

YEAR END  
NEWSLETTER  
2025

# DEAR FRIEND OF THE JAGUAR

As 2025 comes to an end, we invite you to meet NJP's newest team members, reconnect with familiar faces, and understand why your support remains essential to everyone involved in this work. Inside, we share the accomplishments and latest updates from the year, which saw the return of much-needed summer rains across the region! We are also pleased to share several of the year's best wildlife photographs captured on the reserve that give glimpses into and illustrate the impact of your generosity.

You will also learn about several long-lived jaguars and ocelots whose repeated appearances on our trail cameras underscore the importance of protected areas like the Northern Jaguar Reserve and the Viviendo con Felinos® ranches.



Picture of The Northern Jaguar Reserve- Taken by Ben Widler, Board President

## WELCOMING OUR NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: LYDIA LOZANO

We are thrilled to introduce Lydia Lozano as the new Executive Director of the Northern Jaguar Project. Lydia brings a rare combination of scientific expertise, community-centered leadership, and a lifelong passion for protecting Mexico's most iconic species and ecosystems.

Lydia holds a degree in zoology from the Universidad Autónoma de Sinaloa, where her early work centered on research and conservation initiatives involving sea turtles and birds. From this foundation, she expanded into a holistic approach to conservation—integrating land protection, environmental education, research, and deep engagement with local communities.

For nearly a decade, Lydia led the México conservation program for Nature and Culture International, during which she established and managed approximately 54,000 hectares of protected tropical deciduous forest. In 2019, she received the Disney Conservation Hero Award for her outstanding commitment to safeguarding Mexico's ecosystems.

Lydia is also the creator of the beloved "Día del Jaguar" festival in Álamos, which she organized for five consecutive years. The festival became one of the most recognized wildlife events in the region. It helped elevate the celebration to the international stage by declaring the International Day of the Jaguar.

Most recently, Lydia has collaborated with conservation groups across Mexico to advance the creation of new protected areas and regional conservation plans. Her vision, experience, and deep ties to the communities and landscapes we serve make her an extraordinary leader for NJP's next chapter.

We are honored to welcome Lydia and look forward to the renewed energy, partnerships, and possibilities her leadership will bring.

# A MESSAGE FROM OUR BOARD PRESIDENT, BEN WILDER

It is an honor to step into the role of NJP Board President, following the remarkable model of dedication set by Matt Skroch and joining an incredible board and the NJP team in Mexico and the U.S. While relatively new to the board and the world of wildlife conservation, I have over twenty years of experience in cross-border science and conservation in the U.S.–Mexico borderlands. My research focuses on the origin and future of life in the Sonoran Desert. My conservation efforts center on creating a platform for cross-border, interdisciplinary collaboration. I am the co-founder and director of the Next Generation of Sonoran Desert Researchers (N-Gen) and served as the Director of the Desert Laboratory on Tumamoc Hill from 2016 to 2022.

For me, truly working in a place requires knowing the landscape and the people. I recently filled a long-standing knowledge gap and visited the Northern Jaguar Reserve at the end of October. While I knew the experience would be powerful, nothing could have prepared me for the genuine awe it inspired. Meeting our *Viviendo con Felinos* ranch partners and hearing their ideas for the future of this innovative coexistence program... witnessing the joy and energy of the Festival del Jaguar in Sahuaripa... and then standing amidst one of the largest, wildest landscapes I have ever seen – sierra after sierra stretching into the horizon – was profoundly humbling. It expanded my understanding of just how meaningful and far-reaching our work truly is.



*Ben at Cañón Babisal in the Northern Jaguar reserve, October 2025.*

**I could not be more invigorated or optimistic about NJP's future under Lydia's leadership. Sometimes the stars align between what an organization needs and the right person to carry it forward. This is a remarkable moment—to work together with you, our dedicated supporters, our local partners, and Lydia and our team—to take one of the most inspiring conservation success stories into its next chapter.**



*NJP Founder Diana Hadley and Assistant Director Cholla Duir welcome Lydia to Tucson for a fun week of meet-and-greets!*

# EDUCATION & OUTREACH PARTNERSHIPS

Through our ongoing partnership with the Mexican nonprofit Conciencia and our binational partners and friends at La Tierra del Jaguar, we close this year deeply grateful for the community's enthusiastic participation in the eighth annual Jaguar Festival. Throughout the week, we enjoyed activities that combined sports, art, learning, and collaboration, from tournaments and contests to conferences for ranchers, as well as environmental education workshops for high school students from Técnica José Coronado and CECyTES, the regional preparatory school.

We were especially proud of Mr. José Coronado Aguayo's participation in *Viviendo con Felinos®*, who inspired the youth by sharing his experience, presenting options for productive diversification, and offering ways to coexist harmoniously with wildlife.

We also celebrated the "The Jaguar and I" contest, where children from Sahuaripa, Bacanora, and Arivechi showcased their talent and expressed their vision of coexistence with nature. We are very excited to share the children's work through the creation of a calendar.

For the first time, we involved groups of women from Sahuaripa, Arivechi, and Bacanora through the Copa Jaguar sports tournament. Each event was filled with camaraderie, family fun, and joyful competition. We trust that, in the near future, we will be able to develop more projects together with these valuable women's groups.

For the second consecutive year, we celebrated International Jaguar Day with nearly 100 children participating. We enjoyed fun, interactive activities that strengthened their knowledge of the jaguar and the Jaguar del Norte Reserve, along with games, cake, prizes, a piñata, and unforgettable moments.



## RAINS & RECOVERY

This year's abundant summer rains, carried into the fall, brought a long-hoped-for rebound of the landscape and ecosystem following over a year of below-average rainfall and rising temperatures. Several ponds that had been dry for years have finally refilled, the surrounding vegetation has begun to recover, and a diversity of butterflies fills the sky in every direction. We are already seeing the early signs of increased wildlife activity and expect even more detections in the months to come.

The rains also swept away several trail cameras in the VCF ranches and stranded several members of our team for days on end in the reserve—an ongoing challenge of working in rugged terrain where streams and canyons can transform overnight! Maintaining and replacing cameras is a constant and essential part of our scientific work.



# A LANDMARK YEAR FOR JAGUAR SCIENCE

Our long-term monitoring program reached a major milestone in 2025: we have now identified 81 individual jaguars since our camera studies began in 2000. This year alone, we added 76 new jaguar photos representing 14 different individuals, pushing our total archive past 2,800 jaguar images.

July was a record-breaking month: we documented 25 jaguar photos in the Viviendo con Felinos ranches, capturing seven individual jaguars across eight ranches. These detections show not only the continued presence of jaguars but also the success of coexistence efforts across the landscape. One rancher even named a jaguar “Chamada,” after his ranch—an extraordinary sign of pride and a beautiful symbol of coexistence taking root.

And two well-known females, Doña Eduarda and Sofía, continue to astonish us. With 7.7 and 7.3 years of detections, respectively, they are competing for the title of the longest-living female jaguar in our entire photo record. Their longevity is a direct reflection of the protection this region provides.



*Chamada, exploring his namesake Chamada Ranch, July 25, 2025.*



*Doña Eduarda, an adult female (at least 7.7 years old at one of the Viviendo con Felinos ranches).*



*Sofía, an adult female (at least 7.3 years old) at one of the Viviendo con Felinos ranches.*

## AN OCELOT ELDER AND OTHER SPECIES SURPRISES

Among the quiet triumphs this year is Anchoa, a male ocelot first documented in 2015 and now estimated to be around 11 years old. With 9.3 years of camera detections, he is officially the longest-living ocelot recorded in our monitoring program. His endurance is a small miracle—and a reminder that protecting habitat benefits every species that calls it home.

We also celebrated the return of black bears, with 11 photos already documented this year, surpassing the total number from 2024. It appears the bears are here to stay, signaling a fascinating shift in habitat preference. We will be working with partners to identify similar trends and better understand their sudden presence in this ecosystem.



*Anchoa, a 9.3-year-old ocelot, calls the Northern Jaguar Reserve and neighboring ranches its home.*



*Black bear, new to the area.*

# IN OUR WORDS

## WHAT YOUR SUPPORT MEANS TO NJP STAFF

### HELÍ CORONEL ARELLANO, PH.D., PHOTO DATABASE TECHNICIAN JOINED NJP IN 2020

Donations are vitally important for changing the livestock sector's attitude toward the presence of wild cats on their lands, since for decades they have been considered a threat to their cattle. This particular effort is extremely difficult and costly, and it only has an impact if carried out over the long term.

Contributions directly help four species of wild cats (jaguar, puma, ocelot, and bobcat) to survive, because through agreements with key ranchers, they commit not to kill them. It is also important to mention that environmental restoration activities are carried out on their lands.

In addition, thanks to donations, the biodiversity of a wide area of influence is protected—an area where the birth and dispersal of jaguars to other regions of Mexico and the United States has been documented.

Contributions also allow us to carry out multiple activities, such as long-term mammal monitoring, repairing and/or acquiring equipment, processing digital information, environmental restoration, and many others.

Finally, donations allow different people (such as myself) to have dignified, meaningful work that contributes to local and regional conservation—in fact, binational conservation that already has a real, tangible, and measurable impact on the world. Our institutional work is now a binational reference point for conservation in both Mexico and the United States.



### CARMINA E. GUTIÉRREZ GONZÁLEZ, PH.D., RESEARCH COORDINATOR JOINED NJP IN 2008

Every contribution, no matter how small, can make a difference in our work. Conservation work has many facets, and not all of them are directly related to the species being protected. In the end, they all come together in a comprehensive conservation program like the one NJP carries out. Contributions help ensure that our field team has the proper conditions and equipment to do their work effectively and on time, that our education team has the materials needed to deliver their workshops, and that our office team has the basic tools required to stay up to date with new technological developments. Together, we form a chain where each of us depends on the others to achieve our goals. At the end of the day, this translates into sightings of jaguars and their cubs in the area, reflecting that all branches of our project are working effectively—and all of this is thanks to the support of various donors.



### CRISTHIAN A. VALENTE SÁNCHEZ, FIELD BIOLOGIST JOINED NJP IN 2023

I believe the key is that NJP works not only with ranchers and cowboys in the field, but also with students in schools and with the entire community during events like the Jaguar Festival. It has never been just about creating a reserve or offering payments for photos of wild cats, but about promoting a transgenerational change. A complex, long-term effort that is already showing excellent results.

I continue to be inspired by the quote of one of the ranchers' sons that I work with, "You may never change my dad's mind, but you have changed mine. The next generation of cattlemen will be conservation-minded; we need organizations like yours to help us."

# YOUR SUPPORT MAKES THIS ALL POSSIBLE



As our staff shared in their own words, donations make it possible to change ranching culture that has viewed wild cats as threats for decades, to secure agreements that protect jaguars, pumas, ocelots, and bobcats from being killed, and to restore the lands that sustain them. Your support ensures our field team has the tools to monitor wildlife, our educators can reach students and communities, and our office staff can keep pace with the growing demands of binational conservation work.

Most importantly, your contribution helps create a rising generation of ranchers and young people who now see jaguars not as enemies, but as symbols of pride and possibility. This is the kind of change that only happens when people like you invest in it—deeply, consistently, and with hope for the future. We invite you to make a year-end gift today and continue to support NJP’s mission to preserve the northernmost population of the jaguar.

Visit our website at <https://www.northernjaguarproject.org/> to make a donation today, or send a check to NJP at 2114 W Grant Rd Ste 121, Tucson, AZ, 85745

## OTHER OPTIONS INCLUDE:

### GIVING THROUGH STOCK.

If you have stock or mutual funds that have increased in value and have large capital gains, selling your shares would generate a significant capital gains tax. However, you can donate your stock or mutual fund shares directly to NJP and receive a tax deduction for the full value of your stock or fund donation. For more information, please contact Cholla Duir at:

**[cholla@northernjaguarproject.org](mailto:cholla@northernjaguarproject.org)**

### IRA CONTRIBUTION.

You can also contribute all or part of your required IRA distribution to NJP and avoid the income tax you would pay on your required retirement distribution.

If this option sounds best for you, contact your tax advisor and ask them to issue the disbursement to NJP via check, mailed to 2114 W Grant Rd Ste 121, Tucson, AZ 85745.

From all of us at Northern Jaguar Project, we wish you a wonderful 2026 and thank you sincerely for your support in every form and at every level. We look ahead with renewed vision and hope for jaguars and the borderlands, and we are grateful to have you alongside us.

Sincerely,

***The Northern Jaguar Project Staff***

# EXCITING NEWS ABOUT A NEW JAGUAR DOCUMENTARY: BORDERLANDS JAGUAR!

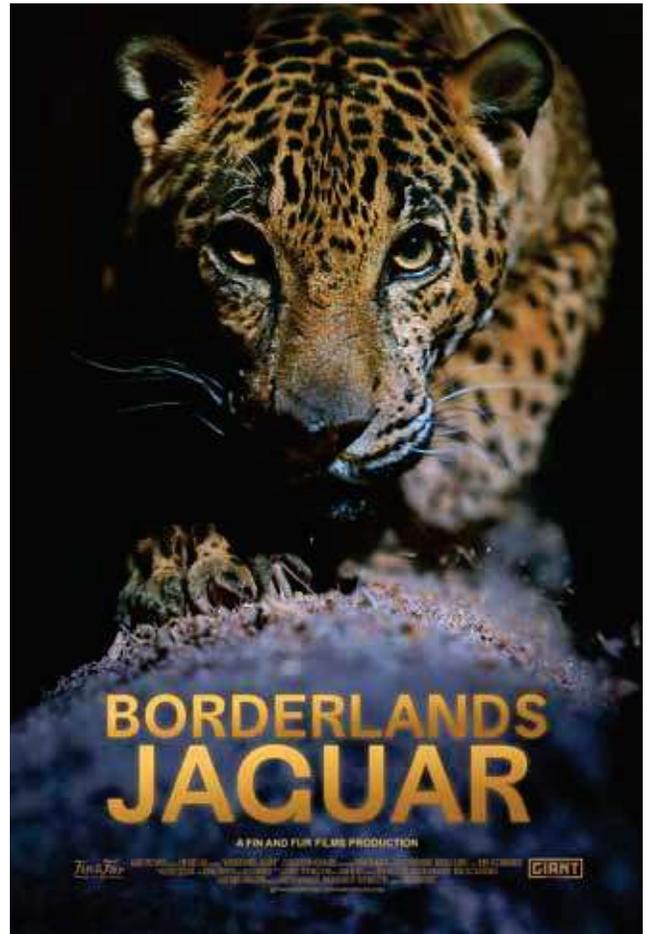
On January 13, an exhilarating new documentary filmed on the Northern Jaguar Reserve will be released on Apple TV, Amazon Prime, and other major streaming platforms. Borderlands Jaguar is a 50-minute film that highlights the story of NJP – our jaguars, our biologists, and the vital work being done to conserve jaguars and protect the borderlands they call home. The story centers on Libellula, featuring extraordinary camera-trap footage that documents her life, resilience, and lasting legacy. The film was produced by Fin and Fur Films, the same team that did The American Southwest, and we'll be sharing the official trailer soon – stay tuned.

To celebrate the release, theatrical premieres will take place:

**January 15 in Austin, Texas, at AFS Cinema**

**January 16 in Tucson, Arizona, at The Loft Cinema**

Both screenings will include Q&A sessions with the filmmakers and conservation team.



## STAY CONNECTED

*Follow us on facebook and instagram for the latest updates, photos and conservation stories.*



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