

WILD CAT

Issue 07



MIRRI'S NEXT ADVENTURE!

Learn what's next in store for our miracle girl, Mirri the Clouded Leopard Cub!

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From the **DIRECTOR**

It's hard to believe how quickly 2025 is flying by. It's been an incredibly busy and rewarding period here at the centre, with so many exciting developments to share.

Mirri continues to be a major focus for us. Watching her grow and develop into a beautiful, confident clouded leopard has been nothing short of extraordinary. Knowing how tough those early days were, it fills me with pride to see her thriving now. Her journey, from such a vulnerable start to the curious and playful leopard she is today, is a story I never get tired of telling.

Recently, I had the privilege of joining Chris Bath on 702 ABC for a segment of Self-Improvement Thursday. For over a decade, I've been fortunate to contribute to Self-Improvement Wednesday with Richard Glover, and continuing this partnership on Thursdays with Chris is an incredible opportunity. Chris is a passionate supporter of the work we do, and it was wonderful to share updates about our conservation projects and, of course, Mirri's remarkable progress.

The centre is bustling with activity. In late March, our cheetah cubs, Ezra and Darcie will embark on their journey to South Africa—a significant step in our breeding and conservation efforts. Later in April, our team will follow, hosting our first guided conservation trip since COVID-19 halted international travel. This trip is particularly special as it allows us to check in on Edie, who was reintroduced to the wild 12 months ago. We can't wait to witness how she's adapted and to share that experience with the incredible individuals joining us.

2025 has started with a flurry of activity, and we're hopeful it sets the tone for the rest of the year. We're optimistic about welcoming more cubs and achieving further successes in our breeding programs. Every milestone is a reminder of why we do what we do—to protect and preserve these incredible species for generations to come.

Your ongoing support means the world to us. Whether you visit, donate, or simply share our story, you are part of our mission. Together, we can make a real difference.

Yours Sincerely,



Ben Britton | Director
Wild Cat Conservation Centre



OUR MISSION

To protect and ensure the survival of wild cat species through the provision of education and carrying out of research, and dedication to conservation breeding & rewilding programs.

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MIRRI'S JOURNEY

Where do we even start?! Mirri continues to amaze us with her incredible progress over the last couple of months. This little fighter has officially hit the 2-kilogram mark—a huge milestone considering she was born at just 180 grams. To now see her confidently running, climbing, and causing all sorts of mischief is nothing short of remarkable. We are so proud of her, and while the ideal scenario would have been to see her doing these things alongside her mum, Moana, we are absolutely thrilled that she has not only survived but thrived despite her rocky start.

One of the most common questions we get asked is: "Now that she's older, can Mirri be reunited with Mark and Moana?"

The short answer is no. Since Moana didn't provide nourishment or care for Mirri in those critical early days, a maternal bond was never established. Without that bond, Mark and Moana no longer

recognise Mirri as their offspring, and any attempt to reintroduce her could potentially be fatal. As heartbreaking as this reality is, we've been working hard to ensure Mirri still develops the essential skills she needs to thrive as a clouded leopard.

To help Mirri develop natural leopard behaviours, she has been spending increasing amounts of time in an outdoor habitat next to our other resident clouded leopards, Tai and Cinta. This proximity allows her to observe, smell, and hear other leopards—critical for understanding her species' behaviours and communication patterns. Tai and Cinta are playing a key role in her development!

While Mirri is still too young to remain outside full-time, she's gradually being introduced to different weather conditions and new environmental experiences. Rain, for instance, has been a fascinating (and slightly confusing!) discovery for her.



Over the coming months, we'll continue extending her time outside, and we expect that by mid-year, she will transition to living outdoors permanently.

If you're planning a visit to the centre, you might catch Mirri either in her nursery or outside exploring her habitat—depending on her schedule for the day!

As Mirri approaches three months of age, we've started to look ahead to what her future might hold. She's incredibly special—not only as the first clouded leopard born in Australia but also as part of a critically important, genetically diverse population in managed care.

The team has been working closely with both the Clouded Leopard EEP (European Endangered Species Programme) and the Clouded Leopard SSP (Species Survival Plan) in the United States to assess the best long-term placement for Mirri within

the global breeding program. Early indications suggest that Mirri may head to the United Kingdom later this year to be paired with a young male cub. Introducing unrelated cubs at a young age is crucial for establishing strong bonds and supporting successful future breeding efforts.

If this plan goes ahead, Mirri will likely travel to London before the end of the year—an exciting step as she prepares to play a pivotal role in the global recovery of her species.

While Mirri's journey has been incredible, we are also hopeful that Mark and Moana will breed again this year. They've already proven they can successfully produce cubs, and we're optimistic that we may see successful mating during the winter months. If all goes well, we could expect new cubs around September. Our hope is that, with experience on their side, Mark and Moana will raise their next litter together without intervention.





JET-SETTING EZRA & DARCIÉ

The time has almost arrived for Darcie and Ezra to begin their next great adventure—heading back to South Africa. The process is officially in its final stages, and it's all systems go!

Their custom-built transport crates have now been delivered to the centre, and we've started the crucial process of acclimatising them to these unfamiliar surroundings. Getting them comfortable with their crates is a vital step in ensuring a smooth and stress-free journey.

Darcie and Ezra are rapidly approaching their 12-month milestone—which just so happens to be the perfect age for their journey. This is around the age that cubs would be dispersing from their mother and moving into independence, their confidence and maturity developing so it times in well with their move to South Africa. Around this age, cubs in the wild naturally begin to assert their independence, either venturing out on their own or forming coalitions with siblings.

For Ezra and Darcie, this timing couldn't be better. At 12 months, they've developed the physical skills and natural instincts needed to start their journey.

It's hard to believe it's been nearly 12 months since Edie made her journey back to South Africa. Watching her adapt and thrive in the wild has been incredibly rewarding. The rewilding strategies used for Edie have provided valuable insights, and we're optimistic that her story has paved the way for a similarly positive outcome for future cubs.

As we edge closer to their late March/early April departure date, we invite you to come and visit these two! It's your last chance to see Darcie and Ezra before they embark on the journey of a lifetime.



A PURR-FECT PARTNERSHIP: MEET OUR VET TEAM

One of the most common questions we receive at the centre is: “Who is your vet!?” While our dedicated conservation team manages much of the animals’ health and wellbeing, we are incredibly fortunate to have a trusted veterinary partner who supports our work behind the scenes.

Our conservation team plays a vital role in the preventative healthcare of our cats. Because of the strong bonds built over time, many health procedures can be carried out by the team without stress or sedation. From routine vaccinations to voluntary blood draws and even ultrasounds, the cats trust their keepers, making these essential health checks as calm and comfortable as possible.

The small, close-knit nature of our team means the cats always see familiar faces—people they trust implicitly. This trust-based approach helps us identify any potential concerns early, ensuring we stay one step ahead of health issues whenever possible.

Of course, there are times when we need expert help beyond the team’s scope. For the past five years, we’ve been fortunate to have Dr. Tom Winters as our consultant veterinarian. Dr. Tom runs Richmond and Wilberforce Vet Hospitals, and his passion for wildlife and conservation has made him an invaluable member of our extended team.

Dr. Tom has been involved in a wide range of procedures at the centre, from health checks to more complex cases. Just recently, he performed a general anaesthetic exam on Crunchie our oldest serval and resident, to assess his ongoing health and ensure he continues to live his golden years in comfort.

A few years ago, Dr. Tom also played a key role in helping us establish our on-site vet clinic. Having a fully equipped facility right here at the centre allows us to conduct many procedures without the stress of transporting animals to external clinics. It’s a game-changer for both the team and the cats, especially when time and comfort are critical.

We also want to give a special mention to Naomi Foster, a senior veterinary nurse at Richmond and Wilberforce Vet Hospitals. Over the past few months, Naomi has generously volunteered her time to assist with the hand-raising of Mirri, our little clouded leopard cub!

With her extensive experience raising domestic kittens, Naomi has provided invaluable support to our team—especially during those fragile early days when Mirri’s survival was anything but guaranteed. Watching Mirri thrive today is, in part, thanks to Naomi’s dedication, care, and expertise.

The Richmond and Wilberforce Vet Hospitals have continually donated time, resources, and expertise to support our conservation efforts. We are beyond grateful for this ongoing partnership and for the incredible people who make it possible—especially Dr. Tom and Naomi.

So, next time you wonder who’s behind the scenes keeping our cats healthy and thriving, you now know the answer: it’s a team effort, with Dr. Tom Winters and his team standing proudly alongside us.

Thank you, Tom, Naomi, and the entire vet team—we couldn’t do it without you!



A TOAST TO CONSERVATION

There are still limited bottles of our Wilding Gin available! With the weather warming up, the gin is the perfect blend crafted for African sundowners and those refreshing G&T moments.

What makes this gin truly special is not just its exceptional taste, but also the heart behind it. When Nick and Ally from Karu Distillery approached us with the idea of collaborating, we saw a shared ethos and passion for conservation. Karu Distillery are known worldwide for their award-winning gins, and joining forces with them on this project has been an incredible opportunity for us. When they visited our centre late last year, we knew we could do something really special together and here it is - Wilding: Jubatus!

A gin that is heavily influenced by the origins of the endangered Cheetah. Traditional in style, incorporating bitter, sweet, citrus, and spice to create a gin that is worthy of accompanying you as

the sun goes down on a warm afternoon. Juniper forward, bursting citrus, bitter pelargonium root, herbaceous floral of diosma, depth of thyme, and warm cassia bark. With every bottle purchased, you are contributing toward our ongoing cheetah rewilding efforts, so have a drink and help save a cheetah at the same time! The perfect drink for an African sundowner or two!

It's an opportunity for our supporters to indulge in a delicious beverage while making a meaningful impact on wild cat conservation now and into the future. Money from every bottle sold is directed back to our conservation and rewilding programs.

Available to purchase at:

<https://karudistillery.com.au/products/wilding-jubatus>



BECOME A WILD CAT SPONSOR

Wild Cat Conservation Centre is committed to securing a future for the forgotten wild cat species! Our unique centre stands proudly in Wilberforce, Australia, as a pioneering force in understanding and protecting smaller wild cat species.

Our brand-new sponsorship program seeks to connect our community of supporters with the cats under our care, while generously supporting Wild Cat Conservation Centres' efforts to protect and ensure the survival of wild cat species. We do this through the provision of education and carrying out research, and dedication to our conservation breeding programs.

Each of our cats are available to sponsor and every sponsorship package comes with a great sponsorship keepsake pack! Our sponsorship packages make the perfect gift for the cat conservationist in your life, so spoil yourself or a loved one.

With a number of sponsorship packages available, know that every donation you make goes a long way in helping us achieve our mission!

Head to **wildcatcentre.org.au** today to meet our cats and sponsor your chosen animal!



MEET OUR CATS!



ZIVA



ZANE



BLANCA



DUKE



COOPER



EMMY



FINNEGAN



SIMBA



CRUNCHIE



KATO



KAIA



TAI



CINTA



MARK



MOANA

Head to wildcatcentre.org.au today to sponsor a cat

JOIN US ON A WILD CAT CONSERVATION TRIP

NEW CHEETAH CONSERVATION TRIP IN 2025!

We are excited to announce that we have recently partnered with The Classic Safari Company. The Classic Safari Company is Australia's leading safari specialist. Since 1992, they've been exploring the world and sharing their passion, using first-hand experiences to create exceptional safaris and journeys to Africa. This new partnership will allow us to provide even more unique wild cat experiences for our supporters.

These hosted trips allow the opportunity for our supporters to spend quality time with our directors learning about wild cat conservation whilst at the same time visiting and viewing wild cats in their natural habitat, knowing that monies raised from these trips goes directly to conserving wild cats!

Our April 2025 Wild Cat Conservation Trip is now sold out though we have a brand-new hosted trip scheduled for August 2025!

Ben will lead a small group of 8 guests to visit Edie at Mziki Private Game Reserve in South Africa before travelling to Phinda Private Game Reserve to learn more about cheetah conservation and the work being done by WCCC and our conservation partners to prevent the extinction of this beautiful cat.

This trip is not to be missed, guests being able to view Edie, our cub born here at the centre now living as a wild cheetah in Africa! A conservation success story!

This tour is capped at only 8 guests, ensuring a uniquely intimate experience. Don't miss out, secure your spot today!

To book a spot please email:
info@classicsafaricompany.com.au





**WILD CAT
CONSERVATION
FOUNDATION**

Thank you to our major supporters

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HOW YOU CAN HELP!



DONATE

Our vision is to secure a long-term future for the world's wild cat species, and we can't do it alone. Wild Cat Conservation Centre relies on the generosity of supporters like you and our corporate partners to achieve our conservation goals.

By donating to Wild Cat Conservation Centre, you are helping us protect the forgotten wild cat species.



VISIT

Join us at the Wild Cat Conservation Centre and experience our wild cats up close!

The funds generated from your visit directly supports our conservation efforts, such as breeding and rewilding programs. Your support allows us to help make a difference to wild cats!