

CHEETAH STRIDES

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CHEETAH CONSERVATION FUND



2012 ANNUAL FUND

AFRICAN TRAVELS

REWILDING

NAMIBIAN GEMS

SPRING TOUR



**CCF's newest ambassadors follow
in Chewbaaka's footsteps**



Help us keep the cheetah where it belongs: *In the wild.*

MAKING STRIDES FOR CHEETAHS

THIS YEAR'S ANNUAL FUND CAMPAIGN IS APTLY themed "Making Strides for Cheetahs." For more than 20 years, the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) has been doing just that. Our ongoing effort is made possible because of the generous contributions of devoted friends like you. Your support of CCF's Annual Fund is the lynch pin that enables us to take even greater strides in our mission to ensure this magnificent creature doesn't vanish from the planet.

The CCF Annual Fund Campaign is your opportunity to play a vital role in our efforts to save the cheetah from extinction. This campaign is CCF's yearly effort to raise the funds necessary to continue our mission. **We have set an ambitious goal of raising \$1,766,000 - a goal we can only reach with your support.**

Your generous gifts to our Annual Fund ensure that our innovative programs can continue uninterrupted throughout the year. Your gifts support vital programs like the:

- Livestock Guarding Dog Program that reduces human/predator conflict;
- local, national and international education and training;
- reintroduction of cheetahs back to the wild;
- care for orphaned or injured cheetahs unable to survive in the wild; and
- research and analysis of genetic, biological and ecological data affecting the cheetah's survival.

CCF understands just how important your support is to our mission. That's why we make it as easy as possible to give to CCF. You can:

- use the enclosed envelope to send us your gift today;
- respond to our requests for support sent via the mail or e-mail;
- go to our website at www.cheetah.org to make a safe and secure gift online; or
- call us at 886-909-3399, ext. 103.

Your gifts to CCF are the best way to help to conserve the cheetah. CCF keeps administrative costs to a minimum to ensure that the highest percentage of your contribution goes directly to our programs. CCF applies 82 percent of every gift directly to programs and only 18 percent to administrative and fundraising expenses.

CCF has been awarded Charity Navigator's highest rating of four stars for our sound fiscal management and commitment to accountability and transparency.

When considering your charitable giving this year, please remember the plight of the cheetah. This unique big cat is at a genuine risk of extinction and extinction means forever. With your help, we can ensure that we continue making strides for the cheetah's survival.

For more information regarding CCF's Annual Fund Campaign or other ways you can give, please contact David Moore, Director of Development at 866-909-3399, ext. 103 or at david@cheetah.org.



The OK Cubs take a break after their first run in the Big Field.

AMBASSADORS HAD THEIR FIRST RUN ON THE BIG FIELD

CCF's new ambassadors, the OK cubs, enjoyed a run in the "Big Field" that was the exercise track for Chewbaaka, CCF's beloved Cheetah ambassador for 14 years. This is the first time the cubs have run on Chewbaaka's "track" since his passing last spring. The cubs have some big paws to fill as our new ambassadors, but seem to relish the challenge.

AFRICAN TRAVELS BUILD RELATIONSHIPS/COLLABORATION

By Laurie L. Marker, D.Phil

AT THE END OF JANUARY, DR. ANNE SCHMIDT-KUENTZEL and I attended the West, North and Central African Regional Cheetah and Wild Dog Strategic Planning meeting and the Niger National Cheetah Planning Meetings at Park W, Niger. The meetings were held in collaboration with the IUCN cat and canid specialist groups, the Zoological Society of London and the Wildlife Conservation Society and were supported by the Howard G. Buffett Foundation.



During our travel we met with CCF's Kenya partner Mary Wkystra from Action for Cheetahs in Kenya and Stephen Brend from Born Free Ethiopia, as well as past international course students, to discuss the future of cheetahs in their countries.

The Regional Workshop highlighted the critical endangerment and lack of knowledge of cheetahs and wild dogs in these regions as well as the extreme need for conservation research initiatives. This workshop was coordinated by Abdoul Karim Samna from the Niger Wildlife Department, under the collaboration of CCF Scientific board members Dr. Sarah Durrant and Dr. Christine Brietenmoiser and others. Karim and four other key participants had attended the International Conservation Biology or Integrated Management Courses at CCF over the past three years.

During the visit to Niger, both the US and German Ambassadors accepted my invitation to learn about the needs of the region for cheetah conservation. They joined us at the Park W during the meeting, where they engaged with the local government representatives with hope for continued collaboration and

support for some of the conservation efforts of the Niger Wildlife authorities.

During our stop in Kenya we visited the Kenyan Wildlife Society to discuss the potential for training a Kenyan researcher in genetic laboratory techniques at CCF in order to contribute to the development of genetic expertise. Also, progress was made in the permit process to send samples from Kenya to Namibia to allow for analysis at CCF until the Kenyan laboratory is ready to process genetic samples.

After the meetings in Niger, we went to Ethiopia where I assessed the facilities and health of four confiscated cheetah cubs in order to evaluate their long-term future. CCF has been in contact with Born Free Ethiopia since the cubs were confiscated at about six weeks of age, providing guidance in proper diet and care. The four cubs were in good physical condition and significantly smaller than the cheetahs in southern Africa, however they are very habituated and will not be candidates for release. We discussed the ideal housing and handling for captive cheetahs as well as for cats that would be candidates for rehabilitation and re-wilding in the future. Scat samples were collected from the captive cheetahs and were transported to CCF.

For several years CCF has worked with Born Free and the Ethiopian Wildlife Department as illegal trade in the region is extensive, with cubs being caught and sold to the Middle East. Ethiopia and Somaliland continue to be hotspots for illegal trade and are among the focal areas that CCF has been working on to bring awareness and action.

SCAT DETECTION EFFORTS IMPROVED WITH NEW TRAINER AND DOGS

OUR NEW SCAT DOG TRAINER HAS ARRIVED! CCF's detection dogs, Finn and Isha, are working with our new trainer, Adam Bean, to find elusive cheetah scat that provides essential information in our census work.

Two fully trained detection dogs are on their way to CCF in the next few weeks, which will increase our scat finding efforts. Once found, scat is processed in our Genetics lab under the direction of Dr. Anne Schmidt-Kuentzel, our Research Geneticist and Assistant Director for Animal Health and Research. Ezekiel Fabiano, our Research Assistant, continues his doctorate work on census techniques, which has included our five-year camera trapping survey, soon to conclude on CCF land. Together, we are using these techniques to better understand the cheetah's genetic makeup as well as population abundance, structure and dynamics.

We will use these techniques to conduct additional



Adam Bean, left, Finn and Matti Nghikembua, out for a day of scat detection.

research with collaborators in other cheetah range countries. In the coming months, we hope to have our dogs working in other areas of Namibia, supplemented by more camera trapping in novel areas.

LGD PROGRAM GROWS WITH NEW LITTER OF KANGAL PUPS

OUR FIRST LITTER OF EIGHT KANGAL PUPPIES WAS born on the 1st of February to Kiri and Firat. This adds to our successful livestock guarding dog program of which more than 400 have been donated to Namibian farmers since 1994. In January, after a day of training farmers with their new dogs, we placed Ushi's



six Anatolian Shepherd puppies born at end of the year. Our research shows that the dogs are extremely effective at reducing livestock attacks from predators, highlighting the economic benefits of the dogs and their conservation value. This coming year several of our young dogs will be ready to breed so we will have more litters to fill our growing waiting list!



A farmer meets his new livestock guarding dog.

RE-INTRODUCTION CONTINUES AT CCF

THE BELLEBENNO TRAINING CAMP, A 4,000-HECTARE fenced game reserve on CCF property, is being used to monitor the progress of re-wilded cheetahs. In 2011, four male cheetahs were placed into the camp and tracked by CCF staff to ensure they had the behaviors necessary for survival in the wild. After a month of observation we were happy with their progress and they were transferred back to their enclosure to await release onto suitable land.

We placed two female cheetahs, Xena and Luna, into Bellebenno at the start of this year. Again, they both exhibited excellent wild behavior and hunted well. The females were not bonded and as such did not stick together, so we have brought Luna back into the 100-acre female camp and are looking for a place for her relocation. The Bellebenno training camp has proven to be a success in allowing appropriate orphaned captive cheetahs to practice their instinctual behaviors in a safe environment to ensure that they are ready for release. We have selected other orphan captive cheetahs for re-wilding in this area.



Xena and Luna are released into the Bellebenno camp.

CCF continues to work with Namibian farmers to increase their tolerance towards cheetahs, but when they are not willing to have cheetahs on their land we are called in to remove the animal.

Toward the end of last year, we received a mother and two cubs, along with three cubs of a similar age whose mother had been shot. We decided to try to unite the two groups in the hope that the mother would adopt the orphaned cubs. After gradual integration, the whole group were bonded and stable. We

released them onto CCF property after fitting a satellite collar onto the mother so we could track her movements. She moved south over the past two months and is now moving back towards CCF land.

We will continue to follow her movements weekly through the satellite collar, which provides updates every five hours. We would like to get several more satellite collars to help us with remote monitoring. If you are interested in helping us acquire these collars please contact us.



KIDS' SPOTLIGHT: TALES OF CONSERVATION

One of CCF's own Kids4cheetahs has been recognized for her inspiring story in a recent Global Story Competition.

Nine-year old Jenna Townsend of Houston, Texas was selected as the winner of Australia's Wildlife Warriors' Tales of Conservation, a contest that invited young writers to convey their passion and concern for animals through their writing.

Jenna's entry, "The Lesson of the Cheetah," was selected from all of the contest submissions. Her story of the cheetah Kekay, is the story of all cheetahs. As her prize, Jenna will receive a limited edition painting of a cheetah by celebrated wildlife artist Pollyanna Pickering of the United Kingdom.

Read Jenna's story at <http://wildlife-warriors.com/the-lesson-of-the-cheetah/>.

VISITOR SPOTLIGHT: THE “BIG CAT PEOPLE” AT CCF

CCF WAS DELIGHTED TO HOST A LECTURE AND fundraising event in Windhoek, Namibia on February 14 for an aptly-named “Valentine’s Date with Big Cats.” Guest speakers, Jonathan and Angela Scott, internationally known for their outstanding still and motion photography work in Kenya’s Masai Mara on the TV show “Big Cat Diaries,” wowed the audience with their beautiful images.



Jonathan and Angela Scott with CCF’s Executive Director, Dr. Laurie Marker.

MINERS MEET NAMIBIA’S GEMS

From February 24 to 26 CCF hosted the Chamber of Mines of Namibia for an annual meeting and Bosberaad (meeting in the bush). Twenty seven delegates attended representing mining and exploration companies active throughout Namibia. Between meetings the group toured the CCF Research and Education Center and learned about our on-going conservation programs. They also met Namibia’s true Gems – the cheetahs. CCF Namibian board member, Mark Dawe, is Chairman of the Chamber of Mines and has sponsored CCF’s Future Farmer of Namibia program through the Solvay Okorosuo Flourspar Mine Charitable Trust.

Everyone was absolutely thrilled with the evening. Guests were captivated by the Scott’s tales of their time spent with some of the world’s magnificent big cats. Jonathan said, “as Honorary Patrons of the Cheetah Conservation Fund (UK), we are thrilled with the opportunity to join Dr. Laurie Marker and help to engage others with the work of the Fund.” The U.S. Ambassador, Wanda Nesbitt, and the British High Commissioner, Marianne Young, attended the event to show support for CCF’s work.

The High Commissioner gave opening remarks, sharing how connected the British people were with the engaging lives of the big cats and how important this program was to ecotourism in Kenya.

Both the Ambassador and the High Commissioner are relatively new to Namibia and both have become involved in our cheetah conservation efforts. The U.S. Ambassador and her husband Jim have adopted one of our Anatolian Shepherds, Cappuccino, and will assist us with our breeding program.



Members of Namibia’s Chamber of Mines meet Namibia’s true gems at a recent visit to CCF.

EDUCATION, TRAINING KEY TO THE CHEETAH'S SURVIVAL

CCF CONTINUES TO HOST BOTH NATIONAL AND international students for environmental education. University groups learn about CCF's integrated research and conservation efforts, returning to their home country with increased knowledge and passion for cheetah conservation, and additional skills to help them assist in the fight against species extinction. Education is an important part of CCF's work, as we train future conservationists of Africa and the world, instilling in them a sense of our natural heritage.

In 2011, we trained more than 21,000 school children in outreach programs, and hosted 33 groups at the Center, six of which were from the US. In March we welcomed the Wakefield School of The Plains, Virginia, for two weeks to assist us with all aspects of

CCF's work. During her spring tour, Dr Laurie Marker has been invited to be a featured speaker at Dartmouth College. For more information on Dr. Marker's spring tour see below.



Dartmouth College students pose with Laurie and our cheetahs at the end of their training.

MEET LAURIE DURING HER SPRING TOUR

Laurie's United States Spring Tour for 2012 will be April 24-May 24. Please check the CCF calendar at www.cheetah.org for tour updates and specific events in your area. Below is a list of currently scheduled tour areas:

San Francisco, CA

Indianapolis, IN

Washington, DC

San Diego, CA

West Lafayette, IN

Los Angeles, CA

Hanover, NH

Please join Dr. Marker's spring tour as she gives lectures at the Indianapolis Zoo, Purdue University and Dartmouth College. CCF appreciates your continued support of all events and fundraisers in its effort to save the endangered cheetah.

This year, the CCF Chapters in Portland, Phoenix and Chicago are taking a year off to regroup their efforts toward the Run for the Cheetah. CCF plans to have a Virtual Run for the Cheetah between the three cities in order to continue its fundraising campaign. Please look for this special online Run for the Cheetah this April. Visit www.runforthecheetah.org for more information.

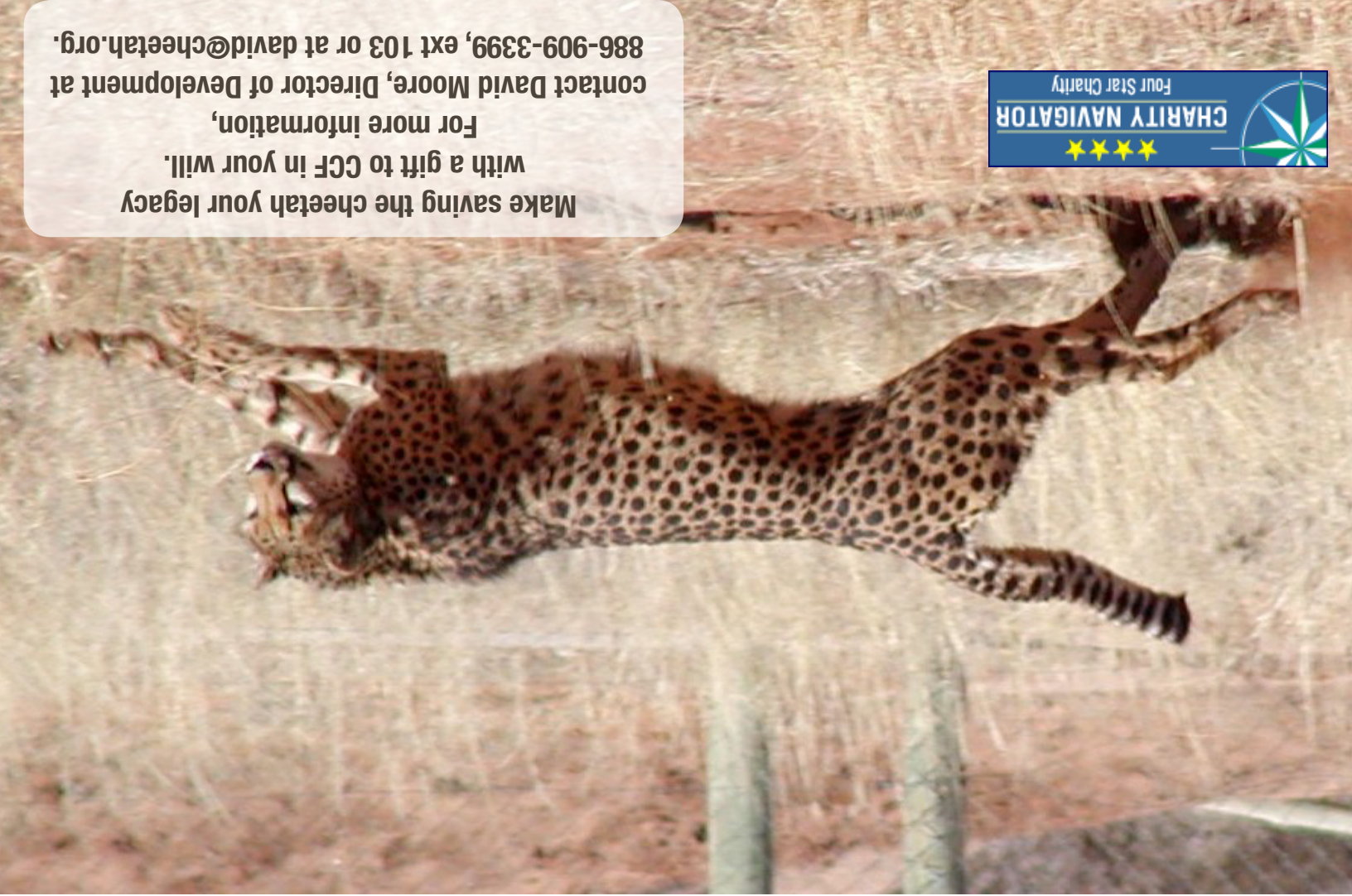
SAVE THE DATE

The Southern California CCF Chapter will hold its 2nd Annual Cheetah Conservation Golf Tournament on November 12, 2012 at Stoneridge Country Club in Poway, California. Registration is now open at <http://cheetahgolf.weebly.com/index.html>.

886-909-3399, ext 103 or at david@cheetah.org.
contact David Moore, Director of Development at

For more information,
with a gift to CCF in your will.

Make saving the cheetah your legacy



CHEETAH CONSERVATION FUND
P.O. BOX 2496
2210 MT. VERNON AVENUE,
SECOND FLOOR
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22301-0496

Nonprofit Org
US Postage Paid
Permit 2896
Merrifield VA