



Cheetah News

CONSERVATION FUND

Spring 2005

No. 21

Update from **DR. MARKER**

CHEETAH REMOVAL ON NAMIBIAN FARMLANDS: Reasons, Rates & Conservation Implications

By Dr. Laurie Marker

Cheetah populations continue to decline worldwide, but Namibia still has the largest free-ranging population (+/- 3,000), of which 90% are found outside of protected areas on commercial farms. In 1991, CCF began a long-term study to investigate the reasons for cheetah removal, demography of the removed cheetahs, and possible solutions for alleviating the conflict between cheetah and landowners. CCF has handled over 650 cheetahs, some several times. The study indicated that conflict with farmers caused 91% of live cheetah captures and 48% of cheetah deaths reported.

The majority of cheetah captures (53%) occurred due to a perceived

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www.cheetah.org



President Nujoma Given Conservation Award

On a New York September day, His Excellency Dr. Sam Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia, received the Cheetah Conservation Fund's 2004 Lifetime Conservation Award. It was presented by Dr. Laurie Marker, Executive Director of the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF). Acknowledging his stewardship of cheetah conservation in Namibia, Nujoma was presented the award of a bronze cheetah

in the presence of over 80 Namibian, American and international guests at the Explorers Club, NYC.

Nujoma has been CCF's International Patron since 1991. "Under his direction, Namibia has become a leader in African and world conservation and is recognized internationally for these practices," said Dr. Laurie Marker.

livestock GUARDING DOGS



Anatolian Puppy

CCF Anatolian Puppies Go to South Africa

In August, CCF donated seven puppies to the South African National Parks (SANPARKS) to form part of a pilot project using livestock guarding dogs around the Namaqua National Park, South Africa.

These puppies form part of an initiative by SANPARKS to encourage farmers using gin traps and poison around the borders of the park to try alternative livestock

and predator management techniques.

SANPARKS gave a generous donation for the puppies which will go towards supporting CCF's Namibian Livestock Guarding Dog Program. CCF is available to visit farmers experiencing livestock losses to predators and also assists with advice on the correct choice of livestock guarding dog and the correct raising and training procedures.

Update from **DR. MARKER**

(Continued from Cover)

threat to livestock, but in only 3% of cases was there any evidence that the cheetahs caught were indeed causing a problem. Cheetahs were often captured opportunistically rather than in direct response to livestock loss. Humans caused 79% of the cheetah deaths recorded, with most being shot on livestock or game farms in an attempt to reduce livestock losses.

Data gathered from trapped cheetahs have provided invaluable information on the life histories of Namibian cheetahs including social structure, reproduction and survivorship. The majority of the cheetahs removed were of prime breeding age (5 to 6 years of age), and 51 % of the captured males were in a coalition, with an average male coalition size of 2.3 individuals. We found that the mean litter size at post emergence from the den was 3.2 cubs, similar to what was found in the Serengeti with a mean interbirth interval of 24 months. An average of two cubs per litter reach independence.

An important point of our long-term research showed that the level of cheetah removals on farmlands dropped significantly through the study, from an average of 19 cheetahs removed annually per farmer in 1991 to just over two by the end of the study, indicating that local attitudes and actions are being positively influenced through long-term education and conservation awareness programs.

Dr. Laurie Marker, CCF Executive Director



CCF continues to need the generous support of donors. Please go to www.cheetah.org to become a member, "adopt" a cheetah or make a donation. With your support we can reach the goal of keeping the cheetah wild and free.



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Collared Cheetah Retires at CCF



In October, CCF received a call from a farmer who had caught a radio-collared cheetah. CCF is not currently radio-tracking cheetahs, so we were very interested to know who this individual was, especially since very few collared cheetahs were unaccounted for in March 2003 when CCF's radio-tracking was concluded.

Based on her radio-collar details and transponder number, we identified this cheetah as one that was radio-collared in 1998 when she was estimated to be 6-7 years old. At that time, her home range extended from south of the Otjiwarongo road to east of the Omatako mountains. She was tracked for about a year before the collar signal stopped. Interestingly enough, the farmer captured her in the same home range she was using six years ago.

Though in fairly good condition, she has cataracts in both eyes, blunt canines and is missing all her incisors, explaining why she was catching sheep and why this farmer caught her. She would most likely end up taking livestock again if released onto farmland, so she is now retired at CCF.



Michelle and dogs in truck

Two Litters of Puppies Born

Michelle Bacon, CCF Volunteer and Global Graduate student from Oregon State University says good-bye to two of the 13 Anatolian puppies born at CCF in July.



Anatolian Health Survey Conducted

Mandy Schumann (left) and Gebhardt Nikanor (center), of CCF, assisted by Dr. Michelle Schroeder (right), a veterinarian from Oregon, recently completed a full health and working assessment of 70% of the Anatolian Shepherds placed by CCF in Namibia.

During a total of 15 days, almost 7000 kilometers were traveled from Mangetti to Gobabis and 68 Anatolians and mongrels were evaluated. Blood and fecal samples were collected and each dog was scored for physical condition. Questionnaires relating to the dogs working performance were filled in with the owners. A comprehensive report is being written and every dog owner who participated will receive a copy of their dog's evaluation as well as a general report.

Namibian Veterinarians Visit CCF

In October, vets from Namibia and South Africa attended a study excursion to CCF as part of their annual meeting to learn more about CCF's captive cheetahs.



CCF thanks Tyco Healthcare, Nellcor for their generous donation of a handheld pulse oximeter. This instrument allows our veterinary staff at CCF Namibia to keep the cheetah safe during surgery by measuring blood oxygenation levels.



Captive Cheetahs Hone Hunting Skills

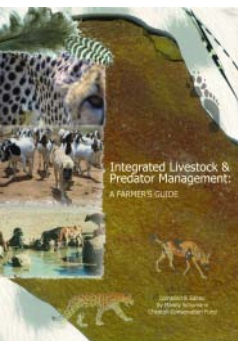
Marianne de Jonge, a bachelor student studying wildlife management at the Van Hall Institute in the Netherlands, conducted research at CCF on habituating certain captive animals to a free-ranging conservancy situation. Two of CCF's captive cheetahs, Rosy and Daisy, were released into CCF's 4000 hectare game-fenced area, Bellebeno. In September, the cats were fitted with radio-collars and a "soft release" was done. De Jonge set up a field camp and monitored the cheetah's location, activity, distance traveled from last sighting and habitat type. The sisters made their first kill, a warthog, just three days after release and continued to take prey, although supplemental feeding was done. It took only six weeks for the two to exit the game fence via one of the many warthog holes. CCF staff has since placed the cheetahs back into an enclosure.

Cheetah Behavioral Study Underway

Wild female cheetahs are generally solitary unless they are raising cubs. A female cheetah typically only seeks male company when ready to breed. However, captive cheetahs are often housed in "unnatural" social groupings. Females are often housed together, with males or adjacent to each other. This could affect both the stress levels and the estrus (heat) cycles of captive females.

To understand captive cheetah dynamics better, Jessica MacManus, a Fulbright Scholar, will investigate behavior and hormone levels, which are indicators of stress and estrus cycles, so that CCF can better understand how social dynamics may lead to physiological changes in cheetahs.

New Management Book Printed for Farmers



CCF has published a new book titled *Integrated Livestock and Predator Management: A Farmer's Guide*. This comprehensive book tackles livestock/predator conflict by addressing livestock care and management issues, predator identification and understanding predator behavior to assist the farmer in reducing losses to predators. CCF used the book to host two training courses for farmers in February 2005. The book will continue to be used in CCF training courses and be distributed to agricultural colleges, polytechnics, teachers and farmers free of charge.

researchNOTES

GIRAFFE STUDY CONDUCTED

Per Jacobsson, a student from the University of Stockholm, Sweden, conducted a study on CCF's giraffe population. His study estimated the carrying capacity of giraffes in the Bellebeno Game Reserve.

Twenty-nine giraffes (15 males, 10 females and 4 unsexed calves) were identified. The study also showed they feed primarily on Black hook, Camel thorn and Shepherds tree.

CCF RELEASES SPRINGBOK

In August 2004, CCF released 250 springbok on their 1300 hectare field known as the 'Little Serengeti.' Four different gene pools are represented in the herds. Although the majority are still around the big field, some of the springbok have dispersed throughout the Waterberg Conservancy.

WATERHOLE COUNT HELD

The Waterberg Conservancy conducted its ninth annual 24-hour waterhole count on July 31st. The count was conducted by CCF's staff and volunteers from the district youth forums. Over 70 participants counted game at 38 waterholes on eight farms and counted over 4,000 head of wildlife. The game counts are conducted in order to determine trends within the wildlife populations.

CCF thanks Telinject Germany who recently donated a Vario 4V. 310 Tele-injection dart gun along with applicator and accessories. This equipment, which is used to immobilise cheetahs, is a valuable addition to CCF's clinic.

CCF Hosts Second International Conservation Biology Course

In July, the second international course in Conservation Biology and Wildlife Management was held in Namibia under the sponsorship of the Smithsonian Institution's Wildlife Conservation and Management Training Program, the Cheetah Conservation Fund, the Namibian Ministry of Higher Education and Wilderness Safaris.

The course had participants from eight countries including Namibia, India, Kenya, Malaysia, Mexico, Cambodia, Brazil and Algeria. The Smithsonian Institution's Dr. Rudy Rudran, course coordinator, and Drs. David Wildt and Jon Ballou joined local experts Dr. Laurie Marker, Director of CCF, and Dr. Hu Berry, Namibian ecologist, along with various other local lecturers. Dr. Eduardo Duque, from Argentina, conducted field exercises in animal tracking and ecology at CCF's field research center in Otjiwarongo.



From Left, Dr. Laurie Marker, CCF Executive Director, Paul Smit, the Namibian Minister of Agriculture, Dr. Bruce Brewer, CCF General Manager, Gary Newton, USAID Mission Director with the Governor of Otjiwarongo at the official Bushblok plant opening in March 2005.

Bushblok Plant Officially Opened in March 2005

CCF's Bushblok fuel log factory in Otjiwarongo is in production! The plant is up and running and building up stock to get ready for distribution within Namibia, South Africa and Europe.

As part of the ongoing research, designated plots on CCF's Elandsvreugde farm have been selectively harvested to assess the density and comparative yield of each bush species. CCF has also commissioned a bush harvesting contractor to harvest several plots to compare and study optimum production techniques.

Cheetah Country Beef Eco-Label to be in Europe by mid 2005

The Cheetah Country Beef eco-label for Namibian beef is gaining in popularity. Interested farmers will sign an agreement with the Conservancies Association of Namibia (CANAM) saying they will not indiscriminately kill cheetahs on their farmland. In return for their efforts of implementing cheetah friendly management practices, farmers will receive a premium price per kilogram of carcass weight sold to Meatco.

The brand name Cheetah Country Beef is being registered as an official trademark in the European Union, South Africa and Namibia. Cheetah Country Beef will be introduced to the Namibian and European market in 2005.



Generous DONATION



Laurie Marker with Howard Buffet and Chewbakka.



CCF would like to thank the Howard G. Buffet Foundation for a very generous donation of heavy-duty farm equipment shipped from the United States. CCF farm operations and the Bushblok Program will be greatly improved through this donation.

CCF Kenya Team Grows

Mary Wykstra, Kenya Program Director, has been approved by the Kenya Ministry of Education to extend cheetah studies for an additional three years. Thanks to the affiliation and collaboration of work with the Kenya Wildlife Service our CCF Kenya team has collected a significant amount of data. CCF Research Assistant, Cosmas Wambua, and a variety of students and volunteers have assisted in this data collection, analysis and networking.

Lumumba Mutiso, a farmer who lost goats to cheetahs in 2002, has recently joined Mary in her research. His personal understanding of the issues will be a great benefit to Mary and Cosmas. He has been assisting CCF Kenya in locating the cheetahs that pass through this highly subdivided area and will continue to be our voice in the community. Welcome, Lumumba!



CCF Kenya Team: Lumumba Mutiso, Mary Wykstra and Cosmas Wambua

Wildlife Artist and Longtime CCF Friend Tragically Killed in Kenya

The CCF has lost a dear friend and supporter in a tragic accident in Kenya. Simon Combes was an inspiration in setting up the Kenya CCF project. He will be dearly missed. Simon loved nature and expressed that love in his art.

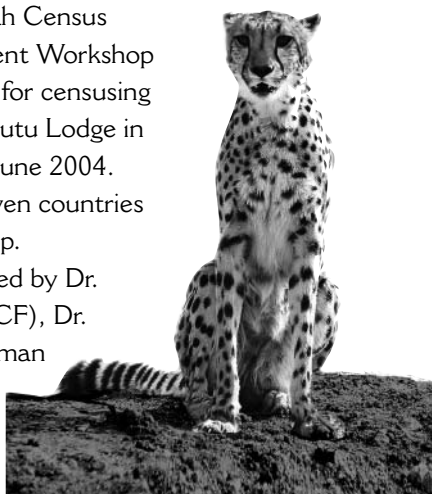
CCF is currently establishing a memorial fund in Simon's name to support cheetah conservation in Kenya. For more details on the fund and how to contribute, see www.cheetah.org.



Global Cheetah Census Workshop Held in Tanzania

An international Cheetah Census Technique Development Workshop to develop global standards for censusing cheetah was held at the Ndotu Lodge in the Serengeti, Tanzania in June 2004. Thirty-four people from seven countries participated in this workshop.

CCF was well represented by Dr. Laurie Marker (Director, CCF), Dr. Arthur Bagot-Smith (Chairman of the Board of Trustees, CCF), Amy Dickman (Research Assistant, CCF), Mary Wykstra (CCF Kenya) and Haral Forster (Okatumba Wildlife Trust).



Censusing techniques include visual observations/tags and re-release, carnivore atlasing, questionnaires/GIS data, spoor counts, camera traps, and photographic survey.

Cheetah Conservation in BOTSWANA

by rebecca klein

The Jwaneng Research Camp has been very busy monitoring radio-collared cheetahs and carrying out a spoor survey to estimate cheetah density. The Howard Buffet Foundation has generously donated a microlight, affectionately named "Cheetah" to locate the radio-collared cheetahs.

A community development officer, Mmusi Tutwane, was recently hired. He comes with a background as a guide, ranger and educator for the Wildlife Department, Conservation International and Mokolodi Nature Reserve. Visits to communities surrounding Jwaneng are underway to assess the level of cheetah conflict and sightings in order to estimate cheetah numbers.

In September, Ghanzi was visited by researchers to complete preliminary studies for setting up a research camp in January. This is an area of commercial farming interests for both cattle and game.

Through Ministry MOU, CCF Donates Hundreds of Books

CCF has presented the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture with CCF Predator Resource Guides and student activity booklets for all of Namibia's schools. Every school was also presented with *African Critters* by Robert Haas for their library collection. The distribution of these resources was done through the Namibian Institute for Educational Development.





US Educators Visit CCF and Namibia

In August, CCF welcomed 20 educators from the United States for a one-week "Earth Expeditions" environmental education course. Sponsored in cooperation with Miami University from Oxford, Ohio, the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden and CCF, the course focused on inquiry based science learning.

The mission of Earth Expeditions is to build an alliance of educators with first-hand knowledge of learner-centered, community-based learning for the benefit of ecological communities, learner achievement, and global understanding.

CCF Outreach Meets Thousands of Learners

In 2004, CCF's education outreach team visited 105 schools. The team gave presentations to 19,146 students. Each student walked away with a new cheetah activity book and a better understanding of the cheetah and its fight for survival.

CCF hosted 24 groups at the LightFoot Campsite during 2004. These groups consisted of schools and community groups totaling 917 people. Youth groups joined CCF at the LightFoot Campsite to assist in service projects.

Both school and youth groups participated in a variety of activities that helped to explain the need for cheetah conservation. They viewed cheetahs upclose. All groups left CCF with a better awareness and understanding of their role in saving the lives of cheetahs.

CCF thanks the Brevard Zoo in Florida, who through a grant from the American Zoo & Aquarium Association's Cheetah Species Survival Program, donated a "suitcase for survival" of hand puppets, plush toys, games, posters, books and art supplies to Namibia's CCF education programs and to projects in Botswana and Kenya.

The Cheetah Conservation Fund would like to thank the following people and organizations for their generous support

- | | | |
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| Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden (CZBG) | Friends of the Kansas City Zoo | Sandra Moss |
| The Angel Fund (CZBG) | Friedman, Billings, Ramsey | National Cancer Institute |
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| | The Anne Mize Fund of the Vanguard Public Foundation | Zoological Society of Philadelphia |
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Purchase of coffee and/or jewelry at the following websites helps support CCF. Visit www.coffeefortheworld.com or www.windowsonwildlife.com/ccf



News

Summary of USA Fall Tour 2004

CCF would like to thank all Chapter Heads, members, special event sponsors and the many supporters behind all these events for making Laurie's Fall 2004 Tour a GREAT SUCCESS. For full details of the tour please visit: <http://www.cheetah.org/?nd=newstours>

Below, a concise list of contributions to the Tour.

- Philadelphia, PA:** Laurie Keynote Speaker AZAD Conference
 - Worcester, Mass:** Worcester Polytechnic Institute
 - Cincinnati, OH:** CCF USA HQ Gatherings
 - New Orleans:** AZA Conference
 - NYC:** CCF presents 2004 Lifetime Conservation Award to Namibia's Present, Dr. Sam Nujoma.
 - DC Chapter** sponsored event in Georgetown with Cheetah Ambassador Sahara and Anatolian Shepherd Alexa
 - NO CA Chapter** sponsored event in Santa Cruz
 - Presentations at **NO CA Wildlife Conservation Network** Annual Expo
 - Seattle, Washington** event
 - Portland, Oregon Chapter** sponsored lectures and BIG CAT. BIG PARTY at the Oregon Zoo. Leopards, Etc. brought their beautiful cheetahs, Kamau and Kgosi. Public library exhibit - *The Role Children Can Play in Saving a Species*.
- Laurie linked up with numerous friends, old and new—keeping the Cheetah Conservation Fund network alive and well.

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Coming Up Next: USA Spring Tour 2005

Tentative dates include: March 11-14 – Cincinnati, OH March 15-17 – New Jersey March 18-20 – Palm Desert, CA	March 22-29 – Bay Area, CA March 30-31 – Portland, OR April 1-3 – Dallas, TX	April 4 – Atlanta, GA April 5-6 – Detroit, MI April 7-14 – Washington, DC, Middleburg, VA
<i>For a complete list of CCF events, please visit www.cheetah.org or contact leona@cheetah.org.</i>		

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