

The beautiful and elusive snow leopard of the high mountains of Central Asia is faced with extinction. Fortunately the Snow Leopard Conservancy is working to try to prevent such a tragedy by helping the shepherds to build new, stronger pens to protect their livestock, involving the villagers in community conservation projects, and helping them to value the snow leopards and understand the role they play in their environment.

...Dr. Jane Goodall



## **SNOW LEOPARD CONSERVANCY ANNUAL REPORT, 2000**

Since its establishment in June 2000, the Snow Leopard Conservancy (SLC) has received grants from foundations and individuals totaling \$60,000. Tremendous support comes from a group of extraordinary volunteer fundraisers based in the Southern San Francisco Bay Area.

Thanks to award-winning science teacher Mike Weddle, we are continuing a unique middle school partnership, which Dr. Goodall describes best:

*I was excited to learn that children in the United States have become involved in the effort to protect these great cats. Selected students from the Jane Goodall Environmental Magnet School of the Waldo Middle School in Salem, Oregon study and help to support the conservation efforts of specific villages in snow leopard countries. This enables JGEMS students to understand the problems faced in other parts of the world in a very personal way, and to realize how their efforts to help individuals can have a direct impact on global as well as local problems.*

In addition, we continue our public outreach, education and fundraising partnership with Project Survival, the conservation arm of the Sierra Endangered Cat Haven. Funds received through these domestic partnerships support our Ladakh and Nepal Stewardship Programs and educational activities described below.

### ***Ladakh Stewardship Program***

Hemis National Park harbors the world's highest diversity of wild sheep and goats, and contains some of India's best snow leopard habitat. Each year the park's approximately 1,600 human inhabitants lose some \$300 worth of livestock per family to snow leopards and other predators — a significant economic hardship.

#### ***One Village at a Time***

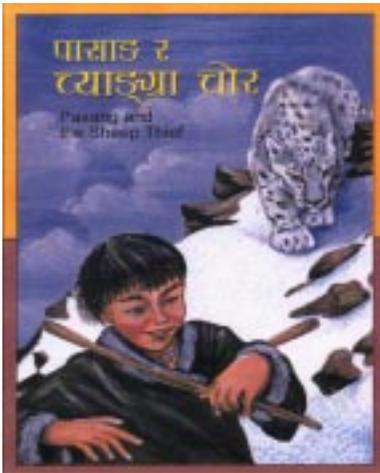
*The SLC works directly with local communities and agencies to reduce livestock depredation by snow leopards. We believe that these big cats are best protected through conservation efforts that invite participation by all the stakeholders, including women and children. We believe in providing simple, environmentally sound, cost-effective incentives to local communities in exchange for agreements that help them become more effective stewards of wildlife and habitat.*

The SLC has continued to expand its program of predator-proofing corrals and improving animal husbandry. In addition we have identified ways to ensure greater local benefits from the existing tourism base. Ladakh Program Director Rinchen Wangchuk will continue to oversee the training of villagers to improve their "parachute cafe" operations (housed in army-surplus parachutes-turned tents, and run by local women). Cafe and campground hygiene are targeted, along with an improved range of items for sale.

The SLC will provide materials for a simple, mouse-proof storehouse which the villagers will build, along with constructing and maintaining a campground toilet. A key next-step will be to use the parachute cafes as focal points for providing tourists and local communities with wildlife conservation education.

## *Nepal Stewardship Program*

Nepal's "Hidden Kingdom" of Mustang dates back to the 8th Century but was rarely seen by outsiders until 1992. This strikingly beautiful land lies along Nepal's northern border, adjacent to Tibet. Planning meetings were held in Fall 2000. We will initiate community-based wildlife conservation initiatives this summer, focusing on predator-proofing livestock corrals, in partnership with the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation and the American Himalayan Foundation. With funding from the United Nations, the team will also work with local people to develop a comprehensive conservation plan for this unique part of the Himalaya.



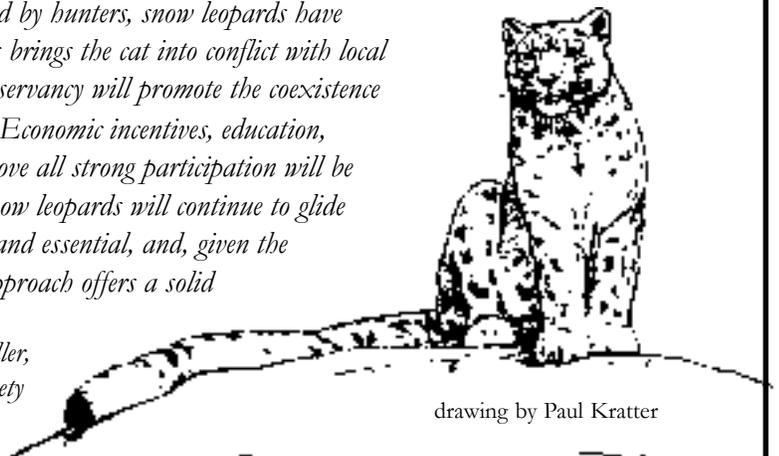
## *Education Program*

***Ramailo Kitaab:*** In Kathmandu, Nepal, five women have seen the need for good quality, fun-to-read, widely available children's books on nature conservation. They pooled their expertise and created *Ramailo Kitaab* (Nepali for "Good Books"). Two years ago, Darla Hillard began working with Ramailo Kitaab on the production of two books focusing on snow leopard conservation. *My Grandma Says* introduces readers aged 5-7 to snow leopards and the other animals of the high mountain ecosystem. *Pasang and the Sheep Thief* tells a more complicated story, for ages 7-12. A fact sheet is included for use in schools. Both books have text side-by-side in Nepali and English.

***Poster: Good Livestock Husbandry is Good for Snow Leopards:*** From 1992 to 1997 artist Leslie Nguyen worked at the request of Tsurphu monastery in Tibet to create two traditional Buddhist *thangkas* — sacred paintings or appliques — to replace the treasured images (one measuring 108x70 feet) lost during the Cultural Revolution. To create the artwork for our poster, Leslie used silks and brocades blended with painting in a style adapted from the traditional techniques. The posters show two mountain settlements, one practicing good environmental stewardship, and one that could use improvement. These will be distributed free to schools, nature clubs, and village centers in the snow leopard countries, and we will hold teacher trainings to practice classroom activities, descriptions of which will be printed on the back.

*The snow leopard is an icon of Central Asia's mountain world. Its enduring presence symbolizes the health of a unique environment, home not only to ibex, marmot, snowcock and gentian, but also the human population which uses the alpine meadows to graze livestock. With natural prey decimated by hunters, snow leopards have increasingly turned to domestic animals for survival. This brings the cat into conflict with local people and endangers its future. The Snow Leopard Conservancy will promote the coexistence of the pastoralists with snow leopards and other wildlife. Economic incentives, education, remedial solutions such as better herding practices, and above all strong participation will be used to assist the communities — and help assure that snow leopards will continue to glide among the crags. The Program is innovative, imaginative and essential, and, given the extensive experience upon which it is based, its realistic approach offers a solid prescription for success.*

....Dr. George B. Schaller,  
Director of Science, Wildlife Conservation Society



## PROGRAM PARTNERS

### DONORS

Foundation grants were awarded to the SLC from the Leonard X. Bosack and Bette M. Kruger Charitable Foundation, the Calgary Zoo, and the Midcontinental Ecological Science Center. Donations were received from the following generous individuals:

#### Visionaries

Kenneth & Gabrielle Adelman, Anonymous, Charlie Knowles, Neil & Joyce Silverman

#### Conservators

Betsy Howell, Thomas & Mary Rothwein, Waldo Middle School

#### Supporters:

Eva Au, Louanna Bennett, Marjorie Carmichael, Lori Gast, Dedre Gentner, Frank Gonzalez, Steve & Diane Haze, Christine Hemrick, Mr. & Mrs. David W. Hunter, Joanne Hutchins, Keith Iverson, Sabrina Johnston, Linda P. Masi, Rick Olivas, Gloria Marshall, Helen Strumski, Stacey Van Syckle, Lucinda & Terry White

#### Friends

Valentina Akamine, Kathleen Bertrand, Anne Bredon, Julie A. Brock, Deanna Dawn, Rosemary B. De Camp, Kennon M. Dickson, Roberta E. Dunn, Assana Fard, The Family Gilbertson, Nancy Grey Designs, Paul Kratter, Donna Larmee, Lawrence & Gina Lorenzano, Lisa McLain, Suzanne Peck, Leslie B. Robinson, Pamela & David Sington, Mike & Karen Weddle, Paul G. Whitehead, Tricia & Carl Zelambo

Recently the SLC linked with the American Himalayan Foundation to work toward alleviating conflicts between people and snow leopards in Nepal. To this end we also work with the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation, and with WWF-Nepal. In addition, we continue our fifteen-year collaboration with The Mountain Institute to promote community-based conservation using the APPA process. Mountain Spirit is an additional partner in that effort.

With funding channeled from the International Snow Leopard Trust, we are completing the Ramailo Kitaab project in Nepal, and the initial corral improvement project in Ladakh. We are also working with the Ladakh Ecological Development Group and the Wildlife Protection Department of Jammu and Kashmir State towards predator-proofing livestock corrals in Hemis National Park.

We have developed a collaborative program for Central Asia Biodiversity Conservation with the U.S. Geological Survey's Midcontinental Ecological Science Center, and expect approval in early 2001. The program will focus on field surveys and training of local wildlife professionals in survey techniques, and on non-invasive techniques using DNA for obtaining information about snow leopards .

### VOLUNTEERS



Many, many thanks to the fantastic volunteers who have given their energy, their passion for cats and hours and hours of their time to help us raise money to save snow leopards. They are: Jim & Patty Beers, Anna Breytenbach, Marjorie Carmichael, Chhinsu the snow leopard, Emily Curtis, Rob & Barbara Dickey, Susie Greenberg, Deanna Dawn, Alicia Falsetto, Karleen & Bob Ferguson, Steve Flaherty, Christine Hemrick, Terry Hillard, Carol Ann Hodges, Linda Hibbs, Keith Iverson, Sabrina Johnston, Chrissie Klinkowski, Charlie Knowles, Donna Louie, Gloria & Kent Marshall, Greg Miller, Mary Rose O'Connor, Pam & Ken Rau, Caroline Raudenbush, Georgina Rayner, Jerry Roe, Bob Segalla, Scott Slattery, Doug Strauss, Ellen Throop, Stacey Van Syckle.

The SLC operates within CAT-Cat Action Treasury, a nonprofit fund for the conservation of wild cats in their natural habitats. Contact us at:

Snow Leopard Conservancy, 236 N. Santa Cruz Ave., Suite #201,  
Los Gatos, CA 95030, (408) 354-6459

*Please visit our web site at [www.snowleopardconservancy.org](http://www.snowleopardconservancy.org)*