



CHEETAH OUTREACH

SEE IT. SENSE IT. SAVE IT.

N E W S L E T T E R

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COMPASSION SAVES TWO CHEETAH CUBS FROM AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE

Two 3-month-old cheetahs cubs housed at a pet shop in Saudi Arabia have been given a new lease on life when a member of a prominent Saudi family took pity on them and purchased them with the aim of rehabilitating these cubs and ensuring that their fate not be destined to a life of intolerable cruelty.

Already at 3-months of age these cubs had endured being de-clawed, kept in crates too small to even turn around in and they were terribly undernourished. The compassionate buyer took these cubs to his house and contacted Cheetah Outreach for advice on dietary requirements, husbandry issues and animal training. As he was only interested in providing the best possible care for these animals, Cheetah Outreach immediately sent their manager, Liesl Smith, to assist in these matters.

Upon arrival, Liesl could see that the cubs were extremely skittish and suspicious. Together with their appointed Saudi keeper, Michael, Liesl patiently maintained a close presence with the cubs, as they were extremely nervous of humans due to their experiences at the pet shop. Michael and Liesl spent the first week, sitting with the cubs, walking around inside the room with them, talking to them and generally just "hanging out" with them to gain their acceptance. During this time they earned their trust and were able to touch and stroke them as well as remove the collars that had been placed on them by the pet shop owner and had become terribly tight. An amazing outdoor enclosure with trees, rocks and an open stretch of lawn was designed and built onto the room that Liesl occupied. Once completed the cubs were moved to this room. They had the freedom to go outside whenever they felt ready, but for two days they decided the outside world was too much to cope with and would rather settle on the bed or in the bathtub! No amount of gentle encouragement could get them to leave the safety of the room.



The cubs were de-clawed

Shaka and Sheba making themselves at home



When they eventually built up enough courage to take the first few hesitant steps outside, they discovered that it was far more interesting than a bathtub and the first real signs of running and playing was observed. The real cheetah spirit was starting to emerge and finally they were acting like two energetic little cheetah cubs. Shaka and Sheba, as they came to be known, went from strength to strength, getting more habituated to people every day and getting more confident in their outside surroundings and the continuous hustle and bustle of the enormous grounds. Their weight and general condition improved all the time, their appetite was getting better and they seemed to be settling in well to their new lives.



Their new enclosure

During the day they would spend their time playing and watching the goings-on around their enclosure and at night retire to Liesl's room to share her bed for the evening. Vocalisations now alternated between hissing and purring.

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COMPASSION SAVES TWO CHEETAH CUBS FROM AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE...continued

During the last two weeks the two became more secure and familiar with Michael and was happy for him to approach and stroke them anytime, as long as it was done in a calm, slow and non-threatening manner. Much time was spent on collar and lead training, although Sheba, the female, turned out to be a much bigger challenge, being a feisty and independent little girl. Shaka, the male, had a very sweet and more insecure nature and excellent progress was seen with him.

After three weeks with them Liesl's job was done. By then a proper feeding regime had been established, and the cubs were safely moved to their new outdoor enclosure. With Michael forming a trusting relationship with them they no longer saw humans as cruel enemies.

Liesl and the cubs bonding



These two cubs were innocent victims of an active and lucrative trade in endangered animals and highlights some of the challenges and obstacles faced within cheetah conservation currently.

Cheetah Outreach is happy to have been able to assist in improving the quality of life of these two animals, and would also like to thank the Saudi family who acted with such compassion towards these two cubs. With their actions it is reassuring to know that there are people out there who are striving to eradicate the harsh realities of endangered animal trading.

ZIMBABWEAN FILM SHOOT

Roxy Danckwerts, a Zimbabwean with a mission, contacted Annie last year asking for assistance in starting up an cheetah education facility in Harare. Annie, always eager to help fellow conservationist promote cheetah preservation sent Liesl Smith, Manager, to help Roxy train her two hand-reared male cheetahs as ambassador educational cats.

In March this year, Liesl was again needed to lend a hand with a film shoot for an outdoor travel show. As Roxy was away for the weekend Liesl had to oversee the three handlers as well as Levi and Diesel, two beautiful male cheetahs as the cameras rolled.



Liesl with Diesel and Levi



Waiting for ACTION

According to Liesl the shoot was filmed in a nature reserve about 2 hours drive from Harare. They were required to hide behind a bush with Levi and Diesel and had to have the cheetahs walk out into the open when the "guide" came walking up with his celebrity guest, who just happened to be totally unaware of this entire arrangement. As far as he was concerned they were wild cheetahs. Everything went smoothly and the celebrity was able to admire the cheetahs through his binoculars.



On route to the shoot



BAGGINS - WHAT A HANDFUL!

Cheetahs. Check. Anatolian Shepherd Guard Dogs. Check. Sheep. Check. Goats. Check. What's missing? Why a serval kitten of course!

We welcome Baggins, a serval kitten, who just happens to be our most active, naughty and inquisitive staff member yet. He joined our programme in March this year and was donated by Mr Brian Jones, owner of Moholoholo and an important role player in cheetah conservation in South Africa.

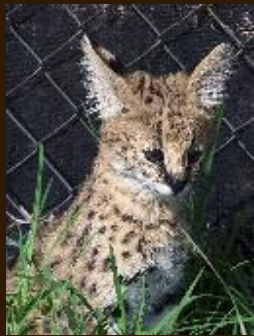
Armed with milk formula, teats, cotton wool and enough medical supplies to equip a hospital ward Liesl Smith and Cindy a volunteer from the USA, left Moholoholo on their return journey to Baggins's new home in the Stellenbosch winelands.

Since he was too small to stay at Cheetah Outreach and our cub raising facility was being kept sterile for future arriving cubs, Baggins ended up being adopted into Liesl's family, going home with her every night. Liesl's spare bedroom was quickly converted into prime serval territory with logs, branches and dead grass. At times when she was away, Heidi Moller (Cheetah Outreach) took over as his step mom and did a superb job of looking after a very bouncy and high maintenance baby.

It took but half a second for everyone at Cheetah Outreach to fall head over heels in love with Baggins. He quickly won everyone over with his cheeky and energetic spirit and the silly games he loves playing. He's proven himself to be quite a challenge compared to the very timid and more insecure cheetah cubs. He has become independent and strong-minded very quickly and several staff members have left his enclosure with a selection of scratches trying to vaccinate or toilet him!



Liesl & Baggins



Baggins, our serval kitten

During his day at Cheetah Outreach he passes the time playing with his favourite snake and fluffy mouse toys, climbing onto his log display and running around with his friend Sukie, our resident border collie.

Baggins has received a lot of interest from our visitors and we hope to be able to introduce him to members of the public soon. He will assist us in educating the public about the benefits of having these beautiful specialized small cats on farmlands, where they control rodent and snake population.

THE CHEETAH OUTREACH ALUMNI

Moyo and Jamar who are residents of Animalark, Reno, Nevada, USA, are two cheetah's that were hand reared at Cheetah Outreach and it has been wonderful to reconnect with these two beautiful boys and to watch them run on their exercise track. As you can see they have settled in marvellously and are blissfully happy at their new home. Aaron and Diana Hiibel, the owners of Animalark, and the staff of the facility can't imagine what life would be like without these two ambassador's for cheetah conservation.





GRADUATION - TANGO AND VICTOR

In May, Victor and Tango, said goodbye to African soil as they headed for California, USA. They have been raised by the staff of Cheetah Outreach from two weeks of age and have spent the last 10 months preparing for their lives as ambassadors at their new facilities. The one cub will be resident at Wild Wonders in San Diego and the other at Sierra Endangered Cat Haven near Dunlap in the north of California.

Travelling there involved a flight from Cape Town to London, then from London to Los Angeles and a further five hours of driving to get to Sierra Endangered Cat Haven, a beautiful facility situated on the hilly slopes of northern California. The boys will stay at this facility for thirty days of quarantine before one of them will be moved to Wild Wonders. Even though the trip there was exhausting, the boys came out of their crates full of energy and curiosity about their new surroundings. They were clearly very relieved and happy to stand on firm ground and being able to stretch their legs again!

Both Victor and Tango bonded extremely well with all the staff and volunteers from both facilities and enjoyed the continuous stroking and fussing from the admiring crowds. Within a day of arriving at Cat Haven the boys were chasing one another around and snuggling up to their new handlers, as if this has always been their home. Not even the thunderous growls of the resident tigers or the shrill call of the snow leopard seemed to faze them.

The boys impressed everyone with their good nature and confidence. When taken on walks around the facility they eagerly made their way from their enclosure up the terrace to the indoor classroom without hesitation and seemed to revel in the new challenges. Victor was always the first one out the gate with Tango a small step behind.

All at Cheetah Outreach already miss these spirited boys, but knowing that they will be cared for with as much love, patience and stimulation as when they were at Cheetah Outreach makes it far more bearable.



GOLF DAY 2007 - HAVING A BALL!



This years winning team

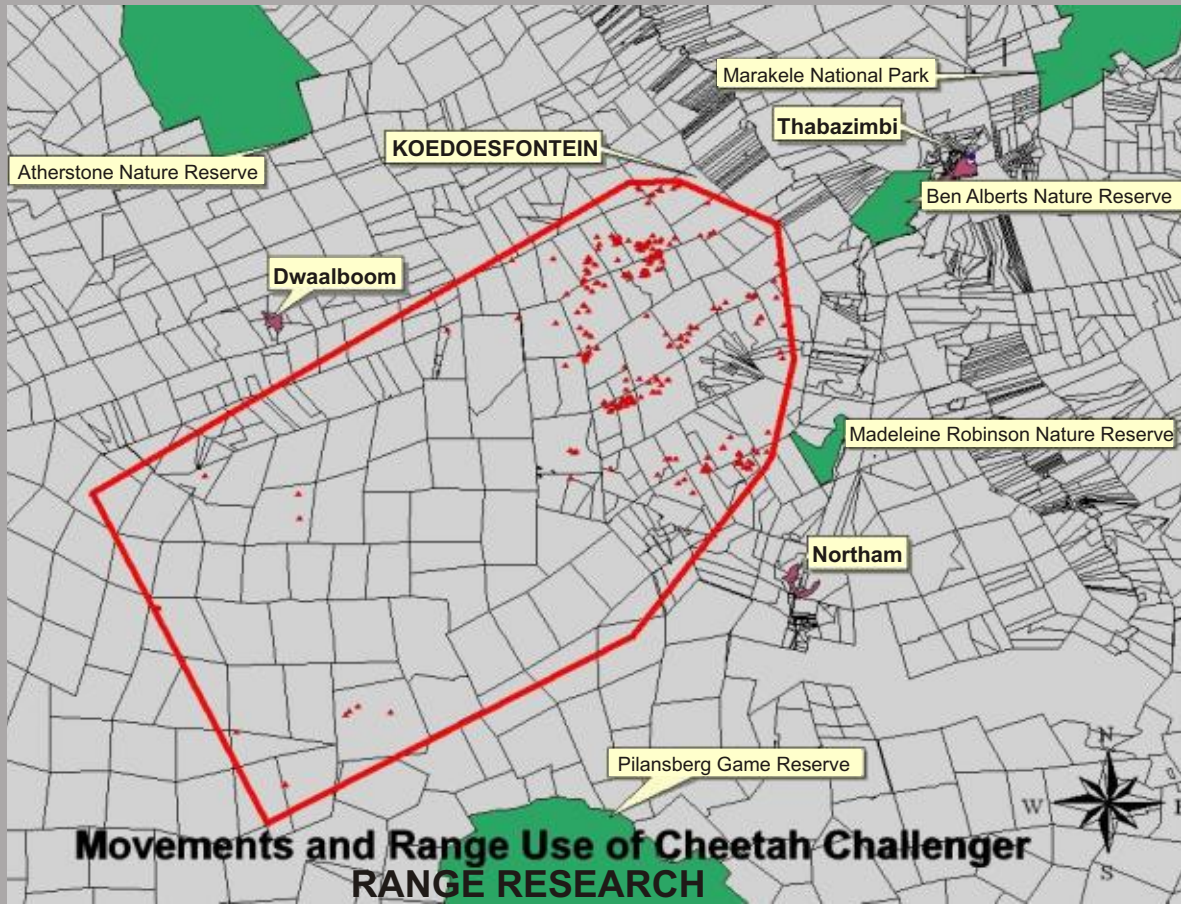
Each year the Golf Day seems to be more successful and enjoyable than before. The players take on a competitive edge when they walk out on to the first tee, who wouldn't be with all the wonderful sponsored prizes up for grabs. We extend a huge thank you to all the participants of the day and we look forward to next years event. Keep practicing!





CHEETAH CHALLENGER - UPDATE

The map indicates the cheetah Challenger's movements for the past year. He was captured and fitted with a GPS/CELL collar on the farm Koedoesfontein approximately 1 year ago. According to Deon Cilliers, Conservation Manager, De Wildt Wild Cheetah Project, the cheetah is using a HUGE range (approx 191sq kilometers). This is nearly 3 times larger than the ranges of the male coalitions that Deon and his team have been monitoring. For the past month and a half his collar has been very quiet and they will try to locate him with aerial tracking. Cheetah Outreach sponsored the GSM/GPS cell collar.



THEMBA - ANATOLIAN GUARD DOG

Our Anatolian Shepherd Guarding Dog Programme, delivered in partnership with De Wildt Cheetah and Wildlife Trust is going from strength to strength with the placements of Themba and Alpha, the most recent additions to our team of brave livestock guarding dogs.

Themba was donated to Mr Valli Moosa, a current Anatolian Shepherd Guarding dog owner whose two-year-old working dog, Uthaya, is one of the most reliable and hard working guarding dogs in the programme.

With a steady increase in Uthaya's herd over the last two years and the members of his sheep herd approaching four hundred, it was decided to give him a companion to share the workload.

Themba was placed on Mr Moosa's farm in February 2007. He spent the first month in a small corral close to the homestead as part of his habituation period and for close monitoring and correction, if needed. During this period he was introduced to Uthaya on a few occasions, with much curiosity from both sides. After the first month, Themba was moved to a small camp close to the grazing camp from where he could observe the rest of the herd. Within two days he decided to join them and the farm manager found him and Uthaya lying side by side among the herd of sheep, to much amusement of everyone. He had crawled through the fence and refused to be separated from Uthaya and the herd again.

By assessing the dogs in the programme following relevant criteria, it was determined that Cheetah Outreach/De Wildt Cheetah and Wildlife Trust has delivered 90.9% successful placements. Since the success rate of placing Anatolians in South Africa has been established to be 40%, the results obtained indicate a significant improvement on the average.





FOUNDER'S NOTE

Looking back at the ten years of Cheetah Outreach, I realize what a privilege it has been to travel this road. A few special friends have been with me since the beginning – Dawn Glover, firstly as a volunteer and later staff member, Patrick and Doreen Brown as volunteers and of course Shadow, our first roving Ambassador cheetah. Together, as we look forward to the next ten we plan to enrich and broaden our education and conservation delivery. To all of you who have supported and applauded our efforts as well as Spier Estate, the only home this facility has ever known, grateful thanks from all the team.

Annie



Cheetah Outreach volunteers:

Top: Lisa, Patrick and Doreen (Patrick and Doreen have supported CO for 10 years)

Bottom: Lesta (received the CO Crystal Award given in

recognition for excellence in the pursuit of Cheetah Outreach goals) and Retha.



Dawn & Shadow celebrating 10 years with CO.



Congratulations to Vanessa (De Wildt) and Johnny on their blessed union.

HELP SUPPORT CHEETAH OUTREACH

To join Cheetah Outreach in its efforts just mark the category of support and fill in your name and address on the form below:

SPONSORSHIP OPTIONS:

Member (R60)

- Bi-annual newsletter of activities, 1 free entry into enclosure per year.

Supporter (R250)

- Newsletter and certificate of recognition, 3 free entries into enclosure per year.

Sponsor (R500)

- Newsletter, photograph, name and date of visit to school or community event, 6 free entries into enclosure per year.

Patron (R1000)

- Newsletter, and recognition on Cheetah Outreach website, 15 free entries into enclosure per year.

Adoption of one cheetah - when available (R5000)

- Newsletter, recognition on our adoption board at Cheetah Outreach, recognition on website and a photograph and information of cheetah adopted as well as unlimited entry into enclosure.

Guarding Dog (R5000)

- Placement of a livestock guarding dog on a South African farm or the purchase of a breeding dog, recognition on sponsor board at Cheetah Outreach.

NAME: _____

MAILING ADDRESS: _____

Mail this form and your cheque, payable to Cheetah Outreach, to PO Box 116 Lynedoch, 7603, South Africa.

