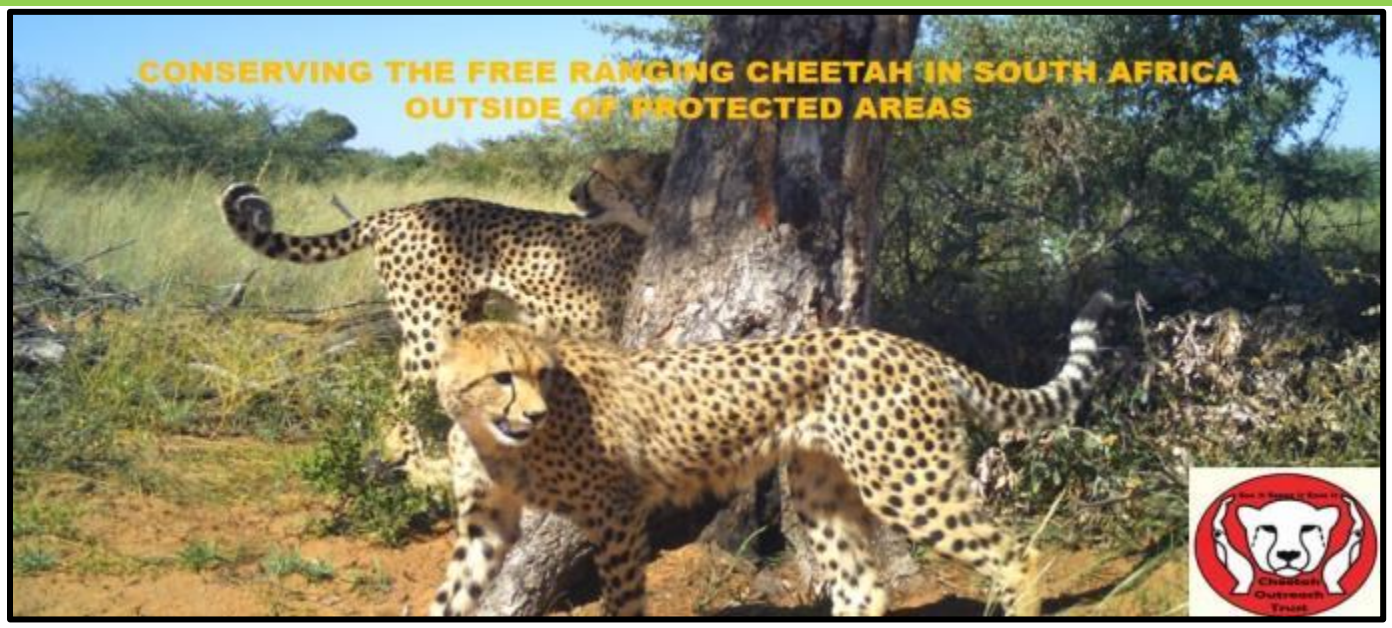
NEWSLETTER: CHEETAH OUTREACH TRUST OCTOBER 2021



We have reached the summer months in South Africa and the end of 2021 is winking at us. Although the farmland areas are still very dry and mostly still looking reasonably bleak, this should change in the next few months with the summer rains expected to arrive soon. We continue to live and work under the threat of the Covid 19 pandemic and although South Africa has relaxed it lockdown restrictions and many countries and now allowing travel to and from South Africa, the effect of the pandemic globally continues to have a significant financial impact on our conservation outputs. We continue to cut down on costs and expenses wherever possible due to uncertain future funding as a result of the effects of the pandemic on our donors. This has made it more critical than ever to keep contact with our farmers to assist them in any way possible when they call on us. As a team, the Cheetah Outreach Trust staff has committed to deliver as much support as possible to farmers while keeping physical travel and other expenses to a minimum. We have had to utilise telephone calls, texts and even social media to keep our supporters, donors and the farming communities informed on the status of the project.

Please visit our brand new website and also follow and share our Facebook and Instagram pages

https://www.cheetahoutreachtrust.co.za

https://www.facebook.com/cheetahoutreachtrust

https://www.instagram.com/cheetahoutreachtrust/?hl=en

NEWS FROM THE FIELD:

We have been blessed with two litters of puppies that were recently born at the Irwin's Guardian Stud from two of our females, Garland and Ester. Ester arrived earlier this year at the Irwin's Guardian Stud and she has proven to be an asset as a breeding dog. These new puppies will be placed with eagerly awaiting farmers during November both in the Eastern and Western cheetah range in South Africa.

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We retired one of our breeding females, Gem, to a suitable retirement home as a domestic companion dog. Ultra-Dog have continued the feeding support of our breeding dogs and Virbac providing vaccination and dewormer support to keep the breeding dogs at the Irwin's Guardian Stud in top notch health.

Figure 1: IG Ester with her pups

Figure 2: IG Garland with her pups

The three puppies that were placed earlier this year in the North West Province are all still doing very well and have settled into their roles as livestock guardian dogs. The farmers that have our livestock guardian dogs working and guarding livestock, continue to praise the success of them l and the waiting list for new placements continues to grow. The Cheetah Outreach Trust has placed 339 livestock guardian dog puppies since 2015, with 8 new puppies to be placed within the next month.

The livestock guardian dogs that were placed in the Bushmans Kloof project last year are doing very well and we continue to monitor their development and progress as part of the bigger project to secure valuable farmer tolerant habitat for the Cape Leopard in the Cederberg Mountains. This is a cooperative project between the Cheetah Outreach Trust and the Bushmans Kloof Wilderness Reserve & Wellness Retreat.

We have been very fortunate through excellent cooperation with the North West Conservation Authority and farmers in the North West Province to collar and re-release a total of 6 groups of free roaming cheetah consisting of two male coalitions and two females in the Kalahari area in the North West Province. This has been made possible through the support of Ashia Cheetah Conservation, African Wildlife Tracking and Ubuntu Wildlife Trust. One of the coalition of males are two of the sub-adults that were removed as part of a group of four sub-adults received earlier this year.

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Figure 3: Release of male cheetah coalition

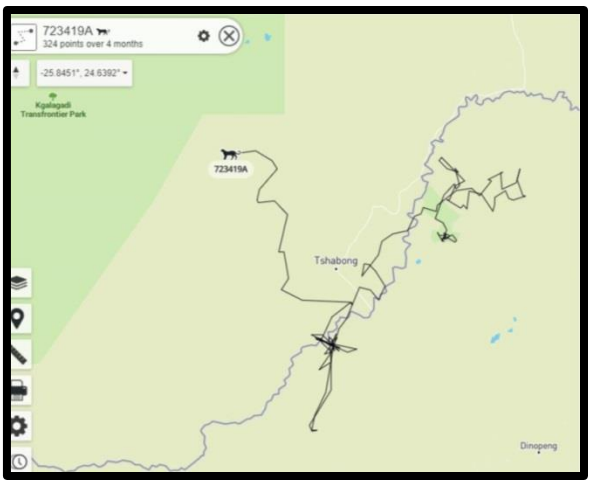

Figure 4: Movement of the two sub-adult males since release

The two remaining sub-adults, one male and one female have been relocated to the South African Cheetah Meta-population under the coordination of the Endangered Wildlife Trust Cheetah Range Expansion Project to enhance the current genetic diversity in this fragmented and managed cheetah population. These four cheetah sub-adults were in temporary holding and care at the Ann van Dyk Cheetah Centre until their release and relocation back into the wild. We are very grateful to have the support of partner cheetah conservation organisations as well as the North West Conservation Authority to be able to expand our knowledge and research with the collaring of free roaming cheetahs in the North West Province. This clearly highlights the importance of cooperation between various role-players in the future of the free roaming cheetah in South Africa.

Figure 5: Cheetah female released on Mt Camdeboo Private Game Reserve

Figure 6: Male cheetah released onto Dinokeng Game Reserve

A group of five sub-adult cheetahs were received from the North West Conservation Authority two weeks ago. These sub-adults were captured by a farmer in the Kalahari area and he was not prepared to have them re-released on his farm. The mother was not captured and we are not certain what happened to her. These sub-adults will be kept in temporary holding for at least 4 months after which they will be moved to a cheetah wilding

facility of Ashia Cheetah Conservation. One of the sub-adults arrived with a serious eye injury and the eye had to be surgically removed at the Old Chapel Veterinary Clinic.

Figure 7: Group of sub-adult cheetahs rescued from farmland

Figure 8: Cheetah undergoing eye removal surgery

We have expanded our cooperation and conservation efforts within the Northern Cape Province. We have had reports of free roaming cheetah for the first time in many years which may be the result of the natural expansion of the current free roaming cheetah range. A female cheetah with three cubs was reported close to a local community and there were fears for human safety as well as predation on livestock. The Endangered Species Unit of the South African Police Service followed these cheetahs and calmed the community down with our inputs and the cheetah have safely moved away from this area of potential conflict. A lone male cheetah was captured by our field officer in cooperation with the local farmers and EarthBound Meerkat Rescue and Rehabilitation Centre close to the town of Vanzylsrus, after this cheetah was walking up and down a specific area of the main road leading to the town of Vanzylsrus. The cheetah was found to have injured front pads most probably due to the hard rocky road he was pacing up and down on. He was taken to the Old Chapel Veterinary Clinic where he was treated for his injuries and thereafter was placed in temporary holding at the Ann van Dyk Cheetah Centre. We found this cheetah to be very relaxed which is unusual for a free roaming cheetah and we suspect that this is a cheetah that might have been illegally kept in captivity either in the Northern Cape area or across the border in Botswana. In an effort to determine if this cheetah could be returned into a wild situation, we have teamed up once again with our cheetah conservation partners at Ashia Cheetah Conservation and the male cheetah was taken to a wilding camp close to Kimberley in the Northern Cape where he will be monitored to see if he can hunt for himself. A decision on the future of this cheetah will be made once this can be determined.

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Figure 9: Vanzylsrus cheetah male just after capture

Figure 10: Vanzylsrus cheetah male in boma prior to release

NOTE OF THANKS AND APPRECIATION TO OUR DONORS AND SUPPORTERS:

The support the Cheetah Outreach Trust receives from our loyal supporters and donor group is now more important than ever to ensure the stability in our conservation work for the next year and beyond. We are very sensitive to the fact that the pandemic has had a huge impact on the short term financial stability of our donors and supporters but keeping this in mind we are hoping for the continued support from our loyal donors and supporters to ensure that the Cheetah Outreach Trust can continue with our important conservation work, conserving saving the free roaming cheetah population in South Africa and making farmland more predator tolerant for cheetah and other predators. The Cheetah Outreach Trust thanks all its loyal supporters that have continued to stand by us during this unprecedented time.

Any donations to support the conservation work of the Cheetah Outreach Trust would be greatly appreciated. As we are a registered PBO we can issue an 18A tax receipt for donations received for South African donors and 501c through our partners to US based donors. Should you require any further information regarding donations and or support, please feel free to contact cheetahoutreachtrust@gmail.com

Donations can be made via our website www.cheetahoutreachtrust.co.za or via portals:

https://www.payfast.co.za/donate/go/ccfcheetahoutreachtrust

https://www.givengain.com/cc/livestock-guarding-dog-program/

https://www.backabuddy.co.za/charity/profile/cheetah-outreach

Bank account wire details can be provided.

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We wish to express a special word of thanks to our long term loyal donors who have stood by us through these difficult times in the Covid 19 pandemic.