

WILD CAMEL PROTECTION FOUNDATION

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

Patrons: The Marchioness of Bute, The Countess of Chichester, Lady Grant, Professor Yuan Guoying, Peter Hall, Jane McMorland Hunter of Hafton, Gerald Kidd, Damon de Laszlo, Lulu Lytle, Colin McIntosh, Professor David Munro, The Dowager Marchioness of Reading

March 2014 - Newsletter Number 32

Dear Wild Camel Supporter,

Dr. Jane Goodall DBE

Jane Goodall, WCPF Life Patron, is celebrating her eightieth birthday.

Jane has been a tremendous supporter of our cause over the past 17 years. Although wild camels are far removed from Jane's overriding concern, the chimpanzee, she has managed to find the time to champion the wild camel's plight to great effect.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, JANE from WCPF and all the wild camels and A HUGE THANK YOU.

CAMEL RACE DAY - SUNDAY, 7th SEPTEMBER 2014

PLEASE PUT THE DATE IN YOUR DIARIES

The CAMEL RACE DAY on SUNDAY, 7th SEPTEMBER 2014 will return to Hole Park, Rolvenden Kent by kind permission of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Barham, where in spite of atrocious weather, it was judged to be a great success in 2012. Once again Mongolian Dancers and Musicians will enliven the day, whose main attraction is Joe Fossett's Amazing Racing Camels. There will be two sessions of racing lasting half-an-hour with two to three races in each session. We hope the racing pigs will attend and there will be a full complement of side-shows and stalls. All in all a great day for all the family ending with camel rides for the children. Entry fee is £10 per car and each car ticket will be entered into a lottery for a special prize. Directions to Hole Park are given below. We hope as many of our WCPF members will bring their friends and support this event, which funds the winter hay for the captive wild camels at the Mongolian breeding centre.

WCPF NEEDS HELPERS ON THE DAY. So if any members can help, maybe collecting entrance fees on arrival or selling raffle tickets or helping on WCPF stalls and side-shows for limited periods of time during the afternoon, we should be most grateful. **PLEASE EMAIL ME DIRECT TO LET ME KNOW WHAT HELP YOU CAN OFFER.**

WCPF Raffle and Bottle Stalls.

WCPF will be running raffles during the day and a bottle stall. So please come with a prize and/or a bottle of jam, conserve, or alcohol for the Raffle and/or Bottle stall. We will be selling raffle tickets to people all day and this and the WCPF stalls are part of WCPF fund-raising. **Any member who sadly cannot come, but who would like to donate a prize or bottle, can make a donation or leave a donation at the wild camel headquarters at School Farm, Benenden or in London. Please Email me for details harecamel@aol.com**

Directions to Hole Park, Rolvenden, Kent: Full details of location may be found at the Hole Park [web site <www.holepark.com>](http://www.holepark.com) Staplehurst is the nearest railway station from Charing Cross, London. Hole Park is situated between the villages of Benenden and Rolvenden in Kent, 6 miles from Staplehurst and 55 miles south of London. **The address is: Hole Park, Rolvenden, Cranbrook, Kent. TN17 4JA England.**

AUSTRALIA

I visited Australia during the winter months and managed to see WCPF members Neil Grant and his camels near Alice Springs and Chris O'Hora and his riding and milking camels at Calamunda near Perth. Both were interesting men committed to their camels and running thriving enterprises. I also met Andrew Harper who takes scientists by camel into the Simpson Desert to undertake specialist studies in their fields of expertise. The feral camels in the Australian deserts and bush now number 500,000 and are a big problem. Culling is taking place, not always humanely. I was able to give two talks about the wild camel and its problems in China and Mongolia and also managed to obtain a very good interview in the Sydney Morning Herald which was also featured live on-line. This resulted in new Australian WCPF members and orders for goods from the WCPF website.

CHINA

Yuan Lei, the Vice-Director of the Lop Nur Wild Camel National Nature Reserve (LNCNR) which WCPF helped to establish and who is the son of our Patron, Professor Yuan Guoying, has sent in a report of the latest activities undertaken by the Reserve Office in China. Quote:

- 1) We have finished translating and have just published three books about the wild camel in China and Mongolia. The first covers the current problems the wild camel faces and why it is a critically endangered species. The second book covers the breeding centre in Mongolia and the third deals with the historical development of the camel and its related species, for example llamas, alpacas and guanacos. The books have been published in Chinese, Uighur and Kazakh and will be distributed to schools, officials and the general public. Sponsors of these booklets are Anglo-American Mining

Beijing, the Chinese Xinjiang local government and WCPF.

- 2) We have undertaken expeditions into the Reserve to monitor the actions of the wild camels at different times of year. We used infra-red cameras to take over 1,000 pictures and videos over the past twelve months. These pictures show a lot of pictures of wild camels, wild Tibetan asses, black-tailed gazelles and wild blue sheep. This helps us to understand migration patterns and animal movements during, for example, the breeding and calving seasons.
- 3) During a recent survey in the field, we saw 54 wild camels in one herd last December in the Kum Su area of the reserve. This was the area which suffered from the disastrous potassium cyanide poisoning by illegal miners. It is encouraging to see that the wildlife is now returning to this once pristine and unspoilt area.
- 4) The Reserve office has also been busy constructing concrete markers to delineate the borders of the Reserve. This work is on-going and will continue throughout 2014.

MONGOLIA

In February 2014, a new Director was appointed to the Great Gobi Specially Protected Area "A" to replace Gotov who sadly passed away on the first day of my visit to the Gobi "A" last September. His name is Dovchindorj. I know him well having been on several expeditions with him in China and Mongolia. This is good news as Dovchindorj speaks English and has in-depth knowledge both of Gobi "A" and the wild camel. As part of his responsibilities he also manages the WCPF Breeding Centre at Zakhyn Us and is a very important link for us in our administration of the Centre and more generally for our work to protect the wild camels in Mongolia.

The two wild camels released last October are doing well. Their satellite collars are still functioning, and one of them was caught on a photo camera trap with a harem of 4 females. This was excellent news especially as the photograph was taken at the start of the breeding season. At the time of writing no wild camel has given birth at the Centre so far, but a birth is due next week.

This year the winter in Mongolia was very dry with little snow. This has an impact on the water table in the Reserve which has already fallen to a low level. Possible another effect of climate change.

WEBSITE TWITTER and FACEBOOK

Please continue to visit our website which is constantly being updated and contains a great deal of relevant information from both China and Mongolia. Please see

www.wildcamels.com if you have not already visited the site.

A very BIG THANK YOU to Anna Jemmett (who was our second volunteer in Mongolia) who continues to help WCPF with its facebook and twitter pages. You will all have a chance to meet her on the Camel Day in September. Please do look

at both www.facebook.com/WildCamels and www.twitter.com/WildCamels

EDUCATIONAL AWARENESS-RAISING PROGRAMME

As reported by Yuan Lei in China, the three booklets have now been published in Chinese Uighur and Kazakh as well as in English. We are looking for a sponsor(s) to translate and publish them in Mongolia. The amount is £7,000. (\$12,000)

LECTURES

I continue to give lecture to schools and other institutions, societies or clubs. And I have been invited to Hong Kong in October 2014 to talk to the Hong Kong Royal Geographical Society and a number of private schools. If any member has contacts in Hong Kong interested in helping WCPF or, who might like to attend these talks could he or she kindly let me know. If anyone knows of any suitable lecture audiences who might be interested in a talk in this country, could they please let me know. The wider the wild camel message gets out, the better.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

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, please send £20.00 (or its equivalent in foreign currency). You can pay by going direct to the website www.wildcamels.com using Paypal. 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 and transfer details.** Thank you to the many members who pay by **setting up a standing order** with their bank to pay direct to the WCPF account. This keep costs down.

SPONSORING A YOUNG WILD CAMEL

If you are sponsoring a young wild camel at the breeding centre, a sponsorship which covers vaccines, veterinary advice, hay and medicines, please remember to send your annual payment, which was due **1st March 2014.**

Very best wishes and renewed thanks for your great support for our on-going work – the protection and conservation of the critically endangered wild camel from extinction. It is with your help and generous support that we are able to achieve so much

John Hare

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POSTSCRIPT: Last Man In – End of Empire in Northern Nigeria

My new book, which is unrelated to the wild camel but indicative of why I dedicated myself to its survival. I was the last recruit into the Colonial Administrative Service in Northern Nigeria – hence the title of this book. My years 1957 to 1964 coincided with a time of momentous change in Nigeria. I was brought into contact with rapidly disappearing cultures and customs in one of

the remotest parts of West Africa. I was caught up in unrecorded political events which merit, I believe, a footnote in Nigerian history. The current enmity between tribal groups puts the emergence of the Muslim terrorist organisation *Boko Haram* and the present religious and political strife in Nigeria into a comprehensible context. *Last Man In* was given a very generous review by Matthew Parris in *the Spectator* and Roderic Dunnett in *the Oldie*. **To order a copy of *Last Man In* - approximately 290 pages, 15 arresting black/white photos - at £20.00 (plus £3.00 postage), please write to me at: School Farm, Benenden, Kent TN17 4EU or go to <www.johnhare.org.uk (Latest Publication)> or <www.Amazon.co.uk>**