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ACTION FOR CHEETAHS IN KENYA

Newsletter

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TEN YEARS OF CHEETAH CONSERVATION

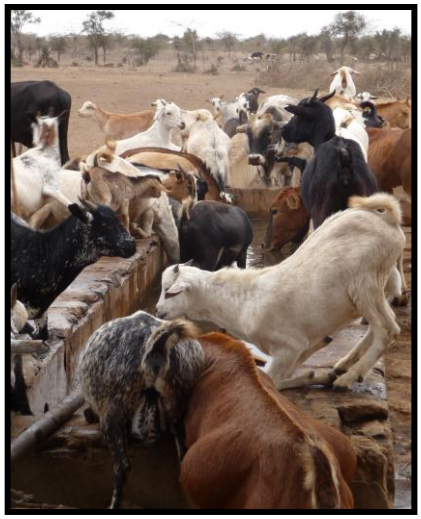
Mary Wykstra, Director

First of all I would like to apologise to everyone for my silence – there are no issues 7, 8 or 9 of the ACK newsletter. For the last year I have focused on data analysis and preparing publications – not a small task. I will, however, assure you that all is well with me, my staff and with the ACK project. The transition into creating ACK as an independent project has been challenging to say the least. We operate under a three year plan that we evaluate and update annually. In 2008 and 2009 we brought a lot of our programmes to a close and launched into a new phase of research and community programmes. We completed field work and began analysis of our National Survey (Mary's MEM), we completed the cattle dip project, we began analysis of our pilot radio collaring project and we completed habitat monitoring in the Salama area (Cosmas' MSc).

ACK is grateful to our affiliates, partners and donors for the trust and support that allow the project to be successful. The Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) provided financial and technical assistance from the start of our work in Kenya in 2001, and remains supportive as our affiliate institution. While there are many differences between land management and government regulations between Namibia and Kenya – it was essential during the launch of our work that we could use the lessons learned about cheetah conservation in Namibia as the foundation for our work in Kenya. The Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) is the governmental support that enabled ACK to conduct research in both the National Parks and in the community lands surrounding the parks. The KWS research officers and veterinary officers provided additional baseline information, technical and logistical advice and physical assistance throughout the development and implementation of cheetah research on national and local levels. The dedicated rangers from KWS and from local county councils were essential during our national survey work. The East African Wild Life Society field officers that assisted with the national survey through financial, logistical and physical support were also essential in conducting the field exercises.

2011 is being recorded as the worst drought in 60 years. Our research areas certainly show the effects. In Salama, the people who settled prior to 2006 plummeted deeper into poverty with failed crops and lost livestock. They suffered from low sale price on the thin livestock that remained. It is being claimed that there had been a 75% reduction in the number of livestock in 2009. With moderate rains in most of Kenya in October 2009 the people thought relief would come, but drought returned with failed rains in 2010 and 2011. It is quite difficult to "preach" conservation when dealing with this kind of drought. How is it possible to get people to understand sustainable development and conservation when their livelihoods are water dependant and their children are starving to death? This is the challenge that we face if we want to assure a future for cheetahs and other wildlife in Kenya. We launched into new research and community programmes in 2010 – this issue will tell you about what we have learned and what we hope to learn in the future.

Photos left to right: Goats drink from water trough during drought, Incoming rain in Samburu, Cheetahs in dry grass.



RESEARCH

Research is the backbone on which policies and wildlife management decisions are made. ACK research works with stakeholders to gather and analyse information on cheetahs and the issues that threaten their survival in Kenya.

CHEETAH TRACKING IN SALAMA

Following the 2005-7 case study on a radio-collared cheetah, KWS granted permission to collar four more cheetahs in Salama to further determine their pattern of movement and behaviour. Cheetah traps were set in August 2008 without success. Additional data on cheetah movements was collected throughout 2009 by Cheetah Scouts, and finally we had success!

One cheetah female was captured and collared in August 2009. A KWS veterinarian (Matthew Mutinda) and KWS approved Moshin Likoniwalla (DVM) immobilised the female and one of her cubs. The female was collared and named "Cheetah Jane" after the matriarch of the Stanely Ranch. Jane's female cub was the first one in the trap and was used to aid in catching Jane. The cub was also immobilised and a microchip was placed to assist with future identification as she was too small for collaring.

Cheetah Jane remained on the Stanely ranch for about five weeks after collaring, and then she crossed the Mombasa Highway into the hills on the north side of the Aimi Ranch. She crossed the highway again after two weeks and proceeded through the Malili ranch past Konza town and into Maasailand south of the railway. Until November Jane remained outside of our study area about 30km into Maasailand. Her long movements were usually between 10PM and 5AM, and short movements were in the morning and evening hours. She often remained in one place during the afternoon hours.

Unfortunately the collar ceased transmitting in November 2009. We are uncertain if the collar stopped working or if Jane may have crossed into Tanzania where Safaricom cell phone coverage would not be received. Although we searched for the signal using the standard telemetry receiver we were not able to locate Jane and her cubs again. It is still possible that she could re-enter the study area and if the battery in the collar is still strong she could send us her data. However, the abrupt stop of the GSM collar transmission is indicative of battery failure and unless Jane is sighted and we are able to find her again, we may never know the cause of the ceased transmission.

Photos: *Top left - juvenile cheetah entered trap first and was used to set another trap and catch the mother. Top Right - Mary Wykstra, Cosmas Wambua and Dr. Mutinda monitor the cheetah and take measurements under anaesthesia. (photos by Maike Bieber) Bottom left – "Jane" collared and awake from immobilisation and ready for release. (Photo by Amber Bengston) Bottom right: Tracking path from Stanley Ranch to Konza 5 August – 24 November 2009 – range 800 km^2.*

CHEETAH TRACKING IN SAMBURU

In January 2010, we began a six-month programme aimed at collaring of one cheetah from the Samburu or Buffalo Springs Reserves and three cheetahs in the Westgate and/or Meibae Conservancies. In 2009 new had identified target areas in the reserves and scheduled the veterinarians for darting. On the day that the veterinarians arrived, 28 January we found the young female cheetah in the Lolpopong area. She made a kill which was quickly stolen by a lioness. After she had an hour of rest we were prepared with loaded darts and we were able to successfully dart and collar her – just six months after collaring Jane in Salama.

One of the Samburu rangers gave the cheetah the name *Nataanywa* which is a name given to a girl who is born when her father is away - the name refers to an expected and pleasant surprise. The collar was an RF collar which requires tracking and downloading in order to retrieve the information. The collar takes GPS points and ambient temperature hourly, and acceleration rate every 15 minutes. The points are stored in the collar until they are retrieved with a base station. In February, we radio-tracked and found her near the Samburu boundary to Kiltermany and downloaded a month of data.

Although Nataanywe never left the reserves, she really moved! Her resting times were through the daytime hours and her longest movements were usually in the middle of the night. In March through July we tracked Natanywe, but we could never get a fix on her. The collar stopped transmitting. She was been seen hunting regularly by tourists and we knew she was still moving between Samburu and Buffalo Springs Reserves, but when we were in the area she seemed to vanish. No one saw her through August, but in mid-October we received exciting news that Nataanywe was a mother of four!

Although the collar was no longer working, we could not remove it until the cubs were full grown. The timing needed to be such that her cubs were old enough to survive on their own in case there was a problem during immobilisation. In August 2011, our time had come… the veterinarians were available for a short window of time and we were having vehicle problems. On the morning of 9 August while we were searching the Samburu Reserve our good friend Julius from the Elephant Bedroom Camp informed us that Nataanywe and her cubs were hunting very near the main road not far from the Archers gate. We followed the family as the cubs showed us that they had been well trained by their mother and killed not just one, but three dikdiks in the three hours while we waited for the veterinary unit to arrive. We immobilized Nataanywe and removed the collar. Within less than two hours she was awake and back with her cubs.

The cause of the collar failure was a small crack in the epoxy that allowed water into the battery casing – we never realised how often cheetahs swim across the river. Nataanywe crossed the river nearly every three weeks in areas where the water would have been too deep for her to have walked. Her movements were recorded every hour and we retrieved 1900 fixes. After the collar failed we were able to follow her through the reports sent to us. We greatly appreciate those people in the reserve who help us keep tabs on Nataanywe. This project is made possible by our partnership with Save the Elephants and the Ewaso Tracking Project and funding from the American Association of Zoo Keepers' Bowling for Rhinos and the St Louis Zoo and we worked closely with the Ewaso Lions Project, and the Samburu and Isiolo County Council rangers. Our work in the area continues, but Nataanywe will now be monitored by sightings only as we move our research into the community phase.

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Photos: *Nataanywe is a good mother. After losing two cubs she was a great hunter and protector to the young male and female cubs that she has raised to adulthood. Before the end of 2011 we expect that she will leave the cubs to fend for themselves and will grace the Samburu and Buffalo Springs with more cubs. (Photos by Peter Barber and Bonnie Blackmore)*

WHY THE CRATE

When out on exercises for cheetah immobilisation, the ACK vehicle carries all that is necessary to assure the safety of the target cheetah. A wooden crate is carried in the back of the ACK vehicle to serve as a recovery room or emergency treatment area. A cheetah captured in a trap is immediately transferred into the crate to calm it down and to allow the KWS veterinary staff to administer immobilisation drugs. Once the collar is placed and the animal is ready for the reversal drug it is again placed in the crate. The cheetah is not released from the crate until it has fully recovered from the immobilization drugs. Once the veterinary and ACK teams determine that the cheetah has recovered, the door to the crate is lifted and the cheetah is released in the same area where it was darted.

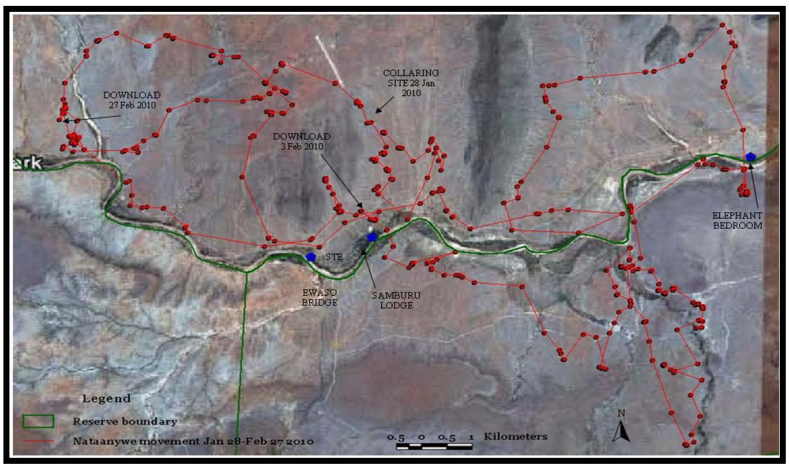
The release crate has become a hot issue of gossip among the Samburu guides from some tour companies. Although ACK has full approval from the KWS and both the Samburu and Isiolo County Councils, the rumours quickly spread that we are harassing or stealing cheetahs. ACK would like to assure all stakeholders that the crate is NOT for moving cheetahs from their current site. ACK has the best interest of the cheetah in mind and would like to assure that any handling of a cheetah is as safe as possible.

***Photos left to right**: ACK and KWS teams shift the cheetah into the immobilization crate, evaluate the weight and health then use the push poles to inject immobilization drugs.*

WHY THE COLLAR

A radio collar, although considered an invasive technique, provides us with data that we could not gather through observations alone. The hourly points, temperatures and speed allow us to better understand cheetah behaviour for comparison between cheetahs in the parks, in pastoral communities and in human settlement areas. Once the cheetah is fully awake from the immobilisation, it is released from the crate. Researchers can find the cheetah immediately from day to day through the telemetry signal and can verify the health of the collared cheetah, but we can keep our distance and avoid habituating the cheetah through the technology of the collar.

The collars we are placing in the Salama and Samburu areas send hourly text messages to give us real time data. We place the collar snug on the cheetah's neck to avoid injury and to keep the battery pack in a location that does not interfere with the cheetahs hunting. Our collars weigh less than 350 grams – far less than the maximum weight and sizes that were used in past telemetry in earlier cheetah studies in South Africa, Botswana and Namibia.



***Photos:** Left - Volunteer Peter Barber releases Nataanywe in January 2010. Right – Nataanywe's movements between Samburu and Buffalo Springs National Reserves in February 2010*

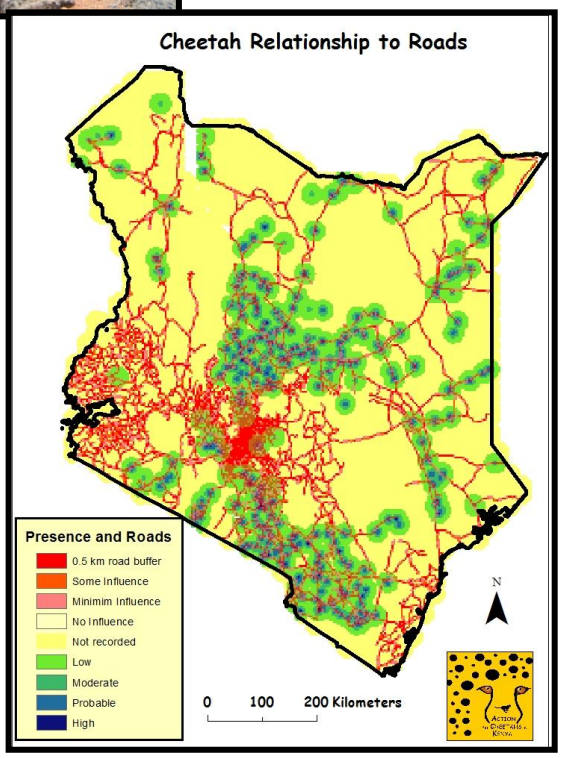
CHEETAH SCOUTS

Cheetah monitoring is more than just following cheetahs. Community "Cheetah Scouts" are visible members of the staff operating daily in cheetah range areas. In addition to collecting data on cheetah sightings and tracks, the scouts distribute information about cheetah behaviour and the reasons for livestock losses. Sightings, predator tracks and conflict reports are entered into a database to evaluate cheetah movements and to map conflicts onto identified cheetah ranges and human settlements. The Scouts also prevent greater losses by helping to quickly find lost livestock reported to them. Herders and managers report livestock losses and predator sightings to a Community Liaison Officer (CLO) and Cheetah Scouts. Scouts visit cheetah conflict sites usually within 24 hours of a report to determine what might have led to the loss, assisting farmers with conflict mitigation. Cheetahs take advantage of opportunities to kill goats, sheep and calves when game is scarce and other pressures limit the cheetah to areas of human land development.

Our scouts collect valuable data on cheetahs and the environment. The scouts conduct routine movements in the area to document cheetah and other predator tracks and issues reported to them by the community. Predators that are found dead are also recorded – the majority of the predator losses were serval cats being hit by cars (12 between January 2009 and December 2010) on both main and secondary roads. Along the Mombasa Road between Nairobi and Emali we have documented nine cheetahs being hit by car since 2004. Combining our Salama area research and our national survey we can see the importance of addressing the security of cheetahs and other wildlife living along the fast developing infrastructure of the road network that brings food, medical supplies and development to rural communities.

It is not only wildlife that is threatened by the expanding roads and high speed traffic. An increasing number of collisions, livestock and people that are hit by vehicles is also a concern to human lives and livelihoods. ACK seeks partners to assist us, and the KWS, in proposals that will improve safety along the Kenyan highways.

Photos: *Above – Cheetah scouts with new motorcycle sponsored by Cleveland Zoological Society. Below (left) – Highway accidents occur frequently as vehicles and lories speed down the steep curves along the Salama section of the Mombasa Road. Upper Right – Lumumba Mutiso collects data and remains of seven-week old cheetah cub killed on Mombasa highway just five kilometres from Salama town. Lower Right – Presence of cheetahs throughout Kenya is not limited by presence of roads (Wykstra, in press) – there is an 80% probability of a cheetah being present within 500 metres of a road throughout the 3250 kilometres of road covered in the 2004-2007 national cheetah survey.*



CAMERA TRAPS

Throughout Kenya, increasing human population and landscape disturbance have detrimental impact on wildlife habitats. Since 2004, ACK has focused on a cheetah population in the Salama area (400km^2) in southern Kenya where cheetahs (10-30 individuals) exist in a human settlement area. This population is facing local extinction due to a reduction of available land and prey because recent subdivision of large ranch lands for subsistence farming and development of the Malili "Technopolis" is accelerating human immigration into the Salama area. Cheetah monitoring currently utilises resident scouts to collect data from the community about cheetah sightings, livestock loss and cheetah habitat. ACK community programs promote an increased local tolerance towards predators, and offer information to mitigate livestock losses which may otherwise result in targeted cheetah killing. To quantify the effects of land-use changes on the stability of the fragile ecosystem our monitoring efforts must increase to keep up with the rapid changes.

Adjacent ranchland in the Athi-Kapiti ecosystem (425km^2) is the link between the Salama area and Nairobi National Park. The Athi-Kapiti ranches are comprised of single land owner properties and share-holder ranches that practice sustainable commercial livestock management and wildlife conservation. Together the land that comprises the proposed study extension stretches nearly two-thirds's of the distance between the Nairobi National Park and the Amboseli National Park. The Athi-Kapiti ecosystem holds as many as 30 cheetahs identified by local naturalists, and is the link of the Salama cheetahs to the Kajiado region.

Photographic traps, hair snag stations and faecal (scat) collection are examples of non-invasive sampling methods used in population studies for rare and endangered species. ACK is currently authorised to conduct radio telemetry studies on cheetahs in the Salama ecosystem. Capture of cheetahs has proven to be difficult due to low density of cheetahs and the level of human disturbance. The combination of non-invasive studies will aid in determining the relative abundance of cheetahs in the area to aid in determining the areas where cheetah collaring can provide additional information on the movement and behaviour of the cheetahs in settlement areas. The use of scent stations and bait used in cheetah trapping for radio collaring will be evaluated to determine visitation rate and regional cheetah abundance.

Erica Hermsen is a master's student from Antioch University in the US. She will work with Cosmas (ACK Research Scientist) and a local assistant to conduct the initial study as a part of her thesis requirements. The number of visitations to the camera trap sights will determine the success of the project. The bait that attracts the highest level of visitation by cheetah with limited visitation by other carnivores will be used to bait cheetahs for radio-collaring exercises. Cosmas will expand on this study to set additional trapping stations to attract predators in general to evaluate the abundance and distribution of carnivores in the Salama and Athi-Kapiti ecosystem.

This study is focused on the Salama cheetah population that exists in the human settlement and uses the commercial ranch land in the Athi-Kapiti ecosystem as a control. Results enable ACK to better understand the level of predator interactions with human grazing and settlement areas and to identify individuals to strengthen our understanding of the movements of cheetahs. Game count transects and camera trapping will be linked to on-going radio-collaring and conflict mitigation data to assure the future of cheetahs in this region. Documenting changes in cheetah distribution in relationship to ongoing studies provides an understanding of the adaptations in cheetah habitat choice, prey selection, health and the effectiveness of conservation efforts to date. The results also enable ACK to promote findings in public forums, research meetings and publications

It is urgent that this study is conducted during the current land used change to effectively prevent decline of cheetah populations. ACK needs to purchase 30 camera trap stations (camera and security), to purchase fuel for setting the traps and conducting community awareness seminars, and to hire a local assistant for an incoming master's student from the USA. Cheetah scouts will continue assist with data collection, conflict mitigation and information sharing between researchers and the community. The acquired knowledge from the camera-trap survey will inform development of cheetah conservation-protocols by the KWS and involvement of local authorities that can furthermore apply to the remaining cheetah populations in Kenya.

Photos: *Left – Cosmas and Erica set cameras on the Stanley Ranch for a pilot study using cheetah bedding from the KWS Nairobi Orphanage. Center – Caracal lynx tracks are often seen on the road during game counts, but this is the first time one has been caught on camera. Right- Jackals check out the cheetah bedding almost every day – no wonder we have been catching jackals in our cheetah traps!*

LEARNING FROM POOP

The use of scat-detection dogs with Joaquin kit foxes (*Vulpes macrotis mutica),* between black bear (*Ursus americanus*) and grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos*) uses dogs that are trained using modified narcotic, forensic, and search-and-rescue techniques. Once a dog is chosen based on its drive for reward, it is conditioned to associate the odor of the target faeces with its favourite reward. ACK will work with a local dog trainer from K&K Security and their Tanzanian-based affiliate to train and condition a detection dog to find cheetah faecal material in the Salama and Athi-Kapiti ecosystems to enhance our understanding of cheetah behaviour.

A Kenyan master's student will be the trained dog handler and will work with the US endocrinology student to collect samples for cheetah-prey preference and health analysis. ACK has partnered with the Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute (SCBI) Center for Species Survival via Adrienne Crosier. PhD for technical and analytical advice on this project. SCBI will also assist with the use of laboratory equipment for fecal assay testing and will provide training for the Kenyan student. The lab testing through SCBI will be used to calibrate new lab facilities being set up in Kenya.

Cheetahs in captivity show a high rate of disease when levels of glucocorticoid (GC) are elevated. GC is released from the adrenal glands in response to stressful stimuli. Elevated GC levels occur in response to both expected (i.e. seasonal food availability) and variable (interactions with larger predators or herders) changes in the environment. GC concentrations are considered to be an indicator of the ability of an animal to cope with social and ecological challenges to the animal. No study has evaluated the levels of stress hormones in cheetahs on public land in Kenya. A comparison of cheetahs in dense human settlement (Salama) to those exposed to the natural competitors on large ranchland (Athi-Kapiti) should provide insight into the levels of stress experienced by the free ranging cheetah.

The availability of prey is linked to the level of livestock predation by cheetah, thus it is important to understand prey preference in ranchland ecosystems. Carnivore diets reflect food availability and the adaptations of the individual to various factors allowing it to locate, capture, ingest and digest its prey. Through faecal hair analysis it is possible to calculate prey preferences of cheetahs in the Salama ecosystem compared to the Athi-Kapiti ecosystem to understand the adaptations of cheetahs living in high human-density regions.

The faecal analysis study will provide information on which to base cheetah management strategies related to cheetah habitat and health. Prey selection and stress hormones are indicators of cheetah health. Both can be determined through analysis of fecal samples collected using a scat-detection dog. Fecal samples will be collected using the time, date and GPS coordinates to reference the area where the sample is found. Each area is a part of long-term game counts and settlement monitoring, thus the degree of prey availability and human influence can be rated. Prey hair will be isolated and identified and enzyme immuno-assays will be used to measure GC concentrations at SCBI following established methodology. Results of initial sample analysis will be applied towards establishing techniques at a Nairobi-based location or for development of field-test kits for future use in this and other monitoring projects.

ACK is currently seeking the funding to launch this project and to begin the work. The local and international students have been identified and access to public and private land has been granted by land owners and managers. Once funding is secure the students will work with ACK and KWS to secure the permits needed to conduct the study in affiliation with our ongoing cheetah studies.

Photos: *Left: Cheetahs mark using urine and faeces to communicate with each other. Right: Dogs can be trained to alert a handler of the presence of the faecal material.*

COMMUNITY

SALAMA FARMERS AND DOG CARE

In July 2009, we worked with Master's Student Floris D'Udine to conduct community interviews within the study area. Floris supervised 145 interviews with random households using ACK staff and aided by volunteers and community members. The study revealed that the primary use of dogs is for guarding of the homestead and that few people give proper care to the dogs. The average life of a dog in this area was five years with less than 7,000 Ksh (US$100) being spent for care of the dog per year. Interesting findings:

- Owners with more dogs and larger herds were more likely to report the loss of livestock to predators.
- Respondents who have been exposed to wildlife education material in the past three years increased tolerance and an attitude approving co-existence with predators.
- Secondary school or further general education resulted in a person being four times more likely to disapprove of free predators in their area than those who had not gone beyond primary education.
- People expressed interest in learning more about the use of dogs in livestock-loss prevention.

This stresses our needs to continue to develop stronger education materials and to spend more time with the people in communities that share the habitats with cheetahs.

Photos above courtesy of Cheetah Conservation Fund: left is a dog which is in poor condition. Right: One month after deworming, treatment for mange, proper diet and access to fresh water, the same dog protected its herd from a predator attack by alerting the owner who chased the predator away.
Below: This dog has no drive to protect livestock or homestead. It will leave the home or herd to find food and water. It will sleep due to its weak condition rather than protecting its home. The dog is only two years old.

Courtesy of Cheetah Conservation Fund

LIVESTOCK GUARDING DOGS - Caring for your dog

ATTENTIVE BEHAVIOUR		**TRUSTWORTHY BEHAVIOUR**	**PROTECTIVE BEHAVIOUR**
Early Juvenile 8 to 16 weeks	**Late Juvenile 4 to 6+ months**	**Sub-adult 6+ to 12+ months**	**Adult 12+ months**
Most critical period of the **bonding** process. The puppy must not be left alone in the boma; some livestock from the herd must always be present. Bonding with other dogs and people must be discouraged to allow a firm bond to develop between the puppy and livestock. By 16 weeks the "critical period" during which social attachments are made is closed. At three months the puppy on a leash must start accompanying the grazing livestock, initially for short periods. At the homestead some livestock must come back to the boma with the puppy. Play behaviour with newborn lambs can be expected and must be stopped immediately by verbal command.	The puppy should be lead-trained and should be **accompanying the livestock** under supervision to ensure correct behaviour, and to ensure the puppy is protected from predators. Make sure the puppy is not being required to walk too far too soon - he needs time to get fit and for his feet to toughen up. Make sure this is done correctly and is a positive experience and *not* punishment. Never hit or whip the puppy – use verbal commands when reprimanding and give positive approval when the puppy shows strong protective behaviour. Put the dog on the leash daily to keep trust between the handler and the dog.	Time invested during these periods of corrective training will yield benefits by producing a trustworthy and effective livestock guarding dog. This stage marks the onset of predatory behaviour patterns and of **"play"** (grabbing wool and ears of livestock). Play behaviour must be stopped *immediately* through corrective training during daylight hours (supervision and reprimanding) and placing the dog on a run-wire at night. Failure to correct "play" behaviour at this stage will result in injuries to livestock and possible losses. Roaming at night can also be curbed by using the run-wire inside the boma.	Dogs should have bonded properly and should be **effective guardians**. However, a one-year-old dog is not yet fully mature and may still exhibit "puppy" behaviour. Your dog may also not yet have the confidence needed to challenge large predators. Barking at wildlife earlier on in the dog's development will indicate the dog views these as "intruders". This must be corrected immediately through adequate supervision and reprimanding and using a run-wire at night. At this stage care should be taken that the dog is not showing hunting behaviour. This may occur if the dog views game as "intruders". The dog should learn to distinguish threatening from non-threatening game species
12 weeks: booster vaccination including Rabies	Deworm at 3 months	Annual vaccinations Deworm at 6 , 9 and 12 months	Annual vaccinations Deworm every 3 to 6 months

COMMUNITY

PLAYING FOR CHEETAHS – ECOSYS FOOTBALL CUP

Eco Sys Action has been a part of cheetah work in Africa since 2005 by supporting the Wana Duma Childrens Project, sponsoring trees, aiding in the construction of the new camp, funding education work and purchasing hand crafts from various groups. In 2009, the registration of ***Eco Sys Wana Duma*** gave ACK the ability to grow this partnership in many new ways. On 12 December 2009 Eco Sys gave the Salama community a day to remember.

The Eco Sys Cheetah Cup was launched! This event was endorsed by UNEP and Kicking Alive designed a special ball for the occasion. Sporting Conservation assisted in the logistics and donations of prizes. The playing field was on land belonging to Maingi overlooking Salama town. The local administration fully endorsed and attended the event. village had posters and information from KSPCA, Nature Kenya, Wildlife Clubs of Kenya, ACK, Kicking Alive, Giraffe Sanctuary and KWS. We had taka-taka (garbage) bins for recycling and composting. A giant plush cheetah was the mascot that kids and adults could cuddle and have their photo with.

The winning teams took home a recycled wine bottle trophy with a banana leaf figure, trees, and ALIVE & KICKING cheetah balls. Congratulations to the Maiani Junior, Ngaamba men's and Kima Kiu teams for their best performances. Special mentions went to runner-up teams Ulu FC mens and Maiani Women Stars. Top scorer from Ngaamba FC was Peter John and from Kima Kiu Stars was Catherine Mueni.

Thanks to staff and volunteers Jimmy, Pius, Cosmas, Hassan, Raj, Kavita, Lumumba, Chifuyu, Josphat, Mutisya, Meshack, Alex, Isaac, Olivier, Adeline, Christian, Mary, Maingi, and all of the other friends from Salama who built the pitch, goals and hang posters.

Photos: *Left – Special ball designed by EcoSys Action and created by Kicking Alive in Nairobi. Right – the winning mens team with trophy, ball and mosquito nets – all prizes were sponsored by EcoSys and Sporting Conservation.*

Photos: *Top –Lumumba practices with Olivier from TANDAFRIK. Bottom – Christopher with trophy designed by artist, Arthur Ogada*

RIDING FOR CHEETAHS

It was a dream of ACK Community Officer, Lumumba Mutiso, to hold a bike race in the area where the cheetahs range. Since this was our first attempt at such an event we kept it small by a short advertising time period and by keeping it fairly local. With TANDAFRIK at the front of the pack, there were 33 riders that launched off at around 11AM on the 13th of December. These riders (ACK Director, Mary included) sped off on a 30km ride.

The night previous to the race the rains hit us hard, to the point that the race was nearly cancelled. Our original intention was to start the race at 9 sharp, but there were only about four racers at the start point by that time so the start time was pushed the start forward to 10:45 AM. We knew that people were coming from Ulu and Ngaamba areas which was some distance from the starting point, and that the mud would make their arrival and the race a challenge.

Congratulations to the winner, Christopher Mbatha, who completed the race in 1hour 23 minutes. Runner-up Muthora Tito was only five minutes behind. Nicholas Ndolonga, Alphonse Manthi, Mulinge Anaben, Nicholas Mutua, Jefferson Masinga, Michal Kivungi, Makau Mutua, Muuo Juma were also in the top 10. Special mention goes to Daniel Melita who completed the race as a runner, Irene Mwende who was the only girl and the only youth to complete the race, and to Simon Mutisya who was the only handicapped cyclist – Simon has only one leg and finished in the top 10.

ACK would like to thank the following donors and partners for their support of cheetah conservation efforts in Kenya

THANK YOU!

American Association of Zoo Keepers – BFR
Animal Ark
Binder Park Zoo
Cat Haven
Cheetah Alliance
Cheetah Conservation Fund
Cheetah Friends Europe
Cincinnati Zoo Angel Fund
Cleveland Metroparks Zoo and Zoological Society
Classic Escapes
Columbus Zoo
Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund
EcoSys Action
Fresno Chaffee Zoo
Kansas City Zoo
Kenya Wildlife Service
Elephant Bedroom Camp
Ewaso Lions Project
Ewaso Tracking Project
Machakos Wildlife Forum
Maibae Conservancy (NRT)
Mesker Park AAZK
Nature Encounters
Peter Barber
Richard Clise
Save the Elephant
Susanne Garrison
PAWS Africa Safari. LTD
Rudy Nielsen
Save the Elephants
SPOTS Europe
St. Louis Zoo Wild Institute
Tulsa Zoo
Utah Chapter AAZK
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Westgate Conservancy (NRT)
Zoofari

Action for Cheetahs in Kenya
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00606 Nairobi Kenya

We need your Help!

Visit the ACK web site: ***www.actionforcheetahs.org*** for more information on our projects in Kenya. Donations can be made on line through Project Survival (**http://www.cathaven.com/ProgramDetail.aspx?id=433**)

Checks can be sent to: Project Survival – Action for Cheetahs in Kenya
PO Box 1611
00606 Nairobi Kenya

$25 (2000ksh)	**Support a School Visit (one visit)**
$30 (2400ksh)	**Support our Community Programmes**
$40 (3200Ksh)	**Support Game Count/habitat monitoring (one month)**
$50 (4000Ksh)	**Snare Removal (one community event)**
$100 (8000Ksh)	**Sponsor a Scout (one month)**
$500 (40,000Ksh)	**Sponsor a camera trap**
$1000 (80,000)	**Support fecal analysis project (process 10 samples)**
_____	**Open Donation**