

CHEETAH STRIDES

The newsletter of the Cheetah Conservation Fund



CHEETAH RELEASE

REBUILDING

ILLEGAL TRADE

GUARDING DOGS

FALL TOUR



Photo by Kate Vannelli



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

NOTES FROM THE DIRECTOR

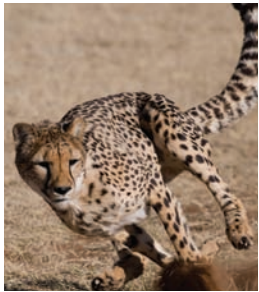


After visiting us in Namibia, many of you come to the same epiphany. Time and time again, I hear, “WOW, there’s so much going on here!” And you’re right. Sometimes I view our headquarters as an aggregate of habitats. We provide the environment for so many different things to grow and thrive; it’s inspiring.

Recently I took stock over a single two-week period, and here’s what happened: We hosted 23 international educators • We helped organize the annual Waterberg Conservancy Waterhole count—more than 50 volunteers counted game at 23 area waterholes • Livestock Guarding Dog puppies were born! (read more on page 5) • New volunteers arrived from multiple continents • Construction continued on our rebuilding project (page 6) • Groups of Namibian school children joyfully watched cheetahs run • We hosted participants from the regional meeting of the Namibian Environmental Education Network • Dr. Ulf Tubbesing came from Windhoek for a closer look at two of our cheetahs • Our staff researchers were out in the field tracking released cheetahs (see page 3 for the story on Jacomina), searching for wild cheetah scat, conducting ecology and prey base studies and welcoming a newly donated item to our genetics lab (page 3) • Our Bushblok plant is churning out fuel logs from sustainably harvested encroaching thornbush • I was interviewed for several international news pieces on my new book, *A Future For Cheetahs* and so much more!



Like the cheetah, we’re always running. I can’t thank you enough for your support. A special thanks to those of you who contributed to and were leadership donors for our annual Chewbaaka Memorial Challenge.



With gratitude and cheetah purrs,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laurie Marker".

Dr. Laurie Marker
Founder and Executive Director

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE FIELD

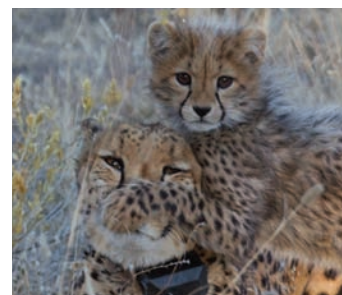
THE WINNER IS: At the 16th annual CCF Gala Dinner in Windhoek, Dr. Laurie Marker presented **four 2014 Cheetah Conservation Awards**. Jonathan and Angela Scott were presented with CCF’s 2014 Cheetah Conservationist of the Year for their dedication to big cat conservation. The 2014 Cheetah Conservation Educator of the Year Award was presented to Professor Tjama Tjivikua, the Founding Rector of the Polytechnic of Namibia. CCF’s 2014 Conservation Business of the Year was presented to the Erindi Private Game Reserve. Erindi has provided homes to several of CCF’s released cheetahs. CCF also recognized two of our longtime staff members, Johan and Tanya Britz, for 10 years of service, and Johan as the Cheetah Farmer of the Year.

TEACHERS BECOME LEARNERS: For the 11th year, Earth Expedition, a program with Miami University in cooperation with the Cincinnati Zoo, brought teachers to Namibia from around the U.S. Many teachers are part of a Masters degree program. They learned about cheetah husbandry, predator friendly farming techniques and more.

SUMMER CAMP VIA SKYPE: Brian Badger, Operations Manager at CCF’s headquarters in Namibia, began Skyping weekly with conservation campers from Busch Gardens in the United States. The two kids camps, “Live From the Field” and “Expedition: Conservation” were wildly (no pun intended) popular and held throughout the summer.

WELCOME AUSTRALIA AND BELGIUM: These are the home countries of our two newest international partners! The newly formed CCF Chapter in Belgium held their first event this summer, a dinner at Cook & Book, which was a big success. Both programs have their own websites and are seeking volunteers.

BACK TO THE WILD: the story of Jacomina



Jacomina was different. CCF cares for rescued orphan cheetahs, which she was. In most cases, the cubs spend the remainder of their life in captivity because they have not had enough learning experience with their mother in the wild to survive on their own.

However, in some cases, certain cheetahs display enough natural wild behavior, during their assessment/rehabilitation period, to make them candidates for release. Jacomina was one of these special cheetahs.

In December of last year three female cheetahs, Jacomina, Emma and Minja, were radio-collared and released back into the wild on CCF land. The three were closely monitored and did well from the start. Soon CCF staff decided to relocate Jacomina to Erindi Private Game Reserve.

Meanwhile, Jacomina mated with a wild male and gave birth to two cubs. CCF staff was there to check on the mother and cubs, with a film crew in tow.

Erindi, although private, is said to be a tract of land 10 times the size of Manhattan. As such, it's home to an array of wildlife, including prey species for Jacomina as well as predator threats to her cubs.

CCF will continue to monitor Jacomina and her cubs for as long as it takes to ensure their survival in the wild.

Jacomina and her cubs on the day after their relocation to Erindi. Notice the tracking collar? CCF is in great need of these items, and many more. Tracking collars assist in studying cheetahs before and after their release. To donate this item or one of the many other items CCF needs here in Namibia, visit www.cheetah.org and view our 'Wish List' under 'You Can Help'.

- photos by Eli H. Walker

GENETICS LAB UPGRADE:



CCF is very excited that Thermo Fisher Scientific has recently donated a four-capillary genetic analyzer. Our genetics laboratory the only field-based genetics lab in Africa. Read more about the lab on page 6.

RAISING A VOICE AGAINST ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE

It started with a call from Ethiopia. In 2005 we learned of two cheetah cubs being held in chains outside a rural restaurant in Ethiopia. The cubs were malnourished and close to death— victims of the illegal wildlife trade.

The cubs were illegally purchased at a local market for about \$6 USD. We don't know the circumstances that brought them there, but we helped arrange the confiscation of the cubs with help from a coalition of support from the U.S. military, U.S. Embassy, the Ethiopian government and Ethiopian Wolf Conservation Programme.

Since then, CCF has become a vocal advocate for ending the illegal trade in wildlife and a founding member of the Coalition Against Wildlife Trafficking (CAWT).

This February, CCF and the Rangewide Conservation Programme for Cheetah and African Wild Dog presented a poster at the International Wildlife Trafficking: Solutions to a Global Crisis symposium held in London.

The nature of trafficking makes it difficult to collect full or reliable information, but CCF has knowledge of at least 598 cheetahs that became victims of the illegal wildlife trade. During the first six months of this year alone, CCF compiled

BY THE NUMBERS:

37 cheetahs documented as illegally trafficked during the first half of 2014

13 cases of illegal cheetah trafficking involving 37 cheetahs.

An independent consultant commissioned by Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), Kristin Nowell, studied both the legal and illegal trade in wild cheetahs to assess its impact on the species' conservation in the wild. The study, which included data provided by CCF, was presented at the CITES Animal Committee Meeting this spring. CCF's Patricia Tricorache and Dr. Nicholas Mitchell, East Africa Coordinator for Cheetah and Wild Dog Conservation, attended.

Our objective is for the CITES Standing Committee to recognize the cheetah as a species of priority in developing international strategies to counter wildlife trafficking, which should include capacity building and enforcement in Northeast Africa. We'll keep you posted on our progress!

STAFF PROFILE: Meet our new vet!



We are delighted to have Dr. Marie-Ann Da Silva, DVM join our staff as our new veterinarian.

It has not taken Dr. Da Silva long to become acclimated to the whirlwind pace at CCF. Since she began working with us on July 15th, she has performed cheetah workups, participated in a cheetah release and assisted with the delivery of 17 puppies and 15 goat kids. Dr. Da Silva received her DVM from Copenhagen University in Denmark.

Her previous experience includes working in a small animal practice; pig production; wildlife capture; being a state vet in Greenland, and undertaking research projects with zoo animals. We are so glad that someone with her talents and experience is able to join our efforts to save the wild cheetah.

Your donations allow for us to provide the best healthcare available to our resident cheetahs, livestock animals and livestock guarding dogs.

To meet our other staff visit www.cheetah.org and view 'Staff' under 'About Us'.

UPDATE ON LIVESTOCK GUARDIANS

The adage “it’s raining cats and dogs” would be fitting for us. The cats are no surprise. But the dogs? It’s puppy season!

In the last several months we’ve had 27 puppies born on our farm. These young Livestock Guarding Dogs will grow up to become the heart of our conservation program to reduce human-wildlife conflict.

The puppies are placed on communal and commercial farms and are working dogs. They bond with—and protect—herds from predators. Farmers no longer feel pressured to kill cheetahs to protect their livestock and livelihood.

THE PUPDATE:

Kiri, a CCF breeding Kangal Dog, gave birth to 10 healthy puppies on Easter Day. The puppies are all now at their new homes on working farms across the country.

At 3 a.m. in the goat yard in late July, we were there as Penda gave birth to seven healthy puppies. Penda was bred to Amos, our Anatolian shepherd male and is a ‘mongreltolian,’ which means she is a mix between an Anatolian shepherd and a working mongrel. A large breed dog can be quite expensive to care for, so CCF has bred this slightly smaller mix to provide farmers with protection for their livestock on a more cost-effective basis.

Also in late July, **Aleya—bred to our Kangal male Firat—gave birth to 10 healthy puppies.**

The puppies are raised as working animals. We help them bond with livestock instead of humans, which is why they are born in our goat yard. After training for the pups and the new owners, the dogs will be placed on working farms and receive regular check-ins from CCF staff. Two more of our Kangal dogs have been breed recently so, more puppies in October!

From the next litters of puppies, CCF will be sending more guarding dog puppies to help in Tanzania.



At top, Penda and her pups. Middle, Kiri’s litter before they went to their new homes on commercial or communal Namibian farms. At bottom, the dream for these puppies—to become working Livestock Guarding Dogs and protect herds from natural predators.

To sponsor a Livestock Guarding Dog visit www.cheetah.org and view ‘Sponsor a Dog’ under ‘Donate’.

HELP US REBUILD!



THE NEED:

\$300,000 to rebuild our Visitor Centre after the 2013 lightning strike and resulting fire

A \$100 or more gift to the one-time “Phoenix Club” will include your name as an Ember Member on our Centre plaque.

First impressions are only made once. Our Visitor Centre burned to the ground, on 16 October 2013, from fire sparked by lightning. We’re grateful that staff and wildlife were safe. Now, we’ve begun the task of rebuilding (see photo on right)—and we’re asking for your help.

Our insurance has covered only two-thirds of our building costs. We need another \$300,000 to complete the building and outfitting of the Visitor Centre.

We invite you to help us rise from the ashes and join our one-time Phoenix Club! As Ember Members, you will be recognized with a listing or plaque at our new Centre when you contribute \$100 and up.

New plans for the Centre include a reception area, gift shop and café, all built with simplicity to warmly welcome guests. The rest of the building will house a lecture hall—critical for farmer trainings, university students and community programs—our Genetics Laboratory, Education, Hospitality and Facilities offices, and space for various researchers.

Planning ahead, we designed the roof for future installation of solar panels. We are currently seeking help in acquiring solar voltaic panels. If you can help, please let us know. When we have the panels, they will provide enough electricity to independently power the Centre.

New Staff Housing: We have recently completed the construction of four staff houses including three duplex apartments, each with one small bedroom, one small living room and a plumbed bathroom. They are a welcome improvement and will enhance the living conditions for CCF staff significantly. We hope to build more of these units in the years to come!

Relocation of the Genetics Lab: The new Centre complex has been designed to relocate the genetics laboratory into the heart of CCF instead of where it currently resides—tucked out of view in a basement. This means that a vital part of CCF’s research can be shared with everyone who visits the Centre. We welcome new equipment for our lab’s new home. Let us know how you can help!

UPCOMING EVENTS: RSVP for a CCF event near you

Dr. Laurie Marker, founder and Executive Director of the Cheetah Conservation Fund, will be on tour in the United States this fall. Our VIP events have limited availability, so RSVP today! Cut out this section and mail it in with the envelope provided. More details can be found online.

For additional lecture and book signing events, see the list at right and mark your calendar. We look forward to seeing you this fall!

Name _____ Phone _____
 Address _____ Email _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____

- YES! I want to attend Cheetah Live! How to Save an Endangered Species.**
 The Mountain Winery | 14831 Pierce Road | Saratoga, CA
 September 20th | 11:30 am - 2:30 pm | \$125.00 per person
- Yes! I will attend Big Cat. Big Party.**
 The Oregon Zoo | 4001 SW Canyon Rd. | Portland, OR
 October 5th | 5:00 pm | \$150.00 per person
- YES! I will attend the 13th Annual Cheetah Conservation Fund Benefit - DC Gala**
 3000 K St. NW | Washington, DC
 October 16th | 6:30 pm | \$125.00 per person | VIP \$250.00 per person
- No, I cannot attend but I have enclosed a donation to support CCF.
- I have enclosed a check to pay for my tickets.
- I will pay with credit card: Visa | MC | Amex | Discover
 Number _____ Exp. _____ Sec. Code _____
 Please add a donation of \$_____ to my total purchase.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: Ron Marks & Christy Bidstrup



Dr. Laurie Marker and Chewbaaka with volunteers Ron Marks and Christy Bidstrup.

The last night of Ron Marks and Christy Bidstrup’s 2007 EarthWatch trip to Namibia, Dr. Marker asked, “So, what are you going to do now?” They took the question to heart.

They participated in the annual DC Gala. Later, Ron branched out with two multi-month stints at CCF Namibia. In 2011, he supported CCF cheetah keepers in their day-to-day work and led a crew that repaired 24 km. of Bellebena fence line and installed 80 swing gates. This project has been essential to CCF’s release program and we’re so grateful for Ron’s continued dedication! More recently, in 2014, he cleared land for construction of CCF’s new staff housing.

“Caring about the world we live in is paramount for the creatures that inhabit it. Supporting the survival of the cheetah is a duty I embrace,” said Ron.

Christy and Ron have helped co-chair CCF’s DC Annual Gala for the last few years and Christy was asked in 2013 to become a CCF National Trustee.

“I want a world where these exquisite animals can thrive in their natural habitat. CCF provides an intimate, yet effective way to help realize this goal,” she said.

SEE LAURIE MARKER: 2014 Fall Tour

Buena Vista, FL.
 September 15th - 17th
 AZA Conference

Oakland, CA.
 September 18th
 Lecture at Oakland Zoo

San Diego, CA.
 September 20th
 Sundowner - With a Cheetah!

Venice, CA.
 September 23rd
 Lecture at G2 Gallery

San Francisco, CA.
 September 24th
 Lecture/Book Signing, San Francisco Zoo

 October 11th
 Lecture/Book Signing /Booth, WCN Expo

Corde Madera, CA.
 September 28th
 Book Signing at Book Passage Bookstore

Tucson, AZ.
 September 30th
 Lecture at Reid Park Zoo

Vancouver, BC.
 October 2nd
 Lecture at LUBC Robson Square

Santa Rosa, CA.
 October 8th
 Lecture and Dinner at Safari West

Sacramento, CA.
 October 9th
 Lecture/Book Signing, Sacramento Zoo

Millbrook, NY.
 October 18th
 KeepSafe event at Millbrook School

Events in Saratoga, CA., Washington, D.C., and Portland, OR., are listed at left.

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Alexandria, VA 22301-0496

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ABOVE: We're thrilled to have cheetah fans of all ages! Valley Charter School in California decided to help CCF by designing and selling temporary tattoos. They came up with a plan of action and followed through to raise over \$700! These pint-sized philanthropists created tattoos of the animals they studied in class: panda, shark, rhino, tiger, polar bear and cheetah. Wasn't that a great idea? Thanks Valley Charter!

INSIDE: Special story (page 6) on rebuilding work after the fire. Read more about how you can help and become an Ember Member of the Phoenix Club. Thank you for your ongoing support to help keep the cheetah wild!



www.cheetah.org

Photo by Craig Taylor