



e-Update No 13 January 2012

Cubs at the Sanctuary

We started 2012 with news of another cub which is currently with the SSPCA at Middlebank — Bela. She was initially taken to the **Vale Wildlife Rescue Centre** <http://www.valewildlife.org.uk> by the RSPCA after being found by the side of the road near Ledbury in Herefordshire. She was very cold and dehydrated but with the care of the Vale staff she was soon fit enough to be transferred north. However, when she arrived at Middlebank she had a few days where she wasn't that keen on food so they have had to settle her down again. We just hope she won't do the same when she moves here, hopefully soon. As we write this, Grace and Paul are preparing to collect Bela at the usual rendezvous, Dalwhinnie.



Bela (Photo: Colin Seddon, SSPCA)

Ness has now moved to an outdoor nursery pen and you can watch her in the Otter Webcam <http://otter.org/webcam.aspx> – that is, of course, providing she has come out from under her bedding!

Holly and Shannon are doing well on the croft, although every day when I go up to feed them Holly sends Shannon out for the first fish and then “mugs” her for it! It's very difficult to get photographs of them out and about doing ‘their thing’. But you can guarantee if you don't take a camera



Holly

there is every opportunity of a good picture... A bit like the KitKat advert!

Today I noticed that they have started to collect their own bedding from the vegetation within their pen. This is great to see, as it is a totally natural thing for them to do.

Dee and Luce had a bit of a traumatic experience over the Christmas period. As you have probably heard we had terrific gales up here and part of the roof blew off the shed, which is partitioned for their sleeping quarters. They had just started to use this to sleep in instead of the smaller box, which we thought they were now finding a bit tight. Fortunately they were not hurt but they have gone back to the small box which they



Shannon

probably find more secure.



We have managed to patch the shed but this is only temporary. It is not just the roof which needs replacing as the weather has taken its toll on the main structure of the shed, so that we need to replace it completely. Obviously we won't be able to do this until Dee and Luce are released.

The cost for this including demolition and removal of old shed will be £1,850, so if you are able to help with this we would very much appreciate it. You can donate online at <http://www.ottershop.co.uk> or you can send a

cheque marked "Shed" on the back. Many thanks.

"As Affluence Spreads, so does the Trade in Endangered Species"

This was the title of an article in the New York Times on 2 January and I'm afraid it made for depressing reading. It cited various confiscations of wildlife products over the past year including rhino horns, elephant tusks and ivory goods, and endangered geckoes, but as usual there was no mention of otters – and yet we know it is a huge part of the illegal wildlife trade.



The article continues "This is just the tip of the iceberg, in a market that is thought to be worth many billions of US dollars a year. The trade in animal and plant life, including creatures protected by international conventions, has skyrocketed over the past decade or so, largely because of soaring demand from mainland China and many other parts of Asia. By now, illegal wildlife trading ranks among the top five most valuable illicit markets globally, after counterfeiting and the illegal trafficking in drugs, humans and oil, according to Global Financial Integrity, a research and advocacy organisation based in Washington."

"If we can make consumption of endangered wildlife uncool among young people in Asia"

The article attributes this partly to an increase in affluence in certain parts of the world so that these items are now more affordable. Transport is also now easier and more goods are travelling by sea as checks are less rigorous at sea ports than at airports. The risks of being caught are seen as very low and the financial rewards are extremely high.

And now for the good news

For one thing, the fact that they are finding more cases of smuggling does indicate that there is more trade but it also means that customs checks are also improving. Politically the wildlife trade is becoming less acceptable and so governments in Asia are more willing to collaborate on combating the trade and some of the traders at well-known markets are becoming more cautious about selling their goods.

The most important thing is to create awareness amongst the consumers and in this way remove the demand for products. As the article continues "If we can make consumption of endangered wildlife uncool among young people in Asia, then perhaps we have a chance of really shifting things."

IOSF is committed to continuing our work in Asia through the Furget-Me-Not campaign and 2012 will see us stepping up our campaign.

To begin with we have now completed our Identification cards for use in Nepal and Indonesia. These will be used by otter researchers in these countries who are working in the local communities so that the people can identify the different species of otter and also distinguish them from other similar species. This will provide valuable data on distribution of otters and also get the local people involved in otter work. These cards have been produced with a standard format so that they can then be translated into other languages. As you can see here, the artwork which has been done by Lyn Wells of **Artful Creatures** <http://artfulcreatures.co.uk> is superb.

ओत प्रजाती

युरासियन (*Lutra lutra*)

स्मथकोटेइ (*Lutrogale perspicillata*)

एशियन स्मलन्ड (*Aonyx cinerea*)

ओत जस्तै देखिने केहि प्रजातीहरु

मलसाँघो (*Martes favigula*)

दुलो न्याउरीमुसा (*Herpestes edwardsi*)

सानो एशियन न्याउरीमुसा (*Herpestes javanicus/auropunctatus*)

गंगटे न्याउरीमुसा (*Herpestes urva*)

रुफोर्ड माउरीन लेईंग प्रोग्रामन र पोशियान्ना पिक्किंग प्रोग्रामनको आर्थिक सहयोगसा अन्तर्गत ओत बचाउ कोषद्वारा प्रकाशित ।
 चित्रकार : लिन वेल्स
 नेपाली अनुवादक : गाणेश कार्के

प्रशासनतन्त्रमन्त्रालय, काठमाडौं

We have also just heard that part of the funding required for a workshop in Brunei has been obtained from the Mohamed bin Zayed Species Conservation Fund. This workshop is to train more researchers, particularly in Borneo, but also throughout Malaysia and also possibly Indonesia. They will be taught the field skills necessary to identify otter signs and also the vital skills needed for public awareness and education in communities. A similar workshop was held in Cambodia in 2009 and following this local people are reporting far more otter-related incidents and pet otters have been given up to Phnom Tamao Wildlife Rescue Centre.

Click here <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/02/business/global/as-affluence-spreads-so-does-the-trade-in-endangered-species.html?scp=1&sq=as%20affluence%20spreads&st=cse> if you want to read the whole article from the New York Times.

Wildlife Club

After a gap of two years the Broadford Wildlife Club, run by IOSF, is active again in conjunction with the Broadford Out of School Club. This is a club to care for children

whose parents are working and it was an ideal way of getting the children to discover more about otters and the environment. At the moment the activities are indoor based because of the weather and the short day length but once the spring comes in we will be able to get the children outside to enjoy and explore our local area.



Chester Zoo

IOSF's Dr Paul Yoxon has been asked to speak at a meeting of the North West Group of Fauna and Flora International, which will be held at Chester Zoo on Thursday 22 March. These meetings are generally a good evening with a mix of "learning" and a social gathering of like-minded people. So put the date in your diary and we will give you further details once they are available.

Thanks

We would like to thank all of you who took the time to send us your good wishes for Christmas. We very much appreciate this and all your cards made our office look very festive.

Thank you too to those who have sent donations – some of you have done this as gifts or instead of cards, so your friends and family are also involved. We know this is an expensive time of year, not just for the festivities but with the extra costs of winter, so your support is a great encouragement to us.

Product of The Month at www.ottershop.co.uk



Our Otter Adoption Gift Box makes a great present no matter what the occasion. So don't forget us when you're wondering what to give for Valentine's Day, Birthdays, Easter, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Congratulations, Thank You.

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Gift Donation; e-Adoption; e-Certificate; e-Birthday card

Christmas Prize Draw

Congratulations goes to Elizabeth Cowan, one of our long-term supporters, whose name was drawn as the winning entry in our Christmas Prize Draw. Elizabeth received one of our popular Oscar Otters. Thank to everyone who took part.



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