

TRUE WILD JULY 2025 NEWSLETTER

Oh, These Beautiful Cats!



SUMMER NEWS FOR TRUE WILD



Zambia - Safari action with leopard hunts and more... (Photo: Quinton Martins/True Wild).

Greetings from Africa! We are writing this Newsletter to you from the southern tip of the African continent - it is our summer safari season (winter in Southern Africa). What an exciting year it has been with so much to share. We will start this Newsletter off with an update on the North Bay mountain lions, followed by news on our conservation efforts, ending with safari anecdotes and updates.

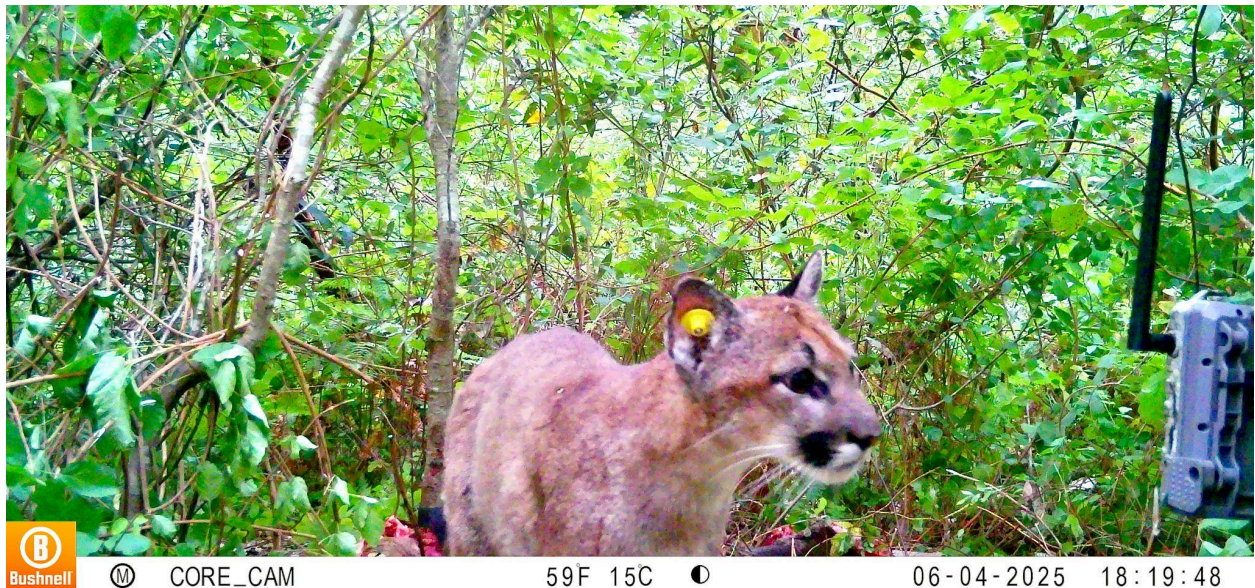
MOUNTAIN LION NEWS!

We have encouraging news for all our tracked mountain lions - male, P48, as well as the female's P33, P39, and P49. The west county male P48 is still alive and appears to be doing well, expanding his range somewhat over the past 4 months and settling into adulthood.

Great news is that all three females we have been tracking still have surviving cubs. P33's single cub born in June 2024 is still alive. Her young female offspring, P50, was captured and tagged in April this year, a milestone with 50 individually identified/tagged mountain lions for the project. We recently got confirmation of P50's well-being when P33 caught a deer on Taylor Mountain in Bennett Valley and Quinton was able to swim through the poison oak to set up cameras to document both mother and daughter feeding.



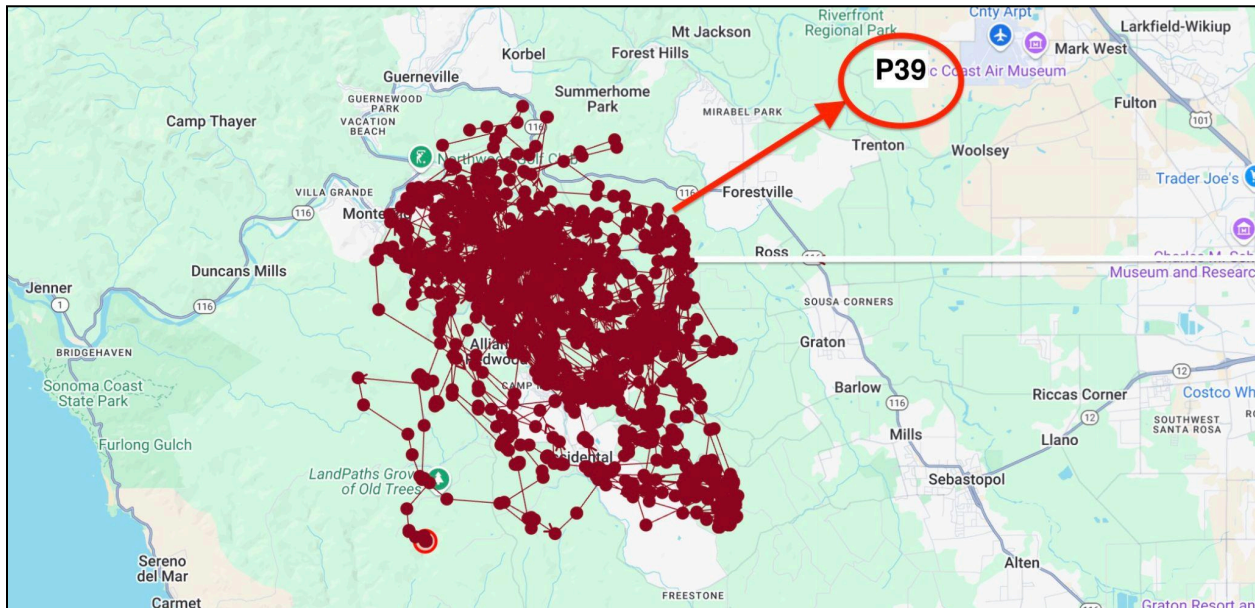
*P33 checking out the trail camera! The deer she was feeding on is lying in the background.
(Photo: Quinton Martins/True Wild/Audubon Canyon Ranch).*



P50 - Project milestone reaching 50 mountain lions - P33's daughter was born on the 17th June 2024 and was still doing well in June 2025. (Photo: Quinton Martins/True Wild/Audubon Canyon Ranch).

In a surprising turn of events we recently got a series of photographs of P39 with 2 surviving cubs in tow. The last photographs we'd had of her were in early May documenting her far to the north-east of her usual range so we were wondering what had happened to them and how they would survive if she had lost her territory to someone else. However, in July we received photos near Occidental, which is back within her historical range. Perhaps she had just been showing them around?

Unfortunately, her collar is not transmitting GPS data and we have been trying to re-capture her to change her collar out. It appears one of her 3 cubs may have died as there was no evidence of a third cub in any of the photos.



P39's range and the location captured on camera with the two cubs circled in red.

P49 has also been documented as having both her cubs with her - these are getting close to being one year old, which is encouraging to see. It has been interesting to see how her range straddles both sides of the Russian River near Guerneville. We would usually expect large natural edges like rivers to be territory boundaries. Yet she has crossed this wide river multiple times with two cubs in tow.

WILDLIFE CONFERENCE

Quinton attended the 14th Mountain Lion Workshop hosted between the 17-20 March by the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies in Albuquerque, New Mexico. This workshop has a strong agency focus and as a result, statewide updates across mountain lion ranges in North America played a big role. Two talks included True Wild/Audubon Canyon Ranch as contributors. Quinton had the following to say about his experience: "Despite some difficulties we experience working with mountain lions in California, things are so much better here as it was an eye-opener to see how other states in the US manage these iconic carnivores. Texas has always been one state where mountain lions are afforded no protection, and there is no limit to the number of lions that can be killed. No reporting is required if a lion is killed either. Utah has now followed by dropping mountain lion harvest quotas - you can kill as many as you like whenever you like. Reporting is required though. There were some hunters who killed as many as 5 lions in one year. It was astounding to learn that these new regulations

were implemented despite population modelling in the state showing a clear decreasing population trend. Colorado issues 2,500 mountain lion permits a year - approximately 500 lions are killed. A permit to hunt a mountain lion costs a mere \$61 for a resident in Colorado. Whether you like hunting or not, this apparent lack of value attributed to wildlife still astounds me. Not to digress but you can shoot a bear in California for the price of a couple of burgers and cokes.

COMMUNITY CONSERVATION

True Wild's work includes using safaris as a key way of supporting conservation initiatives in California, as well as contributing to conservation projects in Africa. One such project, Chipembele, based on the border of South Luangwa National Park in Zambia, is doing incredible work towards wildlife conservation and benefiting communities. True Wild, together with a few wonderful True Wild safari participants, were recently able to contribute \$20,000 towards a four-year university scholarship for a dedicated young Zambian man, Philemon Njobvu. Philemon has a love for studying and conserving hyenas, and we were thrilled to be able to contribute to his career by offering this scholarship at the University of Zambia. We are receiving regular updates from Philemon and look forward to seeing him excel in his field.



Philemon Njobvu (aka - The Hyena Man) - 4 year university scholarship through Chipembele

HUMAN-WILDLIFE INTERACTIONS

It is fantastic to finally be able to have some robust evidence of opaque barrier material deterring mountain lions from jumping into livestock corrals. A landowner who had multiple livestock losses improved his livestock security by building full enclosures for some of his animals and surrounding the others with opaque material wrapped around the corrals. He also installed cellular cameras to monitor the pens. On the 8th May, P48 visited his property but did not enter the corrals. P48 has killed livestock previously and, we believe that if it were not for this barrier material, more losses would have been experienced that night. P48 was seen hanging around the one enclosure for several minutes in front of the camera. GPS data also show he stayed on the property for over 12 hours - giving him ample time to cause trouble. Although not 100% effective, we believe this method of protecting livestock is a good option where a roofed enclosure is not possible. We will continue testing this method of livestock protection.



P48 taking interest in the corral, but not attempting to jump into it. (Photo: M.Krivoruchko)

TRUE WILD SAFARIS



2025 has seen True Wild safari guests visiting Botswana, Kenya, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe so far and the experiences and stories shared with us have been amazing. Quinton has led one family/friends safari in Zambia in June and has two more before heading back to California. The game viewing has been extraordinarily good and we have included a few photographs from his recent trip. Quinton shared one of his experiences from this safari: "We had just been out on our first afternoon activity in the Lower Zambezi National Park, a sunset boat cruise. As we were docking the boat by the lodge, a radio call came through saying a leopard had just killed an impala right by tent #5. The jeep track from the boat to the lodge went right by this. As we drove to the lodge we saw the impala carcass, and later the leopard was seen returning to feast with a very young cub while we dined on our own delicious 3-course meal. The guests in tent #5 couldn't get much sleep for the crunching sounds below. Incredible!" Quinton's next safari in July is back in Zambia visiting awesome camps we love to include in our itineraries: [Old Mondoro](#) and [Kaingo Camp](#).

GUEST SAFARI FEEDBACK

Absolutely amazing trip! Totally a trip of a lifetime...So many amazing places...everywhere we went was so beautifully curated and took us on a journey to so many places that each offered its own special nuances... Really really special and wonderful memories that Angie and I will always have together. ❤️🦁. - Steve



Private Concessions

Botswana is in many ways the quintessential wildlife destination. One of the things that is special about it is that vast areas are protected privately, through concessions - designated conservation areas that are leased (often from local communities) by safari operators. Safaris in these concessions provide an incredible experience because guests have exclusive access to huge wilderness areas, with very low numbers of other guests. While the price matches the exclusivity of the experience, the benefits for both your safari experience and the wildlife itself, which is treated with great respect and not harassed, is worth it. We also know the secrets of special seasonal deals! Having an exclusive safari experience, away from the crowds, is what we focus on with all our safaris.

Volunteering for communities and conservation

Travelers often ask us if they can include some interactions with local communities and/or do some meaningful volunteer work. While we like this idea, it is actually often hard to arrange as communities usually don't live inside the areas conserved for wildlife. While guests have a chance to connect with local people through the incredibly warm staff at safari camps, one isn't able to get a sense of community life or the challenges of subsistence living and co-existing with large and potentially destructive wild animals.

We now have a really good option for guests to add on to their safari if they are wanting to gain more insight and offer something back to local communities. We recently visited

[Imvelo Safaris](#)' volunteer camp, Mlevu Rhino Camp, in Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe. This camp connects you to the rhinos and the rhino conservation work they are doing, as well as allowing guests to assist with a whole variety of activities, both wildlife/research focused and community focused, depending on the needs at the time and guest's interests and skills.

Reach out to us for more on this unique experience that could be included in a broader safari itinerary.

Booking a safari with True Wild is a special personalized experience. We are focused on providing you with all the attention to detail and care you will need, tapping into over 30 years of safari experience to find just the right journey for you and your family or friends. Contact us if you have any interest in traveling on safari as we would love to help set up a unique experience that will suit your needs and budget.

For more information on our safaris, or booking a safari, contact quinton@truewild.org

More photographs in our [June 2025 - Zambia Safari Gallery](#)

