

Project Update: May 2003

Cheetah Conservation Botswana is a new project set up at the beginning of this year to address the problem of cheetah/livestock conflict nationwide. Cheetahs are often considered as pests and are lethally removed by landowners. This is a major threat to an already endangered species. We are working with the farming community, encouraging them to utilise non lethal methods of predator control and appropriate livestock management. We have been progressing well, sending out a nationwide questionnaire to all farms, to find out where the main areas of conflict are occurring, what methods are being utilised to control predators and how people would like us to help them.

While we are focusing on assisting people to coexist with cheetahs on their land, we will relocate proven problem animals. We have set up a research and quarantine camp in the Southern Kalahari for this purpose. Here we will quarantine any cheetahs to be relocated, making sure they are free of disease, before taking them to a suitable release site. Relocated animals are then monitored by telemetry to assess the success of release and gain important information on their home ranges and behaviour patterns.

We are very pleased to thank the Rufford Small Grants Programme for helping to make our work possible and assisting us to preserve this unique species into the future.