

SNOWLINE

SNOW LEOPARD TRUST NEWS



QUEENS OF THE MOUNTAIN: FEMALE CATS TRANSFORM RESEARCH

One of the important aspects of our long-running snow leopard study in Mongolia is to better understand the reproductive patterns of these elusive cats. Many years of camera trap and collaring data are shining a light on the secret lives of snow leopard moms and cubs. This study has provided us with great insight into litter sizes, breeding intervals, cub survival rates and the age when they disperse from their mothers and establish their own home ranges. All of this information is critical to our work to protect these endangered cats.

You may remember a female snow leopard known as Presnel who was featured last year in Planet Earth 3 with three of her young cubs. Presnel is the daughter of Dagina, granddaughter of Agnes, and mother of F13. Each of them has been collared in our study. Thanks to your support, we have been able to follow and observe *four generations of wild snow leopards in this unprecedented research study.*

We are learning so much from these resilient cats and their offspring. Much of the information we've collected had never been documented in wild snow leopards before. It was once thought that females began reproducing at age two, but our studies reveal it's closer to age three. Accurate research like this is vital to understanding these secretive cats and determining conservation strategies to ensure their future. The legacies of these extraordinary females may one day help save their species.



Two of Presnel's cubs in 2023

Photo credit: Jake Davis

Honoring the Life of a Legendary Snow Leopard

We first met Dagina, Presnel's mother, as a tiny cub in 2009. For 13 years, we followed her life on our research cameras and twice via GPS collar. She was one of the most well-known and beloved wild snow leopards in our study.

Unfortunately, she has not appeared on camera for two consecutive years, which likely means she is no longer alive. She was last seen in 2022 with two cubs, making her the oldest known wild snow leopard to give birth.

She and her five litters of cubs helped us understand her elusive species like never before. Her legacy will live on through our continued conservation efforts and the generations of cubs and grandcubs (like the two above) who carry her wild spirit.

Please join us in celebrating Dagina's remarkable life. We hope she inspired you as much as she inspired us.

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SEE YOUR SUPPORT AT WORK IN THIS ISSUE:

Queens of the Mountain

Taking on Illegal Wildlife Trade

Meet the Cats You're Helping to Keep Safe

**The Starlit Cabin: Where Rangers &
Wild Things Meet**

Conservation Gifts with Purpose

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Snow Leopard Trust has been publishing the SNOWLINE News for over 40 years! This is our 148th issue. Please help spread the word by sharing with a friend.

TAKING ON ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE TO PROTECT CATS



Photo: Kubanych Jumabay

Jamal* was severely injured by armed individuals when he apprehended them for illegally hunting wild snow leopard prey species.

Ali* led a successful operation against a group smuggling snow leopard pelts, including those of an adult and three cubs. He suffered severe injuries on a subsequent raid.

Emil* apprehended a poacher with a snow leopard pelt destined for the black market. Fortunately, Emil has not been injured so far.

These are just a few of the brave guardians who risk their lives to safeguard their country's precious wildlife and habitat. In doing so, each of them plays a vital role in disrupting the illegal wildlife trade, a multi-billion dollar industry that threatens countless species with extinction.

Wildlife rangers like Jamal, Ali and Emil are out there every day trying to protect the endangered animals we all love. Unfortunately, they are often outnumbered, outresourced and outspent by those driving the illegal wildlife trade.

But you can give them a fighting chance.

Your generosity fuels our programs to provide rangers with resources, training and vital equipment to combat illegal wildlife trade. Your gift today will also support work with local communities to monitor and protect snow leopards and their prey.

You can help make the world a safer place for snow leopards. If you make a gift right away, your donation will be doubled by matching funds.

*Names have been changed to protect the rangers' identities.

While it's too late for the snow leopards killed by the poachers Ali and Emil apprehended, it's not too late for so many more. Will you be their lifeline? [Your gift will be matched dollar for dollar up to \\$25,000.](#)



Scan this secure code or use the enclosed envelope to make the world a safer place for snow leopards. snowleopard.org/givelove



Photo: Tashi R Ghale



MEET SOME OF THE CATS YOU'RE HELPING TO KEEP SAFE

Through the lens of our research cameras, we're granted a window into the wild lives of snow leopards. This technology gives us unparalleled insights into these elusive cats - revealing secrets about their populations, behaviors, ecology and the habitats they call home. By tracking individual snow leopards over time, we're able to decode their complex interactions with each other, the people they share the habitat with and their rugged mountain landscapes.

Each year, our teams install camera traps in over 180 locations across more than 7,000 km² of snow leopard habitat in Mongolia's Tost Nature Reserve and surrounding mountains, rotating them in two- to three-month intervals between study areas. After collecting all the data cards, they then begin the labor-intensive work of analyzing thousands of snow leopard images to try to identify individuals.

The cats you see on this page are just a few of the snow leopards observed in Tost Nature Reserve in late 2023, where 43 cameras surveyed an area of about 1,500 km².



F12's cub playing together

Camera surveys are crucial in the global effort to reliably estimate the number of wild snow leopards, called PAWS (**P**opulation **A**ssessment of the **W**orld's **S**now **L**eopards). This data is essential for guiding conservation initiatives aimed at protecting these endangered cats and their fragile mountain habitats.

Your support makes our research and conservation programs possible and puts us one step closer to ensuring their survival for generations to come.



M20 - Suul 3



F11 and her first cub at a waterhole.

THE STARLIT CABIN: WHERE WILD THINGS & RANGERS MEET



Photos: Kubanych Jumabay & SLCF-Kyrgyzstan

By Kubanych Jumabay - Director of Snow Leopard Foundation Snow Leopard Trust's partner organization in Kyrgyzstan

It was built as a herder station in Soviet times and served as a home for a herder for around 20 years. It became a ranger cabin in 1995 and I visited it many times for the last fifteen years.

It has a cozy small room, which serves as both a dining and sleeping area. The old metal stove can heat the room in a short time. When it rains or snows outside, herders bring their saddles inside. The scent of horses, livestock dung burning in the stove and food mingle in the air.

After a hard-working day, we have a quick dinner and go to bed early. When we are 7-8 people, we are like tinned fish. If we fall asleep early, I sometimes wake up around midnight. Our food attracts our little friends, the mice. They are noisy at night, organizing marathons in the room. They chase each other, run through our sleeping bags, noisily trying to make a hole in our plastic food bags.

As the fire dies, the hot room starts to cool down. The old wood frames on the three windows let fresh and cold air enter the room and it touches my face. In Sarychat, I get plenty of sleep in a short time. I wake up in deep night, open my eyes, look at the clear sky from my bed and think about the Galaxy and thousands of other things. I see hundreds of shining stars, falling stars. When the moon is up and when there is snow, you can see clear mountains. Sometimes, I hear wolves howling.

I used to think, what shall we do if a bear comes to the

cabin? We often saw bear's pugmarks around the outside, even on the window glasses, but it never entered inside. Until this summer.

This summer, a bear broke into the cabin at least four to five times. Fortunately, it entered when the rangers were not there. It broke all three windows and kitchen utensils. We set a camera trap inside and recorded how the bear was making a mess. But we enjoyed watching it and no one got angry.

Cabin repairs were funded by local responsible tourism efforts and by the family of Nancy Wheatland Biglow, in her loving memory. We replaced the old wood frames with strong new ones and added metal protection on the windows and door to make them bear-resistant.

Now, the cabin is warmer, safer and a bit more comfortable. But maybe it lost a little something? I don't think it will let me feel fresh cool air on my face at night anymore. When I wake up in my bed in the city, I often think about Sarychat's night view from the cabin window.



The rangers use this cabin as a base for their work to protect snow leopards and their prey.

To support community conservation programs like this please visit: snowleopard.org/givelove

CONSERVATION GIFTS WITH PURPOSE



Shop Handcrafted Holiday Gifts that Give Back to Snow Leopards!

These unique handcrafts, created through our women-led conservation program, provide sustainable income and leadership opportunities for women in snow leopard habitat.

Your purchases support coexistence with snow leopards.

- Handmade by women artisans in Kyrgyzstan
- 100% sustainably sourced sheep wool
- Available in a variety of assorted colors
- Approximately 5" / 12.7 cm tall



Cub-in-a-Mug: Popular Best-Seller!

Order your limited edition cub-in-a-mug before it sells out again. Includes a retro-style Snow Leopard Trust mug and our adorable mini cub plush. Perfect for any conservationist who enjoys a hot beverage and a snuggle!

- Retro logo 12 oz ceramic mug
- 6" / 15 cm mini plush snow leopard
- Plush made from 100% recycled materials



Visit shop.snowleopard.org or scan the code above to shop for pet toys, handmade ornaments, calendars & more.



Adopt a Wild Snow Leopard from our Study!

Symbolically adopt one of the legendary snow leopards who have been part of our long-term research study. It's the perfect educational gift for anyone who loves these majestic cats. Every adoption supports our efforts to ensure a future for snow leopards.

- *Personalized adoption certificate*
- *Choose our standard size plush (11") or our JUMBO plush (21")*
- *Collectible card for your chosen cat*
- *Snow leopard fact sheet*
- *Official Snow Leopard Trust annual sticker*