

THE WILD CAMEL PROTECTION FOUNDATION

Head Office, School Farm, Benenden, Kent, TN17 4EU England

Tel: 44 (0) 1580 241132

Email: harecamel@aol.com

www.wildcamels.com

Hon. Life Patron: Dr. Jane Goodall D.B.E.

Patrons: The Marchioness of Bute, The Countess of Chichester, Professor Yuan Guoying, Peter Hall, Jane McMorland Hunter of Hafton, Gerald Kidd, Damon de Laszlo, Lulu Lytle, Colin McIntosh, Professor David Munro, Romy Shovelton, Emma Buchanan, Kate Humble.

October 2017 - Newsletter Number 39

Dear Wild Camel Supporter

WCPF warmly welcomes Emma Buchanan, as a Patron of WCPF. Emma and her sister Lulu Lytle came with me last year to the wild camel breeding centre, in Mongolia. Emma was so impressed with what she saw there she very kindly offered to organise the WCPF 2017 Camel and Mongolian Cultural Day at Buscot Park.

CAMEL and MONGOLIAN CULTURAL DAY – SUNDAY, 16th of JULY, 2017

The Camel and Mongolian Day held at **Buscot Park** on Sunday 16th July was a great success. 300 people enjoyed a buffet lunch at 12.00pm in a magnificent and well-furnished Bedouin tent. The day was opened at 2.00pm by the **Mongolian Embassy's Minister-Counsellor and DHM, Mr. Odonjil Banzragch**. The event featured Mongolian music, singing and wrestling; an amazing camel dressage display given by the Countess of Chichester and her wonderful Bactrian camels, Therese and Temujin, who performed for WCPF three years ago at the Royal Opera House; a tug-of-war in which Mongolia beat England; a spectacular display of birds of prey given by the redoubtable [Jemima Parry-Jones MBE, Director of The International Centre for Birds of Prey](#) and finally an archery contest between Mongolia and the Buscot Archery Club. Over 100 Mongolians were present, many in colourful national dress. There were 25 ringside stalls and approximately 2,500 people were there in the magnificent surroundings of Buscot Park. This was **WCPF's sixth Camel Day** in England and the best yet. It ensured we have sufficient funding for the purchase of winter hay at the wild camel breeding centre in Mongolia.

Huge thanks for the day goes out to Emma Buchanan. Emma worked unstintingly together with a dedicated team of helpers organising the Event and much credit for the success – in particular the magnificent buffet lunch – falls on Emma. On the Mongolian side, our colleague Bataa deserves equal credit for organising the Mongolian participants, liaising with the very cooperative Mongolian Embassy and being my friendly, cheerful link with Mongolia in Britain. Finally our special thanks to Jane MacMorland Hunter, Anna Jemmett and Nancy Fite, a long time wild camel supporter, who came all the way from the USA. All three worked all day on the WCPF stand and raised over a £1,000.

Matthew Parris wrote in The Times: *“It was,” I might begin, “a sunny Sunday afternoon in beautiful Buscot Park in rural Oxfordshire” — and you my readers would be primed to expect a passage of bucolic prose about the joys of English parkland graced by an English stately home in an English summer. This scene, however, was very different. Two quite extraordinary Bactrian camels, their vertiginous humps swaying, mounted by two women in colourful Mongolian costume, pranced, cantered and galloped around an arena while hundreds of spectators seated on straw bales watched in amazement. “My goodness,” gasped an obvious equestrian expert, “that’s a half pass. I didn’t know camels could do that!” There was Mongolian food, Mongolian wrestling and a Britain v Mongolia tug of war. There were falconers and trained Asian birds of prey swooping and diving. Virtually the entire Mongolian embassy had motored up from London for this, a “Camels Day” at Buscot. I’ve long been a supporter of the Wild Camels Protection Foundation, . . . I stroked the cleft lips and velvety noses of two fine camels, patted four humps, and left with happy memories and a camel-themed sweatshirt.*

MONGOLIA

I

travelled to Mongolia in September and the day after my arrival, in Ulaan Baator, along with the rest of the WCPF team attended a reception organised by the British Ambassador to Mongolia, Her Excellency Catherine Arnold, to commemorate 20 years of WCPF, a UK charitable Foundation working successfully in Mongolia. Fifty people attended including the Czech Ambassador and there were a good number of Mongolians and expatriates, many who occupy senior positions in the capital city. The WCPF team, myself, Anna Jemmett, a zoologist and WCPF's Information Manager and Dr. Adiya Yadamsuren, the leading Mongolian wild camel expert and Director of WCPF Mongolia then travelled to Bayan Tooroi and the breeding centre. Also in our group was Alejandro Llop, a professional photographer, who we hope will work with WCPF and become our spokesman in the Spanish speaking world. He is making a video about our work with the wild camel in Mongolia and his excellent photographic record of the recent trip is available on his website www.alejandrollop.com/wild-camel.

Now Dr. Adiya Yadamsuren is now back home in Mongolia full-time having successfully completed his PhD and we are delighted to announce he has agreed to work with us, a formal co-operation, on the implementation of the four-year Mongolian Wild Camel Management Plan, a plan, which we hope will ensure the long term protection of the wild camel in Mongolia. He and Anna Jemmett will be working closely together on the implementation of this Plan. WCPF hopes to finalise this plan in December of this year (see below). Also accompanying the WCPF team were two friends and long-term wild camel supporters, Ian Taylor a senior executive in publishing and Robert Pascall owner of one of the largest soft fruit farms in Kent.

The Great Gobi 6, (GG6) an organisation devoted to protecting six endangered or critically endangered species in Mongolia: the wild camel, the wild horse, the Saiga antelope, the wild ass, the black-tailed gazelle and the Gobi bear held a two-day meeting in Bayan Tooroi which the WCPF team attended. The value of the meeting, for WCPF, was meeting other international and national conservationists, who face many of the same problems WCPF does protecting the wild camel. Illegal mining, climate change, and pressure on protected areas from outside interests are all common problems. To discuss them with like-minded colleagues was of great value and bodes well for the conservation of the Great Gobi in the future.

The newly appointed Great Gobi Specially Protected Area "A" director, Bayarbat, has completed the extension of the fence around the 60 acres. Permission to increase the enclosed area at the breeding centre by 60 acres was given to WCPF, by the Mongolian Ministry of Nature, as the number of captive camels at the breeding centre has increased to a total of 32. With certain modifications the fence will be excellent. In the old fence a large number of metal posts have replaced existing wooden ones, which were showing signs of wear. The breeding centre was in good condition and the captive camels were grazing under supervision in the Enndrigen Nurru mountain range 40 miles from the centre. This outside grazing of the captive wild camels during the summer months ensures the vegetation is rested in the fenced area before the onset of winter and the breeding season. Our special thanks to the generous donation from the Trustees of the Taurus Foundation which made this extension possible.

Seven calves were born this year (3 females and 4 males) and all are healthy and in good condition.

I had lengthy and very productive discussions with Director Bayarbat. The local WCPF staff, Tsogerdene and Durgee are doing an excellent job managing the captive wild camels. We are having the heating repaired in the breeding centre accommodation and have altered the structure inside the breeding centre itself, to make it safer for the staff to working during the wild camel mating season.

On our return to Ulaan Baator, I met the Director of the Prague Zoo, Mr. Miroslav Bobek. Prague Zoo which has worked very successfully on the introduction of the Takhi in Gobi B is interested in cooperating with WCPF, on aspects of wild camel protection and has funds to support this co-operation. There is a meeting in the UK in November/December, with the Deputy Director Dr. Jaroslav Simek which we hope will lead to future co-operation (see below).

While in Ulaan Baator, I presented a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to officials in the Ministry of Nature and Environment. As an IUCN and Mongolian Redbook listed species the wild camel comes under the responsibility of this Ministry. The new MOU runs for three years with automatic renewal until September 2023. It incorporates our continuing management and funding of the wild camel Breeding Centre and also the new four-year Wild Camel Management Plan. I am pleased to report the Ministry has signed the agreement.

Wild Camel Four-Year-Plan for Mongolia.

As mentioned in the last newsletter the WCPF team is developing a Wild Camel four-year-plan to study the wild camel desert habitat; and possible future translocation sites for the wild camels, under IUCN guidelines, from the breeding centre at Zakhyn Us, Mongolia into the Specially Protected Area Gobi "A" and other possible locations. To ensure successful translocations the habitat of the GGSPA'A' must be researched and in particular the impact of any translocation on the remnant wild camel population there. This plan will involve research also into decline in water resources and reasons for this; establishing and studying vegetation transects in key habitat areas; identifying problems of impoverished illegal miners in Gobi "A" and putting forward proposals for their future welfare; and training programmes for Gobi "A" rangers.

The expected LONG-TERM RESULTS are:

A definitive picture of water resources in the Gobi "A" – this will be of benefit to all the fauna and flora of Gobi "A"

A definitive assessment of grazing areas near strategic water points – a benefit to the fauna of Gobi "A"

A permanent solution to the problem of illegal miners within Gobi "A" – a huge benefit both to Gobi "A" and the impoverished illegal miners.

Co-operation with other organisations protecting Gobi wildlife.

The IUCN has a Reintroduction Specialist Group which advises on all aspects of reintroductions or translocations of IUCN listed species. And we are very fortunate to have the support of two members, Professor Phil Seddon and Dr John Ewen. There is an IUCN RSG 'Training for effective Conservation Translocations', Workshop at the Zoological Society of London from 27th November to 30th November and all of the WCPF UK team will be attending including Dr. Adiya Yadamsuren from WCPF Mongolia. Immediately after this Workshop on 2nd and 3rd of December, Professor Phil Seddon and Dr. John Ewen will lead a WCPF Workshop at Wild Camel Head Office in Benenden to assist WCPF in developing and preparing the Wild Camel Management Plan. We have invited Dr. Jaroslav Simek, the Deputy Director of Prague Zoo and an Ungulate specialist to attend. As any long term plan for the captive wild camels at the breeding centre in Mongolia will include translocation (releases) of some these captive wild camels, and these Workshops will be an invaluable experience for all of the WCPF team.

CHINA

Dr. Yuan Lei, the director of the Lop Nur Wild Camel National Nature Reserve in Xinjiang, China with whom we have worked and cooperated for many years has told me that the Chinese government is putting great emphasis in expelling illegal miners from the nature reserve. This is very welcome news and as I write Yuan Lei is currently on an expedition, in the reserve to track down illegal mines. As happens in Mongolia, illegal miners pose a real threat to wild camel habitat, by disrupting ancient migration routes and creating hazards such as abandoned pits, which have been excavated in the search for gold or other minerals. These pits are an obvious danger to the wildlife in the area, as they can fall into them and break a leg. Miners also shoot wild camels for food. So the news of a government crackdown is very welcome indeed. We have also put on the WCPF website photographs from an exhibition Dr. Yuan Lei organised which shows the size and terrain of the reserve.

AGREEMENT WITH ALTWELTKAMELE e.V

Altweltkamele e.V (AWK) has translated pages of our website into German and these can be assessed by clicking on to our website www.wildcamels.com and then clicking on **DEUTSCH** in the top right hand corner of the page headings. They also translate the WCPF newsletters into German and widely promote in Germany, the conservation of the wild camel. Five members of Altweltkamele e.V (AWK) visited the

breeding centre at Zakhyn Us at the beginning of September and informed me they were delighted with what they saw. They also made a number of good suggestions relating to the handling of the wild camels at the breeding centre during the mating season. WCPF appreciates their interest in our work to protect the wild camel and are grateful to them for their support:

1. Sign Boards

We have agreed the wording and artwork on the wild camel German language signboards which Altweltkamele e.V (AWK) will display with the WCPF logo at all the places and centres, which keep populations of domestic camels in Germany.

2.. Translation of three Educational Booklets from English into German

AWK has translated the first of the three existing WCPF English language booklets for children and young adults about the wild camel, into German.

1. Why the Wild Camel is Critically Endangered.

To print a German edition will cost approximately 1200 Euros depending on the length of the print run. WCPF is looking for a wild camel supporter who would like to fund the printing. Books Two and Three are also being translated as per our agreement with Altweltkamele e.V (AWK).

LECTURES

Copenhagen Zoo, Denmark has asked me to give a series of three talks about the wild camel. This will take place at the end of October and will be reported on in our next newsletter.

CAMEL CONFERENCE SOAS: 29th April - 30th April 2017

This Conference held at SOAS in late April was an even greater success than its predecessors. I gave a talk on 'The Release of Wild Camels into the Gobi Desert in Mongolia'. Much of the value of the conference was found in meeting the other participants, all of whom were keen camel lovers, and who were full of innovative ideas.

DONATION AND FUND RAISING

We would like to thank:-

The Prince of Wales's Charitable Foundation for their donation towards our work; and

The Trustees of Taurus Foundation for their generous funding.

Many thanks to Knowsley Safari Park, for your WCPF fundraising day, with Gobi and for coming all the way to Buscot Park;

Nancy Fite for raising money for WCPF, at Bert, her camel's birthday party.

To all the Zoos which generously donate towards our work, Thank You for your support.

And many thanks to the generous donor, whose donation made it possible for WCPF, to purchase 20 camera trap cameras, which will be used in the research work in the GGSPA'A'.

And another big thank you to all the members, who generously make a donation in addition to their membership fee. **If you have a fund raising suggestion please contact me direct.**

WEBSITE, TWITTER and FACEBOOK

Many thanks to Anna Jemmett, who continues to do a brilliant job with our communications on Facebook and Twitter. Anna will be directly involved in both the development and implementation of the Wild Camel Four year project and future fundraising. Our website is maintained and updated by Deborah Swain and her costs are funded by a generous Beijing supporter, who has been a member of WCPF since the beginning. Please visit our Website and Facebook page, as they updated regularly and contain a great deal of wild camel information and pictures from both China and Mongolia. Photos and a commentary on the release are also on the site, as is the link to the French TV documentary. Please see:

www.wildcamels.com; www.facebook.com/WildCamels; www.twitter.com/WildCamels

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Many thanks, to all our supporters world-wide. Your annual subscription is used entirely for funding the Mongolian Breeding Centre Budget. So please remember to renew your annual membership and if you haven't, then send £20.00 (or its equivalent in foreign currency) to WCPF. With over 550 members and

only volunteer staff we rely on members to send us the subscription themselves. You can pay by going direct to the website www.wildcamels.com using PayPal, or by setting up a direct debit with your bank. If you are paying in US dollars or Euros you can also transfer funds direct into the WCPF's Euro or US dollar accounts. **Please email us for the WCPF bank ACCOUNT and transfer details.** Thank you to the many members who already pay by **standing order** direct to the WCPF account. **We will send you our bank details on request.** This is cost effective and the regular income is essential for WCPF and the long term sustainability of our work to protect the wild camel.

SPONSORING A YOUNG WILD CAMEL

With seven young wild camel calves born this year at the Mongolian Breeding Centre we are looking for their sponsorship. If you are already sponsoring a young wild camel at the Breeding Centre, your sponsorship covers vaccines, veterinary advice, hay and medicines. We have five sponsors for the wild camel calves this year, one, an extremely generous donor from America, who is currently sponsoring three wild camel calves. However, two wild camel calves need a sponsor. Sponsors please remember your annual payment, is due on 1st **March of** each year.

LEGACIES

WCPF has received several bequests in Wills, from wild camel supporters. All bequests WCPF receive are spent either directly at the breeding centre or to fund wild camel research. So if you are making a Will do **Please remember the Wild Camel Protection Foundation.**

Renewed thanks for your great support for our on-going work – the protection of the critically endangered wild camel in its fragile desert habitat from extinction. It is with your help and generous support that we are able to achieve so much.

CHRISTMAS - GIVE SOMEONE A WCPF MEMBERSHIP AS A CHRISTMAS PRESENT

At Christmas time we ask members to try and recruit new members by giving a WCPF membership as a present. And members can buy Christmas presents by going to SHOP on the website www.wildcamels.com and orders should be sent directly to me at harecamel@aol.com. Postage always presents a problem, however, by sending the order directly to me, I can respond with the exact cost of postage. We will send a pack of 6 free wild camel postcards to those of you who recruit a new member. And if you would like some of our VERY popular Christmas card of the little Mongolian girl and the camel shouting in the wind, these can be ordered from me at £12.00 for ten including postage.

Very best wishes

John Hare

Wild Camel Protection Foundation Head Office,

School Farm, Benenden, Kent TN17 4EU www.wildcamels.com; www.johnhare.org.uk

A note from Kate Rae, Co-Founder and Co-Managing Trustee of the Wild Camel Protection Foundation. A Conservation Award in the Honours List is rare, and the Wild Camel Protection Foundation team are delighted to congratulate John Hare, the Founder and Chairman on his recent OBE.

HM the Queen's Birthday Honours List, June 2017. John Hare OBE 'Awarded for services to conservation of the wild camel in Mongolia and China.'

'More than twenty years ago John Hare had an idea, that the wild camel, an ice-age survivor species could be saved from extinction. From this idea came the Wild Camel Protection Foundation now 20 years old. It is the only Foundation, in the world with the sole aim of protecting, the wild camel and its rare desert habitat, in both China and Mongolia. Once established we both worked tirelessly in China with Professor Yuan Goying, a leading Chinese wild camel expert to successfully establish the Lop Nur Wild Camel National Nature Reserve, in what many of you know was a former nuclear test site. Professor Yuan Guoying was instrumental in getting permission for John Hare to enter Lop Nur,

which had been barred, to foreigners for 40 years. In 2008 after 5 years of genetic tests at the Veterinary University of Vienna, scientists confirmed the wild camel was a NEW and SEPARATE species, which separated from any other known form of camel over 700,000 years ago. This scientific discovery was a terrific boost for WCPF and its work.

One of our first Trustees, the late and much missed Jasper Evans, a camel rancher from Kenya went on an expedition into Lop Nur in 1996 with John Hare and Professor Yuan Goying to map the size of the planned protected area. He later visited the breeding centre in Mongolia when it was in the initial stages of construction. Then with the support of Professor Yuan Goying and the wonderful Dr. Sarantuya, sadly no longer with us, from the Mongolian Ministry of Nature and Environment, we persuaded the Chinese Ministry of Environment, SEPA, as it was known then and the Mongolian Ministry of Nature and Environment to sign a MOU to co-operate and exchange information on the wild camel. This co-operation continues to this day. There were others too, who gave support and are sadly no longer with us, notable among them, Hugo Berch from Sweden, a relative of the famous Swedish explorer Sven Hedin, who put Lop Nur on the map over 100 years ago. Nothing is certain today with so many species becoming extinct, however, we hope WCPF with the generous support of our members and donors to build on this work, to ensure the long term survival of this amazing animal, the wild camel and its rare desert habitat.'