

# ANATOLIAN SHEPHERD LIVESTOCK GUARDING DOG PROJECT



## PROGRESS REPORTS NOVEMBER 2008



# Progress Report Anatolian Shepherd Guarding Dog Project

## South Africa

In order to assist farmers in the reduction of livestock losses the following Anatolian Shepherd dogs were placed on selected farms as a means of non-lethal predator control:

First set of placements (2005):	Second set of placements (2006):	Third set of placements (2006):	Fourth set of placements (2007):	Fifth set of placements (2007):	Sixth set of placements (2008):
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Uthaya (Botriver)</li> <li>2. Boleyn (Thabazimbi District)</li> <li>3. Gillian (Lepalale District)</li> <li>4. Inca (Brey District)</li> <li>5. Tau (Musina)</li> <li>6. Jedi (Thabazimbi District)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Kiwi (Thabazimbi)</li> <li>2. Warrior (Stockpoort, Limpopo)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Jo (Brey District)</li> <li>2. Simba (Musina)</li> <li>3. Guardian, renamed Beska (Lephalale)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Themba (Botriver)</li> <li>2. Alpha (Baltimore, Limpopo)</li> <li>3. Bravo (Thabazimbi)</li> <li>4. Charlie (Thabazimbi)</li> <li>5. Delta (Limpopo)</li> <li>6. Echo (Limpopo)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Fox (All Days, Limpopo)</li> <li>2. Gia (Tolwe, Limpopo)</li> <li>3. Pego (Vhembe, Limpopo)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Kilo (Jakkelsfontein)</li> <li>2. Juliet (Gregory)</li> <li>3. Hank (Klipvlei)</li> <li>4. Lema (Krokodilpan)</li> <li>5. Mike (Maastroom)</li> <li>6. Issy (Matopi)</li> </ol>

Seventh set of placements (2008):	Eight of placements (2008):	Ninth set of placements (2008):	Tenth set of placements (2008):
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mufasa (Cradock District)</li> <li>2. Scruffy (Middelburg District)</li> <li>3. Roy (Middelburg District)</li> <li>4. Spot (Cradock District)</li> <li>5. Unnamed Cradock District)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Crikey Lephalale District)</li> <li>2. Kaitiaki (Swartwater District)</li> <li>3. Kahu (Baltimore District)</li> <li>4. Charlie (Swartwater District)</li> <li>5. Julliette (Alldays District)</li> <li>6. Rachel (Alldays District)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Peuter (Cradock District)</li> <li>2. Joseph (Cradock District)</li> <li>3. Dusty (Cradock District)</li> <li>4. Simon (Cradock District)</li> <li>5. Charlie (Cradock District)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Neeake (Tosca District)</li> <li>2. Masindi (Tosca District)</li> <li>3. Phoenix (Tosca District)</li> <li>4. Gloria (Tosca District)</li> </ol>

To assess the progress of these dogs, continuous monitoring has been done during 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008 by means of visitations, telephonic discussions and questionnaires.

## **A. First set of placements (2005)**

Of the first set of placements the following results were obtained:

Uthaya is a very successful and well-established Anatolian placed on farm Paardenkloof in the Western Cape near Botriver. Since his sheep herd has grown to over 500 members and his workload has increased dramatically the decision was made to place a second dog on this farm to assist with the guarding duties. Even though the placement of the second dog went well, he unfortunately had to be removed when he displayed some roaming behaviour. Uthaya has now again taken responsibility as the only guardian with the herd. No livestock losses have been suffered since the placement and the farm owner is extremely satisfied.

Boleyn is working brilliantly and displays all the characteristics necessary to deem her an effective guarding dog. She has successfully protected her herd from resident brown and spotted hyena and nomadic cheetahs. She is currently guarding a herd of 90 goats in an area of approximately 400 ha.

She is currently in very good condition.

No livestock losses have been suffered since the placement and the farm owner is extremely satisfied.

Jedi still works as an ambassador at De Wildt Cheetah and Wildlife Trust and is doing excellent work in promoting the project to visitors at this world-renowned facility.

Tau was the first dog placed on Martiens Opperman's farm, Hartjiesveld, in the Limpopo Province. He unfortunately disappeared when he was one year old, presumably to snakebite. He was an effective and reliable guarding dog and no livestock losses were suffered during his time with the herd.

The farmer was extremely happy with this placement and immediately requested another Anatolian to replace Tau.

Gillian adapted well after her move to the new farm and has bonded well to her herd of sheep. She is working well and is in a good condition. She and her fellow guardian Simba have formed a formidable team. Together they chased off a predator from a catch and while Simba stayed with the dead animal Gillian took both herds home.

A few livestock losses have been suffered but the farmer is very happy with the placement.

Inca was removed from her farm because of inadequate bonding with her herd and undesirable play behaviour. This could not be corrected even after numerous attempts at corrective training. She is now a guarding dog at Mr Valli Moosa's house and she is doing an excellent job.

## **B. Second set of placements (2006)**

Kiwi's placement has encountered little behavioural problems and she has proved herself to be an effective and reliable guarding dog. She has bonded very well with her herd of a hundred goats and sheep and guards them daily while the herd grazes in a 600 ha area. At night Kiwi stays very alert and will bark at anything unknown that approaches the kraal. The owners have found spoor of Brown hyena and cheetah close to the kraal. The farm owner is extremely satisfied with Kiwi's placement and has seen significant economic benefit from this placement.

Warrior has developed into a very effective guarding dog and has adjusted well after being moved from his familiar surroundings to a new farm and new animals. He has bonded well with his herd and is very reliable in following the daily routine expected of him. Currently, he is guarding a herd of approximately 300 sheep in a grazing area of 150 ha. The farmer has not had any livestock losses and is very happy with the placement.

### **C. Third set of placements (2006)**

Jo was removed from his farm near Bray in the Northern Cape after the farmer made it clear that he was not willing to commit the necessary time and energy during the training period. Jo was in the care of the same farmer with whom Inca was placed and that was regarded as a failed placement. We suspect that farmer negligence contributed to both removals.

No livestock losses have been encountered during Jo's placement and the farmer, interestingly, has shown interest in buying an Anatolian from Cheetah Outreach in 2008. Cheetah Outreach/De Wildt will invite him to buy a dog but no more dogs will be placed on this farm.

Jo has successfully been placed with new owners where he is now a family guarding dog.

Simba was the second dog placed on Mr Martiens Opperman's farm to replace Tau. He has bonded very well with his herd of 70 goats and escorts them while they roam over an area of up to 2400 ha.

The owner recently reported that Simba did not return home with his herd one afternoon and still had not arrived by the next morning. The owner went to look for him and found him guarding a carcass of a sheep that were killed by a predator. It appears that Simba and Gillian chased it off and while Gillian returned home with the flock Simba stood guard over the carcass. He is doing well after the operation and is back with his flock as guardian.

Guardian (Beska) is doing very well and the owner reports that he has had no stock losses since Beska joined the flock of sheep. They have now started losing their more expensive game calves to predators and are rethinking their need for a guardian dog. Since their main business is game farming and the livestock is only for personal use, they may decide to focus all their efforts on the game and would then not need a livestock guarding dog anymore. If this happens we would have to move Beska to another farm.

### **D. Fourth set of placements (2007)**

Themba was placed on farm Paardenkloof, Botriver, in February 2007 and had to be removed from the farm due to unwanted roaming behaviour. He was then placed on a second sheep farm within the free ranging cheetah area of South Africa. He started off well on the new farm but he began to roam again shortly after the bonding phase. He unfortunately had to be removed from the farm and was placed as a house dog with Mr Valli Moosa.

Alpha has developed into a very impressive looking dog. He continues to do very well and displays no serious behavioural problems. He is still shy of other people but will as before let Mrs Brandt handle him and she reports he has now become accustomed to her sons as well. No livestock losses have been suffered since the placement and the farm owner is very happy with Alpha's progress so far.

Bravo's placement on the new farm progressed very well through the bonding process. He started to display hunting behaviour and was removed from the farm. The hunting behavior may have developed during the first placement and it resulted in Bravo being removed and placed as a companion dog.

Charlie died of an unknown illness recently. De Wildt/Cheetah Outreach is still awaiting the official veterinarian's report to confirm the cause of death.

At the time of his death Charlie was a fully functional part of the flock and the owner was very distressed when Charlie died. He saw the impact Charlie had on his farming operation and has shown interest in acquiring a new dog when available.

Delta has adjusted well and has become an integral part of the herd of cows. Her guarding skills are developing well and after the troublesome cow was removed from the herd she has shown an even stronger bond with the remaining members of her herd. The farmer is satisfied with the placement and the progress shown. The owner has sold his farm and will be moving out of wild cheetah area. He is so happy with Delta that he has requested to take Delta with him.

Echo was replaced during August this year by Crikey and during the time that there was no guardian with the herd of cattle the owner reported losses to leopard.

The placements of these two dogs with cattle had gone exceptionally well, and this success allowed us to place more dogs with cattle. This initiative has made it possible to explore a new avenue in terms of cheetah conservation in South Africa.

### **E. Fifth set of placements (2007)**

Fox had to be removed after developing behavioural problems and showing no response to corrective training. He was placed as a companion dog.

Gia was placed on farm Drinkeling near Tolwe in the Limpopo Province on 25 October 2007. He was allocated to guard a herd of approximately 150 Kalahari red goats from caracal, black-backed jackal, leopards, brown hyena and cheetah. Gia was killed in the kraal by a snake within two weeks of placement. Cheetah Outreach/De Wildt will be placing another Anatolian on this farm to replace Gia.

Pego is accompanying his goats to the veldt every day and is an integral part of the flock. The farmer is satisfied with the placement. Pego is a very protective guardian; the owner reported that during this breeding season two female cheetahs had their litters on the farm and no losses with the livestock was reported.

### **F. Sixth set of placements (January 2008)**

*Kilo* was poisoned by one of the farm workers on the farm, after the last inspection visit. He was replaced by Kaitiaki during August this year

*Juliet* was hurt by an aggressive goat and had her pelvic bone broken. After the operation she went into rehabilitation on the farm. She has fully recovered from the operation and is once again doing her part to guard her herd against predators. She is a very amicable dog in the kraal when her flock is there, but the moment they move out her whole demeanour changes and she becomes very alert. During one of our visits she barked at the field officer when he got too close to her herd.



**Hank** is doing well, but it appears that he may get frustrated due to the fact that the goats does not go far to graze. The owner is currently feeding the herd due the drought and the lack of appropriate grazing. This causes Hank to spend more time near the feed with some of the goats and only some of his time in the veldt with the grazing seekers. The owner reports that he kept an ewe away from her kid but did Not hurt the ewe or the kid.



**Sunny:** The owner reports that Sunny is doing very well. Before Sunny's placement the jackals came up to the fence of the kraal and ripped of lamb's ears to get to them. He now reports that this has stopped and that the jackals have not bothered the sheep. Sunny rotates between two flocks in adjacent camps. He is in good condition and is developing into a good working dog.



**Mike** was placed on a farm in the Maastroom area. He is doing well and has become an integral part of the herd. His owner is very happy with him and his progress. He is in good condition and seems to be adjusting very well to life as a guarding dog.



**Issy** was placed on a farm in the Tshipise area on the 28th of January 2008. She was progressing well in her training and the farmer was happy with the placement. Unfortunately she was injured severely by a goat ewe and died at the veterinarian clinic during treatment.

All the remaining puppies from the newest placements are progressing very well. Their healthcare is up to date in terms of parasite control and vaccinations. Visitations to assess their development and to discuss the placements with the farmers are done once a month.

### **G. Seventh set of placements (June 2008)**

These puppies were the first placement in conjunction with Woolworths in the Cradock area of the Eastern Cape Province in South Africa. All the puppies will be guarding about 200 ewes that each farmer has allocated for this pilot program

**Mufasa** was placed on the farm of Mr. J Kingwill. Mufasa guards his flock of sheep against black backed jackal and caracal. He is doing very well and has completed his training period. He is guarding his flock of sheep on pastures on the farm. His owner is very happy with the way he has bonded with the sheep and his working ability.



**Scruffy** was placed on the farm of Mr. J Bowker mainly to protect his herd against caracal and black backed jackal. The area he guards is quite mountainous and very good habitat for predators on the farm. He is well bonded to his herd of sheep and has become a part of the herd. The owner is very happy with his progress.



**Roy** was placed on the farm of Mr. K Donian. He is well bonded with members of the herd and his guarding abilities are developing well. He protects his herd mainly against caracal and jackal. He is very protective over his herd, a trait that will serve his herd well out in the veldt. The owner is happy with Roy and his progress.



*Spot* was placed on the farm of Mr. W Heyns and will be guarding his herds in the veldt and on pastures on the farm. He is a well developed dog and has a very strong bond with his herd. The owner is looking forward to Spot working in the veldt to start reducing his losses to the two main predators.



*Unnamed*, the dog was placed on the farm of Mr. G Jordaan. The farmer believes in not naming his dogs as they are on the farm to work. The dog is doing well and has formed a strong bond with his flock.

#### **H. Eight set of placements (August 2008)**

*Crikey* was placed on the farm of Mr. A van der Westhuizen to replace Echo, who was shot. Crikey is a very well bonded and hard working pup. He has started to go out with the herd of cattle since he was 3 months old. He has had his first encounter with a leopard at the kraal and successfully chased the leopard off. Crikey is a model guardian and the owner and his herder has put a lot of effort into Crikey's development and success.



***Kaitiaki*** was placed on the farm of Ms. A Engelbrecht. He is replacing Kilo who was poisoned. He is a well bonded pup and is an integral part of his herd. He is still in the training kraal as it is very dry in the area so the grazing is very limited. He displays no behavioural problems and we expect him to develop into an excellent guardian.



***Kahu*** was placed on the farm of Mr. B Fouche. He is a first time owner, but is very committed to the programme. Kahu is well bonded to his herd of goats and has started accompanying them as they graze close to his kraal. He is working well and there have been no behavioural problems to report. He is of great assistance to the owner who is confined to a wheel chair.



**Charlie** was placed on the farm of Mr. J Jones. He is well bonded with his flock of sheep. He has started accompanying his flock out into the veldt each day and is very hard working. The owner brings the flock home earlier than usual to help Charlie to get used to the routine. He is in very good condition and is well cared for. He has the advantage that there is another older dog (mixed breed) with the flock to assist and guide him.



**Julliette** was placed on the farm of Mr. R Gallow. He is also a first time owner. Julliette has bonded well with the herd and has started to join her herd when they go out in the afternoon to graze. She stays close to the herd and is very alert and trustworthy.



**Rachel** is working on the farm of Mr. L Nel where she is guarding a herd of sheep. The bond between her and the herd is very strong and all the members of the herd have accepted her as part of the herd. She is in a good condition and has started to join the herd as they graze close to the homestead.



**I. Ninth set of placements (September 2008):**

These placements are part of the second set of placements in the collaboration between Cheetah Outreach and Woolworths South Africa. The set of 5 puppies were placed with farmers in the Cradock area. The puppies are all developing very well and are being monitored on a monthly basis with their first formal visit in January 2009.



**J. Tenth set of placements (October 2008):**

This litter of puppies was placed in the Tosca area of the Northwestern Province of South Africa. They were placed in this area because of the frequent movement of cheetah across the South African and Botswana border in this area. All the farmers are new owners and participants so we have high hopes for the success of the program in this area.

*Neeake* was placed on the farm of Mr. P Knipe on the border with Botswana. He will be guarding his herd of goats in this area. He is still in training but has formed a strong bond with his herd and is an integral part of his herd. He is in the care of a stockman which looks after the goats. Neeake joins the stockman each afternoon to fetch the larger herd from the veldt.



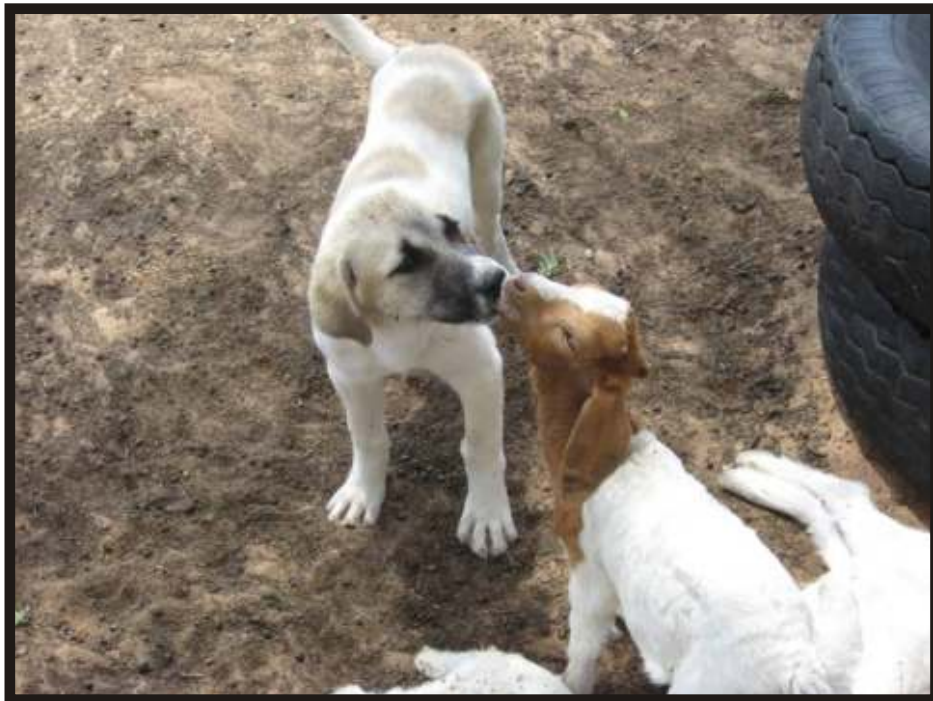
*Masindi* is working on the farm of Mr. B Grobler. She is in training and will guard her owner's herd of sheep. She has her work cut out for her as jackal caught sheep in the kraal prior to her arrival. She is well bonded to her training herd and has started joining the larger herd in their kraal when they return at night. They have accepted her and she is very submissive towards the ewes, especially if they have lambs.



**Gloria** is in training on the farm of Mr. G le Roux and she will be guarding his herd of sheep. She is well bonded to her training herd and is progressing well in her training. She has already formed a strong bond with her herd.



**Phoenix** was placed on the farm of Mr. L Roets where she will be guarding the newly established herd of goats. She is well bonded to her herd and is moving amongst the ewes after they return at night. This has made her acceptance into the herd much easier and she is now treated as a member of the herd.



## **Future Placements**

We are hoping to place 20 puppies this year with approved farmers in free ranging cheetah territories. The extra puppies born out of the breeding females will be sold commercially to help keep up with the demand for these dogs in the non-cheetah area.

## **Future Breeding**

### **Breeding Stock**

The Anatolian Shepherd Guard Dogs that currently represent Cheetah Outreach's breeding animals include the following:

- Two 2-year-old females that were born at respected Anatolian Shepherd breeders, Liebenberg Anatolians, Bloemfontein, South Africa.
- Two females, one six and the other seven, were bought from Grootfontein Research Trust, with all the necessary health requirements for the breeding program. Helen and Lucy have been housed at the breeding facility on Eikendal Wine Estate near Stellenbosch.
- A 3-year-old male, War Dance, was also bought from Grootfontein is housed at Cheetah Outreach.
- Two 12 month old females imported from the USA.
- Three, three month old, puppies (2 females and 1 male) imported from Turkey. These dogs will only be mature and introduced to the breeding programme once they are 2 years old and have had their hips examined and passed health examinations.

### **Breeding**

The first litter of six puppies was born on the 2nd of July to Melda. Wardance is the father of the litter. These puppies were placed on farms where there are still free ranging cheetahs. Angel had her first litter of four puppies and again Wardance was the father. These puppies were also placed in free ranging cheetah areas.

### **Expected breeding timeline and production**

Cheetah Outreach anticipates the breeding schedule for 2009 to proceed as follows:

Angel and Melda will be mated with one of the breeding males. We are searching for a different male to breed Angel and Melda to due to their relatedness to our breeding male Wardance. We have discovered this year after both girls were bred to him that they both carry the “white” gene and is not what we are looking to produce for working dogs. If a male is found and mating is successful, we might expect both females to produce an average litter size of 6 puppies, resulting in a possible total of 12 puppies.

Helen, the second dog bought from Grootfontein Agricultural College, is also expected to produce an average of 6 puppies.

With the purchase of Lucy, a third female from Grootfontein, the original target may still be achieved, since she will also be expected to produce an average of 6 puppies.

The two new 12 month old imported females will only be mated at two years old, so we are expecting our first litter out of them in 2010 once their hips have been examined and passed health examinations.

This would thus mean that the four females could produce an estimated total of 24 puppies in 2009. There may be a second breeding depending on whether any of the females come into heat again towards the end of the year. Any puppies bred in excess of current expectations will commercially be traded and funds invested in the breeding programme.

### **Breeding facility**

Currently Eikendal Wine Estate supports Cheetah Outreach and De Wildt Cheetah and Wildlife Trust by providing the use of a facility to hand raise cheetah ambassadors. Eikendal has demonstrated their commitment to conservation issues by donating half a hectare of land for exclusive use by Cheetah Outreach to house our breeding female dogs. This is essential, since newborn puppies need to be reared in an area free of predators as to cultivate expected and desirable behavior. If the puppies were housed at the Cheetah Outreach facility where cheetahs live in close proximity, the puppies might accept this as the norm.

There are six female camps for the dogs that are 15m by 9m each. A small wooden house was built in each camp for the dogs to sleep in, additional shade is also provided. With the current design of the camps all the dogs have access to a big area for play and energy release. This area is also used for grazing for the sheep and in doing this all the dogs have contact with the livestock.

In addition to the housing camps we have also developed a whelping area where females can be kept in isolation from the other females. This area provides shelter for the mom and puppies in a separate concrete area closer to the veterinary facility, thus enabling easier and better hygiene and monitoring. The whelping area is also set up with lighting and additional heating if necessary in inclement weather. When puppies reach a certain age and size, they would be moved down to the female enclosure areas where there are puppy pens set up. The pens are set up so the sheep can be in the larger enclosure with the puppies, but not be able to get into the puppy area so no puppy is accidentally trampled. This gives the puppies some exposure to the livestock prior to being placed on the farms. Cheetah Outreach currently house Merino and Dorper sheep and plan on acquiring a few Boer goats as to expose young puppies to additional types of livestock they might be placed with eventually.