



BEARS MATTER

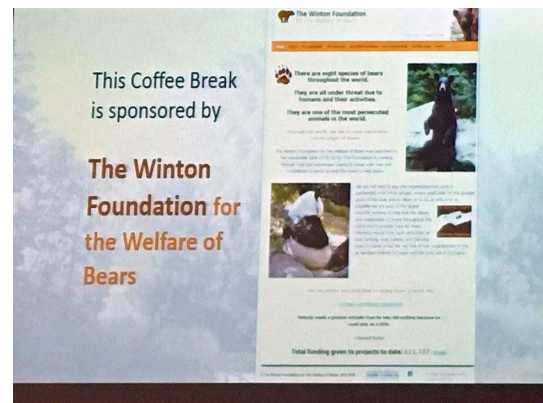
Issue 13, December 2016/January 2017

'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 Issue 13 of Bears Matter! Since the last newsletter we've been working really hard to continue to be as effective as possible and help as many bears and bear projects around the world as we can. So picking up from where we left off in Issue No. 12 of Bears Matter, following the very sad passing of Else Poulsen, we wanted to continue to offer our support to the Advancing Bear Care conference held in October last year. The annual conference allows Bear Care-Givers around the world to come together to share knowledge and expertise. The conference in 2016 was held in Omaha, USA and we sponsored a coffee break during the conference, to encourage others to chat informally amongst themselves about their work. In future years we hope to sponsor delegates from developing countries, or those involved in WBF funded work.

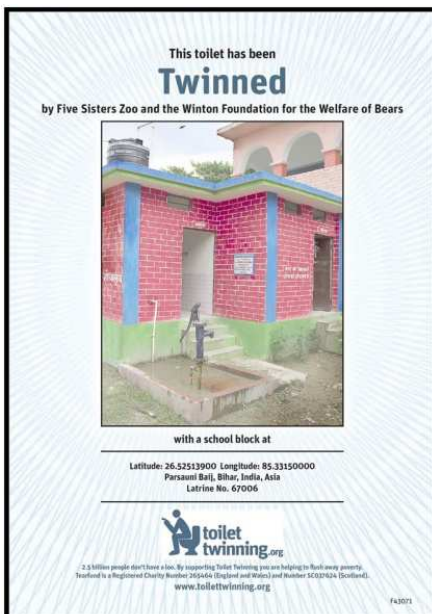


ABC Delegates Omaha 2016



Photos: The Bear Care Group

Also another update since the last newsletter, this time in connection with our joint venture with the Five Sisters Zoo...our lovely Toilet Twinning certificate came through! It is now proudly displayed in the Brown Bear Cafe toilets at the Zoo showing that they are twinned with a school latrine block in Bihar, India



In parts of rural India 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. Our joint donation meant a block of toilets could be built in a school keeping the children safer when they attend school.

From this link you can see just where it is!

<https://goo.gl/maps/UK7kJ5S8JcA2>

The Winton Foundation



for the Welfare of Bears



And more bear hugs delivered in 2016...



Woodlands Wildlife Refuge

Woodlands Wildlife Refuge has been a beneficiary of ours for many years now and a certain resident there had a very special place in our hearts. You may recall we took their lovely little pygmy bear Grace under our wing after meeting her at the Advancing Bear Care Conference in 2013 and helped raise money for her veterinary bills. Sadly Grace passed away in October 2014 and we have been looking for something special to do as a final donation in her memory. After discussions with Tracy Leaver, we have donated \$100 (£84.75) to sponsor their Bear Cam which can be viewed from their website <http://woodlandswildlife.org/wildlifewatch.htm>

We have also bought four boomer balls at \$75.96 (£61.78) for their current group of bears which provide wonderful enrichment and hours of fun! Tracy will send us photos of the bears enjoying their new toys.



Both these gestures have been in Memory of Grace, a very special bear. We will now be closing Grace's Appeal Facebook page but please feel free to continue to donate direct to Woodlands Wildlife Refuge.

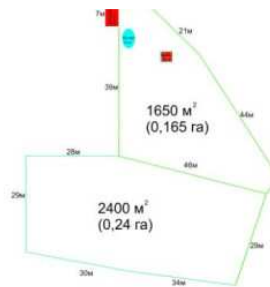
A new beneficiary! Eco-Halych Wildlife Rehab



For a while now we have been looking for projects to support in Eastern Europe where many bears are still suffering, so for the first time, we have sent a donation of \$250 to The Eco-Halych Wildlife Rehab based in the Ukraine.

The NGO Eco-Halych assists the development of Wildlife Rehab of the Halych National Park in the west of Ukraine. Handicapped animals like foxes, wolves, raccoon dogs, ferrets and others which cannot be returned to the wild can find a permanent home here, with professional care, adequate diets and enough space to satisfy their needs. We are supporting their efforts to build a natural bear habitat for mistreated and abused bears and our donation will be used to fund wooden enrichment for their rescued bears.

Over 200 bears are in need of urgent help in Ukraine. They are often held in horrendous conditions, with lack of care or food, living in pits, rusty cages or even in garages. Eco-Halych is building a sanctuary to rehome mistreated bears in the Ukraine so we are delighted to support them.



Photos courtesy of Eco-Halych Wildlife Rehab

Our Little Orphanage!

Those who are familiar with our work will know we have two special adopted bears Bodo and Max. Well we've just adopted our 3rd and 4th - Fluffy and Scruffy at the Wildwood Trust. We will renew each of our adoptions on an annual basis, helping to raise awareness of the dreadful conditions many bears are rescued from and the organisations trying to help them.



Photo courtesy of Wildwood Trust

Wildwood rescued two brown bears in November 2014 from shocking neglect in a disused bear breeding station in Bulgaria. The bears were born at the centre and had lived their entire lives in tiny barren concrete cells. They had never experienced anything other than this life, were desperately underweight and displaying signs of serious stress and anxiety. Wildwood rescued the bears and brought them to the UK where they are currently rehabilitating and can at last experience as natural a life as possible and have the chance to learn and express their natural behaviour.



Bodo was rescued by the Animals Asia Foundation from the brutal bear farming industry. He is a kind, gentle and brave bear and has overcome his disability of missing his right forepaw - probably as a result of being snared in the wild. He is pictured here relaxing on a hammock bought for him and his friends by WBF.

Bodo

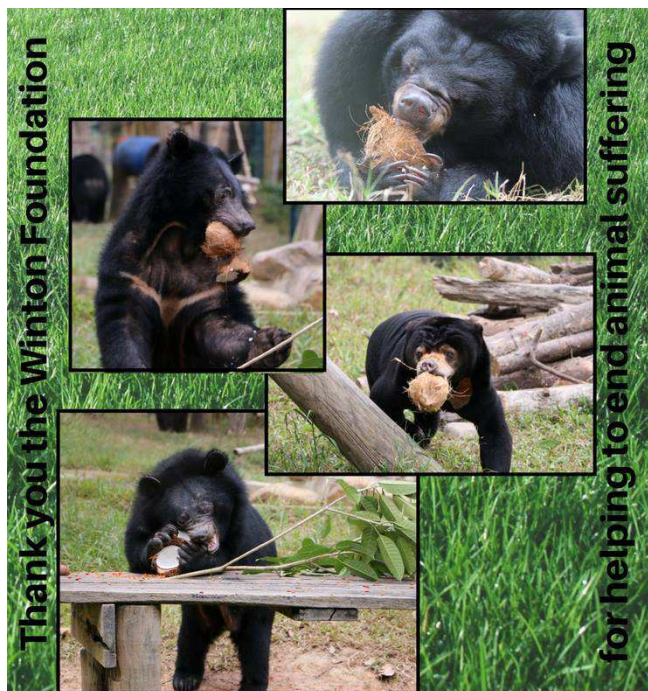
Max is a gentle giant of a bear who spent years of his life chained to railings for the entertainment of tourists and by night, he lived in a 4 metre square cage. Poor Max endured this miserable existence without sight, having been blinded, most probably from a blow to his head while he was a cub which detached his retinas. He is now living a contented life in his own patch of forest at the Liberty Sanctuary in Romania, which has a water pool and a den and over an acre of trees and shrubs.



Max

Read more about our adopted bears and the organisations who have rescued them on our website
<https://www.wintonbearfoundation.org/bear-zone/adoptions>

Our final distribution of funds for 2016 was one of our favourites - our annual Christmas present of a coconut for each bear in the Animals Asia Vietnam sanctuary. We have done this for a number of years now and it is such a delight to see the photos of the bears enjoying their gifts. The coconuts provide great enrichment for the bears and a super tasty treat to provide hours of entertainment.



Enjoy!!

And finally...



Vet and Board Member Heather Bacon continues to monitor the progress of Nyen htoo, the little bear cub in Myanmar. The little cub was found alone - its mother probably a victim of poachers, with a terrible swelling on his tongue making it incredibly difficult for him to eat. We helped fund Heather's travelling costs to treat the bear and still have just over £500 ringfenced to help with the costs of his future care. His diet has improved and he has been moved to a larger enclosure. We will bring you further updates when we have them.



In our summer newsletter we told you about our desire to assist with Georgina Allen and Wild Welfare's work to improve the poor conditions in bear parks in Japan, which have resulted in poor welfare and health for many captive bears. We are liaising with Georgina about the best way we can help and are looking into the possibility of funding educational literature. We have ringfenced £1000 to make available to Georgina as and when she needs it.



Sadly Lesley's sponsored 5km swim had to be postponed due to a knee injury. However, this is now improving and she is back practicing for the mammoth 200 lengths swim. We will keep you posted with her progress.

 The Winton Foundation
for the Welfare of Bears



Bears Matter Month
'Life through their eyes'
Feb 14th - Mar 26th 2017

Don't forget Bears Matter Month 2017 will be here very soon! Running from Valentines Day to Mothers Day each year, it is the biggest event in our calendar. Please help us raise lots of funds again this year so we can continue to help many more bears in 2017.

Thank you to you all for your unwavering support of our work in 2016 and helping us make life more bearable for so many bears around the world.

Here's to an even better 2017!

'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.

How to contact us or for further information:

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Please make any cheques payable to 'The Winton Foundation'