LETTER

RODNEY JACKSON  FOUNDER - DIRECTOR

The wild snow leopard that graces the cover of this report illustrates how far the Conservancy has come in saving these amazing animals. Our efficient, effective use of your donor dollars, combined with our hands-on, community-based approach, has resulted in the solid conservation gains outlined in this report.

The year 2012 marked some exciting developments. Tshewang Wangchuk, Executive Director of the Bhutan Foundation, joined our board. See page 12 to meet Tshewang. With the Bhutan Foundation and governmental agencies, we are working proactively to help communities solve conflicts between herders and snow leopards before they escalate. Please see page 4 for details.

In late summer we learned that the Kyrgyzstan government intended to bring together snow leopard experts and government representatives to establish a global snow leopard conservation program. Facilitated by the World Bank, the United Nations Development Program, NGOs, and others, the first meeting was held in December in Bishkek. Rodney made a presentation on why the cats are threatened.

CAROLINE GABEL  BOARD CHAIR

He will continue to help craft this plan and to bring the full power of thirty-five years of experience to ensure that this effort gains high-level government endorsement from all twelve snow leopard range countries.

The Conservancy also recognizes that cultural and biological diversity are deeply linked. We believe it is imperative that indigenous cultural practitioners be included in planning for snow leopard conservation. Please see page 7 for details.

While we are addressing critical needs in these new programs, we are committed to our ongoing conservation and education efforts in India, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, and Russia. Please sign up for our monthly e-newsletters to keep abreast of new developments.

We are most grateful for your past support, and invite you to continue your vital partnership in the urgent work ahead.

[Signatures]
Seeing Snow Leopards in the Wild

Participants in our Winter Quest for the Snow Leopard 2012 saw a snow leopard on four separate occasions in Hemis National Park, Ladakh! This is a record number of sightings, and the fifth year that our groups have had the thrill of seeing a wild snow leopard. What a wonderful testament to community-based conservation, and the stewardship of the herders who increasingly see snow leopards as the jewels of the mountains. For information on our special Quest trips, please visit our partners KarmaQuests.

Capturing Snow Leopards via Camera Trap

Camera trap monitoring by our partners in Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Nepal, and Russia confirmed the presence of snow leopards.

Moving Towards Sustainability

Nepal: Savings & Credit Program

Communities participating in the Savings & Credit Program (page 6), are generating the money to fund events held by the local Snow Leopard Scouts.

Ladakh India: Community-Based Livestock Insurance Program

SLC-India’s Livestock Insurance program is being partially supported by profits from the Ecotourism Conservation Fund. The fund was established by participants in Traditional Himalayan Homestays. This is a significant measure of success for the insurance program that is in its second year of operation.
BHUTAN
Partners: Bhutan Foundation, Nature Recreation and Ecotourism Department, Jigme Dorji National Park (JDNP)

Jigme Dorji National Park lies in the northwestern part of Bhutan, sharing a border with the Tibet Autonomous Region of China. The park protects an area of 4316 sq. km., and supports a rich biodiversity. Here snow leopards frequently prey upon young yaks, leading local herders to view the cats as pests that need to be eliminated. Working collaboratively with our partners and local communities, the Conservancy is initiating focused projects aimed at capturing the benefits of having snow leopards so that communities will become the primary drivers of conservation. It was in JDNP where tigers were first recorded above 4000 meters, sharing habitat with snow leopards. Activities underway include community-based snow leopard monitoring and improvement of livestock management practices.

...the Conservancy is initiating focused projects aimed at capturing the benefits of having snow leopards...

INDIA
Partner: Snow Leopard Conservancy-India Trust

The Conservancy continued to support SLC-India’s community-based livestock insurance program, which covered herders losing livestock to snow leopards and other predators in Sham Valley. Proceeds from the Ecotourism Conservation Fund go to the participating villages.

In addition, we funded a training course for local youths to become nature guides in Zanskar Valley. This certified training was conducted in collaboration with Hemchandracharya North Gujarat University, Department of Wildlife Protection, and Tourism Department.
KAZAKHSTAN
Partner: Snow Leopard Fund (SLF)

The Conservancy provided funding for monitoring of snow leopards in three parks and reserves in Kazakhstan. Oleg Loginov, director of SLF, led a training course for staff of the Institute of Zoology, Ministry of Education and Science, based on Kazakhstan’s Snow Leopard Conservation Strategy. In September the first photos of snow leopard and other animals in Almaty Reserve were captured via camera trap.

Oleg also presented the Kazakhstan country report at the Global Snow Leopard Workshop in Bishkek (page 7).

MONGOLIA
Partners: Dr. B. Munkhtsog, Mongolian Academy of Sciences and Irbis Mongolia; Dr. Jan Janěčka, Texas A&M University

The Conservancy continued to assist our local partners and park staff in camera trap surveys. Remote cameras were provided to rangers working in four national parks and protected areas in the Altai Sayan range and on the border with Russia.

Field staff collected scats from many different areas—scheduled to be analyzed in early 2013—as part of the country-wide genetics survey being led by Dr. Janěčka.

In addition, Rodney offered continued technical support to The Nature Conservancy’s initiative to identify and recommend offset mitigation for large-scale copper and coal mining in the South Gobi area. This area contains significant populations of snow leopards and prey, along with a variety of species uniquely adapted to this demanding environment.
Annapurna Conservation Area Project in Mustang
Monitoring by Snow Leopard Scouts

Two camera traps were established in the Marchung area of Upper Mustang. They were checked regularly by snow leopard scouts and herders, under the supervision of Conservancy field coordinator Pema Tshering and ACAP staff. The team captured still images, such as the mom and cubs above, and video at this site: View video 🎥

The entire community watched this first-ever footage of snow leopards from Mustang. Villagers, ACAP staff, and local civil servants were all amazed to watch their majestic cat. The video was distributed among the other ACAP field stations so everyone in the region would have the chance to see it.

Mount Everest (Sagarmatha National Park)
Savings & Credit

Ten percent of Savings & Credit proceeds will directly support snow leopard education.

Activities conducted in Thamo, Thameteng, Phorste, and Thame included account auditing, income generation training, and ranking of potential enterprises.

Savings & Credit groups are collaborating with school committees and teachers to work for snow leopard conservation in their territories. Ten percent of Savings & Credit proceeds will directly support snow leopard education.

RUSSIA – ALTAI REPUBLIC

Partners: Arkhar NGO, WWF–Russia

From WWF-Russia / Mongolia newsletter about recent camera trap photos:

“This is striking news that several snow leopards managed to survive despite intense snare poaching in Argut … It is crucial to focus our effort on resurrection of snow leopards in Argut valley because the habitat for the cat is one of the best in Russia. Prey species (Siberian ibex) are abundant, the landscape is favorable.”

–Sergey Spitsyn, monitoring team leader
Sacred Sites–Sacred Species
Partner: Worldwide Indigenous Science Network (WISN)

Since 2010, the Conservancy and WISN have been exploring practical ways to merge indigenous and western approaches to scientific knowledge for the benefit of snow leopard conservation. The general framework for this merger is found in the UN’s Brundtland Report and Agenda 21 of the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

As described in the Director’s Letter (page 2) experts and representatives of snow leopard range countries met in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan to begin developing a global snow leopard conservation program. While the meetings are limited to high level government participation, we are working to create a vehicle for inclusion of indigenous cultural practitioners in the individual country plans that will inform the larger initiative.

We have begun to form a network of cultural practitioners who live and work in the snow leopard’s range countries. We use the term cultural practitioners to cover indigenous / tribal shamans, medicine people, sacred site guardians, and revered elders.

Our goals are:
- Merging western and indigenous approaches to scientific knowledge;
- Revitalizing ancient ceremonies to remember and honor the snow leopard spirit as a unifier of humanity;
- Establishing sacred sites as education / interpretive centers for the spiritual significance and terrestrial ecology of snow leopards;
- Empowering cultural practitioners with new communication technologies, and creating a dynamic on-line network.
BHUTAN
Partners: Bhutan Foundation, Nature Recreation and Ecotourism Department, Jigme Dorji National Park (JDNP)

Rodney and Tshewang held planning meetings with communities in JDNP. It was decided to hold a Snow Leopard Festival in October 2013 to educate adults and children about the importance of snow leopard conservation in the high mountains. In addition, we will assist with the publication of an illustrated book about snow leopards, designed especially for the Bhutanese communities.

KAZAKHSTAN
Partner: Snow Leopard Fund (SLF)

The Conservancy funded the development of a cross-country exchange with our SLC-India education partners, Kalpavriksh. This exchange began with a sharing of conservation education materials, and will be followed in 2013 by a visit of Kalpavriksh staff to SLF offices in Ust-Kamenogorsk and the Katon Karagay National Park.

In addition, we helped SLF initiate a conservation education program for schools in Kazakhstan’s snow leopard hotspots. The pilot program is being conducted in the town of Ust-Kamenogorsk and in Katon Karagay National Park, with lectures about the role of snow leopards in mountain ecosystems. SLF has authored or contributed to several publications aimed at snow leopard conservation. These are used in the school programs, along with the bi-monthly Irbis Club news column published in a regional newspaper that is distributed throughout East Kazakhstan.

MONGOLIA
Partner: Nomadic Nature Conservation (NNC)

The Conservancy continued to support the NNC Nature Trunk Program. With eight new trunks created in 2012, eight more schools have been introduced to NNC’s interactive conservation curriculum. NNC has expanded their program with the support of the Conservancy and other organizations. The team has new lessons for teachers covering wildlife legislation and wildlife economic value, how to write a small grant proposal, and renewing traditional riddles and tales about wildlife.
COMMUNITY-BASED EDUCATION

NEPAL
Partners: Department of National Parks & Wildlife Conservation; National Trust for Nature Conservation/Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP)

Snow Leopard Scouts

Annapurna Conservation Area, Central Nepal

The earth is our home, it is also home of snow leopards.
–Nisha Pun, Class 8

The Snow Leopard Scouts compiled an 80-page booklet, Snow Leopard Scouts in Annapurna. Through stories, poems, and paintings, the students’ love and reverence for the snow leopard are clear and heartfelt. By engaging with and observing local wildlife, these young ambassadors are on their way to becoming the voices of conservation in Nepal.

Snow Leopard Scouts also created and performed a play, Mountain Queen, the Snow Leopard, in order to send a strong conservation message to the community as well as national and international visitors. The drama was so well received by the public that an improved version was performed at the horse racing festival held each year at the sacred pilgrimage site, Muktinath.

A new Snow Leopard Scouts group was initiated in the Manang region, involving twelve students from two schools along with their teachers and key villagers.

Mount Everest (Sagarmatha), Eastern Nepal

The Conservancy and its partners spearheaded the expansion of Snow Leopard Scouts from Mount Everest, which now has 35 members, up from 14 in 2011. On World Environment Day, June 5, school eco-clubs were invited from the entire Khumbu Valley to take part in conservation education activities centered on snow leopards. Several hundred students participated, and were invited to join the Scouts. Eleven of the original and new Scouts aged 12–15 then participated in an alpine field trip. To continue the momentum in the fall, the Children’s Day celebration included an environmental quiz contest and an essay contest with the theme “snow leopard, culture and people-wildlife conflicts.”

By dedicating their time to these workshops, these young ambassadors are now responsible for spreading the message of conservation throughout their communities. With inclusive conservation practices, all participants, young and old, feel a sense of responsibility for their natural environment.
COMMUNITY-BASED EDUCATION

PAKISTAN

Partners: Baltistan Wildlife Conservation and Development Organization; Project Snow Leopard (BWCDO)

A two-day training course was held for teachers of nine schools in three valleys of Baltistan. A conservation education program was launched benefiting about 345 students in 3rd, 5th and 8th grades. BWCDO also provided school supplies for these students who lack even a desk. With more teachers being trained, and the program growing, BWCDO printed 1000 copies of children’s books on the snow leopard and distributed them to the nine schools.

INDIA

Partners: Snow Leopard Conservancy-India (SLC-India); Kalpavriksh

The Conservancy sponsored a workshop attended by teachers in Ladakh to learn the insights and lessons of Ri Gyancha: a biodiversity resource kit for educators in Ladakh. Ri Gyancha (meaning Jewels of the Mountains) teaches educators how to incorporate conservation education in their schools. We also supported expansion of the program to the Zanskar region south of Ladakh. In addition, a nature field trip was conducted in Zanskar with more than 40 students.

SLC-India has been consistent in involving students and community members in environmental workshops with the objective to familiarize the children about the region’s biodiversity, and how to conserve the snow leopard and the valuable flora and fauna of the area.
COMMUNITY-BASED EDUCATION

RUSSIA

Partners: Foundation for Sustainable Development of Altai (FSDA); Altai Ministry of Education; WWF-Russia

The Conservancy supported conservation action in the Altai Republic of Russia, including the third annual International Snow Leopard Day activities in the city of Gorno-Altaisk.

The Conservancy’s education program officer, Lucy O’Dea, represented the Conservancy at the international festival where there were students from the Altai Republic, Mongolia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. Through a series of interviews with local educators, conservationists, herders, students, and citizens, the Conservancy found that these festivals are imperative to the progress of snow leopard conservation in the Altai.

Lucy was joined by Alice Clark, a volunteer from Haverford College, PA, who assisted in filming interviews with key community members and those involved with each of the three cultural museums supported by the Conservancy. Lucy and Alice interviewed local elementary educators and learned about their desire to expand teachings and their hopes for more conservation materials. These films will be compiled for the Conservancy’s website in 2013.

Inegen and Kosh-Agach each formally launched a new Museum of Snow Leopards, the first of their kind in Altai. The museums were constructed as traditional Altai homes and are decorated inside and out with children’s artwork and poems, photographs and felt images of snow leopards. All who visit these beautiful centers can watch videos, read books, and listen to storytelling by local people to learn more about this rare predator.

“If we didn’t conduct our work, nobody would know. Before these competitions and the festival, even the teachers didn’t know anything. Now they know the problem and that it exists. Since the festival, they started to think about it. The local population sees their work and the kids talk about it at home. I am sure there will be a change in the future but we need to start with small steps now.”

—Ludmila Nikolaevna Shabelskaya, Director of Children’s Center

Third Annual Snow Leopard Day Festival in Gorno-Altaisk

Lucy (at left) with some of the festival participants and organizers
MISSION

The Snow Leopard Conservancy advances community-based stewardship of these endangered big cats through grassroots conservation initiatives, range-country environmental education, training of herders in wildlife monitoring, and collaborative research blending traditional knowledge and modern science.

MEET

TSHEWANG WANGCHUK

Tshewang Wangchuk joined the Conservancy Board of Directors in 2012. He brings with him nearly twenty years of field experience as a Bhutanese wildlife biologist. He has worked with Bhutan’s Royal Society for Protection of Nature as well as the national Nature Conservation Division, including directorship of Jigme Dorji National Park. He coordinated WWF International’s Tiger Program, and has been actively involved in Bhutan’s extensive protected area management system. Currently, he serves as Executive Director of the Bhutan Foundation; he is also completing his doctoral degree at the University of Montana, with a thesis on snow leopard population genetics in Bhutan.

Tshewang’s special skills and knowledge will be valuable assets in furthering the goals of the Snow Leopard Conservancy. We welcome him to the Board.
Presentations
Rodney Jackson and our genetics partner, Jan Janečka, gave a presentation in Houston, co-sponsored by the Houston Zoo and the Asia Society Texas Center. They also took the opportunity to hold a lunchtime forum with animal keepers and other staff at the zoo.

University Outreach
Rodney led a forum with Sonoma State University's Geographic Information Systems class about the Conservancy’s work mapping snow leopards and their habitat. He gave a webinar on the same subject with teachers and students at Duke University.

Aqus Café Fundraiser
Program Officer Lucy O’Dea organized a gathering hosted by Aqus Café, in her home town of Petaluma. Some sixty of Lucy’s peers and family friends learned about the Conservancy’s work.

Leataata Floyd Elementary School
Lucy visited the Leataata Floyd Elementary School in Sacramento, as the final event in the students’ study of endangered species.

Pets Unlimited
Rodney talked about snow leopard conservation with a group of at-risk teens participating in the Pets Unlimited Humane Education program.

"It’s not easy presenting new information to kids who are middle-school aged. Your presentation drew them in. . . I have never seen them so attentive and enthralled. You’ve kindled a new enthusiasm for animal welfare for these kids!"

–Sandra Chew, Pets Unlimited

“After studying this exciting species for several months, it was wonderful to have a person so connected to snow leopard conservation come and speak with the children. . . giving them the opportunity to showcase their knowledge. Lucy... is a delightful speaker and we were delighted she could come!”

–Teacher Wendy Money
Rodney and the Conservancy’s Education Director Darla Hillard each contributed to the book *Snow Leopard – Stories from the Roof of the World*, edited by Don O. Hunter. The publisher, University Press of Colorado, described this collection as “powerful first-person accounts ... grants readers a rare glimpse of this elusive cat and the remarkable lives of those personally connected to its future. These stories ... resonate with adventure, danger, discovery, and, most importantly, hope for this magnificent big cat.” Copies are available on our website:

Shop

Deutsche Welle Radio interviewed Rodney.  
Listen to interview

National Geographic invited the Snow Leopard Conservancy to submit articles for their NewsWatch blog. Darla wrote about the Nepal Snow Leopard Scouts...

Read article

...and about Corral Predator-proofing and ecotourism in Ladakh.

Read article

For the 2012 Indianapolis Prize, Mays Entertainment created videos of all six honorees, including Rodney Jackson.

View video

The San Francisco Chronicle featured a front page article, “Rodney Jackson on a mission to save the snow leopard.”

Rodney and Darla were asked to write the cover story for the January-April 2012 issue of Himalayas Nepal.

Read article

Outlook Traveler (India), published an interview with Snow Leopard Conservancy-India Education Coordinator Tsering Angmo.

Read article
Snow Leopard Conservancy is a member of the International Society of Ethnobiology (ISE). ISE’s mission statement includes the recognition that “Indigenous peoples, traditional societies, and local communities are critical to the conservation of biological, cultural and linguistic diversity.”

**Capacity-building**

When English is not a conservationist’s first language, competing for grants can be daunting. The Conservancy assisted the Snow Leopard Fund in winning two small grants totaling some $16,000 for applied research and education in Kazakhstan.

**Mongolia Study Abroad**

This course, with nine junior and senior students, was led by our partner, Jan Janečka, and other staff of Texas A&M University’s School of Veterinary Medicine. Technical assistance was provided by Rodney Jackson and Mongolian partners Dr. B. Munkhtsog, staff of Irbis Mongolia, the Mongolian Academy of Sciences, and a local veterinarian.

Field studies included public health and livestock management; surveying local communities about wildlife and veterinary health surveys in a remote, culturally unique environment; and monitoring snow leopards and their prey. The team’s trail cameras detected a minimum of five snow leopards in the Baga Bogd Mountain Range, including a female with an older cub (page 5). At the end of the two-week field survey, students put together a scientific report and presented the results to the local community.

**Strategic Planning**

With the technical support of WCN’s Director of Conservation Programs, Jean-Gael Collomb, and staff of Foundations of Success, the Conservancy launched a review of our strategic field program approach to snow leopard conservation. We are using Miradi software to refine our conceptual model using a threats-based approach to conservation, including identifying specific, measurable indicators of success that can be tracked with realistic investment in resources. We are challenged in this process by the diversity of our project sites in seven countries and multiple partners of varying institutional capacity. Many thanks to WCN for this invaluable capacity-building support for the Conservancy.

**Meetings**

Darla Hillard traveled to Korea to participate in the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) World Conservation Congress. Sessions focused on increasing the voice of Indigenous Cultural Practitioners (ICPs) in conservation planning and management, processes for involving and supporting them, and developing networking opportunities. With our partner, the Worldwide Indigenous Science Network, Darla co-facilitated a workshop for ICPs with a spiritual connection to the snow leopard or other big cat. Activities explored the merging of Western science and Indigenous knowledge for conservation of sacred species. See page 7 Sacred Sites–Sacred Species.
Art
Leslie Artis, for hand bags and fine art
Molly Eckler, for Long Tail wine label
Victor Pavlushin, art for website and reports
Justin Ringlein, t-shirt design

Professional Services
Steve Flaherty, computer maintenance, Charleen Gavette, expertise in GIS technology and mapping,
Glitchbusters/Jake Smallwood, computer maintenance, Gilda Harger and Tom & Mary Herrmann, graphic design, Terry Hillard, Kathleen Palmer/Sonoma Connections, and John Sichi,
website maintenance and design.

Volunteers
Special thanks to our amazing voluntary Board of Directors! In addition, twenty-five volunteers donated 1030 hours, with a total value of over $24,500, for professional services and assistance with fundraising.

Please continue to support the Snow Leopard Conservancy with your gifts of any amount.

• $50 pays for a porter to transport educational supplies for Snow Leopard Scouts of Mt. Everest
• $100 buys a tank of gas for Snow Leopard Fund Kazakhstan’s field vehicle
• $250 supports camera trap monitoring of snow leopards by Bhutanese women
• $400 covers interpreter fees for a Cultural Practitioner to participate in snow leopard conservation planning

Special Thanks
Karma Quest Ecotourism and Adventure Travel has raised $22,500 for snow leopard conservation in India, since we began offering special Snow Leopard Quest trips in 2005. To date, a total of 36 Quest participants have contributed these funds — 32 have been rewarded with the thrill of seeing a wild snow leopard.

Explore KarmaQuests

This Nepalese child and her community benefit from participation in the Savings & Credit program.

How You Can Help
**PARTNERS**

**Fundraising**
- Aqus Community
- Indianapolis Prize
- Lyon Ranch
- Wild Cat Education & Conservation Fund

**Foundation Partners**
- Australian Himalayan Foundation
- Disney Online Studios, Canada – Club Penguin
- Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund
- MBZ Species Fund
- National Geographic Society
- San Francisco Zoological Society

**Business Partners**
- Cars4Causes
- GoodSearch & GoodShop
- Goosecross Cellars / TorchLight Community
- SHARES
- MissionFish
- SpiritHoods

**Tapeats Fund**
- US Fish & Wildlife Service
- Woodtiger Fund

The GuideStar Exchange Seal demonstrates the Conservancy’s commitment to transparency.
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Donations & Sales 61.3%
Equipment & Gifts In-Kind 4.5%

Expenses
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Education Program 38.1%
Conservation Program 50.2%
Fundraising and G&A 11.7%
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THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS DONORS 2012

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Special Donations

In memory of Jeanine Jaffie: Maurice & Barbara Asa, Mary & Tom Herrmann, Larry & Laurie Wetterschneider, John & Cathy Yee. Special thanks to Jeanine’s daughters, Gail Gordon and Suzanne Ashton, for their particular efforts on behalf of snow leopards.

In memory of Bob Musgrove: Nina Revoyr

In honor of Betsy Ballenger & Chris Beale: Irene Ballenger

In honor of Terri Capone, Carol & David Galbert, Anne Laing, Trinka Smith-Burke, Pam & Dick Stevenson, Lyn Traverse: Betsy Ballenger

On behalf of Logan, Jesse & Ben Hunter: Don Hunter

In recognition of Dr. Rodney Jackson’s work and nomination for the Indianapolis award: Carol Wixson

Gibbs International Magnet School raised $130.17; Leataata Floyd Elementary School, Third Grade Class, raised $35.00; Westmont Charter School – Pineapple Piranhas raised $361.00, to help save the wild snow leopard!

Every effort has been made to ensure this is an accurate list of donors. If you have any queries regarding this list, please contact us at: info@snowleopardconservancy.org

Annual Report 2012