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100th anniversary of the Helsinki Zoo. A beautiful maximum card was also issued featuring a photograph of a snow leopard cub. Since the Helsinki Zoo holds the world studbook for captive snow leopard breeding as well as a magnificent collection of the cats, it seems most appropriate that this 100th anniversary issue coincides with the 25th anniversary of the first issuance of a snow leopard stamp. The most recent issue is from the People's Republic of China, the last country in the snow leopard's habitat range to have produced a stamp of this magnificent feline. Hopefully the future will bring additional issues.

A final note must include a couple of errors which have crept into some reference lists on stamps. Bhutan in 1966 printed a set of a dozen wildlife stamps which included two labeled *Panthera uncta* but were actually drawings of *P. pardus*. Some reference works have made note of this error but many have not. To compound the confusion, this same stamp was reprinted three times with new value denominations.

One reference source credited a 1965 issue from Hungary of circus performing animals as including a snow leopard. The stamp in question actually featured a trained domestic cat! The Soviet Union in 1985 printed a set of six wildlife stamps which included a souvenir sheet of what is normally listed as a common leopard. However, the first day cover issued with this set does include a snow leopard. The actual stamp portrays a leopard in a snow-capped mountain gazing at three mountain sheep. The animal is most likely *P. pardus saxicola*, commonly known as the Persian or Afghanistan leopard. Similar confusion could arise from Mongolia's 1974 set where a spotted cat without the distinguishing characteristics of the snow leopard is shown in a snowy mountain environment.

Most of the stamps and postal items mentioned in the notes are inexpensive and can be relatively easily obtained from stamp dealers who specialize in topical stamps. Maybe, with luck and perseverance, in the next twenty-five years it will be possible to see postal stamp issues celebrating successful efforts by countries such as China, India, and Nepal to set aside large tracts of pristine mountain wilderness as preserves for the snow leopard and other mountain wildlife.

Excerpts from *The Snow Leopard in Kirgizia*

The following is a translation by Kathleen Braden from Chapter 3, "Distribution and Population of Snow Leopard in Kirgizia" from *The Snow Leopard in Kirgizia*, by E. P. Koshkarev, "Ilim" Publishers, 1989

In the study region the snow leopard is found in a large part of the territory but its distribution is uneven. Regular encounters with the animal are characteristic for the northern slopes of Kirgizian ridges and Terskei Alatau, for the basins of the Irtash-Uchkul', Eastern Koiyu, Inyl'chek, and Terekty Rivers. The snow leopard is rare on the southern slopes of the Terskei Ala-Tau from west of the Kolpakovskiy Glacier and the Dzhetyim-Bel' Ridge. The animal has never been noted (except for one visit) on the western and northern slopes of Ak-Shiyrak Massif; encounters are very rare on the left bank of the Sarychat River (between the Kolpakovskiy Glacier and the Kichl-Bordu Valley).

There is a significant differentiation in the density in the Central Tien Shan. The snow leopard is very rare in the upper reaches of the Sarydzhas River and on the left bank of the Sarychat River, where the landscape type is unsuitable for continuous habitation due to the magnitude of frozen area and the open relief. However, in adjacent regions there are various centers where the concentration of snow leopards reaches 6.2 individuals, per 100 km² apparently the highest indicator for the Tien Shan. One of these spots is the basin of Lake Bashkul', well preserved thanks to its inaccessibility, acting as a type of natural reserve.

The major population of snow leopard in the borders of Kirgizia is concentrated, according to our data, in the Northern and Central Tien Shan. In this territory, at least 30% of all the snow leopard habitat in the republic of Kirgizia is located, including more than 50% of the population. The average density of population of snow leopard in the Tien Shan is almost 2.4 individuals per 100 km²— lower than in Mongolia at 3.0 (Bold, Dorzhzundi, 1976) and also than in various regions of India at 5.8 to 8.3 (Mallon, 1984) and in Nepal at 6.0 (Jackson, 1983), but higher than in Chital province of Pakistan at 0.15 (Schaller, 1976). (For further information on



the above references, see ISLT publication *An Annotated Bibliography of Literature on the Snow Leopard* by J. L. Fox.)

Table 1
Population, Density, and Area of Habitation of Snow Leopard in Various Regions of the Tien Shan

Ridge, River Basin Region	Population	Average Density Indiv/100 km ²	Area of Habitation km ²
Northern Tien Shan			
Kirgizian Ridges:			
Aksu	12 - 14	2.51	517.5
Sokuluk	6 - 8	3.25	215.6
Ala-Archa	7 - 9	2.4	333.5
Issyk-Ata	5 - 6	3.25	169.0
Terskei Alatau:			
Altyn-Arashan	3 - 5	2.00	199.5
Karakol	4 - 6	1.74	296.2
Dzhety-Oguz	4 - 6	1.90	262.5
Chon-Kyzyl-Su	6 - 8	3.17	221.0
Kichi-Kyzyl-Su	3 - 4	3.24	108.0
Dzhukuchak	4 - 5	2.40	187.5
Dzhuuka	6 - 10	1.72	465.0
Barskaun	7 - 9	1.86	429.2
Interior Tien Shan			
Sections of Terskei, Alatau & Dzhetymbel'			
	4 - 5	0.75	598.0
Central Tien Shan			
Sarychat			
(left bank)	1 - 2	0.92	162.0
Irtash	4 - 10	1.53	458.0
Uchkul'	5 - 7	2.94	203.7
Bashkul'	2 - 4	4.65	64.5
Terekty	3 - 5	2.77	144.3
Eastern Kollyu	15 - 18	1.89	874.0
Inyl'chek	12 - 16	2.14	655.5
In all Study Territory	113 - 157	2.35	6554.4

Note: Glaciers, used by snow leopards during movement, are included in calculation of areas of habitation.

Preferred habitat: In alpine and subalpine landscape zones, where the snow leopard for the most part spends its life, the predator seems to prefer places with average relief and isolated elevated spots which open up to a wide vista and where the cat can be concealed by rocks or bushes. In the Northern Tien Shan, this is most often Caragana and juniper; but in the interior, Caragana and Kuril Tea. The forest zone, made up of Shrenka spruce, the snow leopard visits primarily when crossing valleys and following from one ridge to another.

In isolated cases, the snow leopard has been registered even in areas devoid of cover. The movement of the snow leopard in these areas is of necessity quite fast; although thanks to the camouflage color of the predator, it is able to remain unnoticed even in open places, except the completely snow-covered slopes.

Artist Terry Isaac Aids Snow Leopard Conservation

A Conservation Edition of Terry Isaac's limited edition print, *Out of the Ice and Snow*, was published recently to benefit ISLT's efforts on behalf of the endangered snow leopard. The print sold out almost immediately.

ISLT sends a big "Thank you" to Mr. Isaac, Mill Pond Press, and Pat and Dan Howard of Howard/Mandville Gallery for their support.

George Schaller Joins Advisory Board

Distinguished field biologist and conservation leader George B. Schaller has joined ISLT's International Advisory Board. Dr. Schaller is science director of Wildlife Conservation International, the global and scientific arm of the New York Zoological Society. He has been involved in field studies of wildlife since 1952.

Dr. Schaller is currently conducting a study in the Qlan Tang region of northwest Tibet. A vast area about the size of the state of Colorado, this region encompasses one of the largest ecosystems on earth