

CHEETAH Tracks

The Newsletter of Cheetah Conservation Botswana

July 2008

Orphaned Leopard
Released

CCB Bids Farewell
to Ann Marie

Plus...

New CCB Collaboration
with Orapa Mine

Publication of CCB's
New Guide Book for Farmers

Community Outreach
and Education Reviews



Rebecca Klein

Hello to everyone from a cool and dry, wintery Botswana. As usual we've had a busy few months, full of excitement and interesting challenges. Amongst these has been a new collaboration with Conservation International on the Western Kalahari Conservation Corridor, with the aim of connecting the Central Kalahari Game Reserve and the Kgalagadi Transfrontier Park in South Western Botswana. CCB has been selected as an in-country partner and our role is to assess current levels of wildlife conflict and develop mitigation methods to minimize conflict and promote coexistence. Communities within the corridor will be supported to diversify their livelihoods from mainly livestock farming towards ecotourism and sustainable utilization initiatives. It is an exciting and progressive initiative and one that CCB is very proud to be a part of!

At this point we have to say a sad goodbye to Thabang Segaletsho, our community outreach coordinator who has been with us for 2 years. He has been offered an excellent opportunity to work for the Department of Wildlife and National Parks in the Community Outreach division. We hope he will be carrying the cheetah conservation message with him into his new role and continue the great work he started with CCB.

The Research team has had great success with the rehabilitation and release of our orphaned leopard. After exhibiting effective hunting skills and reaching adulthood, she was released in collaboration with the Department of Wildlife & National Parks in a wildlife management area in southern Botswana. We are now very busy with the building of our new CCB base at Tiisa Kalahari, in Ghanzi. This will be a demonstration farm where CCB can hold residential workshops and activities for farmers, teachers and schools in the region. We are extremely excited at the potential this facility holds for educating the nation in progressive, sustainable farming techniques. It is thanks to the Howard G. Buffett Foundation once again that CCB has the ability to establish and expand this new initiative. Thank you!

Thanks also go to Wildlife Conservation Network (WCN), whose support has been essential to CCB's progress over the last few years. A great fund raising event was held for CCB in May, in the San Francisco Bay area. Thanks to WCN the event was a great success and recieved significant donour support from within the local area. We couldn't do it without you!

“The Orapa Mine conservation team provided excellent support and funding”

Recent teacher training workshops and school talks in the Orapa region were a great success. The Orapa Mine conservation team provided excellent support and funding for the workshops, talks and bulding of their own predator playground! We hope that this positive collaboration will continue as an ongoing initiative.

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In May I went again to the USA for the bi-annual fundraising trip. First CCB had a wonderful event at WCN near San Francisco, attended by over 100 people, some of whom were long time supporters, as well as many new donors. WCN again did a fantastic job in organizing a first class event, including a presentation on the work of CCB, a silent auction of Botswana crafts from Ghanzi Craft and a presentation of ambassador cats. These, including a king cheetah, were brought by Leopards, Etc. Thanks to all, for the hard work in organizing such a successful function.

I then travelled to Seattle to meet some of our foundation supporters and representatives from Woodland Park Zoo, followed by a short flight to Missoula in Montana for the International Wildlife Film Festival. CCB had been invited to enter *Spirit of the Kalahari* in the annual wildlife film awards. The competition was exceptional but we were awarded an Honourable Mention, for presentation of cultural information. I had also been asked to give a talk on the use of wildlife film in conservation. It was an inspiring event and CCB received a lot of exposure and interest. Perhaps it will lead to a documentary on CCB in the near future if all goes well!?

Lastly, I travelled to ongoing CCB supporters, Animal Ark in Nevada, for a presentation and high speed cheetah run - another great event concluding a whirlwind 2 week fundraising tour. I returned to Botswana with more funds for our ongoing work and pleased to be back in Africa again.

So, as you will find all the news in depth throughout the following pages I will leave this here. I wish to thank all of our valuable supporters who help to make the vision of CCB and cheetah conservation in Botswana a reality.

Re leboga thata! We thank you!

R. Klein
Rebecca Klein



**In Memorium
Puso Kirby**

In recent months everyone at CCB was saddened to hear news of the loss of two dear friends and supporters. Puso Kirby tragically lost his life after a road accident on the 5th June. Puso was a former Mokolodi Nature Reserve Park Manager and became a keen supporter of CCB during its inception in 2003. Subsequently, Puso and his company, Creations of Africa, supported the project by supplying merchandise clothing and local hand made crafts, many of which were auctioned at our events in California to raise funds for CCB. Puso is deeply missed by everyone here and our thoughts are with his widow, Maddie, his four young sons and the families.



Pat Miller

In April we were all saddened to hear the news of the loss of Pat Miller, following serious illness. Together with her husband Bill, Pat Miller was an active and dedicated supporter of numerous wildlife conservation causes, especially the global cheetah conservation effort. She served as chair of the board of the Cheetah Conservation Fund in the USA, and was a member of the advisory board of the Wildlife Conservation Network (WCN). Pat Miller was a keen supporter of CCB's efforts here and our thoughts are with her husband Bill, her family and friends.



Orphaned Leopard Botshelo

Botshelo the young leopard who was confiscated by the Department of Wildlife & National Parks (DWNP) in October 2006 and placed in the CCB rehabilitation programme has been released into the wild. Botshelo has grown into a strong adult leopard exhibiting effective hunting skills and is making us all very proud. She was anaesthetised and collared in Jwaneng in a joint effort by the CCB team and the DWNP, with the assistance of Dr Mark Bing in April, and transported to her release point in the southern part of the country. The location of release was carefully considered taking into account, type of habitat, closeness of game management areas and minimal farm land to reduce possibilities of conflict and mortality. Since her release her GPS locations, monitored by her satellite collar have shown she is exhibiting normal leopard behaviour and avoiding areas populated by people or livestock. She has now been on her own for over three months and is the first leopard to have been successfully rehabilitated and released in Botswana.

we continue to monitor Botshelo 's progress by her satellite collar, with great optimism and hope she will carry on in her resilience for her survival and her kind. CCB team is proud to have been part of this beautiful creature, we have all come to know as Botshelo's amazing journey of life. She has after the tragic lose of Decu, Grace, Alice and all the other cheetahs and predator species lost to mankind, given us a renewed sense of hope in our mission to help conserve the few remaining predator species left to man.



*Top & Centre: DWNP Officer, CCB's Ann Marie, Rebecca Klein and Dr Mark Binn collecting Bio - data on Botshelo before release.
Bottom: Botshelo recovering from anaesthetic at release sight.*



Livestock Guarding Dogs Competition 2008

The Livestock Guarding Dogs (LSGD) programme has published its first issue of the LSGD newsletter. The newsletter is a two way communication platform between CCB and the local community. CCB will be able to convey information about alternative methods of non lethal predator control such as the LSGD programme, and farmers can write their comments, views and suggestions about the programme, which will be published in the newsletter to benefit farmers wishing to start the LSGD programme or improve their existing programme. The newsletter includes information about the competition which started on the 5th of May. The competition was also publicised through one of the local nationwide frequency radio station RB2. As in the previous competition the response was encouraging and entries were done by sending the words "Guard Dog" via SMS through June and July. First stage eliminations were done in July through telephonic interviews and of the 178 entries, 153 were contacted in which more than 50% had LSGDs. Farm visits of the interviewed farmers were conducted for first hand assessment of LSGDs at work. Other farm visits by CCB's Community Outreach staff were to the Tshwaedi cattle post in the Kweneng district where a family of cheetahs was reported to be problematic. CCB assisted in introducing the LSGD programme with the already existing puppies as a sustainable farm management method to combat the problem in the future. Final farm visits for the LSGD competition are continuing and follow ups to new LSGD farms will be conducted in our Community Outreach programme.



Top: First Issue of LSGD newsletter

Centre to Bottom: newly introduced LSGD puppies at farm in Kweneng District.



Research Review Ghanzi

Research work has continued to be dominated by the writing of scientific papers for publication. The hard work is paying off and we look forward to soon seeing the outcome. Lorraine has had the opportunity to get back into the field, when she moved to the Ghanzi research camp at the beginning of 2008. She has been conducting a spoor survey to estimate population size of large predators on Ghanzi farmland.

The survey has just been completed and revealed a lower than expected number of cheetah and leopard in specific areas of Ghanzi. The study was assisted by the use of motion cameras (donated by Cat Haven, California). The cameras have provided an insight into cheetah marking behaviour at 'play trees. Although not climbers, cheetah will use sloped trees to scent mark with urine and faeces in order to claim their territory. Several pictures of one cheetah in particular have established him as the dominant male in the area.

Sadly the male cheetah and the female cheetah with five cubs who were caught on farmland, collared and released into the Central Kalahari Game Reserve at the beginning of the year, have died. The male (Franklin) died approximately two months after release and the female (Sitele meaning 'care giver') unfortunately died within two weeks of release. It is unknown what happened to the cubs, or what was the cause of death for the adults. Thanks to the DWNP the collars were retrieved and are ready for re-use. Nala a female collared cheetah was captured with her four fifteen month old cubs in Jwaneng. Her collar was removed and the cubs were fitted with ear-tags for identification, then released. As is normal cheetah behaviour the male cubs left the Jwaneng area. Now, over a year later one of the males has been caught by a farmer in South Africa, over 200km away from his birth place. The farmer contacted DeWilt Cheetah and Wildlife Trust and once again thanks to our



Top : Motion camera picture of Cheetah leaving play tree.

Centre : Motion camera picture of Cheetah scent marking play tree.

Above : Motion camera picture of Male scent marking play tree area at dusk.



crossborder relations, CCB was contacted, the cheetah was collared and successfully relocated out of the farm land. The cheetah will continue to be monitored via satellite collar.

CCB attended the Ghanzi annual agricultural show at the end of June. The show was visited by both the local community and farmers from across Botswana, many of whom visited the CCB stall and showed support and interest in our programme. It was an excellent opportunity to distribute information to both the general public and farming community. CCB was approached by many farmers and farm workers who wanted to both learn more about predator friendly farming and share their experiences and farming techniques with CCB. We look forward to building on these contacts in the future.

Right: CCB at Ghanzi show.



Community Morulaganyi Kokole



Left: CCB's Community Conservaton Officer, Mr Morulaganyi R. Kokole.

Below: Kokole conducting an interview on a farm visit.



CCB introduces its new Community Conservation Officer, Mr Morulaganyi Reuben Kokole to all our donors, supporters and partners. He is from Molepolole Village here in Botswana holds, a B-tech degree in Nature Conservation, and has volunteered in a couple of enviromental and conservation organizations including CCB. Kokole has visited a number of farms in the Ghanzi, Kweneng and central districts following reports of cheetah sightings or livestock killings. Kokole has conducted a Spoor Survey in the Research sector and parcipitated in the Debswana Orapa Mine teacher's training workshop organized by our Education sector to be familiarised with CCB's whole operation and how the different sectors overlap.



Kokole was also part of the CCB team that attended the World Environmental Day Celebrations that was organized by the Department of Environmental Affairs in Tonota, and the Ghanzi Agricultural show. He is now busy with the LSGD Community Outreach programme, visiting farms country wide. After reported killings of 10 goats in the Letlhakeng area of the Kweneng District, Kokole visited the affected farms and introduced the LSGD programme to the farm owner and his herders. A follow up and mobile workshop will be done in the area to see how the programme is helping.



Education Wabotlhe Letubo



CCB's joint effort with Debswana's Orapa Mine in an Environmental conservation awareness raising campaign went well. Activities for the campaign included, construction of the cheetah park and a Teacher training workshop. Through hard work and the great team spirit of the CCB and Orapa mine teams, the Cheetah park construction is complete. In a return trip to the area for follow ups on the teacher training workshop, the Cheetah Park was handed over to the mine, in an official opening graced by Mr S. Sebetlela, Orapa Mine's General Manager and Mr J. Jamare, the Conservation Manager. Both were pleased with the results of the collaboration and were enthusiastic about continuing the campaign. Still on our Education programme, our Education Coordinator Wabotlhe was in Molepolole visiting a total of 9 schools and attended the DWNP's Association of Environmental Clubs of Botswana (AECB)'s Kweneng District Student rally, at which CCB awarded Certificates of Achievement

Above right : LSGD farm visit.

Above: CCB's Wabotlhe Letubo with Orapa Mine Conservation team constructing Cheetah Park.

Below and Right : Ann Marie at CCB.



and attendance to students participating in the Environmental Debate, Project, Essay and Quiz competitions. CCB was again in Jwaneng town's Acacia Primary school for a presentation, with the standard 1 classes. Their theme curriculum for that week was wildlife, focusing on the Cheetah. The pupils were very keen to learn about the cheetah and were happy to see the cheetah and leopard skins and the skulls that are used as exhibits for our educational programme. At the end of the presentation, pupils gave a selection of names; 'MAROTHODI' which means spots, 'LEGADIMA' which means lightning, the reason being that the cheetah is as fast as lightning, for male cheetah recently called in by a farmer 200km from its birth place in Jwaneng.

CCB also visited Macheneng and Lerala Villages and went to a total of 5 primary schools and 2 junior schools for predator talks. These talks were mainly to educate pupils on the different types of predators species in the country with particular emphasis on the endangered cheetah. Teachers were really interested in the message and keen in forming environmental clubs in their schools. Mr David who is an officer at the DWNP Machaneng office gave his part of the talk and encouraged schools to affiliate with the AECB and always report sightings of any wild animal they may think is a predator or they think is a threat, instead of ignorantly killing them.

*Top 1 & 2: Cheetah Park construction on-going in Orapa Mine.
Centre: Machaneng Primary School students in Predator talks.
Above: Acacia Students observing the cheetah, Leopard skins and skulls
Right: Acacia pupils holding Leopard Skull.*



CCB Bids Farewell to Ann Marie



On the 24th July CCB said farewell to Ann Marie Houser, following her appointment to a United States' government programme in Arizona focusing upon the conservation of the Mexican Wolf.

As a co-founder of the project and Director of Field Research, Ann Marie has tirelessly dedicated the past 6 years to CCB, based at our Jwaneng facility. Her knowledge and experience in the safe capture, sampling, care and release of cheetahs has enabled CCB to gain an invaluable understanding of the local predator population. Her efforts, including the management of our International Short-term Volunteer Programme at Jwaneng, have had a significant impact upon the development of local knowledge and a greater understanding of predator habits and behaviour to help the farming communities who often come into conflict with cheetahs. She has also played a pivotal role in shaping the CCB of today, but it is perhaps the creation and development of CCB's cub rehabilitation programme and

the processes involved which will stand as a lasting legacy of Ann Marie's work at CCB. We and the nation of Botswana have learned a great deal about the inexact science of cub rehabilitation and re-release, and the many challenges that such a process can present - thanks especially to the dedication of Ann Marie.

Above & Right : Ann Marie and a life in predator conservation in Botswana.

Below : Members of the CCB team at the farewell reception for Ann Marie on Saturday 12th July, from left to right, Lorraine, Brian, Kyle, Winnie, Ann Marie, Wabotlhe and Rebecca.





On Saturday 12th July, CCB board members, volunteers, staff and friends came together at a farewell reception for Ann Marie at the Jwaneng research camp, followed by the presentation of certificates and gifts.

Everyone at CCB will miss Ann Marie and wishes her Good Luck and every success in her new role in Arizona.



CCB Opportunities International Research Students & Administration Volunteers

This year, CCB is offering opportunities to MSc and PhD students who may be interested in conducting research into the cheetah population of Botswana. Field research placements will be for a maximum of 12 months and open to MSc and PhD candidates only. Candidates should have a good academic record, hold a BSc or MSc degree, have a particular interest in cheetah related research and be able to obtain enough financial support to conduct and adequately complete the field research component of their studies in Botswana.

Also this year, CCB is offering limited, short term volunteering opportunities to non-residents of Botswana. We are currently only inviting applications from individuals who possess administration skills, with qualifications and/or proven experience, to assist in the daily project operation side of CCB. Placements are office based, will be for a period only of 1-2 months and

successful applicants will be based here at our main office situated within Mokolodi Nature Reserve. Monthly volunteering fees do apply and this is an ideal opportunity for those with skills often overlooked for placements with wildlife conservation projects in Africa.

For full details and application forms for both these opportunities, visit the Volunteering/Opportunities page of our web site at www.cheetahbotswana.com



Above: CCB international Volunteer in July 2008, Bob Noah with ambassador cheetah 'Letotse'



Thank You to...

As ever, it is the constant interest, encouragement and support of all our donors here and around the world who's contributions fuel our efforts here on the ground. Special thanks to everyone who continues to support us in these growing times for CCB and most recently to:

The Howard G. Buffett Foundation
Wildlife Conservation Network (WCN)
Debswana
UNDP Global Environment Facility
AZA Conservation Endowment Fund
Cheetah Outreach
Mokolodi Nature Reserve
The People & Nature Trust
Project Survival
WSPA
Leopards, Etc
Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF)
SPOTS Foundation
The Angel Fund (Cincinnati Zoo)
Disney Wildlife Conservation Fund
Beagle Foundation
Panther Ridge
Toledo Zoo
Virginia Safari Park

Cougar Mountain
Metro Richmond Zoo
The Predator Conservation Trust
Zoological Society of Washington
Impression House
DHL
Botswana Radio RB2
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