



# RESEARCH

Founded in 1990, CCF is a Namibian non-profit incorporated association dedicated to the long-term survival of the cheetah and its ecosystems.

## CCF VISION

To see a world in which cheetah live and flourish in co-existence with people and the environment.

## CCF MISSION

To be an international centre of excellence concerning cheetah conservation, and multi-disciplinary research and education programmes; working with all stakeholders to achieve best practice in conservation and management.

## CCF's activities

include conducting international research, conservation and education programmes to ensure the survival of the cheetah for future generations.

## RESEARCH GOAL

To provide the scientific support for conservation activities

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To gather and analyse biological data specific to each range country using best practice methods developed at the Namibian centre
- To better understand the cheetah's ecosystem by evaluating habitat, prey base and monitoring other carnivores
- To evaluate various non-lethal livestock management and predator control techniques
- To collaborate with other research organisations

The Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) is engaged in a variety of research programmes to provide scientific support for conservation activities. The CCF presents its research findings at international conferences and in scientific publications.

## BIOLOGICAL RESEARCH

The cheetah is one of the most specialised of the 36 cat species with only one species in its genus, *Acinonyx*. During the 1980's, CCF's research collaborators studied many aspects of cheetah biology including genetics, reproductive physiology and virology. These early studies identified the cheetah's limited genetic variation that results in reproductive and health problems.

## GENETICS, OVERALL HEALTH, AND REPRODUCTION

The CCF's ongoing research on wild cheetah includes collecting and analysing blood, skin, tissues, sperm and faecal samples to study the genetics and relatedness of the population, indicate the incidence of disease, stress hormone levels and the reproductive health of the population. Wild-caught cheetah are opportunistically examined including weighing and measuring for morphometric studies, analysis of their dental structure and reproductive fitness as part of the ongoing evaluation of the overall health of the world's cheetah population.

## GENOME RESOURCE BANK

The CCF is investigating the best techniques for creating a cheetah Genome Resource Bank (GRB) of sperm, tissues and blood samples to provide 'insurance' for cheetah's survival. Cryopreservation methods are being studied and refined in collaboration with the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC, USA.

## BEHAVIOUR DEMOGRAPHICS AND POPULATION CENSUS

The CCF researchers continue to investigate the movement of the cheetah to determine home ranges, habitat preference and seasonal use, territoriality and behaviours unique to individual cheetah populations that may be critical for their survival. The CCF also gathers data on the status of the wild cheetah populations, and on the relationship between humans and cheetah, to evaluate threats to the cheetah. The CCF collaborates with other wildlife specialists to develop methods to census cheetah population in Namibia and to use these survey techniques for other cheetah range countries. In conjunction with CCF conservation programmes, researchers evaluate appropriate programmes of relocation, reintroduction, and non-invasive monitoring methodologies to assure a viable wild population.



“ Scientific studies of the cheetah and its ecosystem are vital in order to develop sound conservation strategies for the future. ”

-DR. LAURIE MARKER,  
CCF EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR





# MORE RESEARCH



## ECOSYSTEM RESEARCH

The CCF works to better understand the cheetah's ecosystem by evaluating habitat, prey base and monitoring other carnivores. Specific ecosystem research includes:

### VEGETATION STUDIES

The CCF identifies vegetation and monitors growth patterns within CCF study areas, identifies target areas for ecological management and investigates how bush encroachment affects biodiversity.

### PREY BASE STUDIES

The CCF monitors habitat use by game species within CCF study areas and determines cheetah hunting strategies and prey preferences for individual populations. The CCF also collates historical data regarding predation, develops methodologies for the reintroduction of prey species, and encourages standardised prey studies in other cheetah range countries.

### OTHER CARNIVORE STUDIES

The CCF evaluates the impact of other carnivores on cheetah populations and prey species and identifies how human conflict with other predators affects cheetah populations.

## INVESTIGATING HUMAN AND WILDLIFE CONFLICT

Research into human and wildlife conflict is critical for cheetah conservation. The CCF collaborates with farmers to better understand traditional farm management techniques and perceptions. Incorporating farmers' goals and objectives with research findings about the cheetah and its ecosystem enables the CCF to develop agricultural management plans that are mutually beneficial for cheetahs and farmers. CCF evaluates various non-lethal livestock management and predator control techniques that can reduce the indiscriminate removal of cheetah. The CCF research programme includes:

### CCF MODEL FARM

In an area that has one of the largest concentrations of wild cheetah in Namibia, CCF has developed model farms to research and display predator-friendly and commercially viable livestock and wildlife programmes.

### NON-LETHAL PREDATOR CONTROL

The CCF researches non-lethal management techniques for predator control. Techniques include calving camps, dogs and donkeys as livestock guardians, electric fencing and swing gates.

### LIVESTOCK GUARDING DOGS

Since 1994, CCF has evaluated the effectiveness and suitability of the Anatolian Shepherd dog in Namibia as a livestock guardian. Initial research studies proved the breed's suitability, and CCF now breeds and places these dogs on Namibian farms as part of its conservation programme. The CCF continues to monitor all Anatolian Shepherds placed with farmers as part of an ongoing research study that evaluates training, nutrition and overall health. The CCF has developed the Namibian Anatolian Shepherd Dog Registry as part of the study into the effectiveness of the Namibian Anatolian population.

## COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

The CCF works closely with many research institutions around the world. Long-term research programme partners include the Smithsonian Institution, United States National Cancer Institute, University of California at Davis, Cincinnati Zoo, White Oak Conservation Centre, Oregon State University, the Polytechnic of Namibia, University of Namibia, EarthWatch Institution, the Cheetah Species Survival Plan of the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums and the Cat Specialist Group of the World Conservation Union (IUCN).



## CHEETAH CONSERVATION FUND

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