Wildlife Matters

Exploring wildlife conservation and animal welfare

Issue 1 | November 2021

Brought to you by....
Kate on Conservation &
NORWICH SCIENCE FESTIVAL



Red Panda Power!

WILD WOLF WONDERS

Uncover the secret lives of the wolf pack



BEAVERS ARE BACK!

There's a rewilding revolution taking place in Norfolk



BRILLIANT BIG CATS

Explore the lives of our feline friends



Editor's Note

Welcome to our special edition Norwich Science Festival mini magazine; Wildlife Matters. This publication has been created using the work from the Environmental Journalism workshop.

NORWICH SCIENCE FESTIVAL

"Saving our planet is now a communications challenge"
Those are the words used by Sir David Attenborough when he joined Instagram in 2020. I shared this quote during the environmental workshop at the Norwich Science Festival as a reminder of the power of storytelling. From the discussions and exercises we completed during the workshop, we were able explore the brilliance of nature and how it captures our interests -- from backyard encounters with frogs, to dreams of one day spotting wolves in Yellowstone National Park -- wildlife captures our interests in many ways. With only an hour of writing their pieces, I'm incredibly impressed with the work that the children put together, and very excited to share it with you here.

Kate on Conservation

KATE STEPHENSON
Editor-in-Chief







Kate on Conservation is a blogger, conservationist, and a campaigner for animal rights. She believes passionately in the education of future generations, having worked as Education Editor at National Geographic KiDs UK and Sub Editor at Discovery Education. For the last 10 years she has run the blog KateOnConservation.com

Kate also launched the Wildlife Blogger Crowd in 2020, an online community of nature writers and wildlife storytellers of all ages. www.wildlifebloggercrowd.com

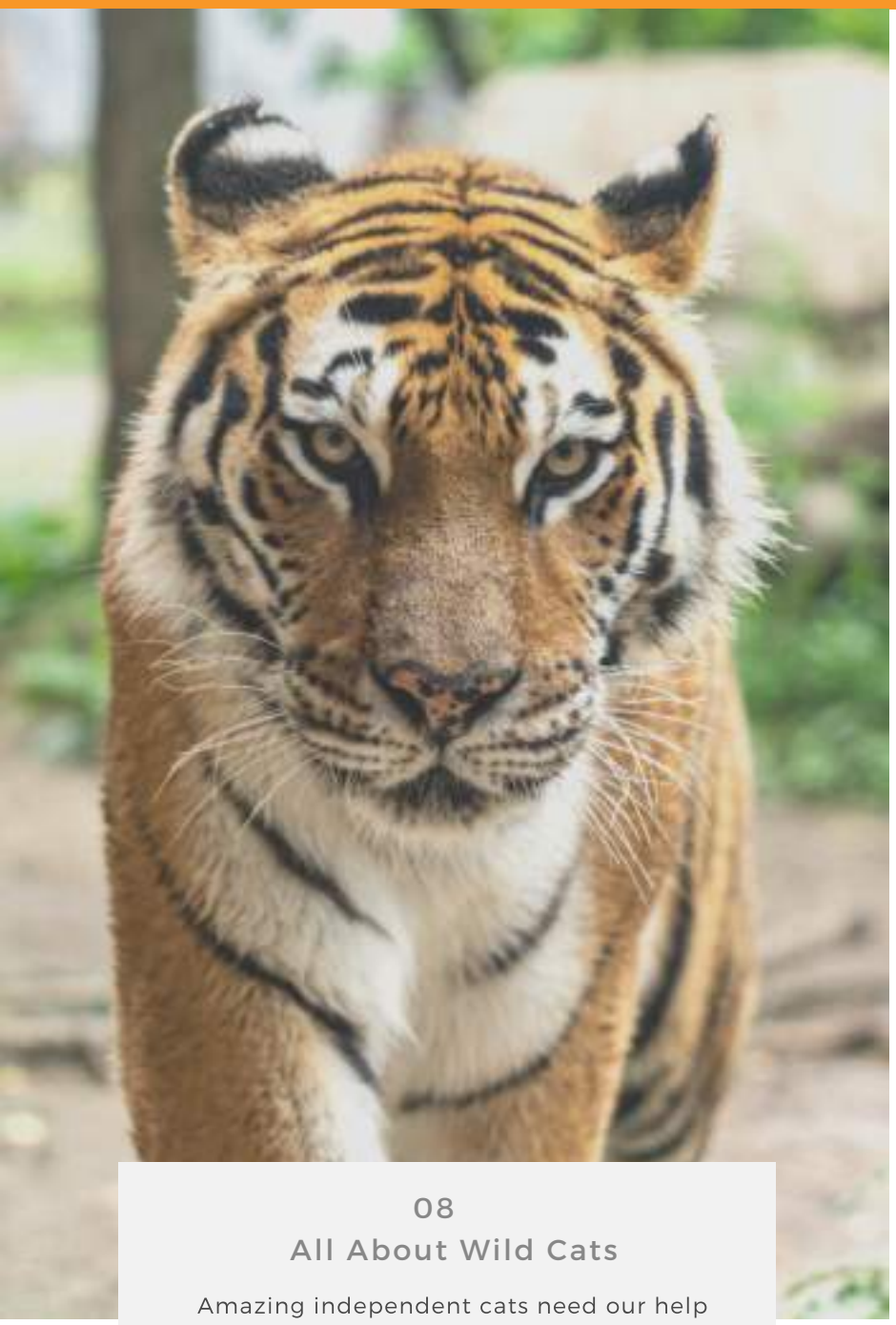
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THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO

PENGUINS IN PECULIAR PLACES

By Felicity Zielinski

When we think of penguins, we usually think of cold climates, but did you know penguins don't just live in cold places?

In fact, there are more species of penguin that live in warmer climates than there are living in cooler temperatures.

Penguins in the cold

Some penguins are adapted to the cold weather. They are fluffier and have thick skin and lots of fat (blubber) under their skin to keep warm in cold weather.

They huddle together with their friends to keep warm and have dark-coloured feathers to absorb heat from the sun, to keep themselves warm, too.

When it gets very cold, penguins can puff their feathers out to trap more air for even better insulation.

When it gets too hot, penguins then fluff their feathers out even more so that the trapped warm air can escape and enable the penguin to cool down..

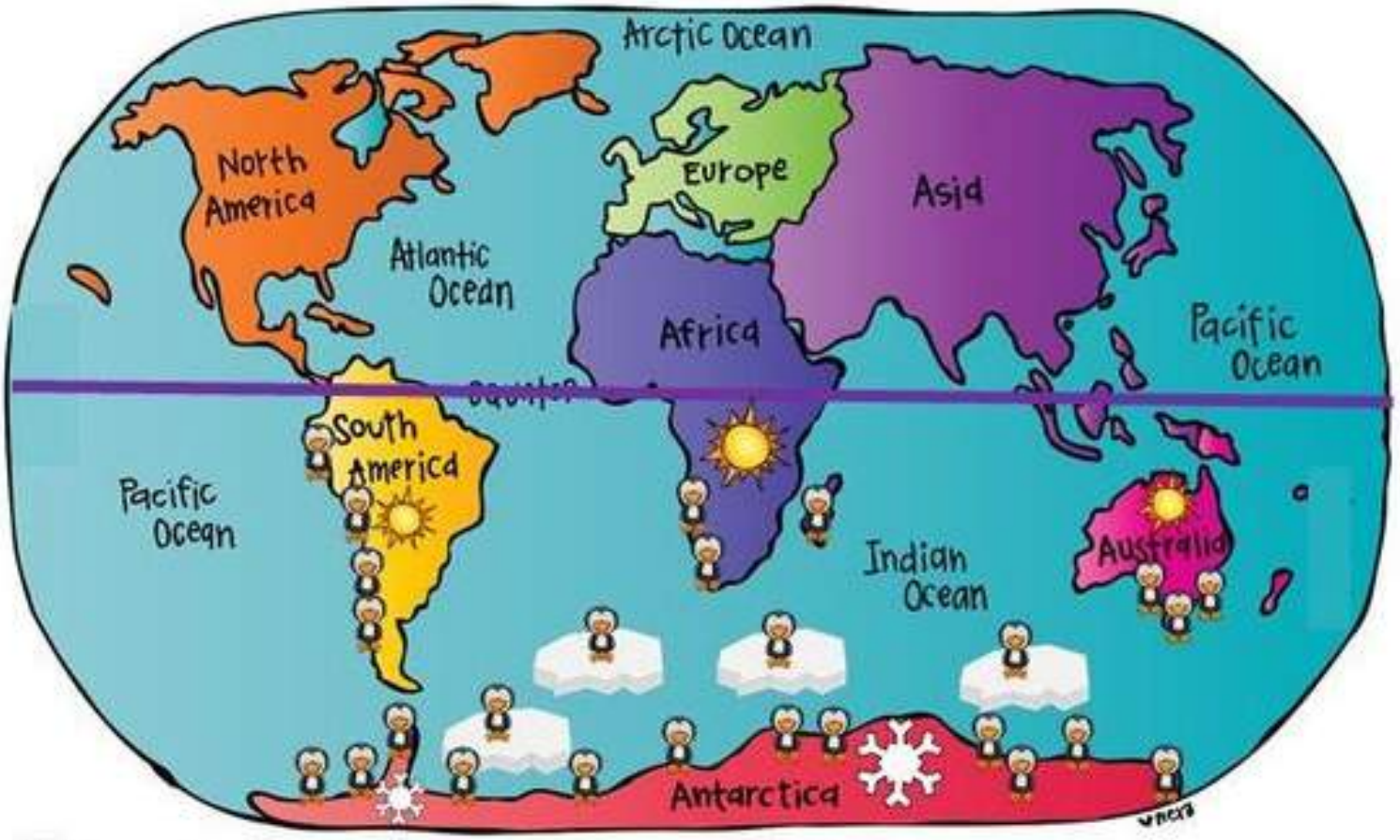
Penguins in the warm

Penguins that live in warm places have different adaptations. African Penguins, for example, have patches of bare skin just above their eyes, which allow excess heat to escape. These are also known as 'heat windows'.

Penguins in the Galapagos cool down by panting. They also lean forward to shade their feet from the sun, and they stretch their flippers out to the sides as it helps them to loose heat from the underparts of their flippers.

Are you surprised to hear that some penguins live in hot places? Take a look at this map to see where they live.

Where do penguins Live?



Penguins live near the water between the Equator and the South Pole. Some penguins live around Antarctica where it is very cold. South America, Africa, and Australia can get very hot and the penguins that live there cool off in the water.

Panda
CASE STUDY

Pandas pouncing back



Saving pandas from extinction

By Neve Portman

For the last 30 years, China's Giant pandas have been close to extinction. Thankfully, over recent years their population numbers have increased by 17%, to reach 1,800 pandas in the wild. As of July 2021, Giant Pandas were no longer classified as 'Endangered', but there are still threats to the species.

WAYS THAT CONSERVATIIONISTS ARE STILL HELPING THE SPECIES:
EXPANDING GIANT PANDAS' HABITATS AND REPLANTING BAMBOO FORESTS.

RED PANDAS VS. GIANT PANDAS

In this feature, Alice Sprake takes a look at the difference between Giant Pandas and Red Pandas. Despite their shared name, the two species are not closely related

RED PANDAS

Red pandas, like giant pandas, are bamboo eaters native to Asia's high forests

They are native to China, Nepal, Eastern Himalayas and Bhutan.



Red Pandas are not just one species but two. They are closely related to skunks, raccoons and weasels.

Red Pandas are classified as endangered due to hunting and habitat loss. Scientists say conservation efforts are more critical than ever. Their homes are being cut down and they are hunted and poached.

GIANT PANDAS

The giant panda was once widespread throughout southern and eastern China, as well as neighbouring Myanmar and northern Vietnam.



BOTH SPECIES' FOREST HOMES ARE GETTING CUT DOWN

Now the pandas' range is restricted to just six isolated mountain ranges in Gansu, Shaanxi and Sichuan Provinces in south-central China.

Giant Pandas are more closely related to bears. However, their eyes are different to those of other bears. Like domestic cats, giant pandas have vertical slits for pupils.

"Giant pandas are no longer classified as endangered but are still vulnerable," say Chinese officials. They face threats from poaching, habitat destruction (as land is cleared for farming), and tourism.

ALL ABOUT



WILD CATS

ELLA SPURWAY



The term "big cat" is often used to refer to the following five species: the tiger, lion, jaguar, leopard, and snow leopard, These species all belong to the family; "Panthera". There are some large species of cat outside of this family, such as cheetah, cougar and clouded leopard that are known as 'wild cats'.

Some of the cats that we know most about are the ones that we keep in our homes. These are known as 'small cats' or domestic cats. There are lots of different breeds of domestic cats, such as tabby cats, Persian cats, Maine coons, Russian Blue and Ragdolls.

Ragdolls (pictured here) stand out for their large size, semi-long coats, and sparkling blue eyes. When we look at domestic cats, it's easy to see the comparison with their larger, wild relatives.



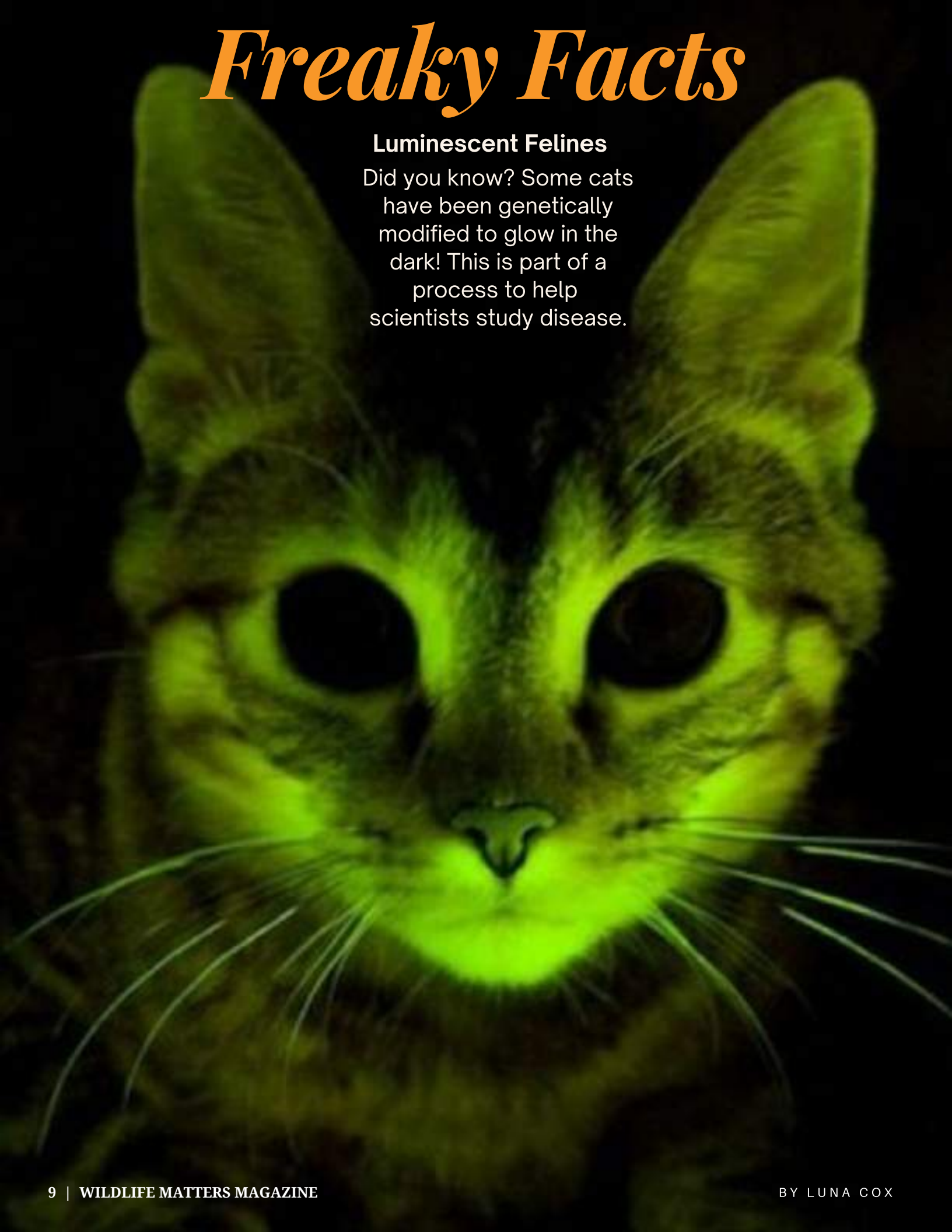
Have you noticed how much your cat sleeps at home? Big Cats are similar in this way! Lions sleep for about 20 hours a day. Leopards are nocturnal, meaning they sleep all day and hunt their prey at night. Leopards mostly live alone, while lions live in groups, known as prides. and it is usually the females who catch the food. Male lions (who have big, bushy manes) are the first ones to eat at mealtimes -- even if they didn't do the hunting!





BIG CATS SPECIAL

Freaky Facts



Luminescent Felines

Did you know? Some cats have been genetically modified to glow in the dark! This is part of a process to help scientists study disease.

BY LUNA COX



THE WONDERS OF

THE WOLF

By Florence Easterbrook

Have you ever wondered about the secret life of wolves? People often think that wolves are dangerous to humans, but did you know that we are in fact more dangerous to them?!

I want people to respect wolves, so we can bring them back to England. Currently, wolves are found in North America, and they were successfully rewilded in Yellowstone National Park, where they have helped to re-shape the land.

Wolves live in packs. A pack is like a big family, with a lead male and a lead female in charge. Only the lead female of the pack can have a litter of pups. A litter usually consists of 4-6 pups.



Wolves have been very misunderstood. We have seen them as mean, cruel and horrible things, but they are simply good hunters and well adapted. For example, their sense of smell is 100 times better than a humans.

Kate on Conservations says; "Wolves have been cast as villains for a long time. We've seen them as the 'baddies' in stories such as Little Red Riding Hood and The Three Little Pigs, and many myths and legends contain 'scary' wolves or werewolves. But they can actually be kind and affectionate to one another and their cubs."

Re-releasing Wolves

I think that if we help wolves come back to England, it will make a giant difference to the ecosystem.

"Wolves are good for the natural ecosystem, if we help them, they will help us."

In the past, wolves were threatened by humans with guns, poison and traps. They were listed under the U.S. Endangered Species Act.

In the early 1990s, U.S. and Canadian scientists captured 76 wolves and released them into the Yellowstone National Park. The wolves thrived in their new home, and their presence helped many other species to thrive too. They could do the same in the UK.



BEAVERS: BACK FROM THE BRINK

A Short History of the Beaver
by Amelia Winiarska

How did beavers revolutionise rewilding? What is their history, and why in the world were they eaten?

Beavers are the extraordinary builders of the animal world. Their dams are architecturally amazing and are great for the environment, as they are natural and can provide habitats for other creatures.

The presence of beavers can improve the quality of water for other creatures, such as fish, water rats, voles, mice and anything that lives along the banks or in rivers.

Dams prevent the soil that has been eroded from fields from being lost to the sea. They slow the flow of water, helping to prevent flooding.

Beavers are both herbivores and rodents. They were hunted to extinction in the UK for their fur and a natural secretion called 'castoreum', which was used for both perfumes and medicine.

Europe's largest rodents have since been successfully reintroduced and protected in many countries, including the UK.

DID YOU KNOW?
Beavers were declared as 'fish' in the 17th Century, because they spent so much time in the water. This meant they could be eaten on Fridays or at Christian celebrations.

"Beavers are ecosystem engineers that help the natural environment."
Hugh, Wild East UK

ROWDY RODENTS

BY ELLIOTT PIMLOTT

If you want to learn about some adorable rodents, then read on...

COMMON DORMOUSE

The dormouse (pictured right) is the only small British mammal with a furry tail. They are nocturnal and spend almost all of their time in the branches of trees during the summer, rarely coming down to the ground.



RATS

Rats (pictured right) are medium-sized rodents with a long tail. They use their long tails for balance. They are mainly nocturnal and live underground. Rats use their sensitive whiskers to touch their surroundings, which helps them to feel their way around in the dark.

A group of rats is called a 'mischief'! They are experts at staying out of sight! Although they vastly outnumber humans, we rarely see them.



SYRIAN HAMSTERS

Hamsters are nocturnal, which means they sleep in the day and will be awake at night.

They are often kept as pets, but at least 18 species of hamsters can be found living in the wild. In the wild they live in burrows in the mud or sand.

Hamsters usually live for 2-3 years, however, according to the Guinness Book of World Records, the oldest hamster lived for 7 years.

They're cute, but can sometimes be aggressive.



HOW TO...
GET FROGS INTO YOUR GARDEN

STEP 1

SETTING UP

Find a suitable spot in your garden for setting up a small pond. You will need a big bowl, some water, pebbles and logs. Make sure that there is lots of plant life around the pond to provide cover and pray for the frogs.

STEP2

MAKING A POND

Now you have chosen your large bowl (an old washing up bowl is ideal), you will need to fill it with water. For the water to remain good quality for frogs, its important to place some oxygenating pond weed.

STEP 3

FINAL DETAILS

Put some pebbles in the bottom of your bowl, as well as a log or tile, so that frogs or other small animals and insects are able to climb out of the water if they fall in. Finally, wait. After a few days it's likely that a frog will arrive.

> “It's good to have a frog in your garden because they are cute and eat flies.”

FROG FACTS

Frogs are amphibians

Frogs are prey to lizards and snakes, water shrews, otters and birds such as herons.

A frog's skin requires fresh water.

They can live in forests, frozen tundras and deserts.

Frog's are adult tadpoles. They grow from frogspawn.





Wildlife Matters

WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO...

- Felicity Zielinski
- Neve Portman
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- Florence Easterbrook
- Amelia Winiarska
- Elliot Pinlott
- Sebastian Sprake

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