

Goals of Training Program

1. Learn how to interact with a large cat safely.

- Recognizing aggressions
- Understanding alpha, omega animal hierarchy
 - Handling an unpredictable situation
 - Aggression between animals
 - Aggression toward a human
- Accidental injury
- Appreciating attention Span and individual cues
- Recognizing and interpreting the meanings to various body postures
- Interpreting vocalizations
- Dealing with an escapee

2. Health standards of large cats

- Watching behavioral cues for health indicators
 - Attitude
 - Gait
 - Repetitive behaviors
 - Ear/tail placement
 - Vocalizations
 - Social interaction
 - Food intake
- How to restrain/sedate for medical intervention
- Simple health maintenance procedures that can be done by a trainer
 - Dental hygiene
 - Check fur/pads/eyes
 - Clean ears
 - Give vitamins
 - Dehydration
 - Administering subcutaneous fluids
 - Pulse
 - Taking temperature
- Veterinary standards for large cats
- Parasitology
 - Susceptibility
 - Pre Prevention
 - Treatment
- Disease
 - Common to species
 - Recognition
 - Prevention
 - Treatment
- Quarantine
 - Uses
 - Methods

3. Nutrition and diet for Siberian and Bengal tigers and African lions

- Caloric requirements, vitamin supplementation
- Alternative nutritional approaches
 - pros and cons to alternative feeding methods
- Water intake - requirements
- Dietary enrichment ideas

4. Proper Husbandry of large cats

- Record keeping
 - Importance
 - Methods

- Cage requirements
 - Size
 - Strength
 - Amenities
- Restraint within a caged environment
- Restraint exterior to a caged environment
- Bedding
 - Appropriate options
 - Cleaning/changing
- Cleaning
 - Appropriate/inappropriate chemicals
 - Frequency
 - Debris in and around enclosure
- Pest control
 - Invertebrates (insects)
 - Vertebrates (everything else)
- Plant safety
 - Appropriate/inappropriate plant exposure
- Unique issues!
 - lightbulbs
- Man gates
 - Safe exodus from an enclosure
- Environmental enrichment ideas
 - Seasonal items
 - Play apparatus
- Exercise
 - Games
 - Toys
 - Walking the cats

5. Transporting large cats

- Loading/unloading
- Reducing stress
 - During the actual drive
 - Overall for the event
- Be prepared for the unexpected!
 - Motion sickness
 - "Business"
 - Breakdowns and backup plans
 - Extras of everything

6. Species-specific information for large cats:

(Tigers, lions, leopards, cougars, bobcats, cheetah)

- Ancestry and evolutionary progression
- Geography
- Biology (territory, gestation, size, morphology)
- Behavioral specifics
 - Social
 - Nonsocial
 - Mating
 - Hunting
 - Territoriality
- Current status
 - Captive population
 - Wild population
 - Reasons for decline
- Conservation efforts and organizations

7. Raising cubs

- Diet
 - Newborn
 - Transitioning to meat
 - The first year
- Feeding methods
- Sleeping patterns
- Replacing maternal behaviors
 - Bathing
 - Bowel stimulation
- Imprinting
- Litterbox training
- Beginning behavior modification
- Preventative medical intervention
- Carrying cubs

8. Behavior Modification

- Evolutionary theory to Behavior
 - Anthropomorphizing
 - Do animals have "emotions"?
 - Animals are "made" to behave a certain way
 - Fright is an adaptive behavior
- Habituation
- Classical Conditioning
 - Desensitization
- Operant Conditioning
 - Extinction
 - Spontaneous recovery
 - Intermittent reinforcement
- Positive and Negative Reinforcement
- Developing a Behavioral Modification/Training Program
 - Problem solving
 - Teaching behaviors
- Importance of Behavior Modification in light of Evolution
- Imprinting
 - What it is
 - The value of using imprinting in a captive situation
- Learned vs. Inherent behaviors
 - "software" vs. "hardware"
- Social hierarchy and its importance to behavior

9. Animals in Captivity

- Define captivity
- History
- Different models of captivity
- Governing bodies
- Inherent problems
- Addressing animal rights
- The positive side of captivity
- Enrichment and the captive animal
 - Human socialization
 - Enrichment activities

10. What can I do to help?

- Can my lifestyle impact tigers?
- How to live "green"
- Contribute to conservation
- Empower your friends and family!