoo in West Lothian, Scotland and a chance to meet Carmen, Suzy and Peggy the three rescued ex circus bears. This brilliant prize will give the winner the chance to help prepare the three bears' breakfast and then head to the Bear enclosure where they will scatter the food in the enclosures and then clean out the dens.

An incredible 'up close and personal' bear experience for the lucky winner.

This prize will be organised with the winner, for a date from Spring 2016 onwards when the bears come out of hibernation.



Peggy and Suzy

Photos courtesy of Five Sisters Zoo and Lesley Winton



A unique opportunity to join the Keepers at the Five Sisters Zoo in West Lothian, Scotland and a chance to meet Carmen, Suzy and Peggy the three rescued ex-circus bears. This brilliant prize gave the winner the chance to help prepare the three bears' breakfast and then head to the Bear enclosure where they scattered the food in the enclosures and then cleaned out the dens. The lucky winner was Helen Ashworth, who took her prize on 24th May 2016

Helen and husband David, pictured with Shirley Curran (Zoo owner) preparing the bears' breakfast.



Helen pictured with Shirley on 'scat picking up duties' and den cleaning!



© Winton Bear Foundation

2016 has seen our Fostering Compassion project develop a very exciting partnership with the Big Hearts Community Trust - the charity arm of the Heart of Midlothian Football Club in Edinburgh. The Trust are running a Kinship Care Programme as part of their work and have asked us to deliver some workshops for their families.

We have so far delivered a series of workshops during the Easter and Summer holidays allowing the children to learn about and spend time with animals.



Storytelling and Reading with Dogs

Visit to Gorgie City Farm



A boot full of bear themed goody bags for the children as part of their trip to the Five Sisters Zoo



During our 'Hollydays' workshop the children make up goody boxes of treats and toys for dogs in need. This batch of goody boxes was donated to the All4Paws clinic run by veterinary students from the Dick Vet School.

The clinic is run especially for the homeless people of Edinburgh and is a place they can bring their much-loved dogs for veterinary care.

Each dog was given a present of a goody box from the children. This moved one owner to tears as he'd never been able to afford to buy his dog a present and was so happy that she'd now have one.



We were also delighted to launch our 2016 Volunteer Recruitment drive at the Dick Vet School with an information stall in February.

We will be returning to the school later this year to give another talk.



IAHAIO CONFERENCE

One of the highlights of the year so far was being asked to deliver an oral presentation at the IAHAIO Triennial Conference in Paris. IAHAIO is the International Association for Human Animal Interaction Organisations and attracts people from all around the world working in the field.



. This year's conference attracted around 450 delegates and was packed with educational talks, workshops and poster presentations and was an invaluable opportunity for networking.

BROWNIES AND BEARS

In May, we had the great pleasure of taking a group of 13 children from the 2nd Pencaitland Brownies from East Lothian, to Five Sisters Zoo. They were all doing their "Friend to Animals" badge. For the badge there is a section on endangered animals and a section on zoos, sanctuaries and wildlife reserves. The children came to meet Carmen, Suzy and Peggy and learnt all about their story. They brought the bears lots of goodies such as chicken, eggs, strawberries, grapes, yoghurt and honey. During their trip, they also learned about the endangered Gobi bear. They all clubbed together pennies that they had been saving and donated the wonderful total of £86.93. They were each awarded a certificate, thanking them for helping look after Carmen, Suzy and Peggy. Carmen really wanted the Brownies to stay and play, but she understood they had other animals to see, and lots more work to do for their "Friend to Animals" badges.



IMPORTANT NEWS ABOUT FOSTERING COMPASSION

Fostering Compassion was established in 2013 as the Humane Education project of the Winton Foundation for the Welfare of Bears. We began with 10 children from 5 families and by the end of 2015 we had more than 120 children from 60 families being referred to the project.

Due to its substantial growth, and the fact that we are now working with more animals than just bears, the decision has been made to break Fostering Compassion away from the Bear Foundation and establish it as a charity in its own right. This will happen over the next few months. The Winton Bear Foundation will still be heavily involved in any of the bear-themed Fostering Compassion workshops and it will never be forgotten that the project all started, thanks to the bears!

To continue to follow the work of Fostering Compassion please visit our dedicated website and 'like' our Facebook page

www.fosteringcompassion.org

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Fostering-Compassion/403973553141205?ref=hl>

REMEMBERING ELSE

We close this newsletter with the sad news of the passing of a great bear advocate, Else Poulsen, who we lost in April of this year. Else had been battling cancer for more than a year. Else was an incredible lady and a great inspiration.

We wish we could thank her once more for the invaluable guidance and support she provided to the Winton Bear Foundation. The bears have lost a great champion.

Else began her career in animal behaviour in the early 1980s working as a field biologist in Alberta's oil patch. When the bottom dropped out of the energy industry she became an entry-level zookeeper at the Calgary Zoo, working with a wide variety of animal species, from toads to tigers. Over time, Else developed a keen interest in large carnivores and specialized in captive bear behaviour, husbandry, and management. She was led to research aberrant behaviours in captive bears, publish her findings, and advocate for change. After 18 years at the Calgary Zoo, Else left to work at the Detroit Zoo, and then several bear specialist facilities in Canada. As the founding consultant for Behavioural & Environmental Solutions she provided expertise on modernizing bear husbandry methods, environmental enrichment programming, and enclosure design and redesign to zoos, sanctuaries, rehabilitation facilities, and animal welfare groups around the world.

Else has over forty publications to her name including peer-reviewed journals, technical journals, articles for the media, and books. Her first bear behaviour book titled "Smiling Bears – A Zookeeper Explores the Behaviour and Emotional Life of Bears" was published in May 2009. Her second bear book, "Bärle's Story - One Polar Bear's Amazing Recovery from Life as a Circus Act" was released in Spring 2014.

Else also founded the Bear Care Group, following her vision to improve the well-being and welfare of bears around the world. She dedicated her entire life to caring for animals, especially her furry first loves, the bears. She was selfless and tireless in her dedication, and will be greatly missed.

Else, the world is a greater place because of you and a sadder one without you.

Thanks to www.elsepoulsen.com/ for biographical information.



The Winton Foundation for the Welfare of Bears will continue to provide sponsorship for the Advancing Bear Care Conferences for 2016 and future years.