



# CHEETAH CONSERVATION FUND

## NEWSLETTER

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### FIFTH ANNUAL "CELEBRATION OF SPEED AND ELEGANCE"



#### Speed –

*In previous centuries, we admired the cheetah for its speed – one which we could not hope to match. The cheetah has evolved through millions of years to be the fastest land mammal, and yet today is running its most important race, for its very survival. The outcome of this race depends on each and every one of us.*

#### Elegance –

*To see the elegance of a cheetah running wild, we must ensure this vision for future generations. As*



*stated so eloquently by Jonathan Kingdon: "Of the many ways of measuring land's wealth, one of the surest signs of ecological richness and diversity is an abundance of predator species." Here in Namibia we have the honour of sharing our land with the world's most elegant predator of all, the cheetah.*

With thee words, Dr. Laurie Marker, Executive Director of the Cheetah Conservation Fund, welcomed all attendees to the Fifth Annual gala dinner and auction, "Celebration of Speed and Elegance" held at the Windhoek Country Club on 19 July 2003. The evening's theme, Young Cheetah Friends, inspired by a design by artist Susan Mitchinson and tied into the stories of non-releasable cheetahs housed at CCF, served to remind the audience of the importance of keeping Namibian cheetahs wild and why CCF exists: to maintain a habitat and work with people so that cheetahs can live wild and free.

Dr. Patrick Bergin, President & CEO of the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF) was the evening's feature and talked about why large landscapes are the future for African conservation, stating that "wildlife can support people." Over the 40 years since its founding AWF has invested in the people of Africa for conservation. Dr. Marker followed Dr. Bergin's talk by saying, "this is what makes them a nice role model for CCF, because we also believe in investing in people.."



*Dr. Patrick Bergin, President & CEO of the African Wildlife Foundation, during his presentation regarding the importance of large landscapes in the future for African conservation.*

Once again, the popular Tangenyi Erkana was the evening's Master of Ceremonies. Among the 300 guests was the Guest of Honour, the Right Honourable Prime Minister of Namibia, Theo-Ben Gurirab; the Namibian Ambassador to the U.S., H.E. Leonard Iipumbu; and the Kenya High Commissioner, H.E. T.H. Dado. In his speech, the Prime Minister commended Dr. Marker on the role that CCF has played in Namibia's conservation.

An auction of 100 items donated by Namibian and international businesses and artists raised nearly N\$50,000. One of the featured auction items was a 18kt pink tourmaline pendant, donated by the Sand Dragon in Omaruru. These funds will assist CCF in furthering its research and educational goals, and thus accomplish its motto: "We Can Live Together." The Cheetah Conservation Fund extends a warm thank you to everyone who contributed to the success of the 2003 Celebration of Speed and Elegance.

For the fourth year in a row, CCF recognised local people whose work has made meaningful contributions to conservation in Namibia. CCF's Conservationist of the Year Award was presented to two farmers: Petrina Hikas, a communal farmer from Khorixas, and Timm Miller, a commercial



*The Right Honourable Prime Minister, Theo-Ben Gurirab, and Mrs. Gurias, the evening special guests, view the auction items with Dr. Laurie Marker (CCF's Ex. Director), Dr. Arthur Bagot-Smith (CCF Chairman - behind) and H.E. Leonard Iipumbu, the Namibian Ambassador to the U.S. (left).*

farmer from Helmeringhausen, who has demonstrated his ability to live and farm in harmony with predators.

**In addition, an award that acknowledges the hard work of NGOs in Namibia was presented to Mr. Garth Owen-Smith and Dr Margaret Jacobsohn of the Integrated Rural Development & Nature Conservation (IRDNC) for their work in community-based natural resource management.**

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# CHEETAH CONSERVATIONISTS OF THE YEAR

For the fourth consecutive year CCF paid tribute to outstanding conservation efforts by Namibians, by presenting Conservationist of the Year awards. This year, two farmers were honoured.

Petrina Hikas was born on a farm near Kalkfeld. As an adult, she started thinking about settling with her family down, and managed to buy some livestock and first farmed in a communal area near Khorixas. In 2001 she heard about CCF's Livestock Guarding Dog Programme, and applied for one of the puppies. CCF staff worked with her in placing the puppy, and is very impressed with the excellent care she has given it. That puppy is now one of the most successful working dogs, because she managed to provide it with the right care and training to ensure the safety of her livestock.

Petrina is very concerned about the use of poison within commercial and communal areas, and is an active member of her Farmers' Association. She is a strong proponent of good farming practices, because she knows the difficulties of farming. Hers is an outstanding example of how sustainable farming practices can help people and wildlife to live together.

Timm Miller began farming in 1999 on his grandmother's farm in Helmeringhausen, after obtaining a BSc in Agriculture with a Major in Nature Conservation. He farms with Boer and Angora goats, karakul sheep, and cattle, along with high densities of game species and predators—including leopard, cheetah, jackal, caracal, and African wild cat. To prevent losses,

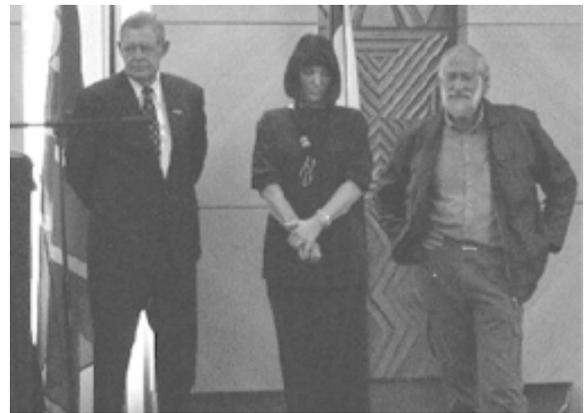
he was the first farmer in his area to obtain an Anatolian Shepherd from CCF. In 2002 CCF staff undertook the almost 2000km round trip to Timm's farm to look at his dog. Timm was nice enough to arrange for our staff to address his Farmers' Association meeting. Interestingly, during that meeting CCF staff learned that Timm was the only farmer in the area who did not have jackal, or other predator problems.

**Timm represents an excellent example of a farmer who has implemented conservation-minded approach to the benefit of his farming operation, thus breaking the mold of traditional southern farmers, and setting an example to all Namibian farmers.**

## THE CHEETAH CONSERVATION FUND AND ITS BOARD OF DIRECTORS CONGRATULATE CONSERVATIONISTS



2003 CCF Conservationist of the Year Award  
Petrina Hikas (2nd from left) and Timm Miller (far right) with CCF staff Siegfriedth !Aeheb (left) and Bonnie Schumann.



2003 CCF General Conservation Award  
Dr. Margaret Jacobsohn (middle) and Garth Owen-Smith (right) with CCF Chairman, Dr. Arthur Bagot-Smith.

And thank all the supporters and sponsors of our this year's  
"Celebration of Speed and Elegance"

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The Gun Shop  
The Juice Factory  
The Lighthouse Pub & Restaurant  
The Miller Family  
The Sand Dragon  
VCS Computer CC  
Walton Stationery Co. Namibia, Ltd.  
Weylandt's Warehouse  
Wilderness Safaris  
Windhoek Country Club

## RADIO-TRACKING CHEETAHS - 1993-2000

*Excerpt from Laurie Marker's PhD - Aspects of Cheetah (Acinonyx jubatus) Biology, Ecology and Conservation Strategies on Namibian Farmlands.*

In May 1993 the Cheetah Conservation Fund initiated one of the most intensive radio-tracking programmes for cheetahs in Africa, encompassing a study area of some 17,928 km<sup>2</sup> in north-central Namibia. The land use in this area is primarily commercial cattle and wildlife farming. At the time the study was initiated, almost nothing was known of the movement patterns of cheetahs in Namibia (+90% occur on commercial farmlands) or the home-range

requirements of different social groups, e.g., females with or without cubs, single males or coalitions (male groups).

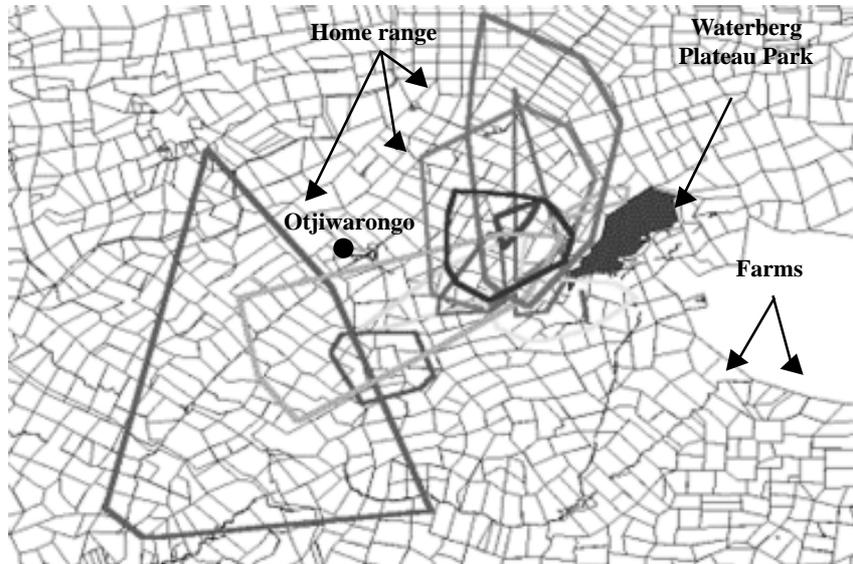
During this period, 42 (27 males & 15 females) cheetahs were fitted with radio-collars (only one individual in a social group was collared).



*Bonnie Schumann sharing CCF's radio-tracking programme with visitors.*

Of the cheetahs tracked, 82% were followed for more than a year, while 12% were tracked for more than three consecutive years. Lifetime, annual and seasonal home ranges, and habitat use were determined from 2,763 fixed locations. Following release, radio-collared cheetahs were tracked from a fixed-wing Cessna 172 aeroplane utilising a dual antenna procedure. Observations were made on 12.4% of occasions, providing information on demographic parameters. Location success rate was 87% on weekly flights.

These factors between sexes, social groups and between females with cubs of different ages. The average distance moved per day varied between sexes, with single males travelling further on a daily basis than females or coalition males. Eight females, three of which had multiple litters, were tracked with cubs during the period of tracking, and ages varied from birth through independence. The mean minimum distance moved between (weekly) fixes was 10.3km, with extremes of up to 40 km's recorded. There was a marked seasonality to tracking through dry and wet seasons as well.



*Variation of home ranges of some of the cheetahs CCF radio-tracked over time.*

We examined spatial differences in relation to social group composition, genetic relatedness, season rainfall, prey biomass, and habitat density. Specifically we asked what factors influenced home range size, spatial distribution and habitat utilisation, and we tackled this with respect to core home-range areas, overlaps between cheetah home ranges and cheetah density estimation.

Home range sizes were compared between single males and those in coalition groups, between the sexes, and between all three social groups (single males, coalition males, and females.) Home range may be defined as "that area traversed by the individual in its normal activities of food gathering, mating and caring for young". We analysed the minimum distance moved per day and the distance moved between fixes, and compared

returned to their original sites of capture, and translocation appeared to have little effect on their movements. Home ranges of resident and translocated cheetahs were no different.

Relative to those studied elsewhere, Namibian cheetahs have very large home ranges averaging 1056 km<sup>2</sup> annually and 1642km<sup>2</sup> over a lifetime. The home ranges in this study were on average three times larger than those found on the short-grass plains of the Serengeti. Ranges were significantly smaller during the wet season, and were inversely related to rainfall. Cheetahs showed intensive utilisation of 50% core areas, which comprised a mean of 13.9% of their total home range area.

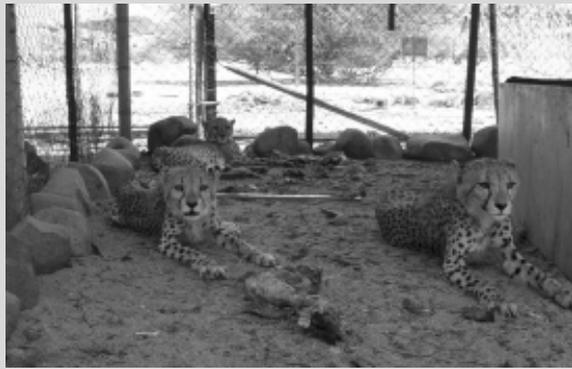
This study would not have been possible without the assistance and participation of Namibia's farmers. Although some of the study animals were shot by farmers, thus frustrating research efforts, many of these farmers shared valuable information concerning the removal of these animals, broadening our understanding of the conflict issues on the farmlands.

Increasing our understanding of how cheetahs move on the farmlands can greatly contribute to the management of conflict that invariably occurs as cheetahs traverse farms. Of particular significance is the extremely large size of the home ranges in relation to problem-animal control. In cases where livestock losses are experienced, removal of cheetahs is most often non-target specific due to their movement within home ranges, and problems will most likely occur even if cheetahs are shot or removed. This once again emphasises the futility of removing predators, versus altering livestock management that is far more effective in reducing conflict.

## THREE YOUNG CHEETAHS RESCUED BY CCF

In February, a concerned member of the public informed the Cheetah Conservation Fund that there were cheetahs in a very small enclosure on a farm in the Omaruru area. The cats, the individual said, appeared to be in a poor condition. CCF immediately obtained permission from MET to remove the cheetahs. Three approximately 12 month-old cheetahs were found in a 4x6 meter cage. The cheetahs had apparently been in the small enclosure for more than five months. The cage was filthy, with rotting carcasses and old bones littering the ground.

These cheetahs were captured in a game camp and were held for no particular reason and without a permit. We do not know what happened to their mother. As they are so young and very habituated, we are unable to release them back into the wild. The holding of any large



Two of the three cheetahs rescued by CCF

carnivore in Namibia is subject to approval by MET and the granting of a permit to hold the animal. New and vastly improved guidelines have been formulated regulating the welfare of carnivores in captivity. Anyone wishing to hold a large carnivore, or already having one in captivity is urged to contact MET for a copy of the new requirements.

## JACK IMBERT- Pilot Extraordinaire



Jack "at home" in his Cessna 172

## NEW CHEETAH PEN



A team of Raleigh International volunteers spent three months at the Cheetah Conservation Fund building a 64-hectare pen for the non-releasable cheetahs at CCF.

With help from Raleigh's volunteers, the female cheetahs at CCF can now be moved to the new pen, making space for the male groups in the two and three hectare pens around the centre.

With a punctured coffee tin serving as a shower (representing the only luxury in the bush camp), these young urbanites tackled the daunting task of planting poles and pulling fencing with great enthusiasm. Three different groups, each with about 12 people, spent three weeks at a time living and working in the bush. A sub-division of a game camp was already in place, so most of the main perimeter fence was up already. This camp has now been cheetah-proofed and warthog-proofed by Raleigh, who also constructed a one-hectare feeding pen and handling facilities within the larger area. This facility will ensure that all the cheetahs can be seen when fed, and caught or immobilised when necessary, for example, during annual health checks. Smaller enclosures are available in the event of injury or illness.

## Waterberg Conservancy Waterhole Count

The Waterberg Conservancy held its annual full moon 24-hour water hole count this year in July. Almost 70 people assisted with this year's count, including volunteers from Daktari, Otjiwarongo and Khorixas youth groups, EarthWatch, CCF and Waterberg Conservancy farm staff.



Since 1993, Jack Imbert has been CCF's radio tracking pilot. Jack has supported CCF's efforts for many years, joining the CCF Board of Trustees in 1993. Besides being an outstanding pilot and physiotherapist by qualification, Jack is also a cattle farmer in the Otjiwarongo district, and has adapted his management techniques to be a predator-friendly farmer.

Many of the CCF volunteers and staff were lucky enough to accompany the pilot and radio-tracker on these spectacular flights over the farmlands, and on occasion over the Waterberg and around the Omatako Mountains. Many passengers were not lucky enough to escape the sometimes rather severe effects of motion-illness. These memories were fortunately often superseded by memories of sightings of wild cheetahs crossing roadways, standing on the pinnacle of a termite mound, or even playing as the plane swooped overhead.

CCF's radio tracking study represents one of the longest on-going studies of cheetahs anywhere, and doubtlessly few other pilots have made such a consistent and dedicated contribution to a research programme. While CCF paid for fuel costs, Jack donated all the flying time, making a significant financial contribution to CCF's ability to carry out this project. In most cases, flying time averaged 3,5 hours per week, with conditions varying from the very clear but windy winter months, to the turbulent conditions of the rainy season in summer. The only occasions Jack was not helping CCF with its radio tracking was on the rare times when he went on holiday, and Dr. Arthur Bagot-Smith filled in for him.

Jack's unfailing support and enthusiasm helped to make this project the success it has been, helping to find the answers to so many questions, and unravelling so many of the mysteries surrounding cheetah movements on the Namibian farmlands.

**Call CCF if you have  
Cheetah Problems  
067 306 225**

## SHOOT OR RELEASE – AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH

- Editorial-by Bonnie Schumann, CCF

“Shoot or release it.” This is the advice often given to farmers calling Namibia’s Ministry of Environment and Tourism. (MET) when they have caught a cheetah on their farm. Many farmers simply shoot the captured cheetah, believing they are solving their problems this way. On the other hand, many farmers are looking for other alternatives rather than shooting one of Namibia’s valuable wildlife resources.

In many cases, with extension work and by providing farmers with assistance, conflict caused by livestock loss to predators can be eased. A farmer, given the right approach, may be willing to release the captured cat and, in so doing, be an example to neighbours less willing to do so. Without help, however, a farmer will simply shoot the cheetah as told by MET, thereby closing the door on any further possible conservation. In most cases farmers are left feeling alienated and with a lasting negative attitude toward, not only predators, but also MET.



Most capture efforts result in the indiscriminate trapping of cheetahs that are not necessarily causing the problem, this only compounds livestock loss issues on farms.

It is all very well to have a conservation body protecting our wildlife in our reserves, but what about the wildlife living outside the boundaries of our protected areas. Without the tolerance and goodwill of Namibia’s farmers who inadvertently accommodate more than 90% of Namibia cheetahs,

### BOTSWANA UPDATE

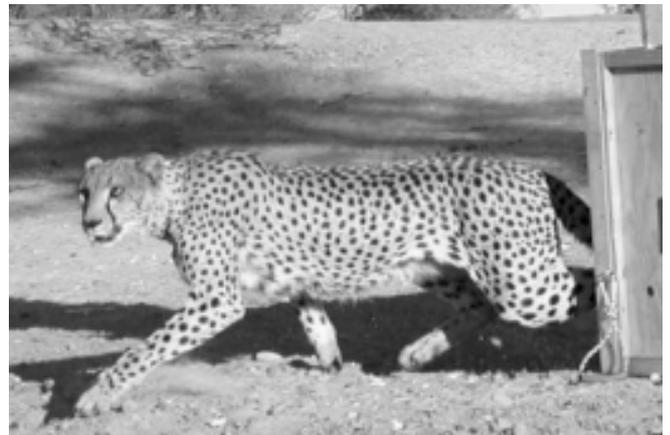
In April, one of Cheetah Conservation Botswana staff spent a couple of weeks at CCF Namibia for continued training in addressing farmers and cheetah/livestock conflict issues. Then, one of CCF’s staff members, Mandy Schumann, travelled to Botswana and together they visited several farms and began collecting survey data on farming practices and conflict issues. In addition CCF staff inspected Cheetah Conservation Botswana’s new field base of operations and cheetah pens in Jwaneng.

Namibia would not be the Cheetah Capital of the World, let alone have a viable cheetah population. Yes, farmers do accept that by farming in Africa they face the risk of drought, disease and predators, but the conservation of these predators outside protected areas is not the sole responsibility of the farming community. Nothing can be done to control the weather, quite a bit can be done to help control the impact of disease, and a lot can be done to negate the impact of predators on livestock. In fact, Namibia is fortunate enough to have NGOs dedicated to carnivore conservation.

A typical example illustrating this issue is that of a Kamanjab farmer who called the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) in February, as she was experiencing smallstock losses to cheetahs. She had been advised by the MET office to shoot the cheetahs. She would have had to shoot cheetahs indiscriminately since, as everyone knows, targeting only the culprit is notoriously difficult.

Fortunately, the farmer was not willing to accept this advice, and continued to make enquiries, which led her to find out about CCF. CCF staff discussed livestock management to protect her livestock, as an alternative to shooting the elusive cheetahs. Livestock management techniques

include calving kraals, calving seasons, guarding dogs or donkeys, secure fencing, and herders. In this case the farmer was in a position to and was willing to adopt livestock management techniques. She understood that without sound livestock management in place, conflict with predators would continue to exist. Shooting predators might be effortless, but is counter-productive, and a serious waste of both the farmers’ time and a valuable natural resource. In the majority of cases, captured cheetahs are releasable.



Removing cheetahs simply open ranges into which other cheetahs will move. The fundamental solution to reducing predator losses lies in improving livestock management.

CCF’s research has shown that the majority of captures are indiscriminate and not target specific. However, in some cases habitual livestock thieves are caught—usually old animals or cubs without a mother, and are non-releasable. What happens to them? Should they be shot?

CCF believes that non-releasable cheetahs can continue to be a valuable asset and resource to this country, and internationally—if kept alive. The conservation value of these captive carnivores remains a controversial issue of debate. CCF believes these carnivores can continue to have educational, conservation, and economic value outside of the free-ranging population. CCF takes a firm standpoint that the protection of the free-ranging population is of utmost priority. Cheetahs should not be killed or removed indiscriminately from the wild, be it by game or livestock farmers, or by people wishing to earn an income.

Many farmers in Namibia live peacefully alongside a range of predators; they have developed livestock management techniques to protect their livestock. Farmers in Botswana, Kenya, Zimbabwe, South Africa, and elsewhere are following the example set by Namibia’s farmers. It is up to MET officials, agricultural extension officers, and NGOs to gather as much information as possible from predator-friendly farmers, and to make these findings available to farmers still struggling with predator conflict issues. It is important to resolve predator problems in more imaginative ways than simply reaching for a rifle. This is not only our responsibility, but also a moral obligation!

### CCF Welcomes

Max and Bessie Simon joined CCF in April as Maintenance Supervisor, and Farm Supervisor, respectively. Max, a mechanic trained in Germany, is responsible for the maintenance and improvement of CCF facilities and equipment, and assists with various farm tasks. Bessie is responsible for supervising animal husbandry and farm staff.



# BRINGING TOGETHER CULTURE, CONSERVATION AND EDUCATION

- Editorial By Hannes de Haast, Etosha Conservancy

With the long awaited law on nature conservation not yet promulgated, members of conservancies tend to get discouraged and are losing enthusiasm. However, some of the main functions of a conservancy lie outside the stipulations of a law, so that conservancies have a reason to exist – with or without the law. I will try to justify this statement by defining and discussing the three words – culture, conservation, and education, in relevance to conservancies.

## Culture

Culture can be defined as the man-made part of the human environment. It is the way of life of a specific group. It is learned rather than transmitted by genes. Human beings are trained and *educated* to behave in ways that are conventional and fixed by tradition, hence the distinction between culture and education.

The way that we deal with nature and the environment is part of our culture, and I don't think that we as a nation can be proud of this part of our culture. Even with our national flower (the plastic bag) so abundantly spread across our country, we definitely cannot say that we have a pro-conservation culture. We rather have a utilization or over-exploitation culture, a-reap-while-you-have-the-chance culture, an if-I-don't-shoot-it-someone-else-will culture, to name but a few.

Fortunately, culture is something that can change and that is, I believe, where conservancies can play an important role. To become a nation that cares about the environment, we will have to change our culture.

## Conservation

Conservation is the careful management and enlightened use of natural resources. Some resources have been extensively damaged through human ignorance and carelessness. It is everyone's responsibility to be concerned about conservation and to develop proper attitudes and practices to implement it.

Conservation has a few enemies that I want to point out, namely greed, ignorance and carelessness. The killing of vultures by injudicious use of poison would classify under ignorance or indifference, while the shooting of kudu to balance one's budget classifies under greed. Greed is so inherent to a free enterprise system that I doubt if we would ever be able to eradicate it. We should rather apply it correctly to be in harmony with our goals, and that is quite possible because the money

incentive gives us a good reason to conserve. Without a material incentive in some or other way, few people would be interested in conservation.

I once worked for a company that was obsessed with the quality of their products and this worked through even to the person cleaning the floors. They really had a pro-quality culture with slogans to go with it, like "Quality pays."

Now, how about a slogan for us, like "Conservation pays." That is exactly what the tourism industry in Namibia is all about. Our most valuable commodity is the wilderness. But a wilderness that is littered with plastic bags and without vultures and cheetahs is no wilderness anymore. Therefore, without conservation we will most certainly lose a lot of tourists in the long run.

It certainly will not be good business if a big guest farm is surrounded by neighbours who destroy the wilderness. It is important that as many landowners and land users as possible get a cut from this tourism-cake. I can think of no better arrangement for this to become as reality, than a conservancy.

## Education

Education is a social process, designed and organised to systematically supply the members of a group (whether it is a tribe, a community, or a nation) with knowledge, skills, and *attitudes*, with the intention of utilising them to meet individual and social needs.

If we look at agriculture as an example, we see that in spite of all the educational paraphernalia (like extension officers, farmers weeklies, agricultural colleges and faculties), a lot of stupid things still happen on farms, but in the field of conservation the situation is much worse.

Extension officers classify farmers as initiators, early-adaptors, late-adaptors and (I want to add) never-adaptors. Now, if a late-adaptor in agriculture does not want to adopt a better method of production, then he is primarily the one that is going to suffer. But, in our conservancy industry (let us call it the 'wilderness industry') ignorance or indifference of a late-adaptor will cause all of us to suffer in the long run.

For effective conservation, we will have to be more effective and efficient than past agricultural methods. I can think of only one way

to achieve this, and that is through a ground-level approach. In other words, every one must become an educator. And, once again, where can one get a more suitable arrangement to achieve this goal than in a conservancy. What my neighbour does agricultural-wise may not necessarily affect me but what he does wilderness-wise will indeed – and I can play a major role to influence him. Our field of education should not be limited to conservancy members only. Different target groups could be identified for such an educational effort, and each group should be approached differently. For instance, non-members (like the business community, farm workers, and the government) should be educated to become members and to exploit ways to get a share of the wilderness cake. Each conservancy could become a member of the local chamber of commerce and encourage the business people to become more tourist-friendly, because tourism is good for conservation and *vice versa*. There are also certain things that farm workers should know about conservation and tourism, and the effect of these on our future, but it is important that there should also be an incentive for them.

## Conclusion

The three words, culture, conservation, and education are intertwined. We can't just sit and wait. We must play an active role to establish a pro-conservation culture in our country. We must become much more tourist-friendly because the profits that go with it give us an ideal incentive to conserve. Conservation will definitely pay. Each of us should become an educator, all the different target groups should be addressed, and CANAM should play a leading role in this regard.



CANAM members attending the AGM in May at the Okahandja Lodge. CANAM continues its goals in Conservation through Conservancies.

## NAMIBIAN WILD DOG PROJECT INITIATED

The African wild dog is the second most endangered large carnivore in Africa after the Ethiopian Wolf and the most endangered large carnivore in Namibia. Perhaps only 3000 animals remain in the wild, Namibia's population has been estimated to be around 500 individuals, all existing in the isolated northeast of the country.

Being killed by farmers, habitat loss, and disease contracted from domestic dogs are all contributing factors to the dog's drop in numbers. While wild dogs undoubtedly kill livestock under certain conditions, research has shown that their impact is small compared to livestock losses from disease, ingestion of poisonous plants, stock theft, and predation by feral dogs, jackal, and hyena. Wild dogs are frequently blamed (and subsequently

persecuted) for large numbers of stock from being seen in the vicinity of farmlands when the true cause of livestock loss remains unverified. In response to the need for wild dog research and conservation, the Namibian Nature Foundation has recently initiated the Namibian Wild Dog Project (WDP). The aim of the project is to investigate human-wild dog conflict along with other threats to wild dog conservation, while developing means for mitigating these threats.

The initial study area is the emerging communal conservancies of Otjozondjupa and surrounding commercial farmland. The Cheetah Conservation Fund is working closely with the WDP to develop collaborative approaches to conservation based on the common objectives of research and education.

Earlier in the year, the predator sub-group in the Otjozondjupa region—comprised of the CCF, WDP, and the Rare and Endangered Species Trust (REST), joined efforts to collect predator information in the four emerging communal conservancies of the eastern area of the Otjozondjupa region. The group developed a standard questionnaire to focus on predator and wildlife sightings, densities, and farmers' attitudes. The questionnaire will look at livestock management practices, and will provide baseline information upon which appropriate measures regarding predator issues can be devised. For more information on this project, contact Robin Lines by cell phone: 081 2772 333, or email at [wilddog@mweb.com.na](mailto:wilddog@mweb.com.na)

# LIVESTOCK & GUARDING DOGS

## RAISING A GUARDING DOG – SUCCESS OR FAILURE?

What makes a dog a successful livestock-guarding dog? Although there are factors such as breeding, and training, which contribute to a set of golden rules that should be followed when raising a livestock-guarding dog, the secret to a successful working dog is its owner! An owner that is in touch with his dog's development, health, and progress is the key to ensuring the success of the dog.

Just as young growing children go through specific developmental stages, so do all animals. Any parent can tell you about the importance of bonding with your baby, the terrible twos, the dreaded teen years and so on, until maturation takes place – and the raising never really ends. Raising working dogs is no different.



Anatolian puppies on their way to their new home

The Anatolian Shepherd was imported into Namibia by the Cheetah Conservation Fund. This breed was selected as it ranks amongst the top third of the most successful large working breeds, and it comes from a similar climate to that of Namibia. Most importantly, it has an advantage over the many local breeds and traditional mongrels, in that it is formidable in size and has the courage to match – important when facing predators such as leopard and cheetah. The Anatolian Shepherd is also rapidly gaining popularity amongst South African farmers.

However, the Anatolian Shepherd is not a wonder-dog that can be thrown together with livestock at any age and left to its own devices. A certain amount of effort and serious commitment are required from working dog owners.

The golden rules to raising a successful working dog can be summarised as follows:

### 1. OWNER

A successful working-dog owner should be:

- dedicated to making the dog a success;
- available to monitor the dogs progress and guide its development;
- willing to invest time and money into the dogs health, welfare, and development;
- patient and understanding of dogs quirks and needs

### 2. BREED

When selecting a livestock-guarding dog, an owner needs to ask:

- What are the main predators the dog will need to defend the livestock against?
- What function have the various available breeds been developed for, i.e., working, herding, hunting, etc?
- What are the advantages/disadvantages of the

various breeds and their sizes?

- Does the dog come from a proven working line?
- Where the problem is smaller predators such as jackal, many of the smaller traditional mongrels, as well as some of the herding breeds will do. Where larger predators such as leopard and cheetah are a problem, then a larger dog will be required. The first step to consider is finding a dog that comes from a proven working line. This is not a guarantee that the dog will succeed, but is the first step along the way, as genetics can play a role.

### 3. BONDING

Most literature suggests that the critical bonding stage for puppies takes place between six and twelve weeks of age. Therefore, the dog should be living with what it is expected to protect, from the age of 8 to 16 weeks. Ideally, the puppy should be born amongst livestock and raised with them for the rest of its working life. Taking an older dog from a home where it has been bred and raised with a family, and putting it with livestock, is a recipe for failure.

If a dog has been born and raised with goats, it will not easily develop an attachment to a flock of sheep. The livestock a dog is raised with must be considered its family. Dogs should never be moved from their first herd, so make sure you know which herd you want them with when you place the dog. New livestock may be brought into a herd but the dog should always remain with a core group it can identify with, especially if they are animals that it grew up with.

When new livestock are brought in, do remember to integrate them gradually. Some dogs, the Anatolian Shepherd being no exception, will recognise strange livestock as not being part of their “family” and they may try and chase them away, causing injury. Take kraal manure and rub it into the new livestock and keep them amongst some of the herd for a few days before allowing the dog access. If you feel more than one dog is necessary to protect the herd, first acquire one and establish it as a successful working dog, before acquiring a second dog. Raising two puppies together may result in them bonding with one another and not with the livestock.

### 4. RAISING

A livestock-guarding dog should never be separated from its herd. When still too young to walk out, some members of its herd should always be left with it in the kraal. When still a puppy, lambs or kids are best as the dog then grows up with them and there is mutual acceptance and bonding.

Adult sheep or goats can be quite aggressive with unfamiliar puppies, so protect the puppy until it is mobile enough to avoid them, and the adult livestock have had a chance to become accustomed to the dog. The puppy can be confined in a pen within the kraal when the herd comes into the kraal in the evening. Later, a doorway can be created

for the puppy to come and go but which is too low for the adult livestock to access. The pen can also serve as a feeding pen for the dog, so that the livestock do not take its food. Ensure the dog has some supervised contact with the livestock when birthing takes place. Older puppies may become excited with newborn lambs, often attempting to clean newborn livestock (this can assist positively with bonding). However, in the process, they sometimes actively prevent the newborn's mother from reaching it. Therefore, allow the puppies access to newborn livestock but do supervise them in the beginning.

Puppies should start accompanying livestock at about three months of age but should not be made to walk too far or for too long in the beginning. As the puppy becomes fitter and its feet toughen



Tim Miller with his Anatolian Shepherd near Helmeringhausen

up, it can walk for longer periods. A dog that is exhausted and foot-sore is not going to want to walk out. Ensure the dog is lead trained at this stage, and that some livestock accompany it if brought back to the kraal.

### 5. TRAINING

At three months of age and again around six months, some breeds of dogs go through a very playful stage. They may chase livestock around, usually in the early morning and evening hours, when energetic and bored in the kraal. The owner needs to be on the lookout for these stages, as with large breeds like the Anatolian, a six-month-old puppy can actually play livestock to death. A certain amount of playfulness indicates bonding and that the dog is viewing his livestock as companions. However, an owner should reprimand the behaviour when observed, so that it does not become too boisterous. As a precaution against damage, boisterous dogs can be put on a run-wire or penned within the kraal if adequate supervision is not possible. When installing a run-wire remember:

- Always ensure the dog has access to water and shade;
- Use a lightweight chain with a swivel clip;
- Ensure the dog cannot reach and try to jump over a fence, or become wounded around any support poles;
- The pegs to which the runwire is attached should be secured below the surface of the ground, to ensure the chain does not get caught on it

STORY CONTINUED on page 8

# COMMUNITY NEWS

## OTJIWARONGO PUBLIC PAINTS CHEETAHS

In March community members participated in creating cheetah works of art in Otjiwarongo. Two models of cheetahs were placed at the Pick 'n Pay and Spar centres, and members of the public were invited to display their artistic talents by painting a square on the fibreglass models. To paint a square, one paid N\$ 5; over 50 squares were painted on each model. Many adults sponsored squares so that local children could paint on the cheetahs.

The Otjiwarongo Tourism Forum thanks local businesses that supported the community event, including General Supply and Pupkewitz, for donating paint and brushes, and Pick 'n Pay and Theo's Spar for allowing the event to be held on their premises.



Face to face – community conservation in action

These two cheetahs, now called “Community Cheetahs,” are part of the 30 cheetah models in the city’s Meetah Cheetah campaign. Meetah Cheetah involves displaying individually decorated cheetahs throughout the town to promote tourism.

For more information, contact the Otjiwarongo Tourism Information at (067) 303830 or Cheetah Conservation Fund at (067) 306225.

## OSHANA YOUTH CHOIR

The Oshana Youth Choir, a 25-member group from northern Namibia, performed for the CCF staff on May 27. Their visit to the Otjiwarongo area was coordinated by CCF staff member Siegfriedth Bandu !Aebeb, and CCF volunteer Richard Urfer. The choir also performed at Pick and Pay in Otjiwarongo, and at Harry Schneider’s farm, presenting HIV and AIDS information in musical form, as well as music from different cultures in Namibia. Siegfriedth commented, “Otjiwarongo and CCF have enjoyed the performance by the young people. We’re hoping they come back in the future.”



## Defense Force learns about cheetahs at CCF



Namibian Defense Force spent a morning at CCF learning about cheetahs and their role in a healthy ecosystem. This distinguished group are based at Otjiwarongo during their training.

## OTJIWARONGO YOUTH FORUM’S VISIT CCF

Youth Forum is a Youth Development Program of the National Youth Council of Namibia and Directorate of Youth Development. The project aims to inspire youth from all backgrounds to discover their full potential by working together on challenging environmental and community projects in Namibia. Youth participating in projects at CCF have the chance to gain new skills and enjoy a multi-cultural experience, while their contribution in terms of local knowledge, history, and culture is welcomed and valued.

The Otjiwarongo Youth Forum visited CCF in February and March of this year. They helped construct a 64-hectare holding pen for cheetahs, and also cleared the bush in other holding pens. In between working, the groups participated in

CCF’s environmental education programmes. Over the past five months CCF has hosted four youth forums with about 20 members each. In total, the Community Development Division of CCF has reached 795 individuals through information-sharing meetings with communities, conservancy members, and the general public.

**Anyone wanting more information on these programmes should contact the Environmental Education Unit (Ministry of Higher Education, Training and Employment Creation, Sub-Division Directorate of Youth Development) by telephone at: 061-210658, or call the Cheetah Conservation Fund, and ask for Siegfriedth Bandu !Aebeb.**

STORY CONTINUED from page 7

- A dog should be lead trained and accustomed to being restrained before being put on a runwire.

A good livestock-guarding dog may sometimes injure livestock through boisterous playing but they very seldom eat accidentally killed livestock. If this occurs, however, an owner needs to consider:

- Diet – is nutrition and calcium content adequate for a growing, working dog, especially if it is a large breed?
- Who is feeding the dog, i.e., is the dog receiving the food intended for it?
- Is the dog teething and just chewing on what is available? A dog confined in a kraal with nothing to chew on may also resort to chewing on lambs’ ears! Do ensure you provide bones or rawhide for the

- dog to chew on at all times.
- Is the dog being adequately supervised? Note, the dog should never be taken out of the kraal and away from its livestock.

### 6. DIET

Working dogs should be fed twice daily. They work day and night so two smaller meals are best. Remember; do not send a dog out in a tough hot climate on a stomach full of dry pelleted food! Always soak food in water before feeding in the morning, as many areas do not have water for the dog to access in the veld. For large breeds of working dogs, mieleiepap is not an adequate diet. A working dog’s diet can be supplemented with mieleiepap, rice, cooked bones, milk, etc., but the bulk of the diet should be a good brand of pelleted food.

## DOG FOOD DONATION



CCF wishes to thank Scientific Veterinary Diet (SVD) - World Class Nutrition at Affordable Prices, for supplying Starter Packs for our puppies, which include a 2kg-bag of puppy food, and a feeding bowl. Our special thanks to Birgitta Birgitte Bartsch for ensuring that CCF dogs have a supply of food. Birgitta can be contacted by anyone interested in purchasing SVD food, at 081 248-4856.

# COMMUNAL CONSERVANCIES TAKE INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO PREDATOR PROBLEMS

The Elephant Corner Conservancy recently invited a team from the Cheetah Conservation Fund to address members and share ideas on predator issues. CCF was well received with a turnout of 56 members, many having travelled far distances to reach the meeting.

The conservancy invited CCF because it is investigating alternative solutions to predator conflict, with particular reference to the cheetah, and has included predator conservation in their conservancy mandate. However, in order to promote tolerance of the cheetah by the community, livestock conflict issues need to be addressed.

As its name proclaims, the Elephant Corner Conservancy boasts of a healthy population of elephants. The presence of elephant and their associated problems is an interesting one, as it parallels the problems farmers have with cheetah. In the case of elephant, damage is caused when elephants raid vegetable gardens and damage

water points and other infrastructure, and kill or injure livestock at water points. These problems are being addressed by building protection walls around the water points, providing alternative water points for the elephants, and combining gardens into communal areas and electrifying these. In this way, through improved management and progressive thought, planning, and action, conservancy members are looking beyond simply regarding elephants as a liability. Alternative approaches allowing the presence of elephants can also be rewarded by increased developments in ecotourism.

The complicated issue of compensation for livestock losses to cheetah was also raised at the meeting with CCF. The members agreed that such schemes are open to abuse and do not solve the problem of poor livestock management. Predator-loss compensation schemes have been implemented around the world, but have seldom succeeded in solving the predator conflict issues. Addressing livestock management issues and

sharing information with farmers has often proved far more successful.

The Elephant Corner Conservancy isn't the only one interested in predators. The Commercial Bank of Namibia's Go Green Fund recently approved a grant to support wild dog research. The wild dog is another predator with a history of zero tolerance, and yet it has the potential of becoming a valuable asset to the eastern communal conservancies. This area cannot boast elephant or rhino to attract tourist visitors, but it does have wild dogs frequenting the area. Many say that the wild dog is now one of the most sought-after sights for tourists visiting Africa.

As with the elephant and the wild dog, the cheetah has historically been regarded as a liability. Many communal conservancies are now asking: "How can we protect our livestock and turn this predator into an asset that will benefit the conservancy and its members?" We all have to work together to find the answers.

## INTEGRATED LIVESTOCK AND PREDATOR MANAGEMENT COURSE PRESENTED AT CCF

The Cheetah Conservation Fund, in collaboration with RISE Namibia (Rural-People's Institute for Social Empowerment in Namibia), presented a training course titled *Integrated Livestock and Predator Management* at CCF in August this year.

The course was attended by 42 participants, consisting of 35 shepherds (community game guards) representing five communal conservancies, four MET extension staff members, two RISE staff members, and one CCF staff member. The five communal conservancies represented were =Khoadi // Hoas, Tsiseb, Doro !Nawas, Torra and Otjimboyo. CCF initiated the course following

requests for training from some of the communal conservancies CCF visited earlier this year. Otjizondjupa Regional Councillor, the Honourable Councillor Lukas Hifitikeko opened the course on Monday night, while NACSO (Namibia Community Based Natural Resource Management Supporting Organisation) helped sponsor the course.

During the three-day course topics ranging from correct predator spoor identification, livestock management to reduce losses, livestock husbandry and wildlife management were covered. The 42 participants were given the opportunity to put theory to practice and test their tracking skills by investigating mock predator kill sites in and around CCF's goat kraal during

practical training sessions. Spurred on by Don Muroua's (of RISE) convincing performance of an irate farmer who had just lost a prize goat to



*Workshop participants at CCF*

an unknown predator, teams of participants used their Predator ID Sheets developed by REST (Rare and Endangered Species Trust) to figure out which predators had taken the livestock.

Johan Britz, CCF's farm manager, put participants through their paces in the lecture room and kraals, looking at livestock quality and selection and discussing ways to improve calving percentages and ways to reduce livestock losses to predators. Dr. Arthur Bagot-Smith tackled livestock health and disease issues with participants, while Harry Schneider-Waterberg, chairman of the Waterberg Conservancy, discussed integrating livestock and wildlife management in conservancies and the value of conservancies.

CCF's Faniel Ekondo dealt with the selection

of livestock guarding dogs and Mandy Schumann lectured on correct predator ID including looking at killing techniques and spoor identification. Field trips included an afternoon visit to REST where Maria Diekmann discussed the plight of the Cape Vulture in Namibia, the role of scavengers and the effects of the injudicious use of poisons on the environment.

Participants filled out questionnaires both at the beginning and at the end of the course, to help CCF assess how much participants had learned. Participants also completed questionnaires during practicals, which were reviewed by the whole group later to identify problem areas.

CCF and RISE received positive feedback from all the course participants. We hope the game guards, armed with this new knowledge, will go back to their communities and share what they have learned so that livestock and predator management can be integrated into conservancy actions.

In the words of the Honourable Councillor, Mr. Lukas Hifitikeko: "Together, wildlife and livestock can be the means of taking our communities into a more prosperous future. Integrating predator and livestock management is one of the biggest challenges facing our emerging conservancies. Let us take up the challenge and at the end of it say "we can live together" and we will prosper doing so, for the wildlife, the predators and ourselves".

**CCF STAFF VISITS THE  
ERONGO MOUNTAIN  
NATURE CONSERVANCY**



In December two CCF staff members visited the Erongo Mountain Nature Conservancy to discuss predator problems and share information with the Conservancy members. Situated on the edge of the scenic Erongo Mountains near Otjiwarongo, this conservancy has spectacular scenery and plentiful wildlife. But, as is the case on much of Namibian farmland, predator conflict with livestock and game farming also exists in this area.

Conservancy members are looking at how to resolve this conflict, and at the economic value of predators versus the losses predators cause. The Erongo Wilderness Lodge, managed by Mike Warren, is a strong supporter of the ecotourism value of predators. CCF hopes that through exchanging information at meetings such as this, farmers, particularly those belonging to conservancies, will come to terms with living with predators on their land. Situated midway between Otjiwarongo and Swakopmund, this conservancy is the ideal stopover point for weary travellers looking for specialised pampering. To contact the conservancy, or the Erongo Wilderness Lodge: 264 (0) 64 570 537 or email: [eronwild@iafrica.com.na](mailto:eronwild@iafrica.com.na)

**SIEGFRIEDTH BANDU !AEBEB, CCF's  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OFFICER -**

**By Linda Barnes (Earthwatch volunteer)**

Pivotal to the success and preservation of the cheetah is the understanding and support of the Namibians themselves. At least that's what Siegfriedth Bandu !Aebeb says.

Siegfriedth, age 26, has been serving as the Cheetah Conservation Fund's Community Development Officer since 2001. He is devoted to getting the word out about CCF, and believes that CCF's environmental awareness and information is critical to helping farmers with predator management.

The goals he aims to achieve are three-pronged: economic empowerment of the locals, environmental awareness, and social change. There is a deep-rooted belief imbedded in the Namibian culture that all predators are a threat. Time and education are required to help Namibians understand that we can live together and that there are benefits for everyone when we protect the cheetah and the environment.

Siegfriedth was raised on a farm with four brothers in the Tsumeb district of Namibia. He was taught to hunt cheetah with dogs, or to trap and then shoot them. But when he was 16 years old and attending the Braunfield agricultural high school in the Khorixas area, he joined the environmental education club. Soon he was elected chairman of the club and his perspective about cheetahs changed. He now works to change these same perspectives in the Namibian youth.

"I feel good about having brought so many youth and community groups from all over Namibia



*Siegfriedth (centre) with volunteers during the Waterberg Conservancy Waterhole Count.*

(and international groups as well) to CCF," says Siegfriedth. "We welcome these groups at absolutely no charge and offer accommodation, education, tours, unusual experiences with the animals, and opportunities to help care for them."

Siegfriedth believes that although there are no right answers to all the questions about saving the cheetah, we all need to work together to identify the answers that will meet everyone's needs and make peace with the animals.

**CONGRATULATIONS**



*.....to CCF's Education Officer, Matti Nghikembua, who finished his B-Tech in Natural Resource Management at the end of last year, and to Don Muroua, CCF former employee. Matti and Don both graduated from Polytechnic of Namibia last February.*



On the 8<sup>th</sup> of July, Otjiwarongo mayor, Mr. Otto Ipinge, unveiled the new Otjiwarongo billboard and launched the town's official advertising campaign at a press conference in Windhoek. During the conference, he stressed the importance of the town with regard to its location in Namibia and invited people to visit our beautiful area and also mentioned that it was indeed an ideal town for investments. He closed by declaring our campaign officially launched and said like the billboard states: "Otjiwarongo - the cheetah capital of the World would like to welcome you." He also handed out the car stickers to the press that say the same message.

# EDUCATION *UPDATE*

## OVERVIEW OF THE CONSERVATION BIOLOGY AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT COURSE

**A collaboration between the University of Namibia, the Smithsonian Institution, the Cheetah Conservation Fund and the Africa Conservation Science Centre.** The first Conservation Biology & Wildlife Management training course for Namibian undergraduate and post-graduate students was held in January as a result of a collaborative effort between the University of Namibia (UNAM), the Smithsonian Institution of Washington DC, USA, the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) and the African Conservation Science Centre. The four-week course was the 69<sup>th</sup> in a worldwide programme run by the Smithsonian Institution, which previously held courses in South America, Asia and Africa.



*Matti Nghikembua discusses the effects of bush encroachment with course participants.*

The financial sponsors of the course were Ned and Diana Twining of the African Conservation Science Centre. The course director was Dr. Martin Mbewe of UNAM, and course co-ordinator was Dr. Rudy Rudran of the Smithsonian Institution National Zoological Park's Conservation & Research Centre.

Dr. Rudran, a lecturer in conservation biology who has been actively involved in these Smithsonian courses since 1981, said, "It is gratifying that lots of students from previous courses are now heads of wildlife or conservation organisations in their own countries. Some are now professors and teaching (students) themselves."

The 18 course participants included students from the University of Namibia, Polytechnic of

Namibia, and representatives from the Ministry of Environment and Tourism and Wilderness Safaris. Silvia Morgante from Windhoek, a trainee guide/manager from Wilderness Safaris, expected the course to give her a foundation in conservation biology and be valuable to her. "With lodge management you can always be more environmentally aware, and one day it may be that I run an eco-lodge myself," she said. UNAM student Uazamo Koura, originally from Okakarara and double majoring in biology and chemistry, said she expected to know more about wildlife afterwards, adding that there is not much opportunity for practical experience at UNAM. Silvia and Uazamo both agreed the course provided a wide range of information, and was quite demanding at times. Some lectures, however, gave Uazamo help in focusing on what areas of study to choose and broadening her outlook. "I'll also be able to share this knowledge with my people and apply it in my future career," she said. Half of the course was spent at CCF, where most of the practical components took place, while most of the lectures took place at UNAM.

Courses encompassed principles of both *in-situ* and *ex-situ* conservation, including lectures and field excursions in genetics and field ornithology, laboratory modules, trainee seminars and mini research projects conducted by the students. For example, one student used library research to investigate the use of natural resources (plants and animals) by local communities while another researched the genetic diversity of bird species.

Expertise on Namibian flora and fauna was provided by local guest speakers such as Dr. Hu Berry of the CCF Scientific Advisory Board; Dr. Ulf Tubbesing, private veterinarian from Windhoek; Dr. Betsy Fox from the Ministry of Environment and Tourism; Dr. Keith Leggett of the Desert-Dwelling Elephant and Giraffe Research Project of Namibia; Blythe Loutitt from Save the Rhino Trust; and the staff of the Cheetah Conservation Fund, who gave research presentations and practical examples of conservation in action.

Other course instructors from the Smithsonian Institution included Dr. David Wildt, Head of the Department of Reproductive Sciences; Dr. Rob Fleischer, Head of the Genetics Programme at the National Museum of Natural History; Dr. Jon Ballou, population geneticist; Dr. Adrienne Crosier, reproductive physiologist; Jon Beadell, population geneticist; and Craig Saffoe, cheetah keeper.



*A collaboration between the University of Namibia, the Smithsonian Institution, the Cheetah Conservation Fund and the Africa Conservation Science Centre representatives shown here with the 18 course participants included students from the University of Namibia, Polytechnic of Namibia, and representatives from the Ministry of Environment and Tourism and Wilderness Safaris.*

## ROGATE PRIMARY RECEIVES DONATION

The Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) in Otjiwarongo made a fun visit to the Rogate Primary School last week to present the learners with more books and art supplies as well as a check for \$1400. These items and the check came from pen pal school children in Cincinnati, Ohio USA. Through CCF, a long-term friendship between Rogate and schools in Ohio has taken place since 1994. The recent donations came from The Greater Cincinnati Academy, a private school of 30 children. One of the students, Rachel Samuels, a 13 year old, raised the money through bake sales of cookies and cupcakes at her school. The cookies sold for (\$.25 US) N\$2.00 each so she raised the money for Rogate one cookie at a time. The Rogate School will use the money for their school improvement projects.



*Students proudly display donated books, posters and art supplies.*

The Cheetah Conservation Fund is a Namibian Trust dedicated to the conservation of Namibia's cheetahs and work with farmers, local

communities and schools throughout the country. Otjiwarongo is known as the Cheetah Capital of the World and the community continues to work together to see benefits of having wild, free-ranging cheetahs on the land through increased tourism. CCF works to help promote good farm management to reduce livestock loss to predators and encourages good/sustainable wildlife management.

## A PARTICIPANT'S PERSPECTIVE:

### THOUGHTS ON THE CONSERVATION BIOLOGY AND WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT COURSE

By Wellencina Mukaru and Ezequiel Fabiano

We found out about the Conservation Biology and Wildlife Management course through a notice board at the University of Namibia, and were lucky enough to be allowed to join, although we were the only two Bachelors of Science graduates taking the course.

At first we were rather intimidated by the other participants, including those from the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, because those participants had much more knowledge (both theoretical and practical) than we did.

The first day was quite interesting with a lot of tension in the room as initially course participants were divided into the Ministries, companies, and institutions that they represented. Some people were bold, sharing what they knew, while others were silent; we were among the silent ones. But



Ezequiel Fabiano & Wellencina Mukaru with Chwbacka

everything changed after a farewell dinner we had for Dr. David Woods, one of our instructors, and the group started to bond.

The course was a month long. We spent the first week at the University of Namibia for theoretical work, and then travelled to the Cheetah

Conservation Fund's field station for three weeks. It was a lot of fun. The theoretical component of the course was data collection, design, analysis, and scientific writing skills. The field-station work included game counts, bird surveys and DNA analysis procedures, vegetation identification, and density determination.

Socially, the group got to know one another better, finishing the course as friends despite the fact that we started off as strangers. At the end everyone seemed talkative, and we wished that the course were only beginning. We finally walked away with certificates, new friends (both in country and overseas), and a lot of new knowledge. Most importantly, the course helped many of us make career choices.

## PREDATOR CONSERVATION CURRICULUM

CCF participated in the Environmental Educators of Southern Africa (EEASA) conference during June 2003. At this international conference, CCF held an afternoon workshop that dealt with developing predatory conservation education and its implementation into the formal curriculum and non-formal education. The first part of the workshop included papers by CCF and Cheetah OutResearch on implementing Predator Conservation in the Education Curriculum.

CCF presented a paper entitled *Challenges Facing Predator Conservation Education in Namibia*, drawing on the lessons learned from CCF's education programme, and on challenges facing predator conservation in Namibia, and in developing and implementing predator education. Cheetah Outreach Education Officer, Dawn Glover presented a paper entitled *Predator Conservation Education In South Africa*.

Following was a panel discussion on lessons learned by other people involved with education in both formal and informal programmes and presented by Karen Knot from the IRDNC, David Sampson from NEID, and Sue Benedette from FAO.

The third part of CCF's workshop was a round table to discuss how to get predator education into the formal curriculum in Namibia and throughout the SADAC region, and how to get Predator Education into non-formal education nation and region wide.

Over 10 invited participants along with CCF education staff joined in the round table discussion.

CCF student volunteer, Carola Zardo, from Cheetah Outreach in Cape Town, worked actively on coordinating CCF's participation in the Conference, as well as its workshop.



CCF staff and volunteers attended the Environmental Educators of Southern Africa (EEASA) conference during June 2003 including (from left) Dr. Laurie Marker, Gephardt Nikanor, Matti Nghikembua, Carola Zardo, E. Fabiano, and Ron Gray.

## CCF Education Staff Keeping Busy

Public education and the development of an active grassroots constituency are integral components of CCF's overall cheetah conservation programme. CCF is educating farmers, teachers and the public about the need and methods to conserve Namibia's rich biodiversity, and the role of the cheetah and other predators in healthy ecosystems.

Between 1 January and 30 June, nearly 6900 learners and youth group members attended a CCF educational programme, either at the Centre or through outreach programmes. The number also includes daily visitors to the Centre.

CCF's Field Research and Education Centre continues to receive visitors from schools, regional youth groups, youth officials, tourists, teachers, health officials, farmers, conservation and agriculture extension officials, students and the general public.

Organised education programmes at CCF are designed mainly for groups accommodated at the either CCF's Wilderness Camp or tented Camp Lightfoot. CCF hosts school and community groups, exposing them to different environmental

education activities including a Nature Trail, team building activities, games, and other environmental awareness activities. Groups usually spend two nights with CCF.

Between 1 January and 30 June 2003, 9 school groups stayed at CCF's campsites, 9 schools visited CCF on site for day visits, and 5 youth groups stayed at CCF.

All overnight groups were accommodated at Light Foot campsite. A total number of 326 learners and 109 out-of-school youth took part in the Centre-based programmes coming from throughout Namibia, including, Khorixas, Otjiwarongo, Oshakati, Usakos, Windhoek, Outjo, Walvis Bay and Swakopmund.

## BRAUNFELS AGRICULTURAL HIGH SCHOOL

1979 24 2003

P/BAG 2016  
Khorixas  
Tel 067 331806  
FAX 067 331268



Cheetah Conservation Fund  
Otjiwarongo

11 March 2003

RE: CCF Education Center Visit by Braunfels Environment Club

Dear Mr. Nikor

I wanted to thank you for this wonderful past weekend shown myself and the boys of the environment club. I appreciated the kind attention you showed in guiding us around your facility.

The CCF's education center is first class. I have visited the Namibian National Museum which looks to be in an arrested state of decay. Your displays were both informative as well as stimulating, vastly surpassing the government's own efforts and commitments. The same comment also applies to the quality draft booklet "A Voice For The Cheetah". I would recommend your education center to all my colleagues.

I hope your impression of our boys is similarly positive. Speaking for them, I know the chance at a visit was significant and I've witnessed their sharing of new found knowledge with their classmates.

Best wishes to you, your hard working colleagues, and your charismatic cheetahs. God bless, and keep up this most worthy work, protecting the endangered cheetah.

Sincerely,

  
Brant Jorgenson  
Guardian Teacher

# CHEETAH CONSERVATION ACROSS INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARIES

by David Jenike and Shasta Back

Oceans apart, students at Mason Elementary in Ohio respond with unbridled enthusiasm to the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden's Cat Ambassador Program education outreach staff, while back in Namibia, Rogate School students in Otjiwarongo, Namibia, welcome Gebhardt Nikanor, Outreach Coordinator for the Cheetah Conservation Fund. These education programmes in the United States and Namibia are aimed at student participation in a collaborative conservation-education programme designed to tell the cheetah's story and stimulate the actions of youth in both countries. The partnership between the Cincinnati Zoo and Botanical Garden (CZBG), and the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) began in the early 1990s when Cathryn Hilker, founder of the CZBG's Cat Ambassador Program, and Laurie Marker, founder and Director of CCF, teamed up for the first time.



Students review the draft school activity guide

ing standards promoted in each country. Particular attention was given to designing the guides to be relevant and accessible to youth of both cultures. Through stories and activities presented in an engaging and colourful context, the guides emphasise the major concepts discussed during the outreach programs, such as the plight of the endangered cheetah, its importance in the ecosystem, and what can be done to save the species.



Students show their activity books after a CCF school assembly programme.

The latest collaboration builds on the experience and already successful cheetah outreach efforts of both organizations, by developing student-based activity guides on cheetah conservation that complement the outreach programs. Two guides were developed to target different grade levels and, as the outreach programs do, they align with the learn-

ing standards promoted in each country. Particular attention was given to designing the guides to be relevant and accessible to youth of both cultures. Through stories and activities presented in an engaging and colourful context, the guides emphasise the major concepts discussed during the outreach programs, such as the plight of the endangered cheetah, its importance in the ecosystem, and what can be done to save the species.

By telling the cheetah's story through hands-on activities, the guides supplement the goals of the outreach programs. They serve to increase knowledge and appreciation of the cheetah and its role in a healthy ecosystem, as well as generate concern about the cheetah's plight. Most importantly, the guides encourage students to play an active role in cheetah conservation, whether it's simply to pledge to be a friend of the cheetah, or to share the cheetah's story with others.

Evaluation and feedback from teachers indicate that we are succeeding. Together, the outreach programmes and activity guides reach more than 20,000 young people a year. If each of those students embraces the cheetah and takes action on its behalf, imagine the difference it would make in helping the fastest animal on land win the race against extinction.

## SIX STUDENTS COMPLETE UTAH STATE'S ROUND RIVER STUDIES COURSE AT CCF

Between February and May, six students completed the Round River Conservation Studies course, which is based at the Cheetah Conservation Fund's field station, Cheetah View. Round River is based out of Utah State University and teaching undergraduates about applied conservation biology and various field biology techniques.

This year, five American students were joined by one student from the University of Namibia for their course. Two of CCF's staff members, Amy Dickman as programme manager, and Josephine Henghali as an assistant, were involved in running the course this year. A former Round River student, Meridith Kirkpatrick, returned to Namibia to act as the teaching assistant for the course.

Projects conducted by the students focused on examining the habitat characteristics of areas preferentially used by cheetahs, in an attempt to learn more about the habitat selection of wild Namibian cheetahs. The fieldwork involved many hours of tough walking through virtually impenetrable *Acacia* thornbush, but the students were rewarded by numerous exciting sightings, including several snakes, an African wildcat, and even a close-up view of a leopard pausing to watch one of the many times that a flat tyre had to be changed!

In addition to field projects, the students got the opportunity to assist with cheetah work at CCF, received two weeks of academic lectures provided by Dr. Matt Kaufmann and Roman Biek, and took both mid-term and final exams for academic credit from their universities. The students also spent three weeks in Damaraland, working with Mike Hearn of the Save the Rhino Trust (SRT) as part of a long-term project to develop a habitat suitability model for black rhinos in the region.

Other activities included excursions to various parts of Namibia, waterhole counts, game drives, setting up spoor (track) stations for local carnivores, and a visit to the vulture project run by CCF's neighbour Maria Diekmann at the Rare and Endangered Species Trust (REST). In addition, Trent Alvey, a visiting artist, coordinated a great weekend working with local students from the Okakarara Nature Club. Overall, the students received a broad grounding in Namibian culture, lifestyle, ecology, and conservation programmes.

### Namibia well represented at the Audi Terra Nova Awards



2002 Terra Nova Award's winner Jan Oelofse (left) talks with two of the four finalist that were honoured at a ceremony in January in South Africa, Solomon Cedile of the Youth Development Project in Khayelitsha and Laurie Marker, of Namibia. Jan Oelofse won the Award in recognition for refining game capture techniques.

CCF Education Centre  
open to the public daily 9-5.

## UPDATE ON CCF KENYA

Through our networking with Kenya Wildlife Services (KWS) and the farming communities, the Cheetah Conservation Fund Kenya staff is being frequently contacted with reports of cheetah sightings and problems. Several cases have been investigated in the last six months.



*CCF staff and volunteers with KWS staff conducting biomedical collections in the Mara.*

Where the cheetahs come from and where they go is the question that the communities continue to ask? And why is the population declining. One reason is that the landscape where cheetahs once roamed freely is now a mixture of subdivided and heavily populated land, there is some tourism activity on private land with abundant localised wildlife, but most areas are mainly subsistence farming land, flower and agricultural properties, and commercial farming. CCF Kenya continues to develop its education programme. The response has been encouraging. Both students and teachers ask many questions, and pledge their support by sharing their knowledge with family, neighbours and friends. CCF-Kenya has targeted existing environmental clubs supplementing their current activities. The East African Wildlife Society

(EAWLS), and Jomo Kenyatta Foundation have assisted with funding and printing of the activity pages developed by the CCF Kenya staff. Friends of Conservation (FOC) and KWS are involved in the development of the education activities and will assist in distributing information. CCF-Kenya also piggybacked on a tourism awareness campaign with FOC. CCF tourism campaign brochures (The Great Cheetah Census) were printed and have been distributed to tourist lodges throughout the country.

KWS monitoring programme for cheetahs in the Masai Mara was assisted by CCF through developing biomedical protocols to ensure methodologies are consistent. By working together, CCF and KWS are laying the groundwork for long-term monitoring of cheetah within the Park and in farmland regions. Cheetah-sighting reports to KWS and CCF will help determine the best location for long-term monitoring. A cooperative partnership will ensure good data collection and determine future funding in collaborative projects.

## Workshop on Cheetah Conservation in Kenya

A workshop on Cheetah Conservation in Kenya was held on the 30 of July – 1<sup>st</sup> of August at the Mbweha Camp in Elementaita within the Nakuru Wildlife Forum. The Cheetah Conservation Fund, Kenya (CCFK), organized the workshop. Nearly 40 people attended the workshop that brought together international cheetah experts and Kenyans interested in cheetah conservation, including several members of the Kenyan Wildlife Service, representatives from four of Kenya's Wildlife Forums, three NGO's including officials of the African Wildlife Foundation and Save the Elephant Trust, along with the Director of the Serengeti Cheetah Project, Dr. Sarah Durant and the Executive Director of the Cheetah Conservation Fund, Dr. Laurie Marker.

Since 2002, the Kenya Wildlife Service's (KWS) cheetah group, under the direction of researcher Martin Mulama, and the Cheetah Conservation Fund Kenya, headed by Mary Wykstra, have been working cooperatively to gain an understanding of the number and demographics of cheetah in Kenya. The workshop aims were to put Kenya's cheetah research into a global context, and to bring people together who are interested in cheetah conservation in Kenya.

According to Wykstra, "the workshop hopes to encourage cooperation between existing and proposed projects through linkages and following guidelines set by the Global Cheetah Master Plan". A Global Cheetah Master Plan, which has provided guidelines for collaborative cheetah studies and international breeding programmes was developed in 2002 through the Global Cheetah Forum. The topics of discussion at the workshop included Research, Management, and Education. The Kenya Wildlife Director of Research, Dr. Richard Bagine, although not in attendance, sent an inspirational speech that was presented to the workshop delegates about Kenya's commitment to cheetah conservation and to present the goals of KWS concerning cheetah

conservation/research.

Dr. Laurie Marker, Director of Cheetah Conservation Fund in Namibia, and representative of the IUCN Cat Specialist Group, was the guest speaker at the Workshop and presented information on the Global Cheetah Master Plan, model programmes developed in Namibia for cheetah outside protected areas and the future of cheetah throughout its range, as well as an international perspective on the difficulties of captive breeding and management, although important as a backup to the wild population.

Mary Wykstra and Cosmas Wambua talked about their cheetah research on ranch/farm land outside of protected reserves and parks focusing on the Nakuru Wildlife Forum area and the Machakos area. CCF's focus in 2002 was on the Nakuru Wildlife Forum region in the central Rift Valley Province to evaluate past and present cheetah sightings and conflict issues. In 2003 CCF is conducting comparative evaluations of farming communities in other regions where cheetah sightings are more frequent.

Several members of KWS also made presentations. Martin Mulama, Assistant Director of Research and Planning gave an overview of the current research projects in Kenya. Bernard Kuloba, head researcher for the Mara Cheetah Research Project, presented results from the past year's studies, including the identification of over 35 cheetahs in the Mara ecosystem. David Konas, KWS researcher discussed his census finding of cheetah in the Samburu and Marsabit areas. Dr. Adeela Sayyid, Curator of the Nairobi Orphanage and SafariWalk and veterinarian for the Mara cheetah research project presented the protocols for biomedical collections and condition



*Over 35 workshop participants came from throughout Kenya and well as internationally to discuss cheetah conservation in the country.*

of the Mara cheetahs she has handled. KWS and CCF have cooperatively initiated collection of biomedical samples of cheetah in the Masai Mara and developed a protocol for collection in other regions. With increasing information on cheetah/human conflict issues it is important for CCF and KWS to continue working cooperatively to develop protocols for handling capture, sampling and relocation of problem cheetahs.

Other talks were presented by Dr. Sarah Durant and Dr. Fumi Mizutani. Dr. Durant talked about the long-term cheetah research conducted in the Serengeti National Park. Where Dr. Mizutani talked about human and predator conflict issues in the Lakipia area.

Although neither KWS nor CCF currently have the resources to conduct detailed research in all regions of Kenya, there are several individuals and organisations that have expressed an interest in assisting with the development of research, conservation and education programmes throughout Kenya. In order to promote consistency in data collection and presentation, CCF and KWS used this workshop as a gathering of the interested parties to discuss cooperative programmes for the general conservation and education for the long-term survival of Kenya's cheetahs.

## NAMIBIAN CHEETAH CUBS BORN IN THE USA

In May this year, the White Oak Conservation Center reported their first cheetah births sired by one of the ten Namibian cheetahs that went to the USA in 2001. The young male from Namibia bred with a hand-raised captive female cheetah from another zoo in the USA. Although this is the first time this female has bred and produced cubs, she is doing very well at White Oak with her large litter of five.



*Cheetah cubs born at White Oak Conservation Centre in Florida, USA*

White Oak, located in Yulee, Florida, has an excellent reputation for breeding cheetahs and other endangered species successfully. White Oak is dedicated to saving endangered species through collaborative *in situ* and *ex situ* programmes, supporting, among others, conservation programmes for okapi, rhino, maned wolves, and cheetahs. The Cincinnati Zoo also reported the birth of two cubs, their parents being two of the four cheetahs that went to Cincinnati Mast Breeding Center in 2001. Unfortunately one of the cubs had a cleft palate and had to be euthanised. The remaining cub was removed from the mother and is being hand raised at the zoo. The cub is being hand raised because experience at captive facilities around the world has shown that single cubs do not survive past three or four days, as in most cases the mother's milk will dry up due to too little stimulation by single cubs.

CCF congratulates the staffs of Cincinnati and White Oak, and looks forward to hearing about the next births! CCF also thanks the people and government of Namibia for playing a historic role by allowing the exportation of ten Namibian non-releasable cheetahs to the US. These cheetahs are strengthening the gene pool of the species worldwide.

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