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This Leopard Cat (*Prionailurus bengalensis*) was rescued at Cu Chi Wildlife Rescue Station July last year when it was only seven days old. Now this lucky cat is about to enjoy a new year of freedom in the jungle of Cat Tien National Park.

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## Welcome

In this newsletter, Wildlife At Risk (WAR) announces 12 new species of fresh water fish for Vietnam. Also in this newsletter is an update on the number of animals registered to the Cu Chi Wildlife Rescue Station (WRS) and released to the wild. The Cu Chi WRS also had a busy quarter, hosting the visits of about 1000 Vietnamese students and teachers from Ho Chi Minh City. The Wildlife Education Programme provided opportunities for youngsters to participate in various exciting activities such as learning how to become a teenager's environment communicator, releasing fish back to the wild or initiating ideas on how to protect the environment.

WAR would like to express our gratitude to all the sponsors all over the world who have supported and donated to wildlife protection in Vietnam over the last year. We look forward to your continued support in the coming year. We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a prosperous and happy New Year!

**We wish you a Merry Christmas and a Prosperous and Happy New Year!**

Nguyen Vu Khoi – WAR's CEO

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**Contact :** Wildlife At Risk - WAR  
202/10 Nguyen Xi St., Ward 26, Binh Thanh District, Ho Chi Minh City  
Tel : +84 8 38997314, Fax : +848 3899 7316  
Email : [info@wildlifeatrisk.org](mailto:info@wildlifeatrisk.org), Website : [www.wildlifeatrisk.org](http://www.wildlifeatrisk.org)

**Compilation & layout**  
Do Thi Thanh Huyen  
Wildlife Education Coordinator  
[huyen.dtt@wildlifeatrisk.org](mailto:huyen.dtt@wildlifeatrisk.org)

**Editors**  
Nguyen Vu Khoi – CEO  
Jonathan A. O'Brien

## Discover 12 new species of fresh water fishes for Vietnam

**Ho Chi Minh City, 21 December 2010** – Wildlife At Risk announced 12 new species of fresh water fish for Vietnam. These species were recorded during WAR's surveys in Phu Quoc Island since the end of 2008.

"The discovery of these species showed that there is a high potential for new species to be discovered in Vietnam", said Mr. Manh Huu Bui, Senior Conservation Officer - WAR.



Cá chạch suối đuôi gai (*Barbus cf. diabolica*)

Previously only known from Indonesia and Malaysia.



Cá heo gai mắt myers (*Pangio myersi*)



Cá heo râu đuôi chè (*Lepidocephalichthys furcatus*)

This species is known from Mekong basin in Laos and Thailand.



Redstripe rasbora - Cá lòng tong chỉ vàng

(*Rasbora pauciperforata*)

Common in small streams with currents.



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Cá lăng suối nâu - *Amblyceps cf. foratum*

This species used to be known from Malay peninsula, Thailand and Cambodia.



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Lambchop rasbora - Cá lòng tong tam giác

(*Trigonostigma espei*)

## Discover 12 new species of fresh water fishes for Vietnam – cont.



© WAR/Bùi Hữu Mạnh

**Cá lia thia áp miệng** (*Betta prima*)



© WAR/Bùi Hữu Mạnh

**Malay combtail - Cá rô dẹp đuôi hoa**  
(*Belontia hasselti*)



© WAR/Bùi Hữu Mạnh

**Striped glass catfish - Cá trèn lá đầu to**  
(*Kryptopterus macrocephalus*)



© WAR/Bùi Hữu Mạnh

**Bornean leaffish - Cá sặc vện đục**  
(*Nandus cf. nebulosus*)



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**Pearl Danio - Cá sọc dưa tím** (*Danio pulcher*)  
This species is common in many small streams in Phu Quoc island and other places in Southern Vietnam



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**Cá trèn schneider** (*Silurichthys schneideri*)

## Rescue and release

In the past three months, WAR has rescued 55 endangered animals including Yellow-cheeked Crested gibbons, Otters, Asian Palm civet, Cobra, Python, Monitor lizard, Chinese Water Dragon, and fresh water turtle. Interestingly, one animal originally from South America i.e. the Tegu (*Trachemys scriptaelegans*) was also registered to the Cu Chi Wildlife Rescue Station (WRS).

Also during this time, 35 individuals were successfully released to the wild, including 9 pythons, 9 moles, 8 cobra, 7 pythons and importantly 2 hawksbill turtles. These animals were all released within protected areas. During the year 2010, WAR has received nearly 500 animals to the rescue center, in which 400 animals have been released back to their homes.



### Story of the three baby Otters

The three baby Asian Short-clawed Otters were registered to the Cu Chi WRS on 7 October 2010. These otters were confiscated from a household in Ho Chi Minh City who were trading them illegally. When confiscated, the otters were about 6 to 7 weeks old and were quite exhausted. They had to suckle milk from a fake milk breast. After spending two months at the Cu Chi WRS recovering, the otters are now quite healthy and are learning to eat fish. They are definitely enjoying life at the Cu Chi WRS.



### Story of the five Monocellate Cobras

These lucky cobras were confiscated on 4 June 2010 by the Forest Protection Department of Binh Duong Province in an illegal wildlife trading case. After staying for four months at the Cu Chi WRS, the five Cobras became healthier and were ready to live independently in the wild. They were released to the forest of Cat Tien National Park, Dong Nai province.



## Teenagers learned to become environment communicators

**Ho Chi Minh City, November 6 and 7, 2010** – A two-day training course on communication skills was successfully conducted for twenty-five children aged from 12-15 from the “I love nature” clubs, Khan Quang Do magazine and seven university volunteers. This training course provided participants with knowledge on environment communications and skills on how to design and implement an effective communication project for secondary school children.



Presenting idea for communications project at secondary schools  
Photo: WAR/dohuyen

During the training course, the students also learned how to develop and deliver an effective talk to their fellows at school on environment protection. Each participant prepared and delivered a talk which was filmed and shown to all for comments and further learning. Students also worked in groups to develop

four practical communication projects that will be implemented at their schools in the next semester. The university volunteers will support the students when needed, to help implement the initiatives.

The learner centered approach with many active learning activities has encouraged all participants to actively participate in all training activities. An exciting and relaxed atmosphere was maintained to ensure learning effectiveness. Although environment communication is quite new to many participants, they are now confident in their abilities to conduct communications activities for their friends at secondary schools.

This activity was a part of the programme entitled “Take part in nature protection”, a cooperation programme between WAR and Khan Quang Do magazine.

## Release of native fish to the wild

**Ho Chi Minh City, 5 December, 2010** – Over 100 fresh water fish (Betta spp.) which were bred in the programme “Breeding and release of native fish back to nature” from Wildlife At Risk (WAR) were released into the canal under the Red Bridge (Cau Do), a tributary of the Saigon River. More than 20 people including members of the club “I love Nature”, Red scarf Magazine (aged 12-15), and volunteers who are university students from Ho Chi Minh City participated in the release activity.

These fish were bred during the Breeding and releasing of Native Fish programme, conducted by WAR since February 2010. Some decades ago, this species was quite common in the inner and outer

areas of Ho Chi Minh City. However, together with urbanisation, the habitat of these species including canals, marshes, and ponds have been lost. “The breeding and release of these fish to the wild not only helps to improve the population of the native fish in the basin of the Saigon River, but also helps to reduce mosquito larva and thus the mosquito, including those causing dengue fever and other diseases,” said Mr. Bui Huu Manh, Senior Conservation Officer, WAR.

This activity of releasing fish helped the students understand the importance of native species protection. It also directed the students toward environment protection through their daily activities. Before releasing the fish, the students also collected all the garbage at the site.

In the future, WAR will continue the programme of breeding and release of native fish species that are not exploited for commercial purposes but can be used for ornamental purposes, such as the Crescent betta, Lambchop rasbora, Blackline rasbora, and Pygmy gourami.



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## 1000 students and teachers visit Cu Chi Wildlife Rescue Station

WAR has supported and organized field trips for about 1000 secondary school students, teachers and education managers from District 1, District 2, Binh Thanh and Phu Nhuan Districts, Ho Chi Minh City to visit the Cu Chi Wildlife Rescue Station (WRS). By December 2010, about 500 students and teachers from 20 secondary schools in Binh Thanh and Phu Nhuan Districts have visited the Station. This is an effort of WAR to educate youngsters about wildlife protection and to promote the rescue activity among the Vietnamese community.

The one-day trips are an opportunity for the students and teachers to discover the endangered wildlife and learn how to protect them. During these trips, the visitors learn important information about the wildlife at the Cu Chi WRS, which is not found in the official school curriculum, in the city zoo or anywhere else in the City.



Students from Cau Kieu Secondary School learn about a fresh water turtle.

Photo: WAR/ Do Thi Hong Hoa

In the morning, the students observed and learned about endangered animals such as those that are confiscated from the illegal wildlife trade in Ho Chi Minh City and other surrounding provinces, such as Moon bear, Sun bear, Leopard Cat, Monitor lizard, Chinese Water Dragon, Pangolin, Gibbons, Douc, otters, and turtles. After that, the students visited the display center to learn about threats to wildlife and further actions they can take to help. After lunch, at a nicely designed coffee area, there was a quiz show and interactive games to provide the students with further knowledge and to guide them how to act in a real situation. This was also an opportunity for the students to think and decide what they will do to protect the animals.

The teachers and students were quite excited and happy with the trip. *"I really liked the trip and love the animals so much. I hope I will visit the Cu Chi Wildlife Rescue Station again. I also hope that more Vietnamese children will have the opportunity to visit the station like me"*, said Van Anh, 15 years old from the Dien Bien Secondary School.

About 500 secondary school students from District 1 and District 3, Ho Chi Minh City will visit the Cu Chi WRS by January 2010. WAR is always looking for additional support so that more youngsters from Ho Chi Minh City are able to experience the useful and exciting day at the Cu Chi WRS as well as other field trips to discover the beautiful nature of Vietnam.

## International Students visit Cu Chi Wildlife Rescue Station

Thirty-five enthusiastic year 5 students from the British International School (BIS), Tu Xuong Campus also visited the Cu Chi WRS for a hands-on enrichment program focusing on Moon Bears, Sun Bears and the Asian Short-clawed Otters.

The students kindly donated fruits, jams, fish paste and of course a bear's favourite treat: honey. They learned about Vietnam's Endangered Wildlife, how to enrich and stimulate the animals lives' and learned a little bit about "what it's like to be an animal keeper".

WAR would like to thank the British International School and Saigon South International School for inviting us to their Christmas bazaars.

BIS students learnt about the Yellow-checked Crest Gibbons



## Green talk - English eloquence contest on environment protection-finds the winners.

**Ho Chi Minh City, 18 December 2010** – The final round of the Green Talk – the English Eloquence contest on environment protection was successfully conducted by WAR, UNESCO's Center for Culture, Education and Training, Business World Magazine, Viet Light Media, and Phia Nam Media.

The Green Talk Contest aims to raise awareness of the public, especially youngsters, about the environment and also encourages young people to creatively and actively participate in environmental

Green talks winners and the judge board



protection. This is also an avenue for youngsters to improve their English skills while contributing to environmental protection.

The contest included three rounds in which the contestants aged from 16 to 30 years old, proposed education and communication initiatives to protect the environment in a practical manner. After the first round, from 15 Nov to 5 Dec 2010, the 20 best initiatives were selected for the second round. The authors of the 20 best initiatives were awarded with a study tour to the Cu Chi Wildlife Rescue Station on 12 Dec 2010. In the second round, the contestants presented their initiatives to a judge board in English. The five best initiatives were selected for the third and final round.

In this final round, the authors of the five best initiatives presented their initiatives in the form of an action plan to a judge board that included business men who might be interested in the initiatives and provide support to implement them.

About 300 people participated in this final round including University leaders, business men, university students, and the media.

The first prize was awarded to Truong Thi Vy and Pham Thi Ngoc Tu from University of Sciences with the idea to communicate and persuade people to reuse coffee grounds as a short of fertilizer. Vy and Tu enjoyed a trip to Singapore to learn about environment protection and 5,000,000 VND. The second prize belonged to Nguyen Kieu Linh from University of Sciences for the idea of creating an intelligent shop where old clothes and rags are turned into fashionable clothes and accessories. Linh enjoys a prize of 3,000,000 VND. The third prize was awarded to Nguyen Hoang Vu from University of Commercial with the idea of setting up a Green Library online and offline. Besides, two other candidates were awarded with honorable prizes and the University of Science was awarded for having the largest number of students participated in the contest.

The Green Talk Contest will also be conducted in 2011 in more cities and is expected to have the participation of a much larger number of youngsters.



Visiting Cu Chi WRS

Throughout 2010, WAR has received support and kind donations from different organisations, universities, schools, individuals and volunteers who come to work at the Cu Chi WRS. We would like to express our gratitude for these precious supports.

Special thanks go to Osprey Packs, Inc for supporting us for the last four years.



## Cu Chi Wildlife Rescue Station has been visited by 7000 people

Since being established in 2007, the Cu Chi Wildlife Rescue Station (WRS) has welcomed more than 7000 visitors. Among these visitors, most of them are foreigners from all over the world. Visiting the Cu Chi WRS not only helps the visitors to discover stories and observe different endangered animals, but also teaches them friendly behaviours toward wildlife. These visits also inspire us to work with our whole hearts to save these animals.

We believe that education for different stakeholders through visits to the Cu Chi WRS or other activities is a much more effective and sustainable solution to preventing the illegal wildlife trade while rescuing animals is an immediate action to save a certain amount of wildlife.

Thank you all for visiting us.



## Melbourne fundraising event

**Melbourne, 21 October 2010** – This year's fundraising event was organised by Wildlife At Risk's (WAR) Ambassador - Jules Cronin at the Electric Ladyland Bar on Melbourne's Chapel Street, Australia. This is the second year now that Jules has organised this special event to help raise awareness and support for Vietnam's endangered wildlife.

Roughly 150 Australian guests turned up for this exciting evening. Everyone who was present may have had different backgrounds, but they all shared one common goal: a passion for saving wildlife.

During this entertaining evening, guests were treated to food, drinks, and presentations highlighting the illegal wildlife trade, silent auctions, live auctions and live music from a DJ. Silent auction prizes included

luxury "Antler" luggage hold alls, cases of exclusive wines, and luxury hampers. During the live auction which was conducted by Richie Biggins - guests had the chance to bid big on exclusive prizes such as luxurious accommodation at the "Mango Bay Eco Resort, Vietnam", villa accommodation in Port Douglas - Australia, and exclusive concert tickets for "Crowded House" at Melbourne's Rod Laver stadium. Guests also had the opportunity to name some of Vietnam's endangered and most charismatic wildlife: sun bears, gibbons and otters.

*"I am delighted to be able to support and sponsor WAR. The evening was a huge success. The event*



*seems to be growing bigger and better each year",* said Alistair Guss from MAC engineering solutions.

Every single dollar raised at this year's event will go directly back into conservation efforts through WAR's activities at their rescue stations and conservation projects in Southern Vietnam.

Wildlife at Risk (WAR) would like to thank every guest who came to this year's event and we look forward to seeing you all again next year- tell your friends. Special thanks must go to Jules Cronin and her team including Michelle Christoffersen, Kate Hayes, Emma Connell, Jodie Holkner and Rosalba Rehnzella, Alistair Guss from MAC engineering solutions, Tottie Goldsmith, and Richie Biggins for their great support and enthusiasm throughout the evening.

From left to right: Kate Hayes and Alistair Guss (MAC Engineering Solutions), Richie Biggins, Tottie Goldsmith, Jules Cronin, Simon Faithfull at the event

**Fishing cat** (*Prionailurus viverrinus*) is listed in Vietnam Red Book as Endangered Species. This is a very sensitive animal. You must be super lucky to see them in the wild.

Due to habitat lost, and illegal hunting and trading, this animal is on the brink of extinction. Act now to protect this animal.

Happy New Year, the year of the happy wise cat.

## Publications

### Eco shopping bag

WAR's eco shopping bags were produced to encourage people replacing it for one-time used nylon bags and thus contributing to protect the environment.



Photo: WAR/Nguyen Vu Khoi