

CHEETAH STRIDES

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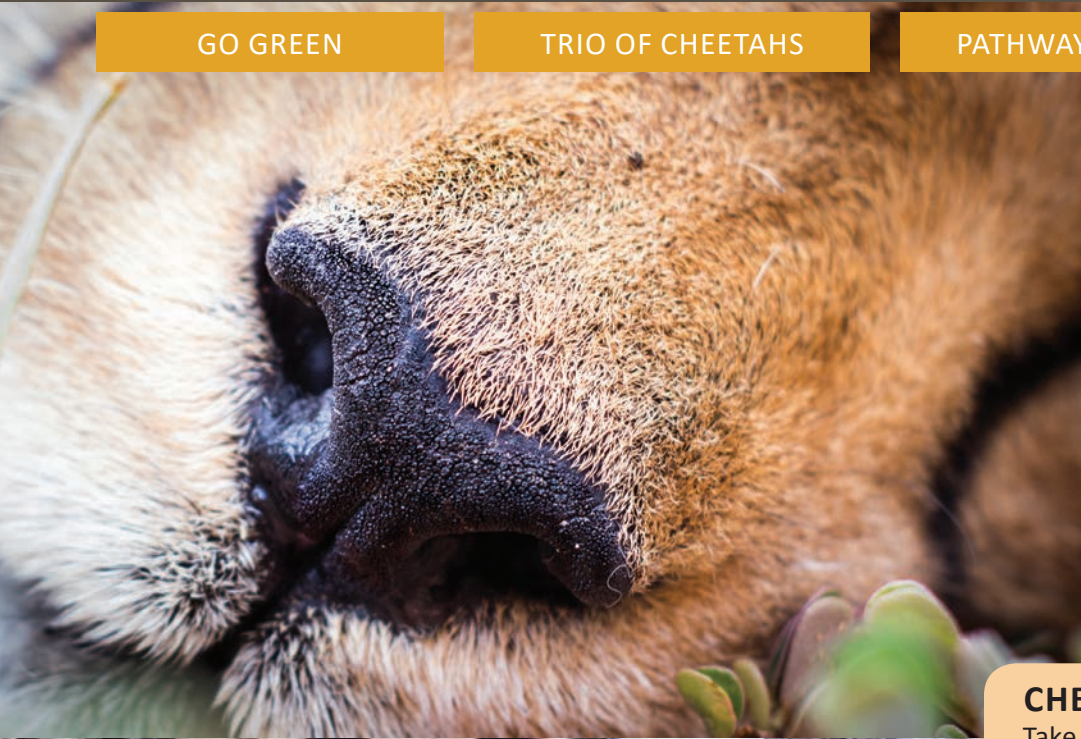
THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CHEETAH CONSERVATION FUND

GO GREEN

TRIO OF CHEETAHS

PATHWAYS NA

SCAT, SCAT, SCAT!



CHEETAHS CLOSE-UP!

Take our Cheetah Adaptations Challenge on page 6, for a chance to win a copy of *Cheetahs - Biology and Conservation*.



Cheetah
CONSERVATION FUND
www.cheetah.org

HELP US KEEP THE CHEETAH WHERE IT BELONGS

in the wild.

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR



The year, like most others in recent history, started off with great gusto. We kicked off 2018 by hosting a major event in Namibia, the Pathways Africa 2018 Conference and Training. It was a lot of work, but after hearing the reactions from the over 150 participants and 45 trainees, it was so worth it! A huge thanks to our partners, Colorado State University's Warner College of Natural Resources, the Large Carnivore Association of Namibia, and the Namibia Nature Foundation, our sponsors (the Pathways story has the full list), and our CCF staff, volunteers and interns. Because of your efforts, we pulled this off. I'd also like to personally thank the Honorable Minister Pohamba Shifeta of Namibia's Ministry of Environment and Tourism for his wonderful opening address. Underscoring Namibia's commitment to conservation and highlighting the importance of community based natural resource management sets a strong example for other nations to follow.

Our work in the Greater Waterberg Landscape will be a focus for 2018. For many years, we held Future Farmers of Africa (FFA) trainings at the Centre. To reach farmers in the remote regions of the GWL where conflict runs highest, we have been taking our trainings on the road. In 2018, our Ecology and Veterinary teams will be traveling throughout the four communal conservancies in the GWL, to teach farmers about proper livestock management, basic veterinary care, animal husbandry, non-lethal conflict mitigation tools and the use of our CCF Livestock Guarding Dogs. We are also entering the next phase of an important GWL research project that will identify conflict hot spots in Hereroland (see Go Green story).

Cheetah View Lodge (CVL) has been a pleasant surprise. Since opening last June, we've had lots of guests and more interest for this coming year. Word of mouth has been incredible! The people who've stayed at CVL have been lovely. They are very engaged in the work we do, and it's great to be telling our story to even more people. Guests have remarked how the accommodations and food have CCF exceeded their expectations. Many thanks to our hard-working tourism staff for making CVL a success.

We have opposite seasons and schedules in the southern hemisphere, so this means we are at the end of our summer. We've had some terrific Namibian students interning with us, and we've also had several excellent international students here at the same time. Our research and conservation, education projects are scaling up, and we rely on these students to help staff our projects at the same time they are learning from us. We also are relying on you for your continued support, so we can meet the needs of the community.

At CCF, we remind people that we need to 'change the world to save the cheetah', and we cannot do this alone. We are grateful for our partner organizations, our staff, volunteers and interns, and for our supporters like you. I'm looking forward to seeing as many of you as I can while I am in the U.S. on my Spring Tour. Help us scale up. Spread the word, bring a friend to an event, and come see us in Namibia! You all mean so much to me and everyone at CCF.

Dr. Laurie Marker
Founder & Executive Director

PS: Thanks to our staff for your great blogs! These help keeps all informed about the happenings at CCF. Please share our news with others too!

DR. MARKER'S USA SPRING TOUR

Colorado
Cheetah Night at Hallum Lake
March 14

California
African Sundowner - Desert Style!
How Dogs are Saving Cats
March 21

Happy Hollow Zoo Talk
April 5

WCN Expo
April 21

Missouri
Event TBA
March 26

Virginia
Event TBA
March 29

For more info and to see the updated schedule.
www.cheetah.org/events/

Keep up with the cheetahs by following CCF's social media.

Find us @CCFCheetah on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, & Pinterest.

PATHWAYS AFRICA RAISES THE BAR



Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF), Colorado State University's Warner College of Natural Resources (CSU WCNR), the Large Carnivore Management Association of Namibia (LCMAN) and the Namibia Nature Foundation (NNF) partnered to bring a major wildlife conference to Namibia, the 2018 Pathways Africa Conference & Training. The six-day event was themed "Living with Wildlife" and examined the human dimensions of natural resource management. Pathways Africa was held January 6 - 11, 2018, at the Safari Hotel in Windhoek. According to participants and the organizers, the event was a resounding success.

Dr. Laurie Marker, CCF's Founder and Executive Director and a lead conference organizer, explained that Pathways Africa was developed to set the precedent for future research, innovation, and collaboration and to further the application of research in the field of human dimensions of wildlife management in sub-Saharan Africa. The conference and training drew more than 200 international participants.

"One of the main goals of Pathways Africa was to bring together visionary natural resource professionals, students and academics who are forging new frontiers, so we could learn from each other," said Dr. Marker. "The needs of Africa are going to overshadow the world in the next many years, and having a focus on Africa natural resource management is critical to solving problems on a lasting, global scale."

Pathways Africa was presented in two parts. The first was a three-days training for 45 early and mid-career conservationists from 12 African nations, including Namibia, Algeria, Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Africa, Somaliland, Tanzania, Uganda, Zimbabwe and Zambia.

The training offered workshops on leadership, community-based conservation program management, human-wildlife conflict mitigation and communications,

and it gave trainees the chance to meet and form relationships with peers in other African nations.

"Pathways has been stalwart in its mission to increase professionalism and excellence in the human dimensions of conservation, and we strive to increase the understanding, skills, and capacity of motivated, early-career practitioners in Africa," said Michael Manfredo, Professor and Department Head of The Department of Human Dimensions of Natural Resources at CSU.

The training was followed immediately by the three-day conference, and the trainees were invited to participate. Sessions presented during the conference included The Changing Nature of Wildlife Conservation; Wildlife Trafficking and Demand Reduction; Landscape Connectivity; Human-Wildlife Conflict; Community-based Conservation; Linking Science to Action; Policy and Legislation, and Transboundary Species Management.

"We are very pleased to have so many wonderful partners and sponsors for Pathways Africa. We would not be able to put on an event of this size without their support," said Dr. Marker. "The event was a huge undertaking. Our CCF staff, volunteers and interns were so wonderful! They did an excellent job hosting people at the social events and they were in all the meeting rooms making sure the presentations ran smoothly."

Stella Emvula, a CCF intern from Namibia studying at Plymouth University in the UK, was among the CCF group working the conference. "Pathways Africa was a wonderful experience. I learned so much and got to meet so many different people from all over the world. The workshops that dealt with issues pertaining to human wildlife conflict interested me the most. I listened to talks many different approaches to understanding coexistence," said Stella, who recently switched her major to Wildlife Management.

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photo top: Conference attendees participated in many training seminars and lectures. bottom photo: Dr. Marker meets the Honorable Pohamba Shifeta, Namibia's Minister of Environment and Tourism.

Photos courtesy: Department of Human Dimensions of Natural Resources

The next Pathways conference will take place in Germany in 2020.

PATHWAYS AFRICA 2018 SPONSORS

MET Namibia

USAID East Africa

WWF Namibia

WWF/Russell E. Train Education for Nature

Air Namibia

Go Green Fund

Namibian Nature Foundation

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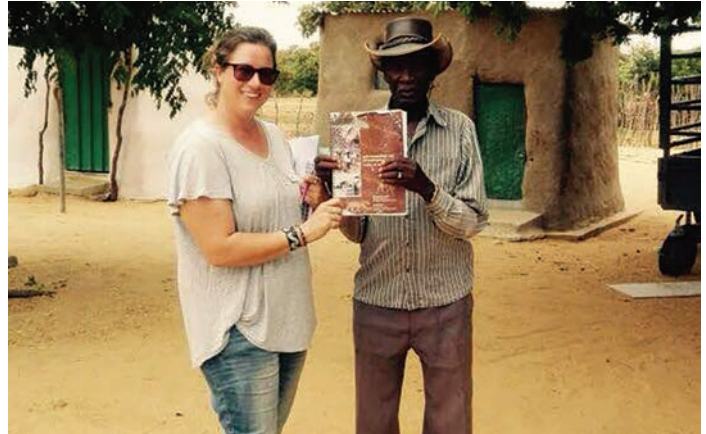
Geka Pharma (Pty) Ltd

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CSU WCNR

Cheetah Conservation Fund

portion of the GWL with freehold (commercial) farms, and the work was completed in 2017. In January, CCF's team, headed by newly-hired ecologist Willem Briers-Louw, began Phase Two. This next phase will cover the four communal conservancies of the GWL (Otjituuo, African Wild Dog, Okamatapati, and Ozonahi), a much larger territory than Phase One. Collectively, this area is known as the Eastern Communal area.



"The aim of this phase is to determine the wildlife present within this area, during both wet and dry seasons. By strategically placing camera traps on known wildlife trails or at water points, we aim to better understand which herbivore and carnivore species occur within this area," said Willem.

Three trapping grids were created, and 35 cameras will be placed in each grid, beginning with the Otjituuo conservancy. Cameras will be sampled sequentially for 30 days, from January through December, 2018.

To set up cameras on communal lands, CCF's team used a grassroots approach. They engaged with local communities to enlist their help. They surveyed farmers about their livelihoods, presence of wildlife on their lands and perceived versus actual livestock losses. Communal farmers were surprisingly receptive to having a camera on their land.

"When farmers understood the reason for the cameras, they were more than willing to point out ideal locations (for wildlife) to place the camera, and they agreed to leave them alone," said Nadja le Roux, CCF's Community Relations Manager.

"By involving community members in this project, we hope that they will take pride in participation, and we will get the best results possible," added Willem.

GO GREEN PHASE TWO: IDENTIFYING HOT SPOTS IN THE EASTERN COMMUNAL LANDS

In 2015, CCF embarked on a multi-year research project using camera trap surveys to determine human-carnivore conflict areas ("hot spots") across the Greater Waterberg Landscape (GWL), a territory covering more than 19,000 km². The massive undertaking is being supported in part by Namibia's Go Green Fund, administered by the Namibian Nature Foundation in partnership with Nedbank Namibia.

During Phase One, CCF ecologists tackled the

CCF STAFF SPOTLIGHT: Quentin de Jager, CCF Scat Dog Handler & Trainer



Quentin de Jager is a most welcome addition to the CCF staff in Namibia. He joined CCF in 2017 as our scat dog handler and trainer. Quentin brings to CCF a wide range of professional skills, and in addition, he is exceptionally personable and giving of his time.

Born in South Africa and raised on a game farm, Quentin has been exposed to wild animals his entire life. Growing up, his parents operated a Boerboel (South African Mastiff) breeding kennel, so working with and caring for dogs became second nature to him early on. He knew he wanted to be a wildlife ranger, so upon high school graduation, Quentin embarked on this career. On the job as a ranger, he learned how effective dogs can be in fighting poaching.

Quentin enrolled in Paramount Specialized K9 Academy in South Africa to earn his qualification in dog handling. He trained in basic kennel practices, dog health care, crime deterrence with dogs, patrolling, scent tracking and detection. He also trained in advanced weapons and combat to assist him in anti-poaching work. After completing his training, he joined Paramount Academy's anti-poaching team and worked as an instructor, so he could share his knowledge with others.

Now at CCF, Quentin focuses on the scat dog program. A typical day in his life is long, and it begins just as the sun rises. His first order of business is to prepare his team of dogs for detection work, which entails checking their health status, cleaning their

continued on next page

photos opposite page: Nadja LeRoux with a farmer participating in GoGreen study. photos this page: left: Quentin and scat detection dog Levi right: Enyakwa and Gamena, scat dogs in training

NAME THAT DOG!

And the Winner is...



You voted. We counted. The winning names of CCF's newest scat detection dogs are **Enyakwa** (meaning brave) and **Gamena** (protector), in Oshiwambo.

The winning names were submitted by CCF's current interns. The puppies are Belgian Malinois, and both are female. They were donated to CCF by an Otjiwarongo farmer as a thank-you for Quentin de Jager training his dog (the puppies' sire), for security and anti-poaching work. The farmer is a member of local neighborhood watch group.

"The pups are being socialized with staff, and soon Quentin will begin their training. They are already incredibly smart," said Dr. Marker. "These dogs are a wonderful addition to CCF and we are grateful to have them."



Sponsor a Livestock Guarding Dog
 Help CCF save the cheetah in the wild by
 supporting our LGD program.
www.cheetah.org/donate/sponsor/

kennels, and giving them food and water. Then it's off to the field, where he visits playtrees or other known areas for cheetah activity. By mid-morning, the sun is overhead and it is too hot for detection work, so Quentin returns to the Centre and submits the samples he's collected to the genetics lab. Sometimes a local wildlife ranger will come to CCF for dog handler training with Quentin or he speaks with local farmers by telephone. After 4 p.m., the sun is low enough for him to do more detection work.



In December, Quentin went on holiday to visit some friends in Virginia and New York. Despite the fact he was on vacation, he volunteered his time to give presentations in two of the U.S. cities he was visiting. CCF's offices in Alexandria hosted an event for the D.C. Chapter, and another was held at the home of CCF Trustee, Anne Passer, in New York. Quentin shared stories about his work and the challenges in overcoming cultural attitudes of Namibians towards domestic animals. His talk was accompanied by a slideshow and drone footage of his work with dogs.

"It's very important that we generate awareness for the importance of scent tracking in cheetah conservation. What I love most about this job is that we are using animals to save animals. We find genetic material, and that results in better ways to protect them. I find that beautiful," said Quentin.

photos this page: left: Quentin de Jager with scat detection dog Levi, right: Sasha in post operation recovery
photos opposite page: left: German film crew at CCF, right: Swedish film crew at CCF. Mr. Lindstrom is in the center with Dr. Marker.

A TRIO OF NEW CHEETAHS



CCF has recently accepted three new cheetahs into our Cheetah Sanctuary.

Sasha is a six-month old female. She was found by a farmer on his land, when she was about two months old and apparently very weak. Working together with the MET, she was brought to the CCF Centre. During her initial health check, staff found a hard spot in her abdomen. It was determined that Sasha needed to undergo surgery immediately. During the procedure, an object was removed from her stomach, the remains of a rubber ball. An ulcer had developed as a result, but not yet burst.

Fortunately, Sasha came to CCF when she did, as she would never be able to digest the rubber or pass it through her intestines. Had the ulcer ruptured, she might not have survived. Sasha is recovering from surgery, eating normally, and appears to be doing well. CCF veterinary staff are keeping a close eye on her.

Two other two new cheetahs came to CCF from a private farm where they were being kept as pets, which is against the law in Namibia. The Namibian government would not grant the farmers a permit, so CCF was called to take possession. Bella, a female, is 18 months-old, and Katiti, a male is about a year-old. Bella is tame, Katiti is not.

"The three new cheetahs are currently in the sanctuary. They are all young, so we plan to integrate them with others. We are going to try to put the two females together with other females, and we will put the male with the last two males we received in July of 2017, Niko and Koya. We are hoping they will form a male coalition," said Dr. Marker, who reiterated that "cheetahs don't make good pets and how sad it is that these cheetahs have been taken out of the wild and now are under the care at CCF."

Sponsor a Resident Cheetah at CCF
Help CCF care for orphaned cheetahs.
www.cheetah.org/donate/sponsor/

LIGHTS, CAMERA, CHEETAH ACTION!



As an open-to-the-public research center receiving more than 12,000 visitors each year, CCF is always bustling. We are accustomed to regular media attention. But during December, January, and February, our Namibian Centre was busier than usual, and the spotlight was even brighter!

During these three months, CCF hosted television crews from France, Sweden, Germany and the UK, all making major documentary projects featuring CCF.

In December, just before the holidays, CCF welcomed a crew from One Planet Productions in France. Their project is a three-part series depicting family units of five African wildlife species, including the cheetah. The project will air on France5, a national channel, and is a co-production with National Geographic U.S. and the German broadcaster, ZDF. At CCF, the crew captured beautiful, slow-motion footage of a cheetah running, to illustrate how this big cat moves.

A crew from Sweden traveled to Namibia in early January to work on a production featuring the plight of the cheetah as told from the perspective of Göran Lindström, a Swedish national with an ardent passion for cheetah conservation. Mr. Lindström is a longtime CCF supporter, now in his retirement, who

travels to Namibia regularly and spends months at a time at various wildlife centres. The crew produced footage at Pathways Africa, then came to CCF with Mr. Lindström to reminisce about his experiences. The program is slated to appear on Swedish national television in late 2018 to coincide with International Cheetah Day, December 4.

In early February, German television star Hannes Jaenicke and his crew spent five days at CCF creating a documentary to spotlight Dr. Marker and CCF's conservation programs. The crew captured footage of CCF's cheetahs, our Livestock Guarding Dogs, scat dog detection work, the genetics lab, and Hannes even learned how to make goat cheese in our creamery. The hour-long show will air as a special on ZDF in July of 2018.

In late February, just before Dr. Marker departed for the Horn of Africa and the U.S. for her Spring Tour, a crew from BBC Television arrived to work on a television series tentatively titled, *Big Animal Surgeries*. The segment at CCF revolves around the physiology and morphology of the cheetah, which is used as a storytelling device to open discussion about the threats facing the species and conservation interventions. The crew spent three days filming at CCF on this trip. No air date has been set.



Cheetah Adaptations Challenge

The close-up images on the front cover represent specialized physiological adaptations unique to cheetahs as a species. **Write a paragraph for each area: face, feet, and tail.** Tell us all about the adaptations, and how they make the cheetah one of the most successful hunters on the savanna.

Submit your paragraphs, **by no later than April 30, 2018**, in .doc or .pdf format to info@cheetah.org for a chance to win a copy of CHEETAHS: Biology and Conservation.



CHEETAHS ON SALE NOW

Dr. Marker's latest publication -- three years in the making -- is now available. *CHEETAHS: Biology and Conservation*, published by Elsevier, brings together the writings of more than 150 cheetah researchers, educators, and conservationists to relay what's been done in the modern era to save our favorite feline from extinction. Dr. Marker, Dr. Anne Schmidt-Küntzel, CCF's Research Geneticist and Assistant Director for Animal Health and Research and Dr. Lorraine Boast, a research associate with Cheetah Conservation Botswana, are co-editors. Dr. Marker is credited as lead author for seven of the book's chapters and a contributor for 20 more.

This beautiful, professionally bound book is a great gift for big cat aficionados and is a must-read for anyone serious about cheetah conservation.

See page 6 for a chance to win a copy!

Cheetahs cover art by Angela Scott



RE-WILDING SUCCESS TALES

Savanna, the daughter of Jacomina, a female cheetah re-wilded by CCF at Erindi Ranch, has had a litter of cubs. They are believed to have been born in December of 2017. Mother and cubs are being seen regularly and appear to be healthy.

