



BACKGROUNDER FOR NEWS RELEASE (October 15, 2007)

Artists for Conservation's Sixth Flag Expedition Highlights the Plight of the Cross River Gorillas of Southwestern Cameroon – The World's Most Endangered Primate

About the Artists for Conservation Foundation (AFC)

The Artists for Conservation Foundation (AFC) is a non-profit group of the world's leading nature artists, whose mission is to support wildlife and habitat conservation, biodiversity, sustainability and environmental education through art that celebrates our natural heritage.

Founded in 1997 as the "Worldwide Nature Artists Group" by Jeffrey Whiting - a prominent Canadian artist, author, biologist and professional software engineer - the Group was renamed in 2007. The Foundation's strength lies in its membership and represents a who's-who of nature artists worldwide, including well-known names such as John Banovich, Robert Bateman, Guy Coheleach, John Seerey-Lester and David Shepherd. New members are admitted by invitation only, through a juried process, and only as placements become available. The Foundation dedicates its resources to nurturing its world-class community of nature artists and leveraging this pool of talent to support its mission through a variety of programs and initiatives, including:

- Facilitating art sales to raise funds for conservation
- Supporting artistic field research expeditions to study endangered species and threatened habitats.
- Maintaining the world's largest virtual gallery of nature art.
- Recognizing individuals for their work in support of the conservation cause.
- Producing an annual art exhibition in support of conservation, and an accompanying book and international touring exhibit.
- Planning and spearheading large-scale international environmentally themed art projects.

Through its "Flag Expeditions" program, the Foundation offers fellowships to artists, supporting artistic field research in remote areas of the planet, with a strong emphasis on raising awareness to threatened habitats and endangered species. In the Foundation's "Art for Conservation" program, artists collectively pledge millions of dollars to conservation organizations and programs around the world. The Foundation also supports the conservation cause with a monthly award, recognizing individual artists for their dedication to conservation and the annual prestigious "Simon Combes Conservation Award".

Today, the Foundation is the most progressive and prestigious organization in the world of nature art and represents hundreds of millions of dollars in artwork, though it does not take any brokerage fees or sales commissions on sales made by its members. For the first ten years of its operation, benefiting in part from a donated state-of-the-art technological infrastructure, the Foundation was sustained entirely on membership dues and volunteer labor, although it now seeks patrons, donors, sponsors and partners to enable the continued expansion of its activities. For more information, please visit www.natureartists.com.

About the AFC Flag Expeditions Program

The AFC Flag Expeditions Program was created to make possible the field study and artistic rendering of endangered species or habitats deserving of greater public attention. There is a strong emphasis on the study of unique, threatened habitats, and rare or endangered species in remote parts of the world.

Upon return from the expedition, participating artists are required to submit to the Foundation, a written journal and sketchbook of their journey, photos with the AFC flag in situ, a signed flag and video footage when possible.

The AFC provides funding, as well as prominent exposure in a growing number of venues including on the AFC Web site, for each artist and each expedition. Each year at least two Fellowships are offered- each worth up to \$5,000 US.

The Program is open only to AFC Signature Members, who can apply to obtain financial support and the privilege of carrying the AFC flag on their journey. To find how to become a Signature member, please review our Join Us section.

To-date, the AFC has granted 6 fellowships through this program:

- AFC Flag Expedition #1 - "Observing & Portraying the Endangered Harpy Eagle & its Habitat"; Recipient: David Kitler
- AFC Flag Expedition #2 - "The Sacred Source - A Portrait of the Ganges"; Recipient: David Rankin
- AFC Flag Expedition #3 - "The George River Boreal Forest Expedition"; Recipient: Robert Mullen with AFC artists Robert Bateman and Lindsey Foggett
- AFC Flag Expedition #4 - "The Flora & Fauna of Bhutan - An Artist's Journey through the Land of the Thunderdragon"; Recipient: Pollyanna Pickering
- AFC Flag Expedition #5 - "Painting the Painted Dogs - Artistic Study of an Endangered Hunter"; Recipient: Alison Nicholls
- AFC Flag Expedition #6 - "Cross River Gorillas – The Most Endangered Primate"; Recipient: Daniel Taylor

The AFC's Flag Expeditions website documents past expeditions and highlights new ones yet to be run. For more information about the program, please visit www.natureartists.com/flagexpeditions/.

About the Expedition to Cameroon:

Taylor will undertake a 5-week Artists for Conservation Flag Expedition to Western Cameroon in order to raise funds and awareness for the conservation of the Cross River Gorilla, which is at very high risk of becoming extinct in the near future. His goal is to participate in field surveys in the rainforest and visit sanctuaries for detailed field study, sketching and photographing the Cross River Gorilla and its habitat, as well as consulting with professional field workers, biologists and conservationists. He will be working in partnership with the African Conservation Foundation.

The Cross River Gorilla remains the most endangered primate in Africa with 250-300 individuals left in the wild. Cross River Gorillas differ from other gorillas in the size of their head, their small thumb, and their red crest. The name of these primates is derived from the Cross River that rises in several branches in the highlands of Western Cameroon. Thanks to the remoteness of this impenetrable biodiversity hotspot, small isolated populations have survived in the highlands and are now discovered and studied by local conservationists. The Cross River gorilla has never been painted before.

Key objectives of the Flag Expedition include:

- Observe the behavior of Cross River Gorillas and conduct a detailed artistic study in Limbe Wildlife Center in Cameroon.
- Make sketches and take photographs of endangered wildlife species and habitats.
- Study the gorillas in their environment and learn firsthand from local wildlife specialists about conservation issues in their respective countries and areas.
- Help improve environmental awareness and attitudes of local communities towards great apes by conducting educational art workshops and creating mural paintings together with schoolchildren

in three local primary schools and develop educational posters for distribution to 30 local schools in the forest adjacent communities.

- Participate in surveys in order to observe Cross River Gorillas in the tropical rainforests of the Lebialem Highlands, South West Cameroon.
- Complete original paintings of the Cross River Gorilla and its habitat, the tropical highland rainforests, as well as of other local highly endangered primates, such as the Guenons, Drill and Mandrill.
- Develop an exhibition of resulting artwork for display in Africa, Canada, US and Europe.
- Raise funds and awareness for a primate rescue center and the protection of the Cross River Gorillas in the wild through the donation of art works and a traveling exhibition.
- Promote the work of the African Conservation Foundation, Limbe Wildlife Center and the Artists for Conservation in Africa in Canada and internationally through exhibitions, painting in public galleries and a fundraising and publicity campaign including workshops and media events.
- Report about the Expedition through a variety of media including an interactive geoblog, web diary, video and webcast.

About The African Conservation Foundation

The African Conservation Foundation is working towards the protection and conservation of Africa's endangered wildlife and their habitats. Founded in 1999, ACF fills a unique niche by creating an Africa-wide network for information exchange and capacity building of conservation efforts in the region.

ACF's mission is to support and link African conservation initiatives, groups and NGOs, with the aim of strengthening their capacity, building partnerships and promoting effective communication and co-ordination of conservation efforts.

ACF's work is organized around 5 specific goals:

- Linking conservation initiatives across the continent, and strengthening the networking capacities of research and conservation groups and NGOs.
- Providing training, support and technical assistance for conservation groups and NGOs, particularly grassroots, in Africa.
- Offering capacity support for sustainable community projects linked with conservation.
- Serving as an educational resource centre for the general public, both within and outside of Africa.
- Conducting on-the-ground conservation projects.

Our overall goal is to change the approach of the management and utilization of natural resources to one in which the needs of human development in the region are reconciled with biodiversity conservation.

About Artist Daniel Taylor (excerpt from biography on AFC website):

Having been an artist for many years has been nothing short of a wonderful journey without end. I am forever grateful for the pleasure my gift has given so many people the world over.

My work can be found in both private and public collections internationally and I have been fortunate enough to have been granted showings not only in my home country but have also had my work prominently displayed in countries such as Canada, Japan, United States, England and Australia. A permanent exhibition of my art is on display in the John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, Washington DC.

For the greater part of our lives my family and I have lived in the wild interior of Canada, in British Columbia. This wilderness setting and the abundant wildlife which surrounds us has afforded us a continuous and insatiable thrill. An artist's paradise indeed! Shadows, depth, colour, warmth, smells and sounds - even the silence of falling snow in the crisp, cold winter nights - certainly sets an artist's imagination on fire! No matter

where you look, ever-changing moods are stirred within as you are completely overwhelmed by the various and differing impressions of life around us.

The raising of my children within this wonderland has provided both them and me many memorable images and reminders which I use as a basis for much of my work. Originally I sketched and painted portraits and landscapes in oil but later turned to wildlife. With much trial and error I have eventually succeeded in accomplishing the fusing of all three together and finding my true creative passion in life - Wildlife and Portraits. I am now an accomplished painter in all mediums but in particular in acrylics. Using acrylics I am able to build my creations in layers, layers of transparent paints and shadows, hoping to give you, the viewer, a sense of the painting coming to life.

Support for Conservation:

I am currently involved in a unique project with the African Conservation Foundation. ACF seeks to help safeguard Africa's endangered wildlife. The knowledge they have acquired through all their hard work, I couldn't even attempt to attain in my lifetime. I am a High Realist Artist - I have spent many years developing my technique, and feel I can reveal on canvas the warmth, the beauty of nature, but also the severity of the given crisis, that mere words cannot express.

I feel honoured to be able to paint such magnificent and vulnerable animals as it tears my heart out when I realize how endangered these fellow beings are. Through thoughtless actions we are bringing them to inevitable extinction, which will be our loss ... forever!

'Art for Africa — When Paintings Come Alive' is designed to raise funds for the conservation of the continent's endangered wildlife, such gorillas, elephants, lions, chimpanzees, leopards and cheetahs.

Limited edition prints of the African portraits painted for the Art for Africa project are available for purchase through auctions and direct sales. 80 percent of the revenues of these prints, numbered and signed, will go to the conservation of the endangered species.

I have also been invited to contribute to a large masterpiece wildlife mural mosaic. This entailed a special fund raising Mural Mosaic in support of Youth Environmental Education and Preservation of Wildlife. The 216 panels that make up the mural have been auctioned off to raise funds for Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society. The project became a stunning mosaic of wildlife, bringing artists and people interested in wildlife art together for the environment.

The project has become a stunning mosaic of wildlife, bringing artists and people interested in wildlife art together for the environment. For more information on Daniel Taylor, please visit:

www.natureartists.com/daniel_taylor.asp

For More Information:

Daniel Taylor's Flag Expedition: www.natureartists.com/flagexpeditions/taylor2007/

Daniel Taylor's Biography: www.natureartists.com/daniel_taylor.asp

AFC Flag Expeditions Program: www.natureartists.com/flagexpeditions/

Artists for Conservation Foundation: www.natureartists.com

African Conservation Foundation: www.africanconservation.org/

Media Enquiries:

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