

## ARABIAN SAND CAT “ONE PLAN” CONSERVATION WORKSHOP HOSTED BY AL AIN ZOO

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The sand cat is currently listed as Near Threatened across Arabia but Endangered in the UAE and Abu Dhabi. Despite these classifications there is very little known about the sand cat across its range. Little information exists about its distribution, population size, population trend, biology and ecology. There are as few as 4 confirmed records of the sand cat in the UAE. Because of these factors Al Ain Zoo has made the sand cat a focus species in its conservation and research efforts.

To date the zoo has carried out DNA analysis on its captive population, published baseline haematology and biochemistry values on its cats, participated in cutting-edge IVF and embryo transfer research and carried out an extensive review of all available publications on sand cats.

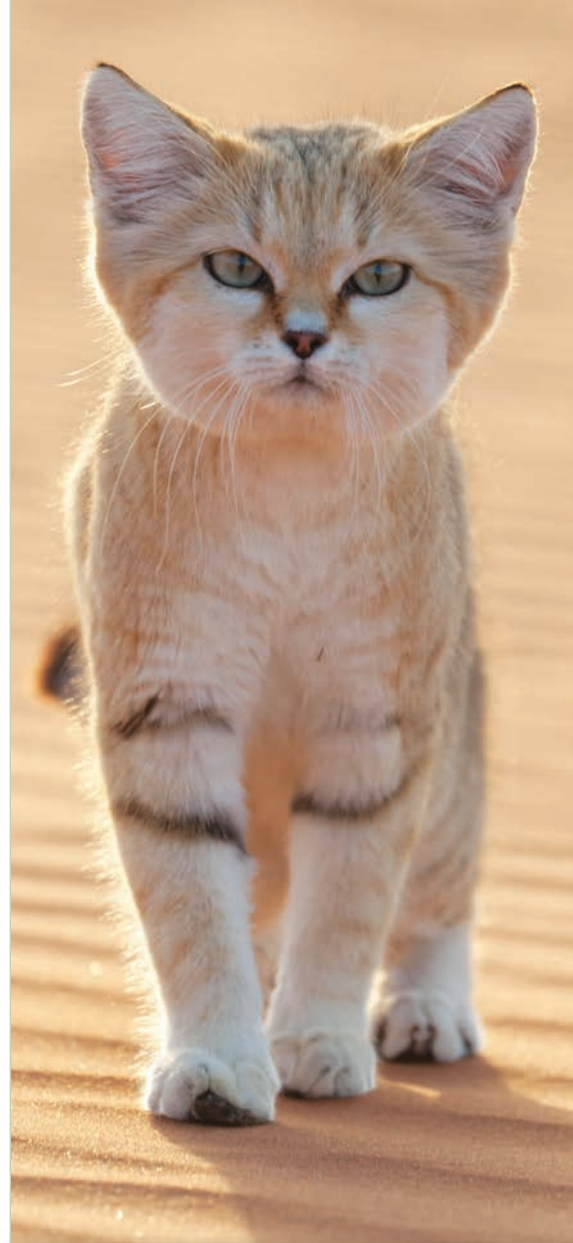
Continuing the programme on 13-14th November 2013 Al Ain Zoo initiated and hosted the first regional One Plan conservation workshop, focussed on the Arabian sand cat. The “One Plan” approach is a recent initiative promoted by the IUCN Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG) which aims to make conservation efforts more effective and efficient by encouraging collaboration and cooperation between the ex situ and in situ conservation communities. In particular it advocates that all individuals of a species, whether in the wild or captivity, are considered as one population.

In the One Plan spirit the Arabian sand cat workshop brought together members of the in situ, ex situ and research communities to share their knowledge, data and experience to create a conservation strategy for the Arabian sand cat. The 30 delegates came from the UAE, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Jordan, Europe and the US.

Since the workshop work has already begun on gathering information for new husbandry guidelines, the creation of a sand cat library and the design of a field research project.

The workshop report and conservation strategy will be combined with a status review and will be freely available when completed.

Al Ain Zoo would like to thank all of the delegates and their institutions for their efforts both during the workshop and since. We look forward to continuing this collaboration in the future for the benefit of the Arabian sand cat.



Sand cat ©Xavier Eichaker



Sand cat ©Xavier Eichaker

## FEW/FPALY NEWSLETTER RELAUNCH

By David Stanton

No news isn't always good news, but our long hiatus from publishing our newsletters is not an indication of inactivity. In fact, since Dr. Mohammed Al-Duais assumed the Executive Directorship of FEW/FPALY last June, our organization has been more active than ever. We are now well into our fifth year of existence and have a very committed and dedicated staff and network of volunteers around the world that continually works towards achieving our mission. Many of you will have followed our activities on our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/yemenileopard>)

which is kept vibrant and current by Australian volunteer Rasha Skybey.

For those of you who don't follow us on Facebook (or who are not one of the almost 1300 people who have "liked" us there - or even if you are!) I'm sure you are as excited as I am about the resumption of our monthly newsletter. Issue No. 38 is a collaboration between Dr. Al-Duais, our Secretary Mr. Maisara Al-Roiney, and volunteer editors in Yemen and the UAE. As the founder and former director of FEW/FPALY I am extremely pleased with the direction that the organization has assumed under the able leadership of Dr. Al-Duais and proud that FEW/FPALY continues to be the most effective conservation organization in Yemen. Mohammed works tirelessly to ensure that the organization's strategy is aligned with the best practices in conservation today and continues to work his magic with scant resources to ensure that FEW/FPALY is a noteworthy player on the global conservation stage. We are all optimistic that the conclusion of Yemen's National Dialog will eventually lead to a more stable nation, but given the uncertain security situation and other problems that currently plague this country, I think it is nothing short of miraculous that FEW/FPALY continues to make headway in its war against indifference to the future of Yemen's endangered wildlife.

You can enjoy the contents of our latest newsletter at:

[http://www.yemenileopard.org/files/cms/news\\_articles/Newsletter\\_38\\_-\\_ND\\_review\\_25Feb\\_2014.pdf](http://www.yemenileopard.org/files/cms/news_articles/Newsletter_38_-_ND_review_25Feb_2014.pdf)