

NEWSLETTER

BEARS MATTER

Issue 18, Summer 2020

'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 18 of Bears Matter! We are delighted to bring you news of our distribution of funds during the first half of 2020 and the amazing projects around the world we continue to support. Of course, we couldn't do any of it without you and we are so grateful for your ongoing support of and commitment to the Winton Bear Foundation. Since we were created in 2010 we have donated £24, 264 to 41 beneficiary organisations and helped bears in 19 countries. Cambodia, Canada, China, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Peru, Romania, Russia, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, Vietnam. This year we have added a new beneficiary, as well helping seven previous ones.

We've all been a bit like bears, hibernating through this time of uncertainty. Lockdown has had an effect on projects far and wide, and we want to continue to support the work they do through this difficult time. So, without further ado, we would like to tell you more about what we have been doing, with your help, so far in 2020. Enjoy!

Summer distribution of funds

Animals Asia

In February we responded to an urgent appeal from Animals Asia. Hong Kong based animal welfare charity Animal Asia's bear Sanctuary in Sichuan, right next to the epicentre of the Covid 19 outbreak of Hubei Province, urgently needed veterinary supplies to stay afloat. The Chengdu sanctuary houses 250 bears in 11 houses and 15 natural and semi-natural enclosures.

As cities and transport links across China came to a virtual standstill the sanctuary's supplies dwindled to vulnerable levels. We sent an emergency donation to their Crisis Action Fund, to help keep the China Bear Sanctuary alive.

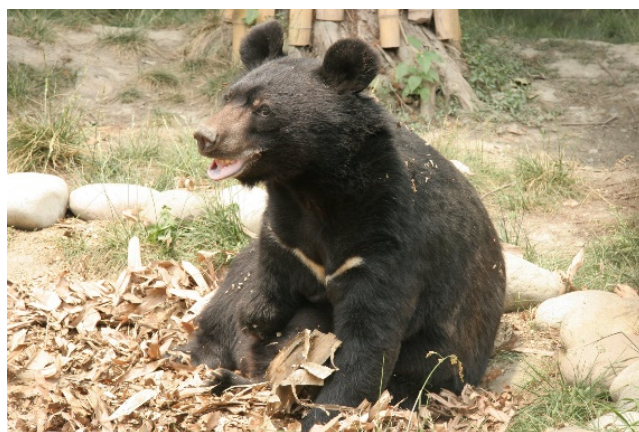
£100 donated.



(Photo Credit – Jill Robinson, Animal Asia's China Bear Rescue Centre, Chengdu, China)

Animals Asia has withdrawn their "Befriend a Bear" programme due to declining take-up, but we won't forget Bodo, or cease donating in his name.

Bodo was rescued by the Animals Asia Foundation from the brutal Bear Farming industry in China. He was freed in November 2003, and arrived missing his right forepaw – probably as a result of being snared in the wild. We have been sponsoring him since 2011 - the first summer of The Winton Foundation.



(Photo Credit – Animals Asia)

Idaho Black Bear Rehab

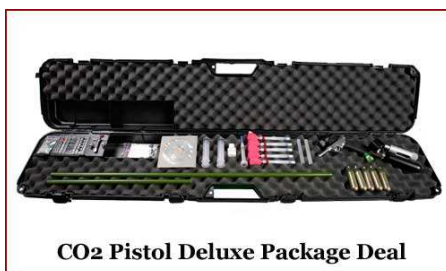
In April we heard from a regular beneficiary that they were badly in need of funds to help in the summer release of their rehabbed bears. Three out of five of these bears, Hucklebeary, Finn and Monte, were all released in early May.



Photos – www.bearrehab.org

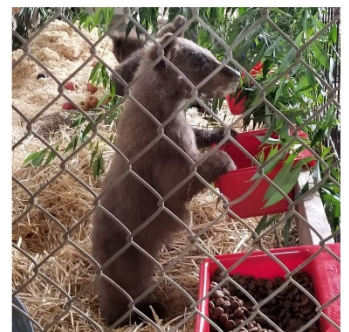
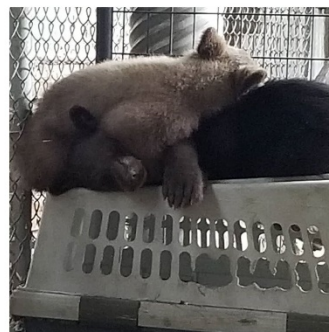
The rehabbed bears are released as close to their original territory as is safe. Once free they overcome any confusion when they realise how far they can run and that they can eat what they like.

An expensive item that the Idaho Black Bear rehab needed for their summer releases was a dart gun and immobilisation drugs. We were happy to make a substantial contribution to the cost of this equipment.



Following the release of these lucky bears, Idaho Black Bear Rehabilitation Centre received three new cubs from Nevada - two siblings; one male, one female - and another unrelated male.

So, let's say happy goodbyes to the bears who have now found freedom and welcome Ninzi, the sister bear, Lou the brother bear, and Hazelnut (because that second male is a nut and they are going to have an exasperatingly good time watching the trouble he gets into). Thank you all for being here as they start this year's bear journey.

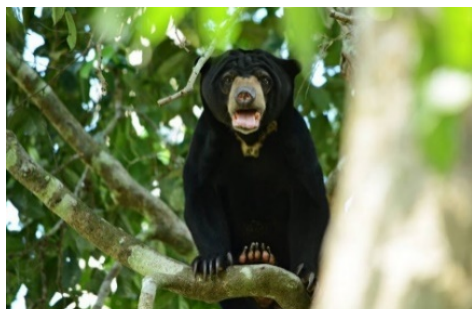


(Photo credit – bearrehab.org)

£331 donated.

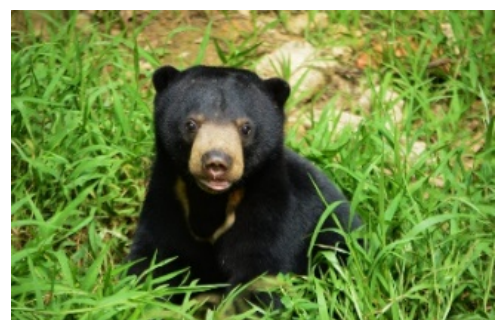
Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre

We were unable to renew our bear adoption of Montom because he is getting ready for release! He has been fitted with a GPS collar, to allow him time to get used to it and to test its function. Montom was released on 10th July 2020.



(photo credit – Bornean Sun Bear Conservation Centre)

So we have chosen another bear to adopt. Romolina is 2 years old and is the youngest female sun bear cub at BSBCC. Her owner claimed that they found a cub alone in the forest and then kept her as a house pet, where she was confined in a tiny cage.



She was rescued and was handed over to the Sabah Wildlife Department, then sent to BSBCC on the 7th of July, 2018. She weighed only 5.95kg on arrival. She was subsequently found to be malnourished - she showed signs of stunted growth as a result of an improper diet and being confined in a small cage, which restricted her growth. Her appetite is good, and she loves watermelon and honey dew! She will vocalize, shielding her food, especially coconuts, from other bears. She is developing into a lovely and playful bear cub.

£59 donated

The Yellowstone Wildlife Sanctuary

Our newest beneficiary is The Yellowstone Wildlife Sanctuary in Red Lodge, Montana.

Here lifelong sanctuary is provided for non-releasable native Montana wildlife. They provide their animals with natural and enriching lives, while sharing a message of education and conservation.

They contacted us in February seeking funding for a stretcher to evacuate bears during an emergency, strong enough to hold a 500lb bear! We sent funds to purchase this “Bear Necessity”.

A stretcher is the only way to transport a bear that has been sedated to a trailer ensuring prompt, injury free transport.

The type of emergency could include fires, floods, earthquakes or severe winter conditions. The stretcher allows evacuations to run much more smoothly.



Black Bear - Blueberry

(Photo Credit – The Yellowstone Wildlife Sanctuary)

Blueberry came to YWS as a small cub and as she is habituated to humans she can't be released into the wild.



(Photo Credit – The Yellowstone Wildlife Sanctuary)

The sanctuary has four non-releasable, American Black Bears in their care. They get a diet of fresh fruit and vegetables, supplemented by bear kibble for their protein and essential nutrients. Enrichment includes bones, meat, fish, peanut butter, seeds, honey and other appropriate treats.

Even though the bears share habitats, they don't share dens. Each bear has its own hillside den. The females, Blueberry and Winnie, are the first to go down for the winter.



Black Bear - Bo

(Photo Credit – The Yellowstone Wildlife Sanctuary)

Bo is the youngest bear at YWS and was found as an orphan by loggers. He has been sharing a habitat with Blueberry since he was a few months old.



Black Bear - Buster

(Photo Credit – The Yellowstone Wildlife Sanctuary)

Buster was taken from his mother illegally as a cub and became habituated to humans, making it unsafe to release him into the wild. He is very large for a black bear.

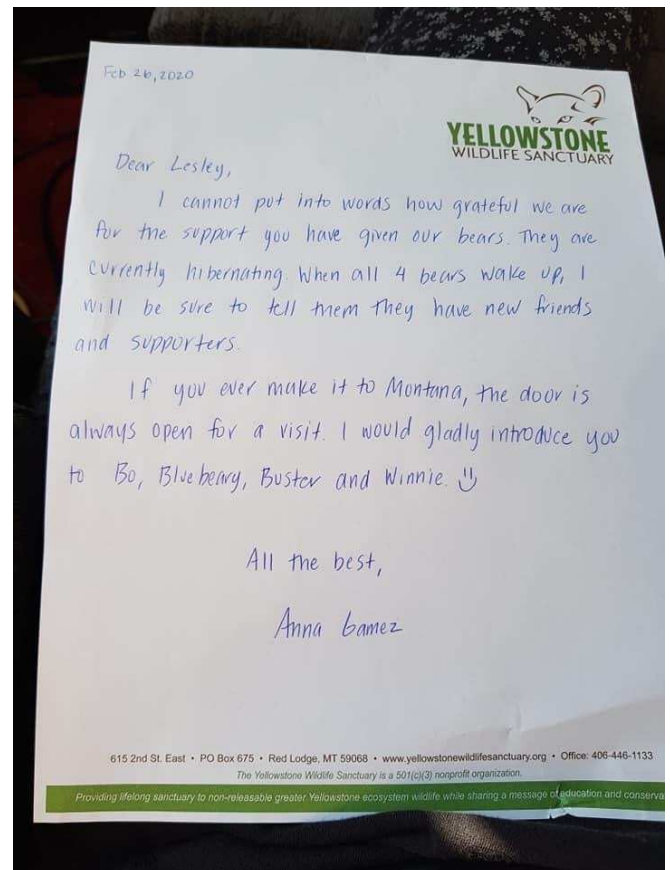


Black Bear - Winnie

(Photo Credit – The Yellowstone Wildlife Sanctuary)

Winnie was orphaned when her mother was shot during hunting season and came to YWS about the same time as Buster. She is a Climber and is often found on top of the lockout between the two areas of the habitat she shares with Buster.

£303 donated.



We were delighted to receive a handwritten thank you note from the Yellowstone Wildlife Sanctuary, which included a paw-print signature from Buster.



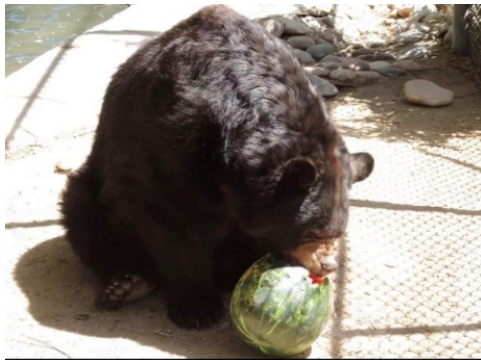
Southwest Wildlife Conservation Centre

Our Founder and Director, Lesley Winton, visited the Southwest Wildlife Conservation Centre when travelling in Arizona. They are currently caring for five black bears.

We have sent funds again this summer to keep them in watermelons.

Southwest Wildlife Conservation Centre rescues and rehabilitates wildlife that has been injured, displaced or orphaned. Once rehabilitated they are returned to the wild.

Sanctuary is provided to animals that cannot be released back into the wild. They are the only accredited wildlife sanctuary in Arizona with the facilities to care for large mammals, such as bears.



(Photos from www.southwestwildlife.org)

Last year we learned that Southwest Conservation Centre was looking after three orphaned cubs, after their mother was hit and killed by a car. They minimised the bears' contact with humans to allow them to rehabilitate the bears and enable them to be released back into the wild.



Here they are, a year later, released into the wild, fitted with tracking ear tags so biologists can monitor their movements, helping assist with bear management in the future. This is the natural age they would venture away from their mother to start a new life on their own. The three cubs will likely stick together until they get used to their new home.

£106 donated.

Meet Griz - resident at Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center, AZ - and yoga practitioner extraordinaire.

Although his name suggests otherwise, Griz is a black bear. He was born in the wild in northwestern Montana, and orphaned when he was only a few months old. Griz found his forever home at Southwest Wildlife in Arizona.



(Photo Credit – southwestwildlife.org)

The resident bears at Southwest Wildlife Conservation Center, AZ wanted to say "Thank You!" for their watermelons! Griz is the only one who would cooperate for a picture, but he is pretty cute!

Our donation will keep them in watermelons throughout the summer - a cool way to stay cool!



International Animal Rescue and Wildlife SOS - Chitra

We are proud to support the International Animal Rescue and Wildlife SOS through one-off donations and our annual bear adoption of Chitra at the Bannerghatta Bear Rescue Centre in India, which we renewed this Summer. This has been her home since she was rescued 12 years ago.

Chitra had lived eight years of her life as a dancing bear and was physically and psychologically exhausted by the time she was rescued. For Chitra, life lost all meaning when she was poached from the wild, separated from her mother, and subjected to a lifetime of cruelty in the “dancing bear” tradition.



Photo: www.internationalanimalrecue.org

Chitra's experience with humans during her tormented past has hugely affected her personality and made her a very introverted bear. As time passed, Chitra grew more comfortable and would be spotted curiously digging pits in her free-ranging enclosure. However, despite growing used to her home at the rescue centre, Chitra is one of the rare examples of a solitary sloth bear under our care.

Forgotten Animals

Another urgent appeal this month came from the UTYOS Bear Cub Rehabilitation Project via Forgotten Animals, one of our beneficiaries from 2019.

Each year, 3,000 to 4,000 bear cubs are left to die after their mothers are killed during the bear hunting season in Russia, but this little cub had had a different fate. In remote Russia his momma and two siblings were killed by a train, and she is was left alive, fighting for her life. The little cub was treated at the UTYOS Bear Cub Rehabilitation Project.

Very sadly we received an update that the little cub succumbed to her injuries. Despite the tireless efforts of the amazing UTYOS team to save the little one's life, her trauma was so severe that nature took its course, putting her out of her misery. She had internal bleeding in her brain caused by severe trauma and her other internal organs were badly damaged from the injuries she sustained.

We can try to find comfort in the fact that she was loved and cared for during her last days, was not in any pain and went peacefully without suffering.

She shies away from interaction with other bears but enjoys the time that she spends alone – digging up corners of her enclosures, munching on watermelons and coconuts as well as napping under the shade of the trees!

Chitra does however, share a very special bond with her keeper, Babu, and will be found sitting upright at the slightest sight of him! Babu understands Chitra's past and thus, knows exactly how to interact with her. Since her arrival he has treated her with the utmost patience and love. As time passed, Chitra would find herself more and more comfortable with Babu and today, the two share an extremely heart-warming bond, as he regularly checks on her and makes sure that all her dietary supplements are properly added to her porridge and she takes them!

Chitra's journey with Wildlife SOS has been 12 years long and she continues to go strong even at 20 years old. Geriatric care for bears is carefully curated by their senior veterinarians as well as keepers to take into consideration the ageing needs of a bear and how extra care needs to be given to them in this important phase of their life. Dental health is also extremely important and the veterinarians keep a constant check on Chitra's teeth so as to prevent bacterial infections or painful ulcers.

Chitra's diet currently includes a range of important multivitamins and supplements which are essential in maintaining her internal strength and immunity as she grows old. As much as she enjoys her honey-laced porridge, eggs and coconuts, there is nothing that makes her as happy as the refreshing taste and coolness of coconut water!

£48 donated.

We are assured that the remaining funds will be used to care for other current residents of the Centre, like these three cubs who arrived at the centre in May.



Photo credit – forgottenanimals.org

£200 donated.

Wildwood Trust



(Photo Credit – wildwoodtrust.org)

We first supported The Wildwood Trust in their campaign to raise funds to bring two rescued bears from a Bulgarian breeding station to a forever home in the UK. Since then, we have continued to support them with our annual adoption of Fluff and Scruff, who have thrived in their new surroundings.

When we heard that they were fundraising for another bear rescue, we were very happy to add to their appeal.

These new cubs were first discovered on the side of a mountain within a snow drift and their mother was nowhere to be seen. Their rescuers believe a disturbance caused them to go much higher into the mountains than they usually would. The bear cubs were too small and unable to follow their mother across the extremely steep and snowy incline in this area, so awaited her return in a snow drift at the bottom, luckily this was very close to an access road otherwise they may never have been found!

When their rescuers first discovered them, they were reluctant to intervene in case their mother came back to look for them. They made several attempts to reunite the cubs with their mother, they even searched the area to try and find their original den, but unfortunately, she couldn't be found. As their mother hadn't returned and the cubs' condition was fast deteriorating, it was decided it would be in their best interests to remove them and to provide veterinary care.



(Photo Credit – wildwoodtrust.org)

Bears In Mind and AWRT attempted to get the bears released back into the wild twice, but unfortunately, both of those efforts failed. The rescuers were running out of places to turn and despite their best efforts the bears were now too old and too used to humans to be successfully released back into the wild. They now needed a forever home.

AWRT in collaboration with Tirana Zoo in Albania stepped in to help, assisted by Bears in Mind to arrange the next stage of their journey. The bear cubs are now being housed in a temporary holding facility in Belgium. But their current enclosure is only temporary, it is not suitable long term for the orphans to express a full range of natural behaviour and they will soon outgrow it. To avoid future health issues, Mish and Lucy must be transferred to a permanent, more suitable home urgently and it is vital that they be brought to their new forever home before winter sets in. At Wildwood's park in East Devon, work has already begun preparing a natural woodland home, where Mish and Lucy will be able to live full and happy lives. Their new home will be a huge natural woodland, Mish and Lucy will have a rich, stimulating, diverse environment where they'll be able to explore, forage, play and have the space to develop a full range of natural behaviours enabling them to grow into happy, healthy adult bears.

£200 donated.



(Photo Credit – wildwoodtrust.org)

Other News

Five Sisters Zoo

We were so sorry to read of the sad loss of Suzy at Five Sisters Zoo. Suzy, along with Carmen & Peggy, arrived at Five Sisters Zoo in 2012, after spending around 28 years in a French travelling circus.

In their post the zoo announced:

"It is with extreme sadness that last night we had to say goodbye to our dearest Suzy. Well into her thirties she had been having a great year, enjoying all the spring and summer weather. Unfortunately over the past few weeks she became ill and despite treatment, it became apparent that she had developed a malignant tumour and there was nothing more we could do. Devastating as it was for us all, we made the difficult decision to let her go.

We take solace in knowing that her final years were spent with grass under her feet in a beautiful large woodland home being loved, cared for and spoiled by her dedicated keepers." She got the chance to walk on grass and laze in sunshine in her old age - a chance so many performing bears have never had.



(Photo Credit – Five Sisters Zoo)



Bears Matter Month **'Life through their eyes'**

For our eighth "**Bears Matter Month**", which runs from Valentine's Day each year, we held a number of awareness and fundraising events to help highlight the plight of all eight species of bears around the world.

Our main fundraiser – the raffle – raised £175.



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.



This is the free and easy way to raise funds for the foundation, simply by shopping online.

Join for free and raise funds when you shop at over 4,400 stores. Your purchase will automatically generate free funds!

How Give as you Live works:

- Sign up free and choose from The Winton Foundation for the Welfare of Bears as your charity.
- Search for a store you want to shop with on Give as you Live - there are over 4,000!
- Click on the store logo - you will be directed to the store website, and your visit tracked by Give As You Live.
- Make your purchase as normal.
- The retailer then pays Give as you Live commission for your purchase, which is converted into a donation to us!

If you already use Give As You Live - why not consider switching to us for a month? Every little helps.

So far supporters have helped us raise over £180, at no extra cost to them.

<https://www.giveasyoulive.com/join/wintonbearfoundation>

Coffee for Bears

We understand that Lockdown has affected many people's finances. However, if you have been lucky enough to continue earning during lockdown perhaps you could donate the cost of your daily takeaway coffee to help the bears? Every donation goes to the projects we support and helps fund many amazing projects around the world.



Thank you also to everyone who continues to donate to us and contribute regularly by direct debit.



On October 10th 2020 we will be celebrating our 10th birthday! We will be marking this event in a number of different ways so, keep an eye out for news in this connection. If you would like to do something to help us raise funds then please do so! Our fundraising efforts have been somewhat restricted this year due to Covid-19 so we welcome any help to keep the income coming in and enable us to help many more bears around the world. Don't forget - one of the best ways you can support us is by setting up a regular monthly donation from anything as little as £2 per month. Please visit the 'How you can help' section of our website to get an idea of all the different ways you can support us. If you have any questions or would like to discuss your ideas, please don't hesitate to get in touch.



The Winton Foundation
for the Welfare of Bears

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

Telephone: +44-(0) 1875 614 899 or +44-(0)7904 733 137. **Please make any cheques payable to 'The Winton Foundation'**



The Winton Foundation
for the Welfare of Bears



HOW TO DONATE TO THE WINTON FOUNDATION FOR THE WELFARE OF BEARS

FROM OUTSIDE THE UK



Use PayPal (either with a PayPal account or a credit card)
via the "Donate" button halfway down this page
www.wintonbearfoundation.org/how-you-can-help/donate-contact/

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"Making it Bearable"

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The Winton Foundation
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"Making it Bearable"

www.wintonbearfoundation.org

Together, we will make the world a better place for bears.