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Young runner puts her best foot forward for Born Free charity challenge!

Six-year-old charity champion Thea Caine from Burnopfield is warming-up for her biggest challenge to date - running the Simplyhealth Mini Great North Run in Newcastle city centre on Saturday the 8th of September.

Thea, who has already raised over £800 this year for international wildlife charity, Born Free, will run the 1.5 km route alongside her dad Paul, who'll be dressed in full lion costume for the occasion!

Thea's mum Cheryl explains: "Thea has always been passionate about wildlife and has adopted animals to support Born Free from a young age. When I suggested doing more and setting ourselves challenges to raise money for them she loved the idea. Paul and I are so proud of her kindness and determination."

Thea, who attends Burnopfield Primary School in County Durham, will take part in the second wave of the race, starting at 9.20am. She says: *"I love big cats, tigers are my favourite. I want to help Born Free to help them."*

Back in July, Thea participated in a range of cat-themed activities as part of Born Free's 'Big Cat Nap', alongside her trusty pet cat Charlie. During the week, Thea took part in a mini-triathlon, a game of tiger tennis at her club in Blydon, lion wall art, a big cat party, sci-fi cosplay as M'ress from Star Trek, big cat themed baking, and even her own Big Cat Nap, which saw her stay in bed for 17 hours!

Animal-loving Thea has also made several mini documentaries to support Born Free's conservation work, highlighting the plight of tigers, lions and polar bears, in the wild, and explaining how the charity works to keep them safe.

See Thea's lion documentary here: <https://youtu.be/1gY41mzZP4U>

Support Thea's fundraising efforts at: www.justgiving.com/theacaine

To find out more about Born Free's work, please visit: www.bornfree.org.uk

-ENDS-

Image: © Thea with mum Cheryl and dad Paul (in costume!)

About Born Free:

Born Free's mission is to ensure that all wild animals, whether living in captivity or in the wild, are treated with compassion and respect and are able to live their lives according to their needs. Born Free opposes the exploitation of wild animals in captivity and campaigns to keep wildlife in the wild.

Born Free promotes Compassionate Conservation to enhance the survival of threatened species in the wild and protect natural habitats while respecting the needs of and safeguarding the welfare of individual animals. Born Free seeks to have a positive impact on animals in the wild and protect their ecosystems in perpetuity, for their own intrinsic value and for the critical roles they play within the natural world. For more information about Born Free please visit: www.bornfree.org.uk

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