

a column by Petopian readers

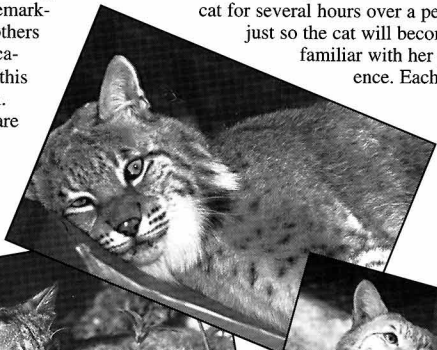
Neglected & Abused majestic felines are given a second chance

story by Sherry Tesler & Phillip de Souza

A Canadian lynx, noble and strong, rambles in the snow on a crisp winter morning. This is a superb image indeed. Yet these remarkable animals, and others like it, are often incapable of achieving this lofty representation. Occasionally they are in need of aid because of injury, sickness, or abuse by their owners, or they may

cat, and Siberian lynx.

The challenge begins when a cat first arrives at the sanctuary, as they become accustomed to their new owner. Shirley will often sit with a cat for several hours over a period, just so the cat will become familiar with her presence. Each day



Photos: Sherry Tesler, copyright © 1999, Wild Ones Sanctuary

need to be rescued from trappers and animal fur farms. These animals, thankfully, do have a great friend in Shirley Malar and the Wild Ones Sanctuary.

The Wild Ones Sanctuary is a non-profit organization, incorporated in 1997 by Shirley Malar, who has rescued captive born wild cats for over ten years. The sanctuary performs many of the functions of most animal shelters, and the task is daunting, particularly under the enormous financial and physical hardships that she incurs. The majority of funding comes from her full time job, and she alone does nearly all of the work. She builds and mends cages, feeds the cats, and performs any chore necessary to ensure the cats safety and comfort. Several distinct wild cat species reside at the sanctuary, including the Canadian lynx, bob-

she gets closer until she is able to make physical contact. Cats that have bonded with their natural mother are especially wary of humans, and often Shirley is unable



A close-up of a bobcat being nursed back to health at the Wild Ones Sanctuary.

to achieve the physical contact stage with them. For most of them, once they know her, they become great companions. They enjoy playing with toys, climbing into boxes, and giving great slobbery hugs!

When time permits, Shirley brings a few of the cats to schools and churches, where they educate and fascinate. The wild cats inspire all by providing evidence that anyone and anything can "bounce back" from arduous circumstances.

The image of an animal shelter

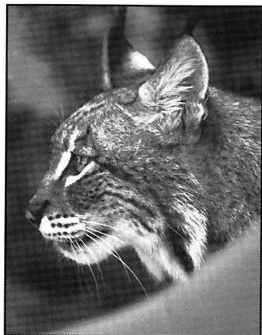


photo by Sherry Tesler, copyright © 1999, Wild Ones Sanctuary

Cassandra lives at the sanctuary owned & operated by Shirley Malar.

may be tragically evocative. Yet they exist for good reasons, providing comfort for injured or abandoned pets. All animal owners can appreciate the marvelous work performed by the Wild Ones Sanctuary and Shirley Malar, as she cares for these extraordinary wild cats, exhibiting the highest ideals of humanity. •

Donations are needed. To contact: Wild Ones Sanctuary, POB 1050, Brush Prairie WA 98606. E-mail: wildones@pacifier.com