

Delaware Valley Eagle Alliance

NATURE'S NEWSLETTER

ONLINE EDITION

Volume 10, Issue 3

www.dveaglealliance.org



TAKING ON WILDLIFE AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Nature's Newsletter

www.dveaglealliance.org

ABOUT THIS ISSUE

by the Editor

The Delaware Valley Eagle Alliance is committed to raising awareness and understanding and to promote the conservation of our wildlife and the natural environment. Conservation and preservation is a challenge that touches us all. Through our online newsletter, Nature's Newsletter, we strive to facilitate the free access and exchange of information of critical issues in the world today; to educate, inspire and empower all to take part and take action to enable all life to exist and prosper on Earth.

This issue of Nature's Newsletter features articles by or about individuals, organizations and communities who have "taken on" regional and/or global challenges. We applaud their efforts, dedication and passion, and hope you are as inspired as we are by their work and successes.

Yoke Bauer DiGiorgio

FRONT COVER PHOTOGRAPHY

Top Center Provided by Georges River Land Trust
Left Top Provided by Obscura Digital
Left Center Steven Lyon, Photographer
Left Bottom Provided by New York WILD Film Festival
Right Top Provided by Pocono Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Center
Right Center Dr. Russell L. Burke, Photographer
Right Bottom ... Yoke Bauer DiGiorgio, Photographer

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2 Ivory Crush at Times Square**
- 4 Reflecting on Conservation and the Ivory Crush Event** *by Dereck Joubert*
- 6 Endangered Species Take Over Empire State Building**
- 7 Commentary** *by Louie Psihoyos and the Racing Extinction Team*
- 8 Saving Electrocuted Wild Birds** *by Kathy Uhler*
- 10 Something That Matters** *by Steven Lyon*
- 12 Jamaica Bay Terrapin Research Project and Conservation** *by Dr. Russell L. Burke*
- 14 The Race To Regain Balance: 12 Rivers Initiative of Midcoast Maine** *by Annette Nagel*
- 15 Following My Passion** *by Nancy Rosenthal*
- 16 Discovering Nature: Update - Mary Lee a Great White Shark**
- 16 About the Delaware Valley Eagle Alliance**

THE IVORY CRUSH

at Times Square



© Yoke Bauer DiGiorgio, Photographer

On the morning of June 19, 2015, in Times Square, New York City, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), with many wildlife and conservation partners, lawmakers, activists and wildlife enthusiasts, including the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC), NYS Senator Brad Hoylman, hosted its 2nd major ivory crush event. Times Square was the location chosen because it is one of the busiest shopping districts in the United States. FWS and its partners wanted everyone to see the Ivory Crush and send a clear message that the US will not tolerate wildlife crimes that threaten to wipe out the African elephant and other species around the globe.

The Times Square Ivory Crush builds on momentum generated in 2013 by the FWS's initial destruction of 6- tons of contraband ivory in Denver and was part of a growing movement to destroy ivory stockpiles and raise public consciousness. Since then, nine governments have followed suit. In May, China destroyed nearly 1,500 pounds of seized ivory tusks and carvings in Beijing. Similar events have been held in Hong Kong, the Philippines, Gabon, Kenya, and Belgium, and elsewhere, totaling more than 50 tons of destroyed ivory.

Much of the ivory destroyed at the Times Square Ivory Crush was confiscated from Philadelphia, PA art and antiques dealer, Victor Gordon, who, in 2012, pleaded guilty in U.S. federal court to smuggling African elephant ivory into the US. The seizure was one of the largest of elephant ivory on record nationwide. Other ivory crushed was seized in other operations by the FWS, the NYS DEC, and the LA Police Dept.

The sale and purchase of ivory products drives an international network of crime that begins with poachers in Africa and ends in shops around the world. Since 1989, the population of African elephants has fallen by half, to about 500,000, with more than 20,000 being killed each year.

Continued on page 3



Continued from page 2

© Photographs by Yoke Bauer DiGiorgio

THE IVORY CRUSH at Times Square

Officials said they are committed to fighting the ivory trade not just to protect elephants but to combat terrorists who profit from elephant poaching.

"Regardless of their country of origin, we all lose if elephants, rhinos, tigers and other iconic animals disappear. The only way we will save them is together through a concerted global effort to end the scourge of wildlife trafficking and the devastation it brings to these animals..." said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dan Ashe.

"I wrote to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to request an ivory crush in Times Square in my district because New York City is the epicenter of the illegal ivory trade. An elephant is killed every 15 minutes,... If we are to protect this magnificent species from extinction we need to raise awareness about the trade of illegal ivory and choke off consumer demand..." said State Senator Brad Hoylman.

"New York is proud to host today's ivory crush - a clear reminder that we will not allow the illegal ivory trade to continue in the Empire State. I urge other states and nations to follow New York's lead and join us in working to

protect these endangered species for generations to come." said NYS DEC Commissioner Joe Martens

"For a brief moment, Times Square stood still for Africa's elephants.... The United States today was not just crushing ivory from poached elephants -- it was crushing the bloody ivory market. It was declaring that we will join many other nations to do our part in ending this crisis." said WCS President and CEO Cristián Samper.

And so, as the speeches concluded, and as car and truck horns honked, electronic screens promoted Broadway shows and onlookers snapped pictures, confiscated ivory was placed by the Event attendees on the conveyor belt of a 25-ton green rock crusher. The rock-crusher buzzed to life and the ivory pieces rolled up the belt, tumbled into the crusher and were spit out as small white sand-like granules.

So, what will be done with the ivory now that it has been destroyed?

The destroyed ivory will be added to the ivory destroyed in 2013 and remain secured by the FWS. In 2014, a "Crushed Ivory Design Challenge" was launched by the FWS calling

on the public to submit ideas for a compelling, thought provoking, and informative display to increase awareness about the threats that poaching and illegal trade pose to elephants and other at-risk species. The goal was to use the crushed ivory to raise awareness, reduce the demand for illegal wildlife products, and ultimately protect wildlife from senseless killing and illegal trade. The Design Challenge closed on March 31, 2015, and submissions are currently under review by a panel of experts.

ADDITIONAL SOURCES

www.fws.gov/news/ShowNews.cfm?ID=0CC6ED8A-D790-5952-413395740E5000A2 PRESS RELEASE JUNE 19, 2015, United States Destroys Confiscated Elephant Ivory in Times Square
<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/2015/06/150618-times-square-ivory-crush-elephants-poaching-conservation/>
www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2015/06/19/this-is-why-the-government-just-crushed-a-ton-of-ivory-in-times-square/
<http://press.wcs.org/NewsReleases/tabid/13614/articleType/ArticleView/articleId/6835/Statement-from-WCS-President-and-CEO-Cristian-Samper-on-Times-Square-Ivory-Crush.aspx>
www.fws.gov/le/pdf/NY-Ivory-Crush-Q-and-A.pdf



© John A. DiGiorgio, Photographer

Reflecting on Conservation and the Ivory Crush Event

Attending the Ivory Crush Event were Dereck and Beverly Joubert, award-winning filmmakers, National Geographic Explorers-in-Residence and wildlife conservationists, who have been filming, researching and exploring in Africa for over 30 years. Their mission is the conservation and understanding of the large predators and other key wildlife species that determine the course of all conservation in Africa. They are the founders of the “Big Cats Initiative” with National Geographic, which currently funds over 80 grants in 27 countries for the conservation of big cats.

The Jouberts have made 25 films for National Geographic, published 11 books, half a dozen scientific papers, and have written many articles for the National Geographic Magazine. Beverly is also an acclaimed photographer and her international exhibitions have further helped to raise awareness for the plight of big cats across the world. Their films have received international recognition with major accolades including 8 Emmys, a Peabody, Wildscreen Panda Awards and a Lifetime Achievement Award at the Japan Wildlife Film Festival, to name but a few, but notably the Presidential Order of Merit from the President of Botswana for work for conservation.

In recent years, the Jouberts have expanded their conservation outreach through another business venture, “Great Plains Conservation”. Dereck is CEO of the company. The initiative is founded on bringing together conservation, communities and conservation tourism to fund large tracts of land that can be protected for the local wildlife and the surrounding communities. Today that land totals about 1.8 million acres in Africa.

We feel so fortunate to have had the opportunity to spend some time talking with the Jouberts about conservation and the Ivory Crush event.

John and Yoke DiGiorgio

Dereck Answers Some Questions Below:

Do “Ivory Crush” (and burns) events such as the one in Times Square have an impact to traffickers around the world, and what do you feel that impact is?

I think they do. It seems as though a good percentage of the market is about collecting as art for investment or as an alternative currency. This sends a message that it is not socially acceptable to invest in ivory. It has been said that behavior is not changed by laws but by peer pressure and the more we send messages of disgust in the trade the greater the stigma of having ivory will be in cultures that aspire to be modern and western. Crushing ivory sends that message. The most receptive would be the children and children change the way adults behave.

What and how is the impact in Africa to the killing of elephants (and rhinos)?

Well when you kill elephants and rhinos and lions, (the big three iconic species), there are HUGE ramifications.

Let's start with the economics. There is an \$80B a year eco-tourism model into Africa and it hangs on the iconic species. Take out lions and elephants, and even rhinos, and that will decline. As it does, it will tip certain communities into economic failure. As that happens, they poach more to survive and that brings about a downward spiral in all species.

Ecologically of course, as you remove the driver or keystone species that influence others (and in the case of elephants that have the ability to change their landscape), you affect changes that are negative (like stopping the natural progression of woodlands to grasslands). Or in the case of lions, you change the drive of prey to migrate, or stay vital and alert. Fewer migrations, or in the case of say, buffalo, means they will settle and feed where there is grazing until there is no more grazing. They overuse the lands, and dedicate where they graze and sleep, and their parasite load increases and they ultimately become vulnerable and



© John A. DiGiorgio, Photographer

Continued on page 5

Continued from page 4

Reflecting on Conservation and the Ivory Crush Event

collapse. Rhinos also graze and play their own role in the dynamics of herbivore landscape, interactions that without which ecosystems fail.

Communities depend on the revenues for income but also for health and education. As the revenues dry up, health gets worse, and they get poorer. Poor unhealthy people poach more and depend on world aid support more. That results in the narrative leaning towards “poor helpless Africans” more, feeds racism and xenophobia and makes the world worse, poorer, and lesser.

Spiritually, many African people and people beyond its borders, have a deep connection to the animals and indeed many are named almost in a totemistic way after them. The Ndluvo people of South Africa are the elephant people. As they lose their connection to elephants, they lose their connection to the Earth and some would argue, they become lost people, wandering as nameless masses. It's not a stretch, without nature we all feel disconnected, a feeling that is born out but our perpetual need to go to parks (Central Park on a warm weekend day is jammed, more jammed than 5th Ave in the concrete because we all want the greenery and space.

Without elephants and rhinos and lions, African nature is not complete. Without nature in various forms we are incomplete.

Are there other initiatives that could be launched to help?

Support sincere efforts like the Great Plains Foundation's work with Rhinos without Borders (moving 100 rhinos to Botswana for protection), or The Big Life Foundation protecting elephants and other wildlife in Kenya. Support the National Geographic Big Cats Initiative (via GreatPlains) to protect cats in Africa and Asia. But also lobby representatives in your region to afford maximum protection to big cats. Lobby to get ivory and rhino horn trade or even ownership banned in each state. It is a commodity built on corruption and greed, and is linked to human trafficking, and terrorism.

Let's get it stopped!

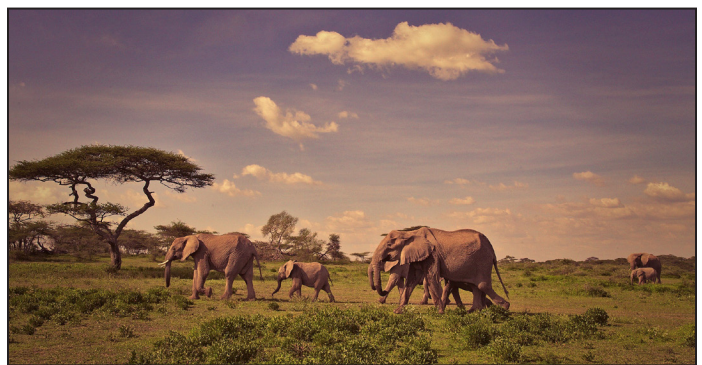
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

<http://www.wildlifefilms.co/>

<http://greatplainsfoundation.com/>

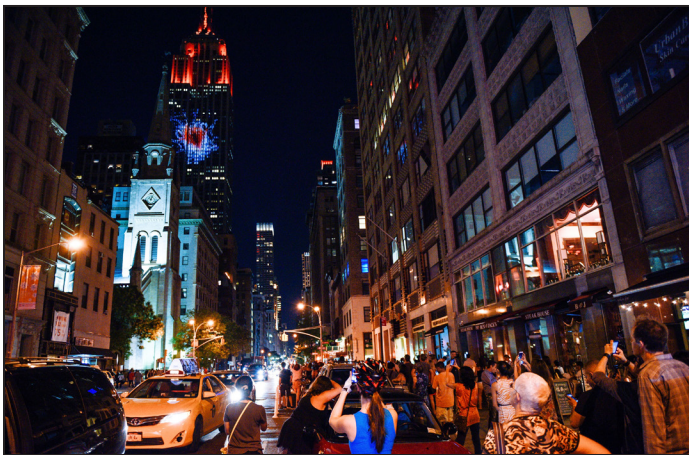
<https://biglife.org/>

<http://animals.nationalgeographic.com/animals/big-cats-initiative/about/>



© Steven Lyon, Photographer

The AFRICAN ELEPHANT, the largest remaining land mammal on the planet, is facing the greatest crisis in decades. According to a 2013 UN report entitled “Elephants in the Dust – The African Elephant Crisis”, increasing poaching levels, as well as loss of habitat are threatening the survival of African elephant populations in Central Africa as well as previously secure populations in West, Southern and Eastern Africa (www.grida.no).



Photographs provided by ObscuraDigital

Endangered Species Take Over Empire State Building

Every night, the Empire State Building changes its famous lights to honor sports teams, holidays, and marketing promotions. One Saturday evening this past summer, endangered species got their turn, with their images being projected onto Manhattan's most famous skyscraper. The event, *Projecting Change: The Empire State Building*, was created by Louie Psihoyos, photographer, filmmaker and director of the Oscar-winning documentary *The Cove* and co-founder and executive director of Oceanic Preservation Society, and Travis Threlkel, founder and Chief Creative Officer of Obscura Digital, and in collaboration with Discovery Channel, Vulcan Productions, the Li Ka -Shing Foundation and Empire State Building Trust.

The purpose of the event was to call attention to the plight of endangered species and promote, not only the upcoming film *Racing Extinction*, but also its greater mission - to expose the hidden world of endangered species and race to protect them against mass extinction.

About four years ago, Louie Psihoyos and Travis Threlkel and his team at Obscura Digital began to collaborate to put on elaborate light shows to help draw attention to the alarming rate at which species are dying out. They also began discussing a more dramatic initiative - they wanted to use the photography of Louie's colleagues at National Geographic, incorporate a musical element and project the images on a newsworthy facade.

They focused on locations in New York City. But the city has strict laws regarding the projection of images on buildings, and Louie's efforts to get approval were frustrated for three years. During that time they put on dozens of smaller, guerrilla-style street projections on billboards and institutions, including the Guggenheim Museum, some with approval and others not. The biggest, was at the United Nations last year. Finally, television producer Norman Lear stepped in to assist, using his connections to Mayor Bill de Blasio's office. Calling the event "*Projecting Change*:"

The Empire State Building", Louie and Travis finally got the green light with just four weeks to put together the production.

On Saturday, August 1, 2015, using 40 stacked, 20,000-lumen projectors on the roof of a nearby building, Louie, Travis, and his team at the creative technology studio, Obscura Digital, illuminated the south face of the Empire State Building from 9 p.m. to midnight with static images and videos of rare animals. A snow leopard, a golden lion tamarin and manta rays, even a King Kong-like ape scampering up with real helicopters circling overhead, along with snakes, birds and various mammals and sea creatures - all were projected onto a space 375 feet tall and 186 feet wide covering 33 floors of the southern face of the Empire State Building. Louie and Travis joined hundreds of socially conscious guests gathered on the rooftop of 230 Fifth Avenue to view the projections of these incredible images. The images were also clear to anyone within 20 blocks downtown of the Empire State Building, and beyond downtown - thanks to cellphones and online via a livestream at www.racingextinction.com.

This event and the prior smaller events are all part of Louie Psihoyos' documentary, "*Racing Extinction*," a wake-up call which draws attention to mankind's role in a potential loss of at least half of the world's species. The documentary premiered on the Discovery Channel on December 2, 2015 in more than 220 countries and territories around the world.

RESOURCES

www.racingextinction.com
www.opsociety.org
www.obscuradigital.com
www.empirestatebuilding.com
<http://www.nytimes.com/2015/07/31/movies/illuminating-the-plight-of-endangered-species-at-the-empire-state-building.html>
<https://www.audubon.org/news/endangered-species-take-over-empire-state-building>
<http://www.newyorker.com/culture/photo-booth/endangered-species-light-up-the-empire-state-building>
<http://www.dailykos.com/story/2015/08/01/1407762/-NYT-Illuminating-the-Plight-of-Endangered-Species-at-the-Empire-State-Building>



COMMENTARY

by Louie Psihoyos and the Racing Extinction Team

Racing Extinction addresses four different drivers of mass extinction - habitat destruction, pollution, invasive species, and over consumption - and talks about what some of the possible solutions are. For example, the eradication of natural habitat to grow food for animals that humans eat is a major factor. Reducing the global consumption of meat can have a huge impact on the extinction of wildlife. Another example, the amount of carbon dioxide currently being created and absorbed by the ocean is acidifying the oceans' reefs at an incredible rate. If this continues, all coral reefs will be gone by 2100. When you lose the coral reefs, you lose about 25% of the species in the ocean.

Racing Extinction aims to inspire people to understand and know what they can do to help stop the mass extinction and save endangered species. Everybody can make a difference. The *Racing Extinction* website (www.racingextinction.com) contains impactful ideas and steps that can be taken - "Start with 1 Thing" that can make a difference in the world. For example, ideas to make your own carbon footprint smaller include: eating vegetarian or vegan as often as possible, walking or biking instead of driving, and using fewer resources.

Racing Extinction, the film, is now available on DVD, iTunes and Amazon. **Everybody can make a difference!**

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE

www.racingextinction.com

(To get involved in the campaign and take action)

Photographs provided by ObscuraDigital



Photographs provided by Pocono Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Center

(Eaglet's feet had been burned from power lines - left and center. Eaglet is now recovering following surgery for a femur fracture on its right leg, which was also burned by power lines - right.)

SAVING Electrocuted Wild Birds

By Kathy Uhler

(Director, Pocono Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Center)

One of the “quieter” tragedies occurring as our human world interfaces with the natural world today is that an increasing number of birds – raptors, such as eagles and hawks, are being injured and/or killed by unshielded electrical power lines and transformers. These raptors tend to seek higher perches on which to sit and survey the scene below, searching for prey.

A new nesting season is about to begin as winter softens into spring, and I am reminded of last summer and the fate of a nest of bald eagles from Pocono Lake Preserve, Pocono Lake, PA. It was July and two of three eaglets, just fledged from the nest, were electrocuted less than a week apart on the same PPL Electric Utilities pole. Electrocution occurs when a bird contacted two parts of the transmission line simultaneously, creating a path to ground.

The first was admitted to the Pocono Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Center (PWREC), suffering severe internal injuries, from the electric current passing through its body, and from the 50 foot fall. His feet were severely burned. The eaglet, not yet 4 months old, was euthanized. Its sibling, delivered by the Game Commission six days after the first, was relatively fortunate. Her burns were less severe, but she suffered a femur fracture from the fall from the pole. Following examination by the staff at Wright Veterinary Medical Center, we were provided with multiple

pain medications, antibiotics and instructions to administer large volumes of electrolytes, a tube feeding diet designed for fish eaters, and to use an electric footbath to soak the burned feet and provide massage to maintain muscle tone, heal the burns, and keep the skin from hardening. The eaglet was not stable enough for surgery to stabilize the femur fracture and so, risky as it was, we waited.

Handling an eagle is never easy under the best of circumstances. My husband, Eric, and I together worked to stabilize the still-powerful 11 pound bird. He tenderly, but firmly, would wrap a towel around the bird trying to prevent further injury to the fractured leg. I would place a falconry hood, made to reduce stress by eliminating visual stimuli, over his head, and administer fluids and medications. The bird was then lifted and held in place with her feet in the footbath for 15 minutes twice a day allowing the warm water and bubbles to increase circulation and help heal the burns to the feet. Medicated sprays were applied to the feet and legs to prevent infection, reduce discomfort and moisturize the skin. Then, using a 60cc syringe with a large tube attached, we placed the tube into her crop and fed her a liquid diet made for fish eating birds. She was unable to stand to eat at that point and could keep no solid food down that we force-fed.

On the seventh day, surgery was

performed. Three surgeons worked for several hours, placing a rod through the fractured ends and stabilizing it with external pins. Clearing yet another hurdle, she survived anesthesia and major surgery. For the next six weeks, the eaglet lived in a Pack-and-Play portable crib we purchased from Craigslist. This allowed the bird to stand on a padded surface. The walls were draped with hospital pads to prevent injury and maintain some sense of hygiene. A tail guard was applied using old x-ray film taped around the tail to prevent breakage and accumulation of waste. Eaglet was fed by tube, force-fed small pieces of fish, chicken, mice and venison, and given antibiotics and pain medications. Several veterinarians performed weekly evaluations at Wright's. Healing was coming along, but she refused to eat on her own.

Finally, the pin was removed and the eagle stood on her own two legs for the first time in months. The fracture, despite having to wait a full week to stabilize had healed! Physical therapy replaced “crib rest”. Eric and I had to contract and extend the leg and allow for wing spread and light flapping without putting undue pressure on the healed fracture. Within a week the bird was standing comfortably and could grip with the talons on both feet. She still was not taking any food on

Continued on page 9

Continued from page 8

SAVING Electrocuted Wild Birds

her own, and we had to force-feed cut up fish and rodents twice daily.... which was getting dangerous. Both of us had cuts on our hands from the razor-sharp beak and had some near misses from sharp 2 ½ inch long talons.

Finally, our eaglet was allowed to breathe fresh air and see the sky. Placed in an outdoor flight enclosure, flapping was the first favorite activity. Capturing the bird for forced feedings became work, and doing so without injuring us or her required concentrated effort. The decision was made to allow the entry of an adult female Bald eagle we were treating for a wing injury. The intent and hope was to have the adult foster the eaglet and demonstrate self-feeding. But, if the food placed in the enclosure were to be eaten, how would we know which eagle was feeding? Thanks to the folks at AIC Security who donated and installed a Wi-Fi camera so that we could observe the eagles in their enclosure we could now witness the adult bald eagle demonstrating eating and sitting next to the eaglet. She was doing her job of being a pal and role model.

No animal should ever have to suffer the pain and stress this eaglet has endured. There are companies and organizations that specialize in providing education and products designed specifically to prevent these events from occurring. The third eaglet was still in the wild, still with its parents and I was determined to prevent another tragedy. I contacted the Pennsylvania Power & Light (PPL) and received a swift response from them. They sent two crews and an environmental professional to Pocono Lake and the area of the nest. I had forwarded several articles outlining ways in which power lines have been retrofitted to protect birds out west. Crews were able to place some protective rubber coating over the wires near the nest to help minimize the risk to the third and last eaglet from this nest from suffering the same fate as his/her two other siblings.

Our experience has shown that power companies do make efforts to protect birds from electrocution. The thing to do is to let someone there know, and to check back regularly to see what progress has been made. Such intervention can be a matter of life or death as a new nesting season is about to begin. For more information, visit www.poconowildlife.org

UPDATE: The Pocono Lake Eagle

The horrific incidents of July 2015 had left us with emotional scars as we worked with two majestic birds that were in immense pain. We learned a tremendous amount from both, increasing our handling and procedural skills, as well as experience with behavior and physical therapy. The birds were expensive to treat, for Wright Veterinary Medical Center, who donated all hours of surgery and medications, and for us, purchasing equipment to care for such large

birds in confined areas, enteral diets, fish, and over-the-counter supplies.

The Pocono Lake eaglet, completely recovered from its ordeal, released itself through a weak spot in the mesh on the roof of her enclosure in late November. We see her almost daily, flying with incredible grace and strength. We had hoped for a spring release, but she could not wait to fly free....

PWREC needs donations to renovate its raptor flight enclosure. The projected cost is \$10,000 and must be completed before March, 2016. Tax-deductible contributions can be made to PWREC by visiting www.poconowildlife.org.



Photographs provided by Pocono Wildlife Rehabilitation and Education Center (Kathy Uhler prepares to tube fluids and provide pain relief for the eaglet.)



© www.lyonheartlove.org

SOMETHING THAT MATTERS

By Steven Lyon

(Director and Producer “Something that Matters”, Founder of Lyonheartlove - a 501c3 non-profit organization, Photographer, and Founder of Green Dogs Technology - an alternative energy company)

In 2009, 122 African rhinos were killed by poachers..... In 2011, 448 rhinos met the same fate..... In 2013 the number escalated to 1,004 rhinos.... WHY?

“Something that Matters” is an upcoming film that documents through one man’s journey, the horrors and hope of the ever present crisis of poaching and corruption, which threatens extinction of the entire African Rhino species.

The African Rhino horn is illegally sold and marketed in Asia as a cure for cancer, hangover, or erectile dysfunction, and increasingly, simply as a party vice. With a value per ounce fetching prices higher than gold or cocaine, it has become a status symbol for the wealthy and insecure. Consuming rhino horn, which is composed mainly of keratin (a protein and also the key structural material making up the outer layer of human skin) has no more of an effect than consuming your own hair or nails.

So how did it all begin? In January 2013, while on a safari in South Africa, I met a most charismatic bushman, Fritz Breytenbach, who changed my life forever. As a result of this meeting I embarked on a 1000 km trek with Fritz across South Africa for the sole purpose of raising awareness about the senseless slaughter of the African Rhino. Fritz had asked me why on earth would I leave New York City and my job to travel to Africa to walk 1000 km in the bush. I have done many incredible things in my life that I am very proud of, but as I explained to Fitz, this was a chance to do something that really mattered. And so I put together

a skeleton film crew to join me and the makings of the documentary, “Something that Matters”, was born.

During the trek, I invited key African individuals, ranging from celebrated authors, high profile reporters, and avid conservationists to tell their stories around the fire. It was through these individuals that I was introduced to people who would become the heroic characters in my film: the celebrated doctor and animal rights activist, Lorinda Hern, with her team, harmlessly darting Rhinos in an exciting chase with helicopters and four- wheel drive vehicles. They would then inject an indelible dye into the base of the rhinos’ horns, leaving the horns purple and poisonous if ingested; the South African Special Forces officer and his wife who track poachers into the bush through the night; a community pastor who is speaking out at his own peril against the poaching syndicates, stressing the damage that poaching is doing to their own community; and the field ranger who travels throughout communities, holding rallies to educate the villagers that this is not simply a “white man’s problem,” and instead, a shared, communal concern with instant global repercussions.

There is no question that the threat is imminent. “Is there hope...?” - this was the question I asked everyone on my journey across South Africa and the answers came back -YES.

Tragically, most of the modern world continues to remain

Continued on page 11

Continued from page 10

SOMETHING THAT MATTERS



TOP: © www.lyonheartlove.org; BOTTOM: © Steven Lyon, Photographer

DID YOU KNOW? The Black rhino probably derived its name as a distinction from the white rhino and/or from the dark-colored local soil that covers its skin after wallowing in mud; "White" rhinoceros is taken from the Afrikaans word describing its mouth - "wyd", meaning "wide". Early English settlers misinterpreted the "wyd" for "white".

oblivious to the crimes being committed against this magnificent species. *"Something that Matters"* aims to present both sides of the pro-trade and pro-hunting arguments that are so controversial in today's Africa. Our goal is to get the word out and to help trigger actions that will help save the first of Africa's famous "Big Five" that now faces extinction - the African Rhino.

We are continuing to seek additional investors and funding to finish the film. The plan is to release it at Sundance in 2017. For additional information about *"Something that Matters"* or to make a donation, please go to <http://lyonheartloveblog.tumblr.com> , www.lyonheartlove.org or contact me directly at lyonheartlove@stevenlyon.com.

LyonHeartLove, a non-profit 501 (c)(3) organization founded in 2013 by Steven Lyon, is dedicated to making documentary films in support of endangered or threatened wildlife. It endeavors to educate people on the horrors of poaching and the joys of wildlife conservation. *"Something that Matters"* marks the organization's first project.

ABOUT RHINOS (Rhinocerotidae)

There are 5 species of rhinoceros (often abbreviated to rhino), 2 native to Africa (White and Black rhinos) and 3 native to Asia (Greater one-horned, Javan and Sumatran rhinos).

3 out of the 5 species are now considered critically endangered.

All 5 species of rhinos can grow to weigh over 1000 kg (2200 lb); the White rhino (the largest) can weigh over 3500 kg (7700 lb); the Greater one-horned, Sumatran, and Javan rhinos are all much smaller in size.

Rhinos have brilliant hearing and a keen sense of smell; however they are well known for having poor eyesight.

Life expectancy in the wild ranges approximately 30-45 years, depending on the species. Females and sub-adults maybe social, but bulls are typically solitary.

Because of the poaching crisis, it is possible that rhino deaths in Africa may soon outpace births. Mothers give birth to one calf every 2-3 years; gestation lasts approximately 16 months.

Rhinos are often hunted by humans for their horns. Their horns are made of keratin, the same type of protein that makes up hair and fingernails in most animals including humans. Both African species of rhino and the Sumatran rhino have two horns, while the Greater one-horned and Javan rhinos have just one horn.

Rhinos are herbivores (plant eaters), eating grasses, leaves, shoots, buds and fruits in order to gain the nutrients that they need to grow and survive.

Both black and white rhinos are actually gray. They are different not in color but in lip shape. The Black rhino has a pointed upper lip, while the White rhino has a squared lip. This difference is related to their differing diets. Black rhinos are browsers getting most of their sustenance from eating trees and bushes and using their lips to pluck leaves and fruit from the branches. White rhinos graze on grasses, walking with their large heads and squared lips lowered to the ground.

Per the International Rhino Foundation (www.rhinos.org):

At the start of the 20th century, 500,000 rhinos roamed the wild; by 1970, the worldwide population fell to 70,000; today, only 29,000 rhino survive in the wild.

All five rhino species are threatened with extinction.

Populations of two species – greater one-horned and white – were reduced to fewer than 100 animals in the early 20th Century, but because of concerted efforts by governments and dedicated conservationists, have rebounded into the thousands or tens of thousands since that time.

Africa's black rhino numbered around 65,000 in 1973, but rampant poaching reduced to only a few thousand animals by the early 1990s; strategic interventions have helped to double its population since then.

There are no reliable historical population estimates for the Sumatran and Javan rhinos, but each is now believed to number one hundred individuals or less, and both are threatened with imminent extinction.



© Russell L. Burke, Photographer

JAMAICA BAY TERRAPIN Research Project and Conservation

by Dr. Russell L. Burke

(Professor and Donald E. Axinn Distinguished Professor in Ecology and Conservation at Hofstra University in NY; has run a citizen science program involving research on diamondback terrapin in Jamaica Bay, NY since 1998; has published several scientific papers on this population.)

I was hired as an Assistant Professor by Hofstra University in fall 1996, and I was excited about the prospects for doing research on wildlife in the area. Already spending a good part of my springs and early summers on what I planned to be a long term field project on wood turtles in northern New Jersey, I wanted to expand that project to their two close relatives - bog turtles and spotted turtles. I was looking for graduate students who could help me do that.

Jeremy Feinberg contacted me the next summer (1997) and I invited him into my lab as my first graduate student. I strongly encouraged him to join me in New Jersey, but he really didn't want to work on a project so far from home. This was to be the first of many times Jeremy benefitted from not following my advice.

He told me instead about seeing lots of predated turtle nests at nearby Jamaica Bay, where it looked like hundreds of diamondback terrapins nested. I didn't know anything about terrapins and was reluctant to start working on a new species, but the large numbers of nests intrigued

me. Not much was known about terrapins, and it didn't take long to read all that had been published on this species. A little work had already been done at Jamaica Bay. Jeremy showed me around the West Pond Trail at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, part of Gateway National Recreation Area, and it looked promising. We got permits from the National Park Service to begin some work the next year.

I continued spending my field time in New Jersey as Jeremy conducted basic research at Jamaica Bay in 1998 and 1999. He rounded up a team of volunteers to help him, he caught and marked nesting terrapins, he marked nests and monitored predation and hatching. He used basic turtle ecology field techniques I had learned when I was a graduate student to estimate the total number of nests. He used GIS maps to locate all potential nesting habitat within Gateway National Recreation Area, and visited nearly all of these areas to check for nesting activity. He showed that nesting activity was closely linked to high tide, and that Jamaica Bay did indeed have a very

large terrapin population. However, raccoons were the primary nest predator, eating 92% of eggs, and usually within a few days of being laid. Jeremy found some females nested at least twice per summer, and strong evidence that some nested three times per summer. One of Jeremy's most notable efforts in both 1998 and 1999 was to actually count each and every depredated nest he could find throughout the entire main nesting island—totaling 1,303 and 1,822 nests respectively during the two years. This was a massive undertaking using an approach that is typically avoided and done instead through estimates that are far less intensive and time consuming.

Jeremy completed his M.S in Biology (with Distinction) in May 2000, and published his terrapin work in a high quality scientific journal the same year. Our paper has been cited by 83 other scientific publications so far.

For the most part, the work that Jeremy did was basic natural history, the sort of observations that are raw material for sophisticated science. This was especially important

Continued on page 13

JAMAICA BAY TERRAPIN Research Project and Conservation



© Russell L. Burke, Photographer

because little work along these lines had been done on terrapins, and almost none in the northern part of their range, and therefore little was known about this species. I became intrigued by this species that lived in the narrow interface of fresh and salt water, doing what no other turtles do.

As new undergraduate and graduate students joined my lab, we increasingly focused on terrapins. The project continued and expanded, and to date has been the subject of 13 Master's student projects (4 current), and numerous undergraduate student projects. We're helped by a changing group of 10-30 citizen scientists every summer, many of whom had never been to Jamaica Bay before. Alexandra Kanonik, whose contributions are difficult to overestimate, joined the project in 2008. She started as a volunteer but her enthusiasm, hard work, intellectual contributions, and love for the terrapins have been vital to the on-going success of the Jamaica Bay terrapin project. We've published 11 papers in scientific journals on our work there and numerous popular articles. As an example, that first paper is bookended by one of our most recent papers (Burke, RL, M Vargas, and A Kanonik 2015) where we tested a new method of deterring raccoon predation using cayenne pepper powder (it didn't work). In between these two we were the first to discover the surprising amount of time terrapin hatchlings spend on land instead of water, and we've worked out ways to apply the methods we've perfected to state-wide and region-wide census projects.

As we continue to focus on Jamaica Bay terrapins, we also have projects throughout the northeast. We never guessed that a simple start would have turned out to be such a goldmine in terms of research that is fast approaching the 20th anniversary of its first year. The Jamaica Bay Terrapin Project is now among the ranks of the large long-term turtle research projects throughout the US. And while so much has been learned, we expect much more to come through future research.

For additional information please go to www.jbtr.org

Turtles, Terrapins, Tortoises What are the Differences?

Members of the order Testudines, a division of the class Reptilia, the primary difference between the three has more to do with where they live than how they look.

In the US, all freshwater, marine and most land Testudines are known as turtles. The species of Testudines found only in the brackish waters of marshes and river inlets along the coast is called a terrapin. Totally terrestrial Testudines are tortoises.

With more than 200 modern species living in the warmer parts of the world, populating every continent except Antarctica and occurring in every ocean except the Arctic, they are one of the most ancient of all living reptiles. They first appeared on earth some 200 million years ago and have remained relatively unchanged.

Their survival is most likely due to one of nature's most successful designs – their shell. The shell is actually fused bone, consisting of the rib cage and spinal cord. The shells of water turtles are much flatter and more streamlined than land turtles, creating less water resistance when swimming.

About Terrapins

Terrapins are the only turtles in the world that live exclusively in brackish water - the narrow brackish water strip along the ocean coast, from Massachusetts to Texas. They can only be found where either *Spartina* marshes or mangrove marshes occur.

Often called diamondbacks because of the angular rings on their shells, they have a light colored neck with small dark markings, a yellow plastron (lower shell) and webbed feet like freshwater turtles.

Female terrapins are much larger than males (females 7-9 inches long, males 4-6 inches long), more so than any other North American turtle.

Terrapins have a number of adaptations to salt water, but they are not as tolerant of salt water as true sea turtles. Unlike sea turtles, terrapins rarely go into the open ocean, and they don't make long migrations like sea turtles; instead, terrapins spend their whole lives fairly close to where they hatch.

As with many species, one of the main issues regarding the conservation of terrapins is reliable estimates of population sizes and trends. We can't know if they're doing okay unless we know how many there are.

DID YOU KNOW? Terrapins impact other wildlife because terrapins are keystone species in both estuarine and nearby coastal ecosystems. This is partially because of their predation on crustaceans, crabs, mollusks and other invertebrates. Terrapins also move enormous quantities of nutrients and calories from the ocean to land in the form of eggs. Terrapin eggs and hatchlings are eaten by a variety of predators, so important in the nutrient-poor environment of Jamaica Bay.



Photograph provided by Georges River Land Trust

The Race To Regain Balance: 12 Rivers Initiative of Midcoast Maine

By Annette Naegel
(Conservation Program Manager, Georges River Land Trust)

While it seems odd to speak about a race to come to a place of balance, our landscape is facing ever increasing challenges to be in balance from choices we have all made about development and growth over the last century. Conservation is in part about seeking balance—by finding the best approach for preserving key landscapes with a growing population and demands on our natural resources. Can we avoid irresponsible development, the introduction of invasive species, or the pollution of water? How shall we maintain the sustainability of our landscapes, local economies and communities? In Midcoast Maine, between the Kennebec and Georges Rivers, nine local land trusts have started to answer these questions and to put forth a vision of a network of conserved lands that protects our ecosystems and ensures human benefits for generations to come. This is the 12 Rivers Initiative.

Midcoast Maine is at a crossroads of diverse terrestrial and marine ecosystems, with a coastline articulated by clean, relatively free-flowing rivers that run north to south. It has important habitats and species, including the world's southernmost Atlantic salmon runs and remnant groves of American chestnut. It is also at the northern end of the range of the Atlantic white cedar and swamp white oak. The region lies in close proximity to the densely developed coastline from Bath to Rockland and is dependent upon fishing, marine trades and tourism. Inland, towns from Dresden to Montville, are defined by large, unfragmented habitat blocks, complex wetlands and farms. Maine's "Beginning with Habitat Program" has identified eight statewide significant conservation focus areas within this region. While distinct, these landscapes are stitched together and fed by its rivers: West branch of the Sheepscot, Dyer, Goose, Kennebec,

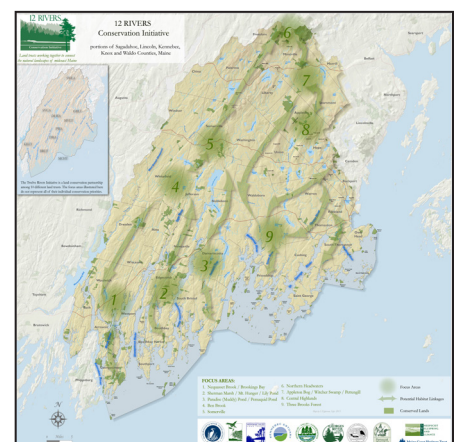
Damariscotta, Pemaquid, Medomak, Georges, Oyster, Back and Weskeag Rivers. Our work is imperative as we are losing species at an alarming rate across the globe, and the alterations to our ecosystem through climate change are happening in ways we could not have predicted. Because of our interdependence with nature, it is prudent to conserve enough habitat for many species to survive. Experts estimate that this should be at least 10% of a region's landscape, and in the Midcoast only 5% is conserved.

In response, local land trusts recognize that by banding together there will be greater wisdom in identifying priorities, better avenues to share this important conservation story, and stronger outcomes in conserving what is meaningful and lasting. The local land trusts recognize the importance of conserving large landscape blocks to protect natural diversity as well as smaller working forestlands to provide ongoing economic opportunities in our local communities.

The 12 Rivers Initiative provides the overarching view of the big landscape, while also ensuring that work continues at the local level, with each land trust functioning in its community with willing landowners. In all, the trusts and the Initiative are striving to restore balance.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

<http://www.georgesriver.org/12-rivers-initiative/>



Map provided by Georges River Land Trust



© Kamau Ware, Photographer

FOLLOWING MY PASSION

By Nancy Rosenthal
(New York WILD Film Festival Founder and Executive Director)

"More than ever people are fascinated with all things connected to our planet and are increasingly aware of the urgency to save it, and documentary film has become an enormously powerful and popular medium for that kind of outreach." Nancy Rosenthal, founder and Executive Director of the New York WILD Film Festival, in a recent statement.

I've learned in my life that the only way to embark on a project, maintain some sanity, and grow as a human being is to be passionate and believe in whatever I am doing. My passion has always revolved around my love of the oceans, mountains, animals and documentaries films.

It was my work as a producer at National Geographic for 17 years that opened my eyes to the power and positive impact of film. So many films speak to the heart of an environmental issue, energize us about the magnificence of the outdoors, tell stories of hope and survival, and motivate us to take action. At National Geographic I was so inspired—not only by the array of cool projects that I worked on, and the unbelievable amounts of information I could learn about the world around me that I could share—but also by the incredible passion and dedication of the community of people who work in the documentary world as well as the scientific community with whom I worked with on a regular basis.

So in the spring of 2011, after more than a year of planning, forming partnerships and a team, and establishing a not-for-profit structure, I created the New York WILD Film Festival, a platform to share powerful films about the natural world with live audiences. A SPECIAL MEDIA preview (a soft opening) was launched at the Tribeca Cinema on April 7th of that year. Due to sponsorship challenges, the actual debut of the New York WILD Film Festival took place in the winter of 2014 at the Explorers Club.

The New York WILD Film Festival, the first annual wildlife and environment specific documentary festival in the Big

Apple, showcases films about exploration, adventure, wildlife, conservation, and the environment. When you add to compelling film screenings, a lively dialog among the filmmakers, scientists, explorers, a New York audience and parties, a community evolves that shares ideas and strategies to affect real change. The festival becomes an experience that inspires, and I hope will be remembered and flourish long past the event.

New York offers a plethora of film festivals in New York and New Yorker's are exceptionally busy. There is so much going on in the Big Apple. It can take weeks to set up a dinner date with a friend. How do you get their attention and keep them engaged every year? I decided early on to hold the festival in the dead of winter when we are not competing with having drinks on a rooftop terrace. My hope was and is that the extraordinary films we show, and opportunity to mingle with people one would never have the opportunity to meet, will lure New Yorkers to WILD. I see it as a bit of matchmaking, you never know who you will meet and what will ensue. One could enter as a lawyer and become an advocate for orangutans --or take up ice climbing, or get a grant to research bats. Over the years audiences have met renowned extreme climber Alex Honnold and "Shark Girl" —Madison Stewart, a 19 year old shark conservationist who attended from Australia. In addition we featured "the Bat Man of Mexico" Rodrigo Medellin who is protecting the endangered bats responsible for pollinating the tequila cactus, all while audiences had a tasting of the valuable tequila Rodrigo is striving to preserve.

I do think people really do want to explore their "WILD" side. People the world over have a respect for, and a passionate connection to nature, and a fascination for the world's remote WILD places. As urban and sophisticated as many New Yorkers are, I believe they are hungry for escape, entertainment, inspiration, to learn and engage. At the end of the day, if one person sees a film and shares what they learned with their children or a friend, or if they eat sustainable seafood for a healthy ocean, or reduce plastic use, the festival has accomplished something. The small actions do count!

The upcoming 3rd annual NY WILD Film Festival is scheduled for January 28-30, 2016 and will be held at the historic Explorers Club headquarters in NY. The schedule and program are posted on our web site and tickets are now also available on our web site. For more information and to purchase tickets, please visit: www.nywildfilmfestival.com.



DISCOVERING NATURE



© Robert Snow Photos / OCEARCH (Updated)

UPDATE - Mary Lee a Great White Shark

Mary Lee is one of the five great white sharks fitted with satellite tags by OCEARCH scientists in the fall of 2012. The tags send location data ("pings") to satellites every time the tag breaks the ocean's surface. The satellites in turn send the data to researchers who can then track the animals. Mary Lee has traveled over 26,500 miles since she was tagged. She started December, 2015 off the New Jersey coast. The last "ping" that provided her location was on January 2nd, near North Carolina – that's about 500 miles south.

White sharks are considered an "Apex Predator", the top predator in the food web. As such, they are the lions of the sea and help maintain ecosystem balance. To remove top predators would result in disrupting the delicate balance of the food web.

Organizations such as OCEARCH are trying to change the conversation of great white sharks - as a recognized world leader in generating critical scientific data related to tracking and biological studies of keystone marine species such as great white sharks, in conjunction with conservation outreach and education at a measurable global scale. In a collaborative environment established by Chris Fischer, Founding Chairman and Expedition Leader, OCEARCH shares real-time data through OCEARCH's Global Shark Tracker, inspires current and future generations of explorers, scientists, and stewards of the ocean, and enables leading researchers and institutions to generate previously unattainable data. 23 expeditions were completed as of December 2015; and by 2016, a total of 25 will be completed.

For more information: www.ocearch.org

THE DELAWARE VALLEY EAGLE ALLIANCE

*working towards the conservation of
our wildlife and natural resources*

ABOUT US

The Delaware Valley Eagle Alliance is a 501 (C)(3) not-for-profit organization; our mission: to increase awareness, understanding and promote conservation of our wildlife and the natural environment.

We believe that raising awareness and understanding will change attitudes toward conservation and our natural resources. We are committed to this because we believe that it essential to enabling all life to exist and prosper on Earth.

We are dedicated in our focus to bring awareness through our publications, educational programs and events and projects.

*John A. DiGiorgio, Chairman and President
Richard Crandall, Director and Vice President
Yoke B. DiGiorgio, Director and Treasurer
Debra Reimer, Secretary*

ABOUT OUR PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

We work with communities and other organizations on wildlife and environmental programs and events. Our focus, education and entertainment, is accomplished by providing enhanced programs with new speakers and presentations and providing all attending, young and old, opportunities to see and experience new and interesting programs.

ABOUT OUR PROJECTS

We are available to work closely with biologists and conservation groups to document ecological and wildlife research on rare, sensitive and endangered wildlife and environmental issues.

SUPPORT

The Delaware Valley Eagle Alliance grew out of a grassroots effort of individuals who want to help protect our wildlife and habitat. Our organization depends on responsible citizens and organizations who share our concern for the environment. Our educational publications, documentaries, programs and events would not be possible without the generosity of our sponsors and supporters.

For more information about having a project, program or event and/or to make a tax deductible donation contact:

***Yoke Bauer DiGiorgio at yokedvea@gmail.com
or call 201-841-5168.***

Editor-in-chief: Yoke Bauer DiGiorgio
Design: Yoke Bauer DiGiorgio / Nature's Art Productions LLC
www.naturesartproductions.com

The Delaware Valley Eagle Alliance assumes no liability for opinions and information expressed by individual authors.

© Delaware Valley Eagle Alliance Publication