



# CHEETAH OUTREACH

SEE IT. SENSE IT. SAVE IT.

N E W S L E T T E R

JULY 2009

VOLUME 9 ISSUE 2

## CHEETAH DIARIES

**D**uring March and April this year, Cheetah Outreach was showcased on ETV every Sunday at 18h30, for 13 weeks when the Cheetah Diaries, filmed in 2007, were finally shown. This series shares Cheetah Outreach's daily experiences of education programmes, cub raising, vet visits, Anatolian placements and training charismatic new ambassadors like Baggins. The effect of this programme was definitely felt in the June school holidays when the fans descended on Cheetah Outreach to meet their favourite characters. It was obvious that Baggins had stolen the limelight, as most of the emails, phone calls and visits were concerning him. Second on the list was Yankee with many a concerned query as to his settling down in his new home in Canada. This series greatly raised the awareness of the general South African public to the plight of this species and the work that Cheetah Outreach undertakes. We have had many new volunteers join us as well as CV's forwarded through from those wanting to assist our programme. Awareness continues to be raised internationally as this series has been told in 10 territories.



Cheetah Diaries Series 2 is currently being filmed and we're confident it will be just as addictive as Series 1. Good news is that season 1 is available at our facility on DVD for only R200.

**Left:** Annie, Beryl and the cubs being filmed for the new season.

**Top:** Filming of the Anatolian game pilot programme

## PUMA



**B**randy, a young female puma, joined us a few months back from Lory Park Zoo in Johannesburg. She has added great value to our small animal exhibit with her impressive agility and playful antics. With a lot of energy to burn we take her on walks throughout the facility, although it probably looks like she takes us for walks as she pulls ahead with her stocky little body to go as far as possible before being taken back to her enclosure. Her favourite toy is the classic plastic bottle and she can entertain herself for hours wrestling with it and running around tapping it back and forth.

Many of the staff are in agreement that she is one of the most beautiful animals on display at Cheetah Outreach and is very sad about the fact that she is only with us on a temporary basis.

Pumas are widespread from the Yukon in Canada to the southern Andes of South America and distribution varies widely in habitat type. Some studies have indicated that the puma and the jaguarundi are most closely related to the modern cheetah but the relationship is unresolved. Pumas face the same challenges as the cheetah since they also come into contact with private landowners and persecution from farmers. Small stock farmers in North America make use of the Anatolian Shepherd Guarding Dogs to protect their stock from pumas, wolves and coyotes. Other threats to the puma include degradation and fragmentation of their habitat and depletion of their prey base.

Brandy is doing a superb job of creating awareness for the animals in other parts of the world that face the same challenges as our local wildlife.



## SPONSOR'S DINNER

Cheetah Outreach hosted their annual Sponsor's Dinner on the 19th June at The Wild Fig restaurant in Observatory. The venue was beautifully decked out, dinner was a gastronomic success, and Joseph was the purrfect welcoming co-host. Annie and Dawn reported back on the Anatolian and Education initiatives and future plans. The overwhelming support from our sponsors which is integral to the delivery of our conservation and education promises was highlighted during the evening and personally shown by the representatives at the dinner. The Wild Fig also joined our family that evening with a surprise discount on the venue hire. So once again a **VERY BIG THANK YOU** to all of you.

## SHADOW'S OPERATION



On Monday morning, 20 July, it was noted that Shadow was not using his right foreleg. After consulting telephonically with the vet and describing how Shadow was holding his leg and the lack of swelling, resulted in him being placed on painkillers for a bad sprain. When there was no easement by the Wednesday morning, he went in for an examination and x-rays. Once again highlighting the fragility of these delicate sprinters and underlining why we do not run our cheetahs in winter, x-rays showed that Shadow had in fact broken his leg. The likely scenario was that Shadow, ignoring his advanced years, tried to prove that he could still do things like jumping off his highest platform and probably slipped on the wet grass

while landing awkwardly. Once the break was identified, he was rushed off to Panorama Vet Clinic where he was immediately prepped for surgery to have the break pinned. After 2 very long hours, the surgery was over. As befitting his status, Shadow received 24hour nursing care on site in the classroom. Tucked into blankets and with his own heater, Shadow had Dawn in constant attendance providing plenty of fusses and kisses on demand. Finally after four very cold, long nights (for Dawn), he decided a change of scenery was called for and slowly made his way back to his enclosure and blankets in the sun. The surgery was a success and Shadow is able to utilise his leg once more.



## GOLF DAY

On the 16th of April, Cheetah Outreach held their annual Charity Golf day at De Zalze Golf club. Once again the weather cooperated and a beautiful sunny day was enjoyed by all. A fabulous round of golf was followed by Dinner, prize giving and an auction. The winning team Winelands Golf Lodges very kindly offered the winning prize - accommodation donated by the Winelands Golf Lodges - to be auctioned off to raise further money. Funding raised on the day came to over R100 000, and will be used to support the Anatolian Shepherd Guard Dog initiative.



## FAREWELL - ARNO

Arno Smit joined us a little more than a year ago and soon became an integral part of the Cheetah Outreach team. He took on the very challenging and time consuming job of coordinating and booking functions and soon developed strong connections with all tour guides and other booking personnel. Arno is leaving us to pursue a career as a game ranger at Kaggga Kamma and even though we are sad to see him go, we wish him the best of luck for this new adventure. He will always be a part of the Cheetah Outreach family.



## Liaison with other programmes & farming communities

The Guard Dog delivery (providing and placing the dogs on farmlands) has been accepted as a Green Choice Food partner and is represented at every Green Choice workshop.

As such, Cheetah Outreach held meetings with the Landmark Foundation, Cape Leopard Trust and Conservation International in May of this year, where a summary of results were given to each of these organisations. An updated Farmers' Manual as well as all monitoring developed and used by the Cheetah Outreach Trust was handed over to the Landmark Foundation and Cape Leopard Trust as both organisations are embarking on researching the effectiveness of the Anatolian.

Cyril Stannard, Cheetah Outreach Anatolian manager, has offered a help line to both organisations and will be holding farmers' workshops for the Landmark Foundation.

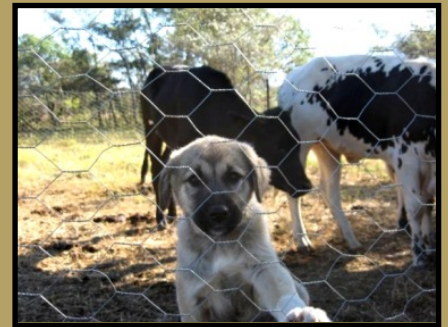
Conservation International and Cheetah Outreach will continue to work together and pool information. The Anatolian programme was represented at the Red Meat Forum workshop in Pretoria and the Merino Association workshop in Port Elizabeth, with at least 4 more workshops to follow.



## Anatolian Shepherd Guard Dog programme - UPDATE

What started out as an opportunity to assist the CCF Anatolian programme has developed into a success story that is saving wild cheetahs on South African farmlands. The following summary can testify to the accomplishment of the Anatolian programme at Cheetah Outreach and the subsequent breeding programme:

- 45 dogs have been placed between 2005 and Feb 2009.
- 6 dogs died due to the following reasons: snakebite; killed by a goat as a puppy; sickness which was not diagnosed and correctly treated; run over by farmer as a puppy; shot by a neighbouring farmer when following cattle through a fence as a result of leopard predation which he successfully deflected; and one dog was poisoned by a farm worker who has been successfully prosecuted.
- 2 dogs have disappeared - assumed either stolen or died from snakebite or predator wounds.
- 5 dogs were removed and rehomed (2 from the same farm) for displaying problem behaviour.



Fifteen more dogs have been placed from late April 2009 to late May 2009,



and another five have been placed on the border with Botswana where there is high cheetah traffic. Farmers in this area are very resistant to what they call "greenies", so it is a testament to the success of the positive approach of the programme that these farmers have been willing to co-operate with us. With 46 dogs still out on South African farms it is interesting to note that no dogs have been lost to predators, although at least two have been wounded. As many of these farms support large numbers of big predator other than cheetah, especially leopard and hyena the deterrent effect of the Anatolian is obvious.

As a result of climate change over the next years, more farmers are left no other option but to farm with indigenous buck. However, this will pose a serious problem to the program as the buck are more easily stressed than livestock. As such in May 2009 we have placed a pilot dog with springbok to ascertain the effect and success of the dog in order to pave the way forward for our programme.



## GAME - IS IT FEASIBLE?

**F**elix, a male puppy born from Melda, one of our breeding females, has been placed on the farm Springfield near Robertson in May of this year. He is part of a pilot project to determine the feasibility of placing the Anatolian guarding dog with game, instead of livestock.

Initially Felix will be kept with 3 goats for a period of 3 months to assist with the original bonding process. During this stage the farmer feeds the springbuck next to the goat kraal daily and takes Felix on regular walks past the springbuck as well as along the perimeter fence.

The next step is to introduce the goats and Felix into the same camp as the springbuck, under supervision, for extended periods of time. This will allow the springbuck and goats to integrate more and get more comfortable with the dog in their presence. The arrival of 4 kids, however, has slowed progress slightly since the goats need to be kept in the kraal until the young are bigger and stronger and until Felix has bonded with the new members of his herd.

Felix has bonded very well with his goats and was seen sleeping affectionately on one of the ewes. He has also formed a special bond with Bongi, the hand reared springbuck that was raised in the farmer's house and is also very comfortable with other dogs.

If this placement proves to be successful it could potentially create new opportunities to address the cheetah conservation issues in the free ranging areas. We are confident that Felix will step up to the plate.



## NAMIBIAN ANATOLIAN WORKSHOP

**L**iesl Smith and Cyril Stannard, the Anatolian Shepherd Guard dog programme coordinator, attended a two week international course on integrated livestock, wildlife and predator management in Namibia. This course was hosted by the Cheetah Conservation Fund in conjunction with the Howard G. Buffet Foundation at the CCF centre close to Otjiwarongo.

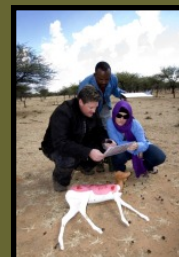
Conservationists, fieldworkers, students and educators from Kenya, Ethiopia, India, Iran, America, England and many more offered an array of knowledge and experience and the workshop gave them the valuable opportunity to share ideas and discuss solutions to address the problems faced by all.

Presentations covered during the course were human-wildlife conflict and mitigation strategies, predator census techniques, land use and the value of conservancies, community based natural resource management, predator kill identification techniques, non-lethal predator control methods, to name a few.

Field trips included a farmer's day held on the farm of a resettled farmer, conducting questionnaire surveys among the local communities near the small town of Nakakarara and a day trip to Etosha Park. The days were very long, but the nighttime drive back to the dorm made it worth while as they had the privilege of sighting aardwolf, porcupine, large spotted genet, polecat, caracal, African wildcat, leopard and armadillo.

It was very clear that all stakeholders from across the globe face the same challenges whether dealing with human-elephant conflict in India or indiscriminate lethal predator control in Botswana. The incremental increase in human populations and encroachment into natural wildlife areas leads to increased pressure on natural resources and all the associated management problems.

Liesl and Cyril would like to thank all the presenters as well as Laurie and her staff for hosting this extremely successful workshop and also organizing special events like the popular cheetah runs. The benefits reaped from this workshop and the new friends/contacts made during their stay will have a far reaching positive impact on our Anatolian programme.



## UGANDA



**P**AAZAB (Pan African Association and Zoos and Botanical Gardens) held their 20th Annual Conference in Entebbe, Uganda from the 19 - 22 May 2009. Annie Beckhelling, Director, Dawn Glover, Education Manager and Mary Possa, Education Officer attended this conference. The conference was opened by the Tourism and Environmental Minister of Uganda, thanking the delegates for their support of the environment and their commitment to Africa's wildlife heritage. Although many stimulating and educational talks were presented at the conference, the real benefit of this gathering was in the networking opportunities with colleagues. The chief outcome of the conference was that Cheetah Outreach now sits on the Education Committee of PAAZAB as one of the main concentration areas of

the organization, with the key aim of strengthening the education component of facilities hosting captive collections. The post conference tour was another highlight of the trip, with Annie and Dawn hiking through the Central African rainforests for the privilege of watching mountain gorillas in their natural habitat. Although strenuous, the result was definitely worth the effort.



## CUB SEASON 2009

**I**t is cub season again at Cheetah Outreach, and we are staying busy at Eikendal with little kids. We have 6 cubs this year from 3 different litters. De Wildt has had an amazing breeding season with 25 cubs born, four of which are king cheetahs. The cubs we have received come from large litters and we were needed to help the moms out with the raising of these cubs.



On June 19th our first 3 cubs arrived from two different moms. They were born at Shigwedzi, De Wildt's private game reserve in the Limpopo province. Ann VanDyk, owner and founder of De Wildt, is in the process of moving the breeding cats to Shingwedzi as it is more isolated and quiet which is essential for the breeding of cheetahs. Unfortunately, over the years the area around DeWildt has been built up and traffic noise has started to become an issue.

Felix and Heathcliff, from the same litter, are inseparable, spending most of the day playing and chasing each other. Heathcliff is a king cheetah and feels that all the attention should be showered on him first and who are we to deny the KING!



The other boy, Chobe, once qualified as an ambassador cheetah will call the Leopards Etc. Facility in California, USA, home. They are longtime supporters of Cheetah Outreach and we are pleased to partake in the raising of their newest ambassador.

On August 4th we received the other 3 cubs that are 5 weeks younger than the three boys mentioned above. These cubs have

strong Cheetah Outreach ties as their parents are Byron, brother to Joseph and Cetane, previously known as Peaches who was also raised at

our facility. The little guys were in isolation for the first 2 weeks and were introduced to the older cubs after that time. The 2 girls and 1 boy, named Isis, Jasmine and Kamikaze are still getting used to their new mates and their personalities are busy developing, but we hope that they are just as sweet as their parents.



We look forward to seeing everyone soon at Cheetah Outreach. The new cubs will be there once they have had their final vaccinations and have been medically cleared by our vet to join the big cheetahs.

## FOUNDER'S NOTE

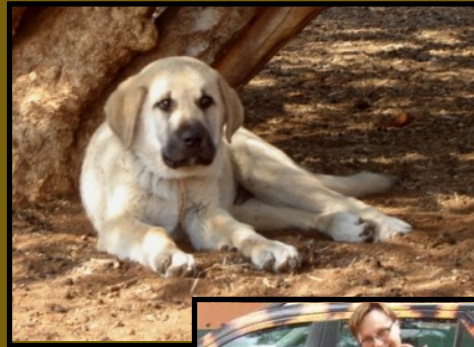
I was fortunate to attend an open house fundraiser held by Wild Cat Education and Conservation Fund (Leopards Etc) in California at the beginning of July. This event raised awareness and funds for the Wild Cheetah Management Programme and Cheetah Outreach, and provided me with a great networking opportunity. During the event which was fully attended, I was introduced to new Anatolian breeders and met Zor, a fabulous male Anatolian whom we hope to be able to breed with in the near future. I would dearly like to thank Rob and Barbara Dicely for their continued and staunch support over the years. I am truly touched at their eagerness to create awareness and fund raise for the South African cheetah wherever possible.

Great news is that the National Zoo in Pretoria, South Africa, has sponsored a working Anatolian on a farm in the Limpopo Province. Malusi will be guarding sheep and is the second Anatolian placement on this farm. As the area is predominantly game orientated, Malusi will certainly encounter many predators other than cheetah, but we are confident that he will scare off any attack on his herd. I am extremely proud of the success of the Anatolian programme and want to thank all involved in achieving the goals set at the start of the project.

*Annie*



Zor, Anatolian in the middle, is certainly a handsome fella for our girls back home!



Malusi, left and bottom with his new owner, is ready to put in a hard days work on the farm.



## HELP SUPPORT CHEETAH OUTREACH

To Join Cheetah Outreach in its efforts mark the category of support and complete the form. Mail this form together with your cheque, made payable to Cheetah Outreach, to PO Box 116, Lynedoch, 7603, South Africa.



### SPONSORSHIP OPTIONS:

#### Member (R200)

- Bi-annual newsletter of activities and 1 free entry into enclosure.

#### Supporter (R500)

- Newsletter, photograph of school visit sponsored, certificate, website recognition and 3 free entries into enclosure.

#### Patron (R1,000)

- Newsletter, certificate, website recognition and 6 free entries into enclosure.

#### Guardian (R5,000)

- Newsletter, certificate, website and facility recognition and unlimited free entry into enclosure.

#### Adoption of one of our Ambassador Animals (R5,000)

- Newsletter, certificate, website and facility recognition, photograph of animal sponsored as well as unlimited free entry into the enclosure.

#### Anatolian Programme Sponsor (R5,000)

- Newsletter, monthly newflashes, bi-annual guard dog report, website and facility recognition, as well as unlimited free entry into the enclosure.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

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