



# SNOW LEOPARD CONSERVANCY

## ANNUAL REPORT - 2003

*Snow leopards are a noble representative of true wildlife . . .  
just like in the jungle where the tiger is king, here, the snow leopard is king of the mountains . . .  
it captures the spirit of the wild.*

- Hushe Villager, northern Pakistan

The Snow Leopard Conservancy believes that building local communities' capacity for conservation is the key to a future where the noble snow leopard continues to roam the mountains of Central Asia.

In 2003, we continued to build upon our long-standing partnerships in four of the snow leopard's range countries. We initiated new conservation efforts in Pakistan and Tajikistan (above); and in India and Nepal, we initiated new efforts while strengthening the conservation and education programs already under way.

We are pleased with progress in Ladakh, where Tashi Lundup has been promoted to Program Assistant



for Zanskar. Tashi supervises the predator-proofing of corrals in Zanskar, and assists with camera-trapping and other program activities as needed.

Tsedar Bhutia is now facilitating communication and coordination between California, the urban center of Kathmandu and the remote sites in rural Nepal where our projects are located. Tsedar, who grew up in eastern Nepal, is a

staffer with The Mountain Institute, with experience that includes research on medicinal plants, and design and development of guidelines for participatory community planning.

A big *Thank You* to The Mountain Institute for maximizing resources by sharing a portion of Tsedar's time with the Snow Leopard Conservancy.

### Advisory Board

Christine Breitenmoser-Würsten, Ph.D., International Union for the Conservation of Nature  
Don Hunter, Ph.D., U.S. Geological Survey  
Nandita Jain, Ph.D., The Mountain Institute  
Kristin Nowell, Cat Action Treasury  
Camille Richard, Rangeland Ecologist  
George Schaller, Ph.D., Wildlife Conservation Society;  
Mike Weddle, Science Instructor, Jane Goodall Environmental Middle School

*Promoting community-based stewardship of the endangered snow leopard, its prey and habitat*

## UPDATES ON INDIA

- 15 village corrals begun or completed in Ladakh and Zaskar, serving nearly 200 households.



Ladakhi villagers lay out a new livestock corral



In 2003 we trained 24 new homestay providers and 11 new nature guides; expanded the program to 8 new areas in Ladakh; and implemented a community-based monitoring process. *For information visit: [www.Himalayan-Homestays.com](http://www.Himalayan-Homestays.com)*



Wild snow leopard, Ladakh, winter 2003-2004

## UPDATES ON NEPAL

Despite Nepal's continuing political crisis, community-based conservation is going forward.

- Household depredation surveys initiated in Humla District, in partnership with Nepal Trust. Three villages have signed conservation agreements.
- Household depredation surveys initiated in Dolpa District, in partnership with DESERT.
- 3 village corrals begun or completed in Mustang.

### Camera Trapping Census, Ladakh

- Improved techniques over the winter of 2002-2003, and in 9 weeks captured 100+ cat images on film.
- Developed a procedure to identify individuals, for testing during winter of 2003-2004 in Hemis National Park's first official snow leopard count.

### The Himalayan Homestay Program

Urban travel agents have traditionally captured the bulk of tourist income, but this program generates cash for villages close to wildlife areas.



Ringmo Lake, Shey-Phoksundo National Park

## PAKISTAN (New Program)

Anthropologist-scholar Dr. John Mock and his wife writer Kimberley O'Neil visited Pakistan's Northern Areas on behalf of the Snow Leopard Conservancy. The two have worked in the region for many years, are experts on the culture, and have earned the trust and respect of the local people – vital for any new conservation efforts. After holding a series of village meetings, and interviews, they put in place a process for participatory questionnaires on livestock depredation to be completed by villagers in three areas. In their extensive report, Mock and O'Neil delivered invitations to the SLC from both the Khunjerab Village Organization and the Shimshal Nature Trust, and made a number of recommendations, which form the framework for our 2004 activities in Pakistan.



## TAJKISTAN (New Program)

Tajikistan's Pamir Mountains, rising to more than 16,500 feet, are home to snow leopards, ibex, and the world's largest wild sheep, the endangered Marco Polo sheep. This high-altitude desert gets less than 3.6 inches of annual precipitation. Most people here depend upon livestock. Basic services and economic opportunities collapsed with the breakup of the Soviet Union in 1991. The situation was exacerbated by civil war after the establishment of the Republic of Tajikistan.



Activities that promote improved local livelihoods and natural resource management within the new free market system are being implemented under the *Pamir High Mountains Integrated Project*. With a grant from UNESCO, the French Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED) is leading the project.

In July, at ACTED's request, Dr. Rodney Jackson visited Tajikistan to examine opportunities for promoting wildlife conservation and community-based monitoring in the eastern Pamir mountains. He trained local staff and herders in basic survey methods for monitoring snow leopard and Marco Polo sheep. The Tajiks conducted their first wildlife survey in the fall.

## INDIA (New Program)

In the fall of 2003, the Snow Leopard Conservancy partnered with The Mountain Institute and UNESCO for an assessment of Community-based Tourism and the potential for Traditional Himalayan Homestays in Spiti District, Himachal Pradesh. The Homestay program is part of a larger integrated program to link snow leopard conservation with local livelihoods in Asia. Further, this survey allowed us to leverage funding provided by the Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund, for a collaborative program in Spiti, under development between SLC and the International Snow Leopard Trust.

Spiti supports good populations of snow leopard, ibex, and other wildlife, and is gaining in popularity among domestic and foreign visitors alike. Important protected areas that are home to the snow leopard and its prey include the Pin Valley National Park and Kibber Wildlife Sanctuary. Spiti lies within the Trans-Himalayan region of India, and consists of a high altitude "cold desert" zone with cold winters and warm summers.

Three villages emerged as suitable potential communities with whom to start community-based tourism activities. All are located close to protected areas and offer prospects for cultural and wildlife-based tourism that could build upon existing local skills and knowledge.

In order to help ensure sustainability and ownership, and to build local capacity, we will work through two local Spiti organizations, each of which nominated a staff person to attend a Community-Based Tourism course co-sponsored by the SLC, held in September in Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve.



## EDUCATION PROGRAM



### Children's Books

\*UNICEF ordered 1600 copies each of the Nepali/English version of *My Grandmother Says...*, *Snow Queen*, and *Pasang and the Sheep Thief*, prompting a reprint.

\* The Tibet Autonomous Region Education Committee reprinted the Tibetan/Chinese version of *My Grandmother Says...*, for wider distribution in the schools.

\*Tibetan Braille version of *My Grandmother Says...* published jointly with the Project for the Blind in Lhasa.

### Sister Schools



Mandalas (right) drawn by students at the Jane Goodall Environmental Magnet School show the relationships between the students' personal interests and their concern for global issues. The innermost circle is "myself," with "family and friends", and "school." The four segments outside represent global concerns. In the narrow circle are possible solutions. And finally, what the world will be like when the problems are solved. The Moravian Mission School students in Leh sent drawings (right) showing their ideal environment.



In the narrow circle are possible solutions. And finally, what the world will be like when the problems are solved. The Moravian Mission School students in Leh sent drawings (right) showing their ideal environment.



The 49 members of the Moravian Mission School's Roots & Shoots club, supported by SLC, will study the Jane Goodall Institute's *Lessons for Hope*. At left are the club's officers.

Darla Hillard, SLC's Education Director, led a group that included two of the Roots & Shoots club members on a field trip to Rumbak Village. They experienced the Himalayan Homestays, and spent two days hiking with two of the newly trained Nature Guides (right).



### Nepal Programs

Darla Hillard also visited Manang to evaluate SLC's education program. The visit was timed for World Environment Day, June 5. Activities at the local high school included a parade, student speeches and a quiz contest.

**School and Outreach Partners:** Dana Gray Elementary, Ellis School, Hamilton Middle School, Pinewood School Lower Campus, Centauri Summer Arts Camp, Sierra Endangered Cat Haven, Wild Cat Education and Conservation Fund.

## Nepal Education Program (Cont'd)

Nagendra Budhathoki, SLC's coordinator for Dolpo, visited participating **Junior Ranger Program** schools in the gateway to Shey Phoksundo National Park. Park authorities provided official approval to conduct the program for the next five years. The program is being expanded to Mugu District.

Nagendra reported:



Park warden Uba Raj Regmi (left) and Nagendra Budhathoki (right) signing the Agreement to conduct Jr. Ranger Program in the Park. Program District Coordinator Binod Dhakal (center)

*Eight hundred and sixty square kilometers of the park lies in Mugu District, yet the communities are deprived of most park-related activities, research and studies, education and community outreach programs.*

*Mugu has prime snow leopard habitat, and the locals showed keen interest in the program.*



**Good Livestock Management** posters (left) are useful both in the snow leopards' range countries, and here at home. **Elementary school teachers in Rhode Island, New York, Virginia and New Hampshire** have put

together a comprehensive lesson plan on Exploring our Living Mountain Laboratory. The plan grew out of a teacher training conducted by SLC partner The Mountain Institute, and features a section on snow leopards. The *Good Livestock Management* poster, jointly produced by SLC and TMI, forms the centerpiece of this section. Betsy Whitesell, the teacher from Virginia, reported:

*This was a great lesson! It would have been hard with out the poster... I used very small versions (5" x7") of the poster as a backdrop to the kids' own sheep pen project. It gave them a focus to their activity and helped them explain the project to their parents.*

For further details on any of the Snow Leopard Conservancy's programs, please visit our website, [www.SnowLeopardConservancy.org](http://www.SnowLeopardConservancy.org)

## US-BASED STAFF

Rodney Jackson, Director  
Darla Hillard, Education Director

## RANGE COUNTRY STAFF

Rinchen Wangchuk, India Director  
Jigmet Dadul, Program Assistant, Ladakh  
Tashi Lundup, Program Assistant, Zaskar  
Padma Doma, Village Steward, Ladakh  
Nagendra Bhudathoki, Education Coordinator, Nepal  
Tsedar Bhutia, Coordinator, Nepal  
Chhimi Gurung, Village Steward, Nepal

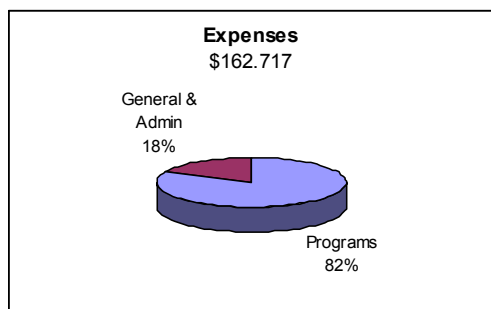
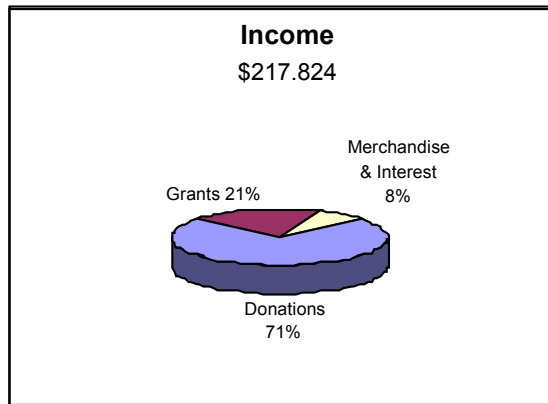
## PROGRAM PARTNERS

All Spiti Youth Organization  
American Himalayan Foundation  
Dolpo Educational, Social and Environmental Reservation Team, Nepal  
International Snow Leopard Trust  
Jammu and Kashmir Department of Wildlife Protection, India  
Jane Goodall Environmental Magnet School  
King Mahendra Trust For Nature Conservation/Annapurna Conservation Area Program, Nepal  
Khunjerab Village Organization, Pakistan  
Ladakh Ecological Development Group (LEDeG)  
The Mountain Institute  
Mountain Spirit, Nepal  
Muse, India  
Nature Conservation Foundation (NCF), India  
Nepal Trust  
Overland Escape, India  
Project Snow Leopard, Pakistan  
Shimshal Nature Trust, Pakistan  
Students' Educational and Cultural Movement of Ladakh (SECMOL)  
UNESCO  
U.S. Geological Survey's Fort Collins Science Center  
U.S. National Park Service, Lassen Volcanic National Park  
Wildlife and Environment-Nepal  
Wildlife Institute of India  
WWF-Nepal

## VOLUNTEERS

Barbara Palmer, Jerry Roe, David Willis (camera-trapping census)  
Eva Au, Toni DeMatto, Sabrina Johnston, Carey Peterson (fundraising)  
Steve Flaherty (computers)  
Terry Hillard, John Mock, Kimberley O'Neil (hours beyond their consultancy agreements)

## FINANCES



Many thanks to our wonderful supporters!

**\$50,000 or greater** - Jon Vannini

**\$10,000 to \$49,000** - Anonymous (2), Leonard X. Bosack and Bette M. Kruger Charitable Foundation, Fort Collins Science Center, Pierre & Pam Omidyar, Shared Earth Foundation

**\$5,000 to \$9,999** - Anonymous, Sidney S. Byers Charitable Trust, Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund, International Trust for Nature Conservation, Sabrina Johnston

**\$1000 to \$4,999** - Ken & Gabrielle Adelman; Donna Allen-Taylor, Bill & Penny Andrews, Anonymous (3), Calgary Zoological Society, Latha Colby, Dave & Terri Jones, Glenn Nash & Cheryl Kendall, Charles Knowles, Margaret Schink, Doug Strauss & Alicia Falsetto, Linda Tabor-Beck, TRA Foundation, Turner Foundation, Wild Cat Education and Conservation Fund, Akiko Yamazaki & Jerry Yang

**\$500 to \$999** - Meredith & Shilo Bishop, Julie Brock, Judith Brown and Michael Meyers, Antonia DeMatto, Celia Felsher, Steve Flaherty, Joann Grothe, Bob and Kennon Hudson, John and Kellie Lehr, Claudine Mussuto, Herrick Stickney, Virginia VanWolbeck

**Up to \$499** - Kara Akers, Harry & Christine Alesso, Judith Allen, Margaret Althouse, Mahnaz Amini, Susan Anawalt, Irene Anderson, Anonymous, Michael Areson, Christa Bailey, Sandra Ball, Steve Barrager, Cameron & Chris Bilger, Kay Bishop, Kim Briones, Linda & Doug Calbreath, Paul & Maureen Case, Fred Coppotelli, Jessica Couleur, Dan & Elizabeth Dana, Kerstin Dautenhahn, Daniel David, Doug & Pat Donaldson, Pamela Dovala, Brooke Doverspike, Stuart & Yoshiko During, Anne Elliott, Stephanie Evans, Eunice Faunce, Ronald Felzer, Jane & Peter Fenwich, Bob & Jan Fenwick, Michael Freedman & Cathy Ching, Inge Gfroerer, Laura & Michael Gleeson,

Lynne Glendenning, Sheila & John Goldsborough, Julie Hartley, Christine Hemrick, David Herbert, Tom & Mary Herrmann, Nancy Hilmers, Carol Ann Hodges, Betsy Howell, Jane & David Hunter, International Society for Endangered Cats, Elaine Iverson, Keith & Stacey Iverson, Elizabeth Jonca, Steve & Karla Jurvetson, Ed & Candice Kerber, Florence Korbus, Barbara Legler, David Leland & Ann Howald, Karma & Wendy Lama, David & Evelyne, Lenette, Pamela Lindsay, Lite Eye Optometry, Darrell & Donna Louie, Edwina Lu, Dixie Sue Luebecke, Stephen & Gerri Lurya, Sue Marek, Kent & Gloria Marshall, Lorane McCoy, Robert McKeown, Janee & Howard McKinney, Robert Michel, Linda Millard, Joyce Mitchell, Julie Mitchell, Colin Morris & Dierdre Dawson, Robert Moyes, Trevor & Jennifer Nicholls, Jeff O'Brien, Carolyn O'Connor, Cindy Ostic, Papeyon Personalizations, Pet Watch Magazine, Mary Ann Peters, Carey Peterson, Miriam Rack, James & Elizabeth Reed, Mary Sue Rhoads, David & Linda Rosen, Sandra Rosenberg, S.F. Chapter, American Association of Zookeepers, Kathleen Savesky, Schmidt Chiropractic, Timothy Seaman, Nora Singer, Russell & Lisa Skibsted, Jeff & Cheryl Stephenson, Sabine Stevens, Carole Stokes, Tim Straight, Phillip & Lill Sturgeon, Timothy & June Sturm, John Tyler, Marta Tyler, Janet Van Swoll, Charles Villarubia, Vanessa Viso, Janice Warziniack, Linda Watkins, Patricia Watters, Jeni Webber, Mike & Karen Weddle, Frederick Welk, Vicki Wilhite, Linda Wise, John Woodman, John Wright, John & Cathy Yee

**Special thanks to Charles Knowles and the Wildlife Conservation Network staff and volunteers:** Sandy Ball, Jim & Patty Beers, Cynthia Bournellis, Marjorie Carmichael, Laurie Cheatham, Latha Colby, Kim Cole, Jessica Couleur, Namita Dalal, Deanna Dawn, Toni DeMatto, Vangie Doctolero, Alicia Falsetto, Karleen & Bob Ferguson, Carol and Kent Fields, Steve Flaherty, Sharon Gates, Fanci Gentry, Susie Greenberg, Shira Gruhl, Jeannie & Armand Gutierrez, Yvette Hernandez, Linda Hibbs, Carroll Ann Hodges, Elaine Iverson, Stacey Iverson, Keith Iverson, Terri Jones, Carol Joerger, Chrissie Klinkowski, Charles Knowles, Christine Kremling, Wendy Lama, Dixie Luebecke, Caryn & Chris Linn, Donna Louie, Gloria "Stuff" & Kent "Pee Wee" Marshall, Donna McCaig, Howard & Janee McKinney, Deb Michelotti, Julie Mills, T.J. Morris, Jennifer Nicholls, Mary Rose O'Connor, Marc Paschke, Cecilia Pleshakov, Pam & Ken Rau, Jerry Roe, Jeremy Schrage, Cherie Schroff, Mary Schwann, Bob Segalla, Carole Stokes, Anne Snowball, Doug Strauss, Carlita Villanueva-Uroz, Becky Wells.



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A Project of the Cat Action Treasury ([www.felidae.org](http://www.felidae.org))