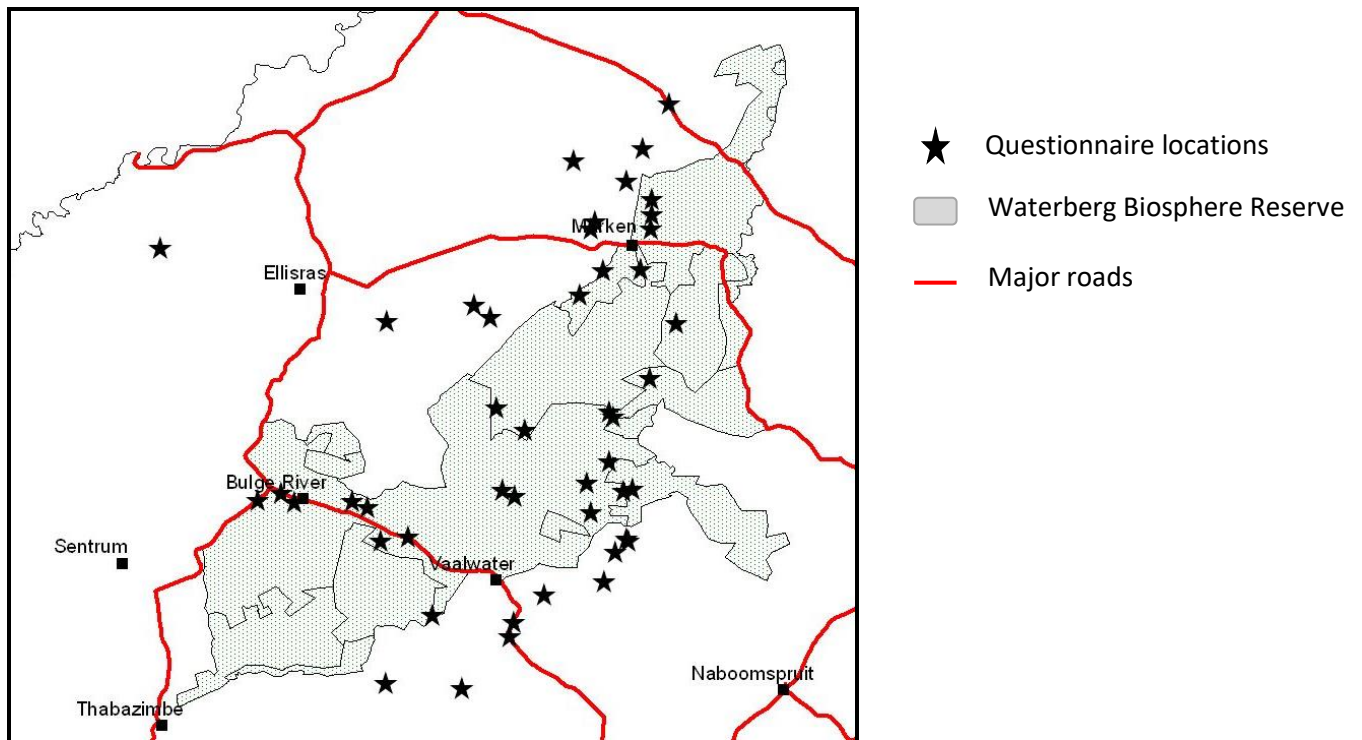


## Project Update: May 2011

The project commenced in February 2011 and has already begun to produce useful results from a scientific perspective and in terms of conservation benefits.

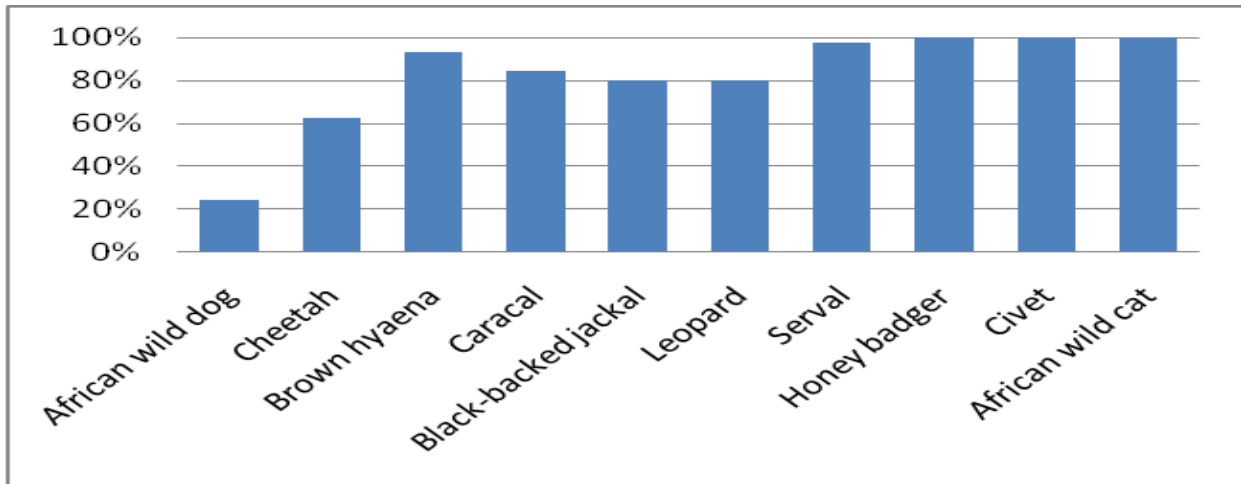
**Aim 1:** Investigate where, when and why conflict occurs and quantify the reciprocal impact of co-existing people and carnivores.

- So far, initial questionnaire interviews have been conducted with 46 private land owners (Fig 1).



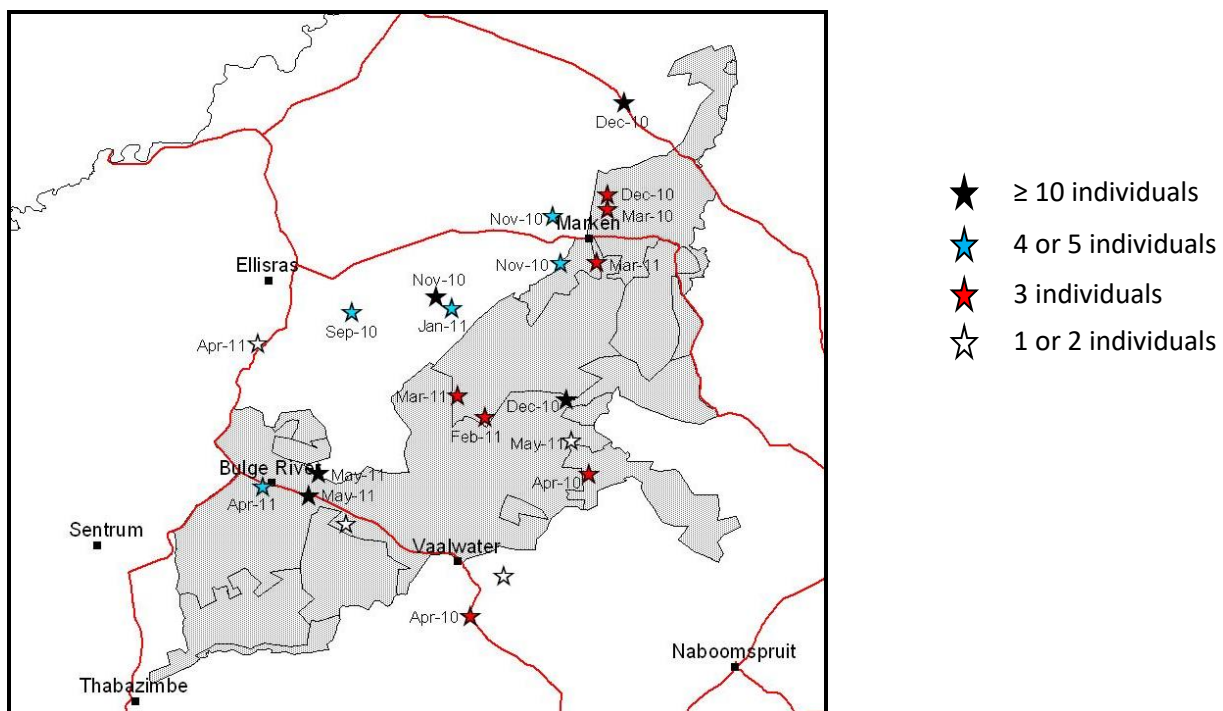
**Figure 1.** Locations of 46 interviews conducted in and around the Waterberg Biosphere Reserve, Limpopo province, South Africa.

- Approximately half of those interviewed have agreed to take part in the next stage of the project, which is to monitor predation and carnivore culling levels over a 1-year period. We will interview further land owners and increase the number of long-term participants throughout the duration of the project.
- Analysis of the preliminary data produced a first outline of human-wildlife conflict in the area, including predation levels in the last year, the number of carnivores killed by land owners, attitudes to carnivores in general, and tolerance of individual carnivore species (e.g. Fig 2).



**Figure 2.** Tolerance (% of 46 land owners who would tolerate regular presence), by carnivore species.

- The data were also used to map carnivore distribution (e.g. Fig 3), which is particularly useful for threatened species like African wild dogs. At present, their local distribution and movement patterns are poorly known, hindering efforts to diffuse conflict and increase tolerance of the species.
- Once further land owners have been interviewed, a more sophisticated analysis will reveal the key natural and anthropogenic variables influencing distribution patterns, as well as those driving conflict between people and carnivores.



**Figure 3.** Locations, dates (2010-2011), and group size of African wild dog (*Lycaon pictus*) sightings in the Waterberg, according to land owner reports.

**Aim 2:** Recommend a range of non-lethal anti-predation measures targeted at actual rather than perceived culprits.

- All land owners that were interviewed have been issued with a one-page guide to carnivore spoor and feeding patterns. This includes species-specific information such as the shape and size of paw prints, dimensions of bite marks, preferred prey sizes, and a description of the likely condition of prey remains. When land owners find livestock carcasses, these guides will assist them in distinguishing between scavenging and predation, and will help identify which carnivore species were involved. Land owners that are participating in monitoring activities will record their losses and use the guide to deduce which carnivore species are preying on livestock. The information will be collected during quarterly monitoring interviews.
- Collection and analysis of faecal samples will begin during the next quarterly session of field work.

### **Outputs**

- Project information is displayed on the Rufford Small Grants Foundation and Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) web sites.
- Project updates are featured in monthly EWT electronic newsletters.
- An overview of the project aims and activities has been presented to the management teams of three large and locally influential reserves in the study area. All have been extremely supportive.
- We met with the Limpopo provincial authority to introduce the project and gain an understanding of the issues they face in enforcing wildlife laws, issuing hunting permits, and dealing with landowner complaints regarding carnivore predation on livestock. The provincial authority has said that they would like to assist the project and we are awaiting formal confirmation of this.
- We presented at 2 local farmer's forums and met with the chair person/officials from three other groups, resulting in invitations to present at their next scheduled meetings. One group has agreed to send out an e-mailshot inviting approximately 300 of their local members to participate.