

Regional Cheetah Workshop hosted by CCF

In December, CCF hosted the first Southern African Regional Cheetah Workshop. The workshop brought 32 cheetah researchers and conservationists from eight countries together to develop strategies to ensure cheetah survival in the 21st century. The workshop was facilitated by the Conservation Breeding Specialist Group of Southern Africa, of the International World Conservation Union's (IUCN) Species Survival Commission. Under the auspices of the Global Cheetah Forum, people from South Africa, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Namibia, Switzerland, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States participated in the workshop, along with the co-chair of the IUCN's Cat Specialist Group, Dr. Christine Breitenmoser. The workshop was sponsored by the Cheetah Conservation Fund, the Wildlife Conservation Network (WCN) and Classic Escapes.



The workshop evaluated what has been accomplished in the southern African region over the past few years and set new research and conservation objectives for the future. Issues surrounding the development of census methodology for estimating cheetah populations, conservation of cheetahs outside and within protected areas, human-predator conflict issues and extension and education initiatives were discussed in depth. Strategies for improved co-operation amongst the regional cheetah conservation organisations were also addressed.

The Namibian Agriculture Union (NAU) was represented by Harry Schneider-Waterberg, who provided a farmer's perspective into many of the livestock and wildlife issues that were discussed. He stated that "the information that was shared was really good and much

of it necessary to know...there are things that can be done for farmers and conservationists to make a plan for the cheetah's future in Southern Africa."

Two main projects came out of the workshop: first, the development of a Cheetah Compendium, which will combine all known information on cheetahs into a web-based programme that will be managed by the Cat Specialist Group (CSG). CCF assisted in raising the needed funds for this project, that is also being supported by the Howard Gilman Foundation and the Columbus Zoo. The Compendium will be completed over the next 6 months.

Secondly, over the next year representatives from the Southern African region will be developing Regional Status Reports for cheetah in their countries. CCF's Director, Dr. Laurie Marker, will coordinate the compilation of the Namibian status report.

Namibian President, Hifikepunye Pohamba Expresses Support for CCF's Work

While in New York in September, participating in his first session of the United Nations General Assembly as Namibia's President, His Excellency Hifikepunye Pohamba expressed his support for CCF's work during a luncheon at The Explorers Club, sponsored by CCF U.S.A.. The luncheon introduced the Namibian President and many of his Ministers to CCF's U.S.A. board members, supporters and investors in Namibia. In his speech, the President stated that "Nature conservation and the sustainable utilisation of our natural resources stand at the core of our socio-economic development efforts. It is for this reason that we will continue to encourage the good work that the CCF has been doing in Namibia over the years."



Dr. Laurie Marker meets Namibia's President, His Excellency Pohamba while in New York.

**Join us at CCF's Gala Fundraising Dinner
29 July 2006**

Don't miss CCF's 8th Annual Celebration of Speed and Elegance gala fundraising dinner on the 29th of July at the Windhoek Country Club.

Last year CCF's dinner raised over N\$90 000! The money raised at the Gala enables CCF to continue its research, education and conservation programmes, as well as assisting in the care of the orphan cheetahs that reside at CCF's Centre and have to be fed every day!

We thank those individuals and businesses who generously donated items for our Silent Auction, as well as those of you who purchased tickets and bought tables! We hope that you will support us again this year!

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CCF phone: (067) 306225
 CCF fax: (067) 306247
 CCF e-mail: cheeta@iafrica.com.na
The Cheetah Conservation Fund, a Namibian non-profit organisation, was founded in 1990 to save the wild cheetah and its habitat through research, conservation and education programmes.

INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNISED GENETICISTS VISIT NAMIBIA

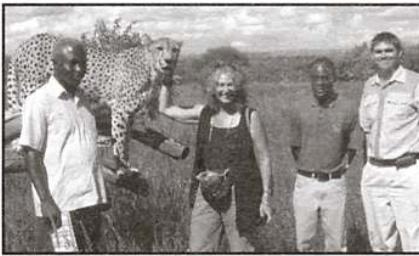
World-renowned geneticist, Dr. Stephen O'Brien (centre), from the U.S. National Cancer Institute and new Chairman of the not-for-profit CCF U.S.A. board, visited Namibia again in November along with Professor Michael Bennish (far left), the Director of the Wellcome Trust's Africa Centre for Health and Population Research in Mtubatuba, South Africa. During their visit, they presented talks to medical professionals in Windhoek and Otjiwarongo on conservation genetics and HIV/AIDS, including the human genes that determine HIV susceptibility (one of which Dr. O'Brien's laboratory discovered), HIV/AIDS surveillance, and education and treatment in southern Africa.



CCF RECEIVES CERTIFICATION FROM FOREST STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

Dr. Bruce Brewer and Matti Nghikembua have continued to develop a management plan for the CCF BushBlok project, which received Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification in December 2005. In addition to CCF being certified, all of CCF's farms and the Research and Education Centre were inspected to ensure that, they too, conform to the appropriate environmentally accountable management principles.

We are pleased with how the BushBlok project has progressed through the year. It's a slow process getting the business up and running but since October, the first two shipments of fuel logs have arrived in the UK (over 400 tons). FSC Certification will enable us to sell our fuel logs to a wider target market. Cheetah friends in the UK now have the opportunity to support cheetah conservation by purchasing Namibian wood logs proudly bearing the eco-friendly BushBlok label.



Namibian Director of Forestry, Mr. Joseph Hailwa (far left), meets CCF's cheetah Chewbaaka, Dr. Marker (centre) & Matti Nghikembua (second from right) during a visit in February 2006. They were joined by Stefan Albat (far right), the local Forestry Officer in Otjiwarongo.

Japanese Cheetah Conservation Society (JCCS) representatives visit CCF Namibia

In December, the Founder of the Japanese Cheetah Conservation Society (JCCS), Kumiko Watanabe (right), and her advisor and translator, Reiko Itoh (left), spent the week at CCF. Although Kumiko has helped raise funds and awareness for CCF in Japan for the past two years, this was her first visit to Africa and the first time she saw a live cheetah. A memorandum of understanding was signed between the two organisations, resulting in JCCS being designated the official Japanese Cheetah Conservation Fund affiliate. Africa, primarily Kenya and South Africa, have always been popular destinations with Japanese tourists. In the past few years, interest in Namibia has grown, with Asian wildlife photographers and film crews wanting to document Namibia's breathtaking scenery,

as well as its abundant wildlife and diverse cultures. CCF is excited about this new partnership and opportunity. In 2005, after Kumiko's visit, CCF was featured on a special nature programme on one of the major Japanese TV networks, as well as in newspaper and magazine articles.



notes FROM THE DIRECTOR



Some of CCF's staff, students and volunteers at CCF Education Centre.

Dear CCF Friends,

CCF's International Research and Education Centre continually hosts students, volunteers and professional collaborators from Namibia and around the world. Working together they collect data to further our knowledge on cheetahs and their farmland ecosystem. In addition, our CCF staff are constantly teaching, learning, analysing, and sharing their wealth of knowledge about cheetahs with the local farming community, who live with this amazing predator, as well as with others who are interested in learning more about the cheetah.

Over the years, many scientific papers and popular articles have been published on CCF's long-term research. As I look around our centre, I see many bright students conducting a variety of interrelated research, and feel so proud of the centre that we have created for this purpose.

During the past year, several of CCF's staff have been involved in Master degree programmes at various universities. Josephine Henghali finalised her Master's dissertation titled: *Conservation Attitudes and Patterns of Biodiversity Loss in Ohangwena and Oshikoto Regions of Namibia*, as did Mandy Schumann, whose dissertation is titled: *Predator Conflict Resolution in Namibian Conservancies with Special Reference to the Cheetah*. Amy Dickman also completed her dissertation titled: *An assessment of pastoralist attitudes and wildlife conflict in the Rungwa-Ruaha region, Tanzania, with particular reference to large carnivores*.

Ezekiel Fabiano is nearly finished with his Master's dissertation on evaluating censusing techniques, while Matti Nghikembua and Bonnie Schumann have just begun their Master's programmes.

Dr. Laurie Marker
CCF Executive Director

CHEETAH NUMBERS ON THE INCREASE?

Over the past couple of years, farmers have reported to CCF that they think the Namibian cheetah population is increasing. Given the good rains over the last couple of years and the fact that game numbers have definitely increased, it is a natural course of events for predator numbers to reflect this increase in prey base.

Over the past 100 years, cheetah numbers have fluctuated. Cheetah numbers were not as high before the advent of cattle farming, where permanent man-made water points, positively affected the prey base. During the 1970's, with exceptionally good rainfall, prey numbers increased dramatically and a surge in the cheetah population was reported. The 1980's brought the worst drought of the last century, resulting in increased conflict with farmers following the sudden decline in the natural prey base, and the need for the farmers to save pasture for their cattle. The result was a near disasterous decrease in the cheetah population.

Before farmers panic at the current apparent rise in the cheetah population, and assume the country will be inundated with cheetahs, it must be borne in mind that natural checks and balances are in place to control the population. One of

the most important checks is territorial behaviour. Individuals can be seriously injured or killed in combat over territories, while non-territorial holders are forced into sub-optimal habitat areas where they do not survive. As wild populations reach carrying capacity, competition within the species also negatively affects reproduction rates.

In addition to these ecological factors are the changing land use on large commercial farmlands. With the advent of land redistribution, more people are moving onto farmlands. The increased human activities cause a disturbance in prey base distribution and often results in habitat fragmentation. With less space available to predators, individuals spend more time on farms with a higher prey base and lower human presence, creating the illusion of an increased predator population, when it is more likely we are seeing the effects of predator redistribution on the farmlands.

In any case, this increase in predator presence is most acutely felt by farmers who do not practice hands-on management. Cow-calf operators whose cattle calve in the bush without supervision, and allow their small stock to roam unattended, will be the hardest hit. Game farmers will also experience pressure in their prey-rich

camps, where fences are not rendered predator proof.

Since over 90% of Namibia's cheetahs live on farmlands, the responsibility remains with the farmer to farm "defensively". This entails constantly evaluating and adapting livestock management practices to prevent losses to predators, vs. "reactionary" farming, where steps are taken after livestock is lost. In the long-run this is a far more economically and ecologically sound approach than wasting a lot of time and effort pursuing elusive predators with poison, gin-traps and night shooting, none of which have been shown to solve predator conflict.

Namibia proudly advertises itself as the "Cheetah Capital of the World", a title which helps draw increased income from ecotourism, conservancies and hunting sectors. Farmers who have come to terms with predators on their land are leading the way in demonstrating that the dual benefits of agriculture and wildlife conservation can be enjoyed by all.

For further information on reducing human/wildlife conflict please contact: Bonnie Schumann or Johan Britz at 067-306225 or 081 124 7800 or cheeta@iafrica.com.na

A Decade of 24 hour Waterhole Counts within the Waterberg Conservancy

Five major indicator species have been monitored by the Waterberg Conservancy over the past 10 years (1995-2005), including warthog, kudu, oryx, red hartebeest, and eland. The annual average area of farmland surveyed for the 10 year period was 113,967ha (SD: ±12,155). In addition, rainfall figures have been collected with an overall average of 354.6mm (SD: ±163.3).

Water dependence is a vital variable when interpreting the results, because these species have different water dependence levels.

Available literature on the water dependency of the species indicate that warthog and kudu are more water dependent than the other three species, thus, having a higher waterhole visitation frequency. As the graph depicts, over the years the rainfall and game species densities have shown significant fluctuations that have provided further understanding into the relationship between these variables.

Since 2003, CCF began conducting strip counts before and after the waterhole count, in order to compare visual distance sampling counts to the

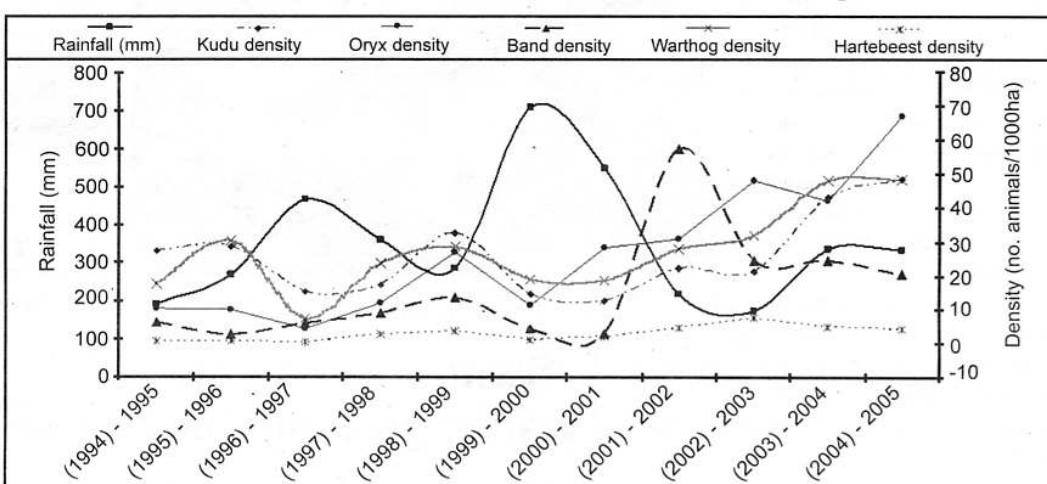


Figure 1 shows the five game species-densities per 1000ha along with rainfall (measured in millimetres) for the 10 year period.

POPULATION MONITORING TECHNIQUES

The design, implementation and management of sound conservation practices are often dependent on the availability of reliable estimates of animal numbers or abundance. Large carnivores often pose particular problems in this regard due to their low densities and wide-ranging behaviour, so the true abundance of such species can seldom be reported. As a result, the development of techniques to count predators, such as cheetahs, continues to be investigated. However, before these techniques can be reliably utilised, they need to be calibrated against a known number. Counting the exact numbers of cheetahs is very difficult due to their secretive nature and large home ranges. Over the years, CCF has employed two indirect censusing techniques, radio tracking and spoor tracking, to determine approximations of the local cheetah population.

Between 1993 and 2001, an average of 15 cheetahs were aerially radio tracked on a weekly basis in the 18,000km² research area around the Waterberg Plateau. A minimum density was ascertained by dividing the number of collared animals per year by the size of the study area. In addition, spoor tracking has been conducted monthly since 1995 on two designated roads traversing CCF's 7,000ha research farm, Elandsvreugde. In this case, density was defined as the number of individual species' spoor per 100km driven. Although the tracking research was originally designed for antelope species, all predator species were also collected when observed.

Using these overlapping studies, CCF's research assistant, Ezekiel Fabiano, who is conducting his Master's degree Research in Environmental Development from the University of Kwa-Zulu Natal, South

Africa, is ascertaining the type of relationship, if any, that exists between the densities derived using these two techniques, while also determining the optimal distance needed to travel for spoor tracking sampling.

Through radio tracking analysis, an estimation of 2.5 individuals per 1000km² was determined. The spoor tracking presented a relatively lower overall density of 0.92 per 100km.

Statistical analysis showed a weak relation between the two techniques, being attributed to the differences in sampling areas and the fact that cheetahs are highly mobile. The results are encouraging, and further research, using longer line transects that traverse through open to medium vegetation structures, could provide new insights into the relationship between these two indirect censusing methods.

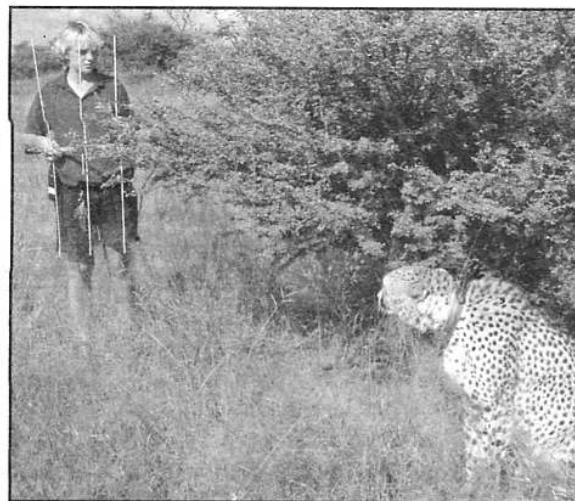
Shiraz and cubs in training

CCF's ongoing research includes establishing the steps necessary for the rehabilitation and subsequent release of captive cheetahs into controlled environments (e.g. national parks and reserves). In February, five of our resident cheetahs, a mother and her four young cubs, were released into a 4,000ha, game-fenced area, designed to contain cheetahs. Shiraz and her cubs, Nehale (m), Omukumo (f), Sheya (f), and Linyanti (f), will be monitored closely by CCF's research and animal care assistants, Marianne de Jonge and Phillip Randle, who are also responsible for the maintenance of the Bellebeno game camp as a cheetah-containing enclosure.

Following a similar release last year, as a part of De Jonge's student research, Shiraz and her cubs will be fed daily and tracked at least twice a day. Data on their movements and behaviour will be recorded and entered into a database.

Since their release, Shiraz has been exploring her new surroundings cautiously, moving approximately a kilometre per day and, up until now (one month into the

research) she has not made a kill. If this project is successful, then Shiraz and her cubs will learn to hunt and live independently.



Shiraz has been fitted with a radio-collar enabling Research Assistant, Marianne de Jonge to locate her on a daily basis.

Swing Gates - are warthogs trainable?

Coinciding with Shiraz's release, CCF continues to evaluate the effectiveness of installing swing gates into the game fenced area into which Shiraz has been released. Warthogs are

prolific diggers and game farmers often complain about the holes dug under their game fences, allowing cheetahs access to their game farms. As cheetahs walk along the fences, they often see these warthog holes and duck under, entering these prey-rich areas.

CCF has placed swing gates at high-use warthog holes and closed up the other holes around the swing gates, to encourage their use by warthogs. After the placement of the swing gates, the gates are left open for a short time period so that the warthogs continue to use these locations to pass through the fence. After the swing gates are lowered, the warthogs quickly learn that a mere push of their snout will allow them passage through their favourite routes. Cheetah, however, appear not to associate the gates with access through the fence and merely pass by the gates. Continued work is needed to find and fill newly dug holes until the warthogs are fully accustomed to use only the swing gates. The use of the gates has been monitored by placing camera traps at the areas to see if the gates are being used and by which animals. CCF has been very pleased with the swing gates and have found that not only do warthogs use the gates, but porcupines have been photographed too. It seems these diggers would rather use a swinging door!

Censusing Cheetahs - Using Camera Traps

CCF continues to work on methodologies to estimate cheetah numbers and density. Since September, camera trapping research has been conducted using passive motion/heat sensor cameras placed at playtrees and other high-use cheetah areas throughout CCF's study area. After ground truthing the study area, 40 cameras were placed at 20 locations. The cheetahs trigger these self-activating cameras and take their own pictures. Spot patterns will then be used to individually identify each animal photographed. Each time the same cheetah is recorded, it will be used as a capture location and a mark-recapture analysis will be used to determine population density in the study area. Research Assistant Matti Nghikembua designed the camera grid and has been monitoring the cameras over the past three months. Altogether, over 300 rolls of film have been developed. Thanks to the farmers on whose land cameras were placed!

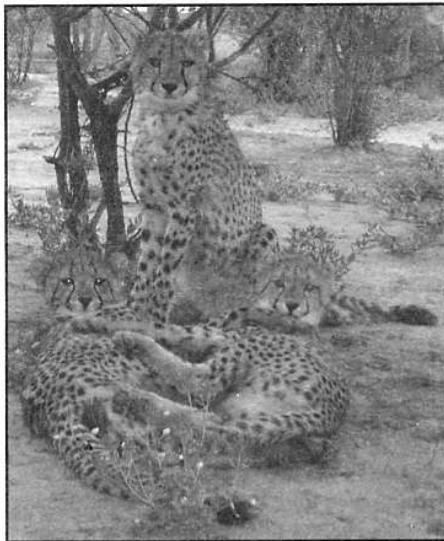
Waterberg Carnivore Project Update

In recent months, significant progress has been made in determining the diets of both leopards and brown hyenas, and in uncovering the interactions between these two secretive species. Radio tracking has yielded interesting information about the movements and home range of both leopards and brown hyenas along the base of the Waterberg Plateau. In September 2005, an adult female leopard was captured and collared with a GPS (Global Positioning System) collar, which is programmed to automatically collect location data every six hours. This not only provides insight into the leopard's movements, but also identifies areas where she is spending extended periods of time. In many cases a high-use area turns out to be a kill site and additional information such as leopard kill rates, diet composition (including species, age and sex) and frequency of scavenging by brown hyenas can be recorded. After five months, it has been determined that kudu, warthog, duiker, and oryx are the top prey for this female leopard, with some seasonal variation, depending on when young antelope are available. On average, she is making kills every four days, and brown hyenas are scavenging prey remains at nearly 70% of the kill sites. These results have added information previously unavailable using standard radio tracking.



PhD student, Andrew Stein and CCF staff, Josephine Henghali, secure a GPS collar on a female leopard.

More orphans arrive at CCF



New residents at CCF, Hermione (left), Ron (centre) and Harry (right)

In September, three orphaned cheetah cubs, approximately two months of age, were brought to CCF. A farmer who had become aware of the cubs calling in vain for their mother for over a week, captured them and called CCF. The cubs were easily caught, due to their young age and weak condition; it appeared that they had lost their mother for some time. Sadly, her fate remains unknown. The cubs are doing well and have adapted

dependent on their mothers up until the age of about 18 - 22 months, losing an adult female before this age is disastrous for youngsters.

CCF continues to remind the public that it is not legal to remove cheetah cubs (and adults) from the wild for captive purposes. Please contact MET for information on policy regarding captive carnivores. Detailed guidelines have been drafted for your safety and the welfare of large carnivores, and strict guidelines exist for holding large carnivores in captivity.

A REVIEW OF CHEETAHS WORKED ON BY CCF: 1991 -2005

Between 1991 and 2005, CCF has worked on 676 cheetahs in 1525 handlings. Many were handled multiple times, including those in captivity for annual physcials, as well as wild cheetahs that were tagged and released and then re-captured. Of these 676 cheetahs:

- 500 (74%) were wild caught animals,
- 100 (15%) were already in captivity, and
- 76 (11%) were dead animals from the wild, of which
 - 316 (47%) were caught on livestock farms,
 - 259 (38%) were caught on game farms,
 - 342 (50%) were released back into the wild, and
 - 52 (8%) were transferred out of country, into the wild in South Africa and Zambia, while others went into captivity in South Africa and the United States.

very well to their new surroundings at CCF. They have named them Harry, Ron and Hermonie, after the characters in the Harry Potter book series by J.K. Rowling. They are affectionately called the Hogwart's trio.

In February, a fourth orphan came to CCF. This cub, named Kanini (meaning little one) by staff, as she is very small for her age, is also adapting well and will be introduced to the Hogwart's trio when she is strong enough. Cheetah cubs are

To release or not to release...

By: Bonnie Schumann, Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) & Carla Conradie, Africat Foundation.

Over the years Otjiwarongo-based Cheetah Conservation Fund and Africat Foundation have received calls from farmers to collect cheetahs captured in trap cages. The farming community asks what happens to these cats, and why were they caught in the first place?

Cheetahs are usually captured at "play trees" (marking trees), along fence lines, or in the veld using live bait (e.g. goats). Captures are most often made as a preventative measure or simply because cheetah activity was seen on the farm, and not due to livestock loss. Captures very rarely take place at a kraal and usually not at the same time as an actual loss. Since cheetahs rarely return to a kill, the captured animals are seldom directly associated with a specific loss, as is more common in the case with leopards. Each of these factors play a role in determining the fate of the captured cheetahs and a number of criteria are considered when deciding whether these animals are candidates for release, or should remain in captivity.

Place and Time of Capture

Where and when a cheetah is captured is usually a good indicator as to whether the actual cheetah that may have been causing livestock losses has been caught. A cheetah captured inside a kraal is more likely to be the problem than a cheetah captured at a playtree, because multiple cheetahs have overlapping home ranges, and young dispersing, transient male cheetahs also visit these marking trees. Most cheetahs captured at marking trees are considered releasable, because this indiscriminate capture does not target specific conflict animals, but rather any cheetah passing through the area.

The time period between the loss and the capture is also important when determining whether the right predator has been caught. Most captures occur days or even weeks after a loss. CCF's radio telemetry data, collected over a nine year period, has shown that cheetahs are virtually never found on the same farm from one week to the next. An exception to this rule is females with cubs under eight weeks old, as they stay close to their dens until the cubs are able to follow them. Since home ranges overlap and individuals



travel vast distances, (the average cheetah home range is 1600km²) any significant time lapse between livestock loss and capture makes it highly unlikely that the culprit has been caught.

Reason for Capture

The circumstances under which a cheetah has been caught are also considered, including whether actual livestock or game losses have occurred or if the capture is a preventative measure carried out in anticipation of losses. Cheetahs caught for the latter reason are considered releasable.

Cheetahs that take livestock may be categorised as either habitual or opportunistic livestock killers. Certain cheetahs may develop habitual livestock killing behaviour, sometimes even climbing into kraals despite the close proximity of humans or dogs. Where suspected habitual livestock killers are identified (e.g. caught at the kraal) every effort is made to relocate these animals in non-livestock areas such as reserves. Failing this, they end up in captivity.

CCF's scat analysis research has shown that cheetahs primarily hunt wild game. And many farmers have reported cheetahs moving through calving herds or in close proximity to livestock and ignoring them. Opportunistic behaviour occurs when a predator takes livestock on occasion, but does not actively seek out livestock in preference to natural prey. Cheetahs caught taking game in game camps, although causing economic losses, are considered releasable because they are taking natural prey.

Age, Overall Health and Behaviour

Cheetahs captured under the age of sixteen months without an adult are considered non-releasable. However, following rehabilitation as adults, cheetahs that have been orphaned at an early age could be released into controlled environments such as reserves. Where a cheetah's age, dentition and physical condition are such that survival in the wild is no longer possible (old age), it is considered to be non-releasable. Cheetahs are not considered releasable when they have been injured to

such an extent that, even with medical intervention, the injuries would handicap the animal's ability to hunt.

Cheetahs that are habituated to or imprinted on humans are not considered suitable for farmland release, but could be considered for release into reserves.

Procedures for Release of Cheetahs Caught on Farms

Both CCF and AfriCat carry out full biomedical and health examinations on cheetahs before they are released, and all animals are marked with ear tags and/or transponders. If the cheetah is releasable, the farmer is requested to allow the cheetah to be released at the capture location. In cases where animals deemed to be releasable are removed from a farm, permission is obtained from the farmer for their release. No cheetahs are released onto private farmland without the permission of the landowner and cheetahs are not released onto public roads.

Farmers who allow the release of trapped cheetahs are provided with information including weight, age, ear tag numbers and general release location. The identities of farmers who permit CCF and AfriCat to release cheetahs are held in confidence, and neighbours are not notified of these releases. This allows farmers who support cheetah conservation to participate without incurring the animosity of neighbours with differing beliefs. This policy is considered equitable, since farmers who shoot cheetahs indiscriminately do not involve their neighbours in the decision making process, even though such shooting creates disruptions of wild cheetah populations well beyond the boundaries of a single farm.

The value of biodiversity to the survival of all life forms on earth has been clearly established, and the importance of the role of predators in maintaining biodiversity needs to be accepted so that ways can be found to live together. Living with predators is never going to be easy, but it can be done, as is being demonstrated by many Namibian farmers. Removing cheetahs buys some time for the farmer and the cat, but ultimately, the key to human/predator conflict resolution lies in sound livestock and wildlife management.



Do Livestock Guarding Dogs Make Good Pets?

Since the inception of CCF's Livestock Guarding Dog programme in 1994, over 230 Kangal Anatolian Shepherd dogs have been donated to farmers throughout Namibia to protect livestock from predators. Occasionally, however, one of these guardians does not work out properly and is returned to CCF. Once returned, the dog is evaluated by our herder to decide the best future for the dog. Dogs showing they have bonded and that exhibit mature behaviour are re-homed as working dogs, while those that fail to do so are re-homed as pets.

However, does the Kangal breed of the Anatolian Shepherd make a good pet? We have found that they do make the adjustment to pet life very well and take the task of guarding their new human families very seriously. But these big dogs need a big yard and a sturdy fence to contain them, as having grown up used to walking long distances daily with their goat or sheep herd, they are often at first not content to stay in a yard. If you are interested in learning more about CCF's re-homing programme, please let us know.

Mongreltonian Puppy Placement

The first two "mongreltonians" (mongrel/Anatolian crosses) produced by CCF are doing well. They were born in July 2005 and are being monitored closely.

CCF's puppy, Penda, is working well with her goat herd and will form part of

CCF's dog breeding programme as will her sister, who is working in the eastern communal conservancy area. These two dogs are smaller in size than a pure bred Anatolian, yet still maintain guarding behaviour. The pure bred Anatolians grow so quickly and so big, that many of the communal areas have asked for CCF to assist in working towards a smaller dog that is still trustworthy and guards well. CCF research has shown that no matter what size the dog is, the quality of care and diet is vital to the performance of the dog. Over the next year, these two dogs will be bred back to pure Anatolians and their offspring monitored closely as well.



Mongreltonian Livestock Guard Dog, Penda (left), and her co-worker, Uschi (right) leading their goat herd into the veld.

Education is the Future

The Cheetah Conservation Fund strongly supports the education of youth. The future of endangered species and ecosystems are in the hands of the next generations and by teaching them the importance of conservation and human impact in the world, we ensure that they become aware of their responsibility in preserving the planet.

CCF has a well developed education programme, visiting schools all over the country and inviting schools, youth groups and environmental groups to visit the CCF Centre. In 2005, over 10,500 learners attended CCF educational programmes, presented at nearly 100 schools. An additional 1,100 students stayed overnight at CCF's Light Foot tented camp. CCF's Education Officer, Gebhardt Nikanor, is responsible for coordinating and conducting environmental education and outreach programmes at schools and at the CCF Centre as well as community education around the Livestock Guarding Dog Programme.

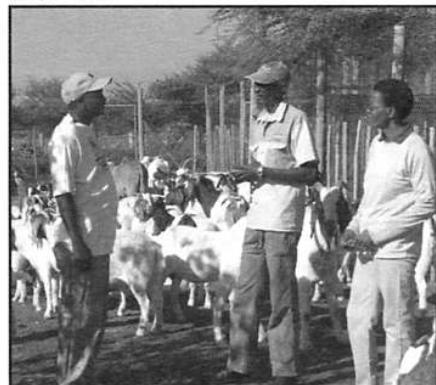
SQUAMOUS CELL CARCINOMA FOUND IN WORKING DOGS

Squamous Cell Carcinoma (SCC) has been diagnosed in several Kangal Anatolian livestock guarding dogs, as well as mongrel dogs in Namibia. Through careful monitoring of the dogs they have placed over the years, CCF has identified this emerging problem and will be investigating it further. Research to establish if other countries with high UV exposure may have reported a similar problem will form part of the investigation. In particular, veterinarians from South Africa and Australia will be asked about the incidence of SCC in their dogs, as it is suspected that exposure to the sun could be the cause. Without further investigation, this is still speculation. CCF is working with veterinarians from Namibia, South Africa, Australia and Holland to investigate this problem.

Farmer's Meetings

Bonnie Schumann and Josephine Henghali, accompanied by Polytech conservation and Neudamm Agricultural college interns, travelled with Mr. Jefta Karipata to the four corners of the Otjiwarongo district to speak to affirmative and emerging farmers about training opportunities offered by CCF. CCF is focusing on making training courses available to these farmers.

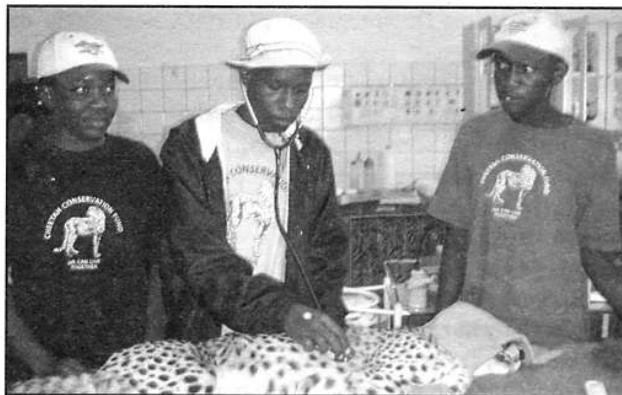
Josephine Henghali (right) and Gebhardt Nikanor (centre) visited a group of resettled farmers in the Okahandja district and spent time sharing information on integrated livestock and predator management. They also showed the farmers how to identify which predator had been harassing their livestock, and discussed options for protecting the livestock using guarding dogs.



ANNUAL CHEETAH HEALTH EXAMS - TRAINING FUTURE CONSERVATIONISTS

In February, all resident cheetahs at CCF underwent annual health exams, endoscopies and sperm collection for male cheetahs, as part of CCF's ongoing research into all aspects of cheetah health. Every time a cheetah is handled at CCF, be it for annual exams or wild cheetahs passing through, CCF staff always take the opportunity to conduct intensive training for their students in addition to undertaking their basic research.

Very few facilities worldwide offer the "hands-on" training that students receive at CCF. In cases where the animals were darted, interns accompanied CCF's veterinarian, Dr. Arthur Bagot-Smith, and staff to observe the procedures and learn about safety aspects.



This year Namibian Polytech Natural Resource Management students Eben Tjiteere (middle) and Oiva Akudhenga (right), and Agriculture student Maria Newaya (left), as well as visiting students from abroad, were trained on how to calculate dosages for anaesthetics and antibiotics, monitor the vitals of anaesthetised cats, take blood, and administer vaccines. In this way capacity building amongst future conservationists, both locally and

internationally, is undertaken at every opportunity.

This year the clinic was a hive of activity, as groups from as far afield as Canada, New York and Mozambique watched various procedures. In addition, students from Neudamm Agriculture College interning at the Agriculture Extension office in Otjiwarongo and Polytech students interning at other local organisations also joined in. Members of the public visiting the centre during the week were also given the unique opportunity of seeing the resident CCF cheetahs undergoing their annual physical examinations.

INTERNATIONAL YOUTH INSPIRED BY NAMIBIA & CCF

In January, CCF was visited by a multi-national youth group, hosted by the Namibian National Youth Council Environmental Programme. The collaborative international youth programme brought together six representatives from three different countries. The 18 youth, varying from school leavers to University students representing Mozambique, Canada and Namibia, took part in the programme with the main focus being environmental education.

While they were at CCF, annual cheetah work-ups were being performed, giving the group the opportunity to participate in this interesting process. CCF's Director, Dr. Laurie Marker met with the youth group and explained that in order to save the cheetah, an integrated and holistic approach is required, whereby the focus is not only on the needs of the cheetah but on the livelihoods of the Namibian people as well.

The six Namibian representatives were very proud and enthusiastically shared knowledge of the environmental wealth of Namibia with their foreign peers. All were inspired by the vision and dedication of the Cheetah Conservation Fund.

As a part of this programme, the students have been given grants for projects within their country. A strong interest was expressed to use this funding, with CCF's help, for a research project in Mozambique to establish the status and distribution of cheetahs there. Mozambique's cheetah population, is estimated at just over 100 cheetahs. Representatives from this country said the experience at CCF really hit home.

Several of the Canadian students looked at developing programmes with CCF in their country, as last year Cheetah Conservation Fund Canada received its official charitable status. This gives the Canadian students the opportunity to continue supporting CCF long after they have left Namibia.

For further information on the CCF Canada chapter, please contact Diane Girard at 32-375 Book RD N, Grimsby, Ontario L2M 2M8, Canada or email her at dgirard@kingluminaire.com

New students join CCF team!

Every year students from the Polytechnic of Namibia conduct their six month internships at CCF, giving them the opportunity to gain work experience in their field of interest. Beginning in January, CCF welcomed three new Namibian students (see photo above).

Maria Newaya, a 3rd year agriculture student, will be focusing on baseline studies of the CCF's goat herd and learning about how to care for Kangal Anatolian Shepherd Livestock Guard Dogs. Oiva Akudhenga and Eben Tjiteere, both 3rd year natural resource management students, will conduct research on bush encroachment, as well as their own conservation projects. Oiva will study giraffe feeding behaviour and Eben will conduct prey density surveys on CCF's research farms.

In collaboration with the Oregon and Washington State University System's Global Graduate programme, US students intern at CCF for a 3 month period and gain university credit. Kari Page has assisted with CCF's education programme and will be completing her internship at the end of March.



ATTENTION: AFFIRMATIVE ACTION AND EMERGING FARMERS! TRAINING COURSES OFFERED

CCF is again offering training courses on "Integrated Livestock and Wildlife Management". These courses are developed around the needs of the organisation or community and can be a week long, or can be run as a series of one-day courses over time. Topics include herd health, factors affecting production, record keeping systems, rangeland management and predator identification, ecology and predator killing patterns. Specific topics requested by participants can also be entertained if enough time is allowed to source specialists. Ideally, groups consist of 35 participants. Support for these courses has come from the Smithsonian Institution, Wilderness Safaris, the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, Ministry of Agriculture, Water and Forestry, RISE, NNF and the Namibia Wild Dog Project.

CCF has been conducting these courses over the past two years for communal farmers and conservancies. Based on the positive response received from participants, we have decided to offer the courses to emerging and affirmative action farmers in the commercial farming areas. This course is also ideal for farm workers and can be adapted to specific group's training needs. Farmers are encouraged, through their associations or conservancies, to contact CCF regarding the courses. For more information contact, Josephine Henghali or Bonnie Schumann (far left in picture above) at CCF on (067) 306225 or cheeta@iafrica.com.na



Communal and Commercial Conservancy Relations

Conservancies in Namibia are institutional mechanisms to enable group management of natural resources in a sustainable manner that provides a range of benefits for conservancy members. Currently, there are two approaches to conservancy development, based on the dual land tenure system in Namibia. On commercial (freehold) land, individual farm owners have conditional rights over the use of wildlife. They voluntarily form conservancies by agreeing to collaborate in the management of wildlife and other natural resources. There are currently 25 freehold conservancies, covering about 4.7 million hectares and supporting some 30 000 people. On communal land, residents acquire conditional rights over wildlife use and commercial tourism through the formation of a conservancy and its registration with the government. There are over 40 registered communal area conservancies, covering almost 8 million hectares and supporting more than 100 000 people.

CCF supported an assessment through a joint partnership with CANAM, which represents conservancies on freehold land, and the Namibian Association of Community-based Natural Resource Management Organisations (NACSO), which represents NGOs and individuals that work with communal area conservancies. The assessment was commissioned in order to take stock of the two conservancy approaches and to identify key issues, constraints and opportunities for collaboration between communal and commercial (freehold) conservancies in Namibia. A consultant, Brian Jones, was hired to develop a blueprint to move forward in conservancy cooperation.

A draft report entitled "Critical Stocktaking Assessment and Report on Communal and Freehold Conservancies to Explore Areas of Mutual Cooperation, Collaboration and Synergy" has been presented and will provide the basis to move collaborative efforts forward.

mediaNEWS

Due to CCF's internationally recognised programmes, we are contacted regularly by the media. Over the past year, Namibian cheetah conservation received extensive media coverage both internationally and locally. This coverage is vital to foster international awareness and support of cheetah conservation efforts and the value of Namibia's cheetah population internationally.

International Sky News TV featured a two minute segment, played every hour for 24 hours, and the ABC TV News (U.S.A.) did a 4 minute feature programme about CCF's guarding dogs. Three events, the Regional Global Cheetah Forum Workshop, held at CCF in December, a visit to Namibia by internationally renowned geneticists, and the annual Waterberg Conservancy August full moon water-hole count all received widespread

local coverage. In addition, local and international farmer's magazines featured articles about CCF, ranging from the use of swing gates on game fences to information regarding CCF's research programmes, livestock guarding dogs, and Cheetah Country Beef.

CCF was proud to be a part of the Namibian Conservation Magazine 2005/2006 which published an insightful article about CCF, emphasising that CCF "has its foundation in sound scientific research". Both the Namibian New Era newspaper and Space Magazine ran editorials on Dr. Laurie Marker and her role in cheetah conservation in Namibia, while African TV, Johannesburg, featured CCF in a series aimed at inspiring young South Africans to take up careers in science, technology and conservation, as well as showing some of the great innovations that are coming out of Africa. Japanese TV showed how predator conservation and

livestock farmers can work hand in hand, and Animal Planet's hour-long documentary showcased CCF's work to the world. In 2006, a French film crew filmed a CCF documentary for European countries that will air later in the year.



French film crew, Gerard Sergent (far left) and Jean-Laurent Bodinier (second from right) with their director, Natacha Calestreme (second from left) and US travel magazine photographer, Jay Dickman (centre), are shown sights in Otjiwarongo, Cheetah Capital of the World, by Dr. Laurie Marker.

ccf KENYA

NEW HEADQUARTERS IN NAIROBI

Since 2001, CCF Kenya (CCFK) has been based on the Delamere Estates near Nakuru, through the support of the Delamere's and other friends on Soysambu - especially Tom and Sally Cholmondeley and the late Simon Combes and his wife Kat, allowing CCF to work within the network of Kenya farming communities. The need to be closer to the Kiu project(s) site, coupled with the bad roads, triggered the decision to find a new home base for CCFK. CCFK's base of operations is now in the Mt. View Estate just 3km north of Westlands, Nairobi.

CCF Kenya Project Director, Mary Wykstra, and Research Assistant, Cosmas Wambua continue to conduct research and education projects with the assistance of their Community Liaison Officer, Lumumba Mutiso, in the Machakos Wildlife Forum.

CHEETAH CONSERVATION BOTSWANA

The Cheetah Conservation Botswana (CCB) project is an independent project, and not a CCF project, as incorrectly reported in the last newsletter. Rebecca Klein heads up CCB, ably assisted by veterinarian Dr. Kyle Good and Field Researcher, Annmarie Houser. For more news on CCB, please visit their website at www.cheetahbotswana.com

International effort saves Ethiopian cheetah orphans.

Have computer will travel" is Dr. Laurie Marker's philosophy and no matter where she is, she is doing cheetah business, and has friends in all parts of the world. While visiting the U.S.A. in November, Laurie was able to help cheetahs in Ethiopia. Thanksgiving 2005 will remain a memorable day for many cheetah friends around the world. It was the day two orphan cheetahs' lives were saved in a remote corner of Africa, and it demonstrated the power of people across the globe combining their efforts to achieve a goal.

While most Americans were fixing their turkey dinners, Laurie was coordinating her list of friends in Ethiopia to assist two orphan cheetah cubs. The cubs, estimated at only five months of

age, were tied to the ground by an 8-inch rope, after they were illegally purchased at a local market for 50 birr (US\$6) by a hotel owner. In addition to



being severely malnourished, one cub had a badly infected eye that had gone untreated. The U.S. military Civil Affairs unit, based in Gode, sounded the

alarm when they were offered the cubs for US\$1,000, and contacted CCF for assistance.

Through our extensive network of cheetah friends, we were able to coordinate the rescue. Ethiopian officials and concerned individuals, helped by representatives of the U.S. Embassy in Addis, the U.S. military unit, and the Ethiopian Wolf Conservation Program successfully confiscated the cubs and flew them to Addis for veterinary attention. Of concern is the fact that this incident once again highlights the ongoing illegal capture and trade of carnivores (especially young cheetahs), in this case in southern Ethiopia, that are apparently often sold to buyers in the Saudi Peninsula and elsewhere in the United Arab Emirates.

CCF has been asked to support the care and housing of these cubs at the Presidential Palace in Addis Ababa.



Algerian cheetah scat samples yield their secrets.

Last year Dr. Laurie Marker joined a team of researchers from the Sahale Saharan Interest Group (SSIG) in a survey of the Ahaggar National Park in Algeria. The team was excited to find signs of cheetahs in the park. Cheetah spoor were seen, as well as scat found at marking trees. The Algerian guides and local nomads in the park informed the research team that cheetahs use certain trees regularly. The team collected nearly 50 scat samples that were thought to be from cheetahs.

Using CCF's scat analysis technique, the scat is washed and the hairs within the scat are analysed to determine if they are from cheetahs (cheetah scat always has cheetah hair within it since cheetahs lick themselves). The location of the confirmed cheetah samples was then mapped, showing a rough distribution of cheetahs within the Ahaggar National Park. The next step will be to have these confirmed samples analysed to evaluate the genetics of the Algerian cheetah. This will be done at the Zoological Society of London. The remaining scat samples, at a later stage, can be used to identify the prey base of cheetahs in Algeria, as each hair can be identified to a species level. On-going work for CCF students!

international SUPPORT

Thanks to Mrs. Bremmer's 4th grade class at Captain Strong Elementary School in Battleground, Washington, USA for donating books that will be distributed to Namibian schools. If you are interested in donating books please ship them by surface mail to Cheetah Conservation Fund, PO Box 1755, Otjiwarongo, Namibia.

CCF staff are always happy to respond to farmers' predator/cheetah problems. Please do not hesitate to contact CCF at 067 306225. If phone lines are down, please try 081 124 7799.

thankYOU

Thanks to the following cheetah friends for their support...

Renate Allcock
John W. Andrews
Sam Arkans
P.H. Ashby
Octavia Avila
Sharon Avis
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William & Gayle Bauer
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The Earth Foundation
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Natural Encounters Conservation
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Zoological Society of Philadelphia

staffNEWS



CCF thanks our behind-the-scenes staff for maintaining our facility for Namibians and visitors throughout the world. You are a valuable part of the CCF team and we can't do it without you!

CCF says farewell to:

Engelhardt /Awaseb, Assistant Farm Manager, who was based at CCF for over 2 years. He has relocated to Northern Namibia and will be missed by all at CCF.

Trix Malan, Public Relations and Gala Event Organiser has left CCF to go abroad for two years.

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www.cheetah.org

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PO Box 198072, Cincinnati, OH 45219-8072, USA
PO Box 151, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 2XW, UK
Donors who wish to make direct deposits at CCF's
Namibian account may do so at:

**Commercial Bank of Namibia,
Bulow Street Branch, 12-20 Bulow Street,
PO Box 1, Windhoek,
Swift Number: CBON NA NX,**



CCF - AN INTERNATIONAL CONSERVATION ORGANISATION

from Cheetah Conservation Fund, PO Box 1755, Otjiwarongo, Namibia

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