



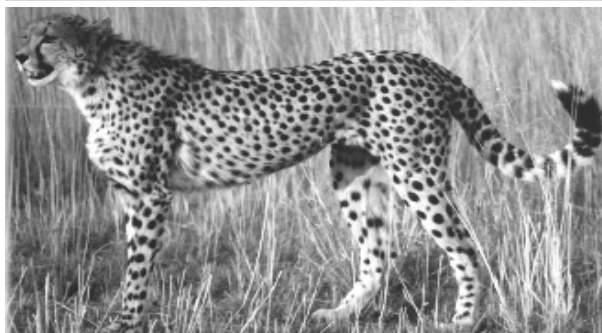
VITAL STATISTICS

The data that is collected from the cheetahs and leopards moving through the AfriCat project provides us with information on the characteristics of the wild populations of these animals in Namibia. Before their release, the cats undergo a thorough examination and a list of procedures is carried out. Drawing blood, taking hair samples, measuring and weighing are all part of the routine tasks performed when a new cheetah or leopard comes in. The data collected from each cat is recorded in a database that allows for quick and easy access to information either on a particular cat or when providing statistics on these Namibian carnivores to researchers around the world.

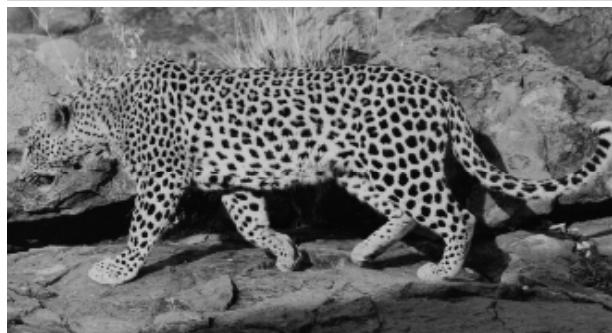
The arrival of what at first glance looked like the biggest cheetah we had ever come across prompted a search of our records to find out if this was in fact the case. Measurements of the skull, muzzle, chest, abdomen, tail, feet and canines are taken for each cat that comes in. In order to interpret overall size however, none of these measurements, or the cat's weight, can be used in isolation. Body length (tip of nose to base of tail), shoulder height and chest girth have therefore been taken into account for the purpose of calculating the overall size and determining which of the cats is the largest. After studying the data, it was confirmed that the male cheetah in question - collected from a farm in the Otjiwarongo district - was indeed the largest cheetah that AfriCat had ever recorded.

The table below shows the measurements of the largest cheetahs and leopards that AfriCat has recorded in relation to the average sizes of these cats, which have been calculated using the data collected from all the adult cats that have moved through the project.

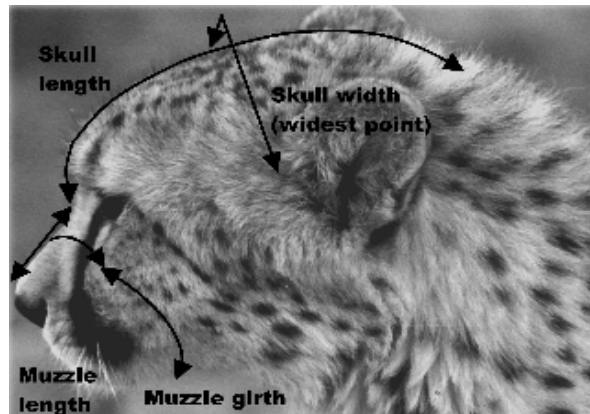
CHEETAH



LEOPARD



MALE AVERAGE (n=89)*	SINGLE LARGEST MALE	FEMALE AVERAGE (n=47)*	SINGLE LARGEST FEMALE	MEASUREMENT (Centimetres)	MALE AVERAGE (n=59)*	SINGLE LARGEST MALE	FEMALE AVERAGE (n=58)*	SINGLE LARGEST FEMALE
132.57	142	127.48	138	BODY LENGTH (Tip of nose to base of tail)	134.01	150	114.26	127
79.62	87	77.71	81	SHOULDER HEIGHT	69.14	78	60.17	65
74.01	80	68.28	75	CHEST GIRTH	78.47	89	62.58	71.50
61.14	64	56.87	50	ABDOMEN GIRTH	74.67	86	60.65	70
38.79	43.50	33.90	36	NECK GIRTH	51.30	59	41.10	43
77.35	89	73.73	80	TAIL LENGTH	83.26	87	76.40	78
20.32	23	19.13	21	SKULL LENGTH	20.46	25	18.83	21
15.88	18.50	14.93	16	SKULL WIDTH	16.80	21	13.68	16
7.65	9.50	6.76	7	MUZZLE LENGTH	9.06	11	7.47	9
29.57	31.50	26.96	29.50	MUZZLE GIRTH	34.07	37.50	28.15	29.50
2.32	2.60	2.21	2.50	UPPER CANINE	3.40	4.20	2.77	3.20
1.70	2	1.54	1.80	LOWER CANINE	2.91	3.40	2.26	2.80
8.46	9.6	7.79	8.7	FRONT FOOT	8.68	10	7.34	8.5
6.58	7.8	5.97	6.9	FRONT FOOT WIDTH	7.71	8.8	6.43	7.3
9.62	10.8	9.03	9.9	BACK FOOT LENGTH	8.21	9.2	7.51	7.8
6.84	8.0	6.16	7.0	BACK FOOT WIDTH	6.67	7.4	5.50	6.1
46.25	62	39.40	45.50	WEIGHT (Kilograms)	53.03	69	30.50	36.50
3.82	5	4.24	3	AGE (Years)	5.49	5.50	4.39	6

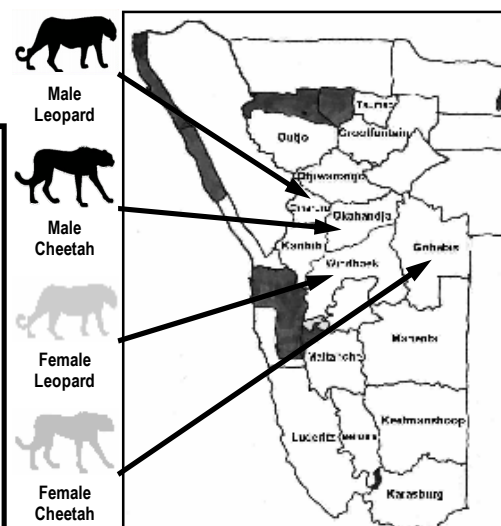


Measurements of a cheetah skull.



* For analytical purposes the measurements of all the cats under the age of 2½ years, as well as those that have been in captivity for any length of time, have been excluded.

Although the results did not indicate a specific area of Namibia that was yielding particularly large cheetahs or leopards, the findings highlighted certain parts of Namibia where the average sizes of the cheetahs and leopards caught were slightly larger than those captured elsewhere in the country.



The Differences and Similarities between Cheetahs and Leopards

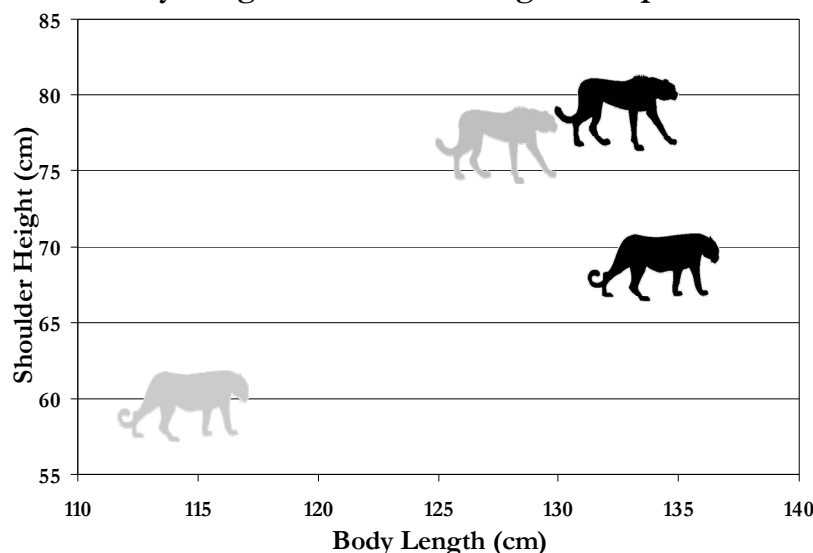
When comparing the physiological characteristics of the cheetah and leopard, the proportional differences in size and structure can be attributed to the way their features are adapted to how each animal moves and its specific predatory techniques.

The way in which a cheetah initially approaches its prey depends on the type and number of prey animals present, the terrain and the amount of cover available. A rush, walk or stalk (to within a distance of 50 to 100 metres from the prey) is usually followed by a short high-speed chase before the cheetah knocks the prey off balance by tripping the animal or grabbing and holding on with its dewclaws, pulling it down. Large prey is generally suffocated through a bite to the throat, while smaller prey is usually bitten through the skull.

(Note: cheetahs can reach a top speed of between 100 and 115 kph which can be maintained for a few seconds only or for a distance of between 300 to 600 metres.)

The leopard either lies in ambush or approaches its prey by means of a long slow stalk until it is relatively close up (within 20 metres or less). A short chase (20 to 30 metres) may ensue before the leopard pounces and while holding the animal down, kills it by: biting the throat and throttling it, biting the back of the head or neck and crushing the skull, dislocating the vertebrae or severing the spinal chord, or suffocation through a bite to the front of the muzzle.

Body Length & Shoulder Height Comparison



Male Cheetah



Female Cheetah

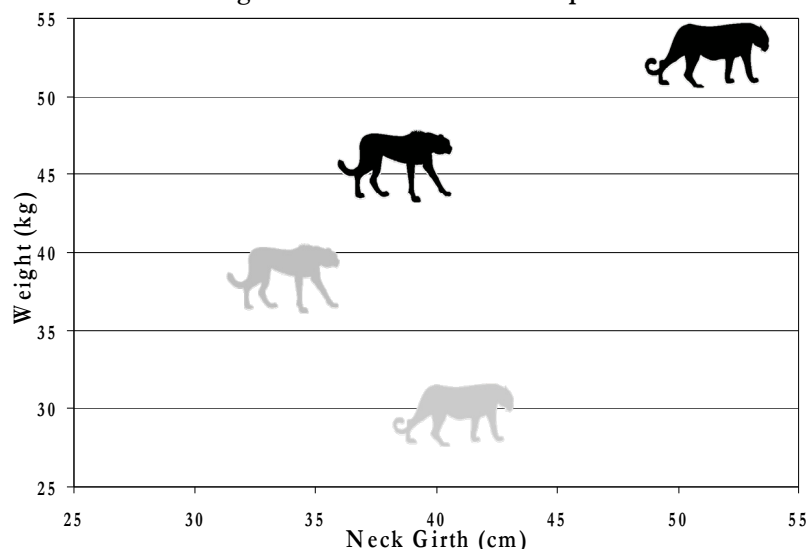


Male Leopard



Female Leopard

Weight and Neck Girth Comparison



The average body length (tip of nose to base of tail) of the male cheetah and male leopard are very similar, with the leopard's tail being slightly longer. The cheetahs' longer limbs however, provide the additional height advantage.

The variations in size, proportions and body shape between the two cats are reflected in their bone structure. For example, the cheetah, in relation to its size, has a longer "forearm" than the leopard - the humerus/ulna length ratio being 1.0 in the cheetah and 0.9 in the leopard (Turner, 1997).

The cheetah's taller, lighter and more slender build, slim, elongated legs, thinner, shorter neck, flexible spine and slightly concave back are all ways in which its body is adapted for its distinctive advantage - speed.

The leopard's more thickset, stocky, heavier build, muscular body, shorter legs and thicker neck are geared towards strength and power.

Generally the male cheetah is more robust and heavier than the female but there is substantial overlapping of the measurements between the two sexes and the differences are fairly insignificant in comparison to the leopards that AfriCat has recorded.

The difference in size between male and female leopards is far more distinctive. The female leopard has a much slighter physique and weighs significantly less than the male.

The difference in average body length (tip of nose to base of tail) between the male and female leopard is 14.7%, whereas in cheetahs it is only 3.8%.

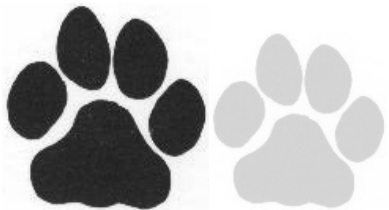
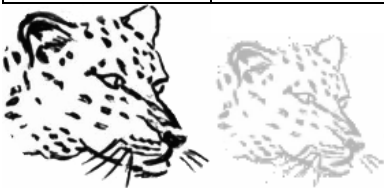
The contrast in sizes between the genders of the two species is further substantiated by the variation in their average weights, with the difference being 14.8% between male and female cheetahs, as opposed to 42.5% in leopards.

The tables below show the percentage difference in the average measurements between the male and female leopards, highlighting the significant size variation between the two sexes.

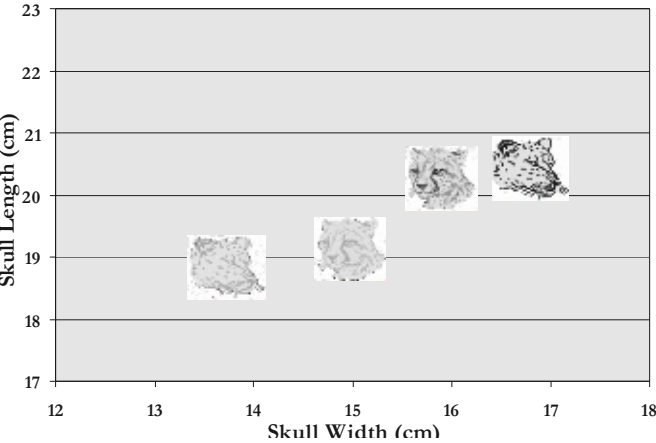
Skull Width	18.6%
Muzzle (Length & Girth)	17.5%
Upper Canine	18.5%
Lower Canine	22.3%

Body Length	14.7%
Shoulder Height	13.0%
Chest Girth	20.3%
Neck Girth	19.3%
Weight	42.5%

Front Foot Width	16.6%
Back Foot Width	17.5%



Skull Measurements Comparison

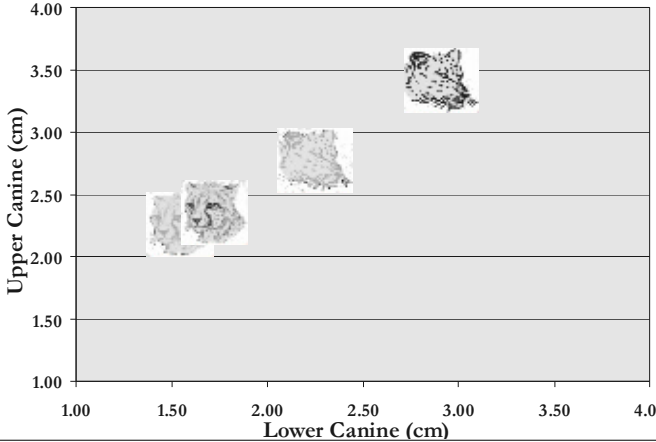


The cheetah's shorter jaw contributes to a smaller muzzle with the resulting reduced weight being a further adaptation to its sprinting ability.

The leopard's heavily built skull and massive jaw, as well as the way the skull is structured to accommodate the powerful jaw and neck muscles, are some of the reasons for its head appearing bigger and broader than that of the cheetah. It is also the presence of these much thicker, stronger and more powerful neck muscles in the leopard that account for the large differentiation between the neck girth measurements of the two cats.

The size variation of the teeth, particularly the canines, contributes to the difference in muzzle measurements between the two cats. The shape and size of the canine teeth are indicative of the manner in which the cat kills its prey.

Canine Measurements Comparison

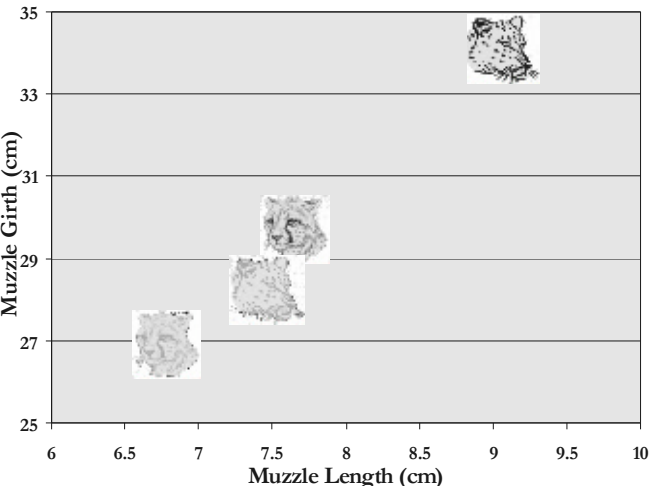


The skull design and characteristics are determined by the animals' teeth and jaw structure and the way these are utilised during predation and feeding.

Once again using the males of the two species for comparison, there is little difference in their average skull measurements. It is the build, structure and shape of the two skulls and the sizes of the surrounding muscles that vary quite significantly, reflecting very different size and form in the external appearances of each cat.

The cheetah's head is smaller and more rounded making it more streamlined in favour of running speed. The rounded head is due to the shape of the top of the cheetah's skull being more convex, whereas the leopard's is relatively flat.

Muzzle Measurements Comparison



The cheetah's jaw and relatively small canines are designed to tightly grip and hold the prey by the throat as strangulation occurs.

Although the leopard uses the throat-bite method, the much bigger, sharper and more pointed canines are more suited and better designed to penetrate through the skin and neck vertebrae of its prey.

The large roots of the leopards' canines add to the size of its muzzle, while the correspondingly shorter canine roots in the cheetah allow for larger nasal cavities - an adaptation that enables an increased intake of air during sprints, as well as providing it with the ability to suffocate its prey while simultaneously recovering from the chase.

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ANNUAL HEALTH EXAMINATIONS

One of the requirements of having large carnivores in captivity in Namibia is an annual veterinary inspection, when the animals' health and condition, as well as the areas and surroundings in which they are being kept, are checked on by a vet. All the cats have to be vaccinated and those that are housed in enclosures where both males and females are present, are required to be on some form of contraception to prevent breeding in captivity.

In early March, two days were set aside during which forty cheetahs were anaesthetised. This year we were honoured to have four vets in attendance, with Dr Gary Bauer, a veterinary ophthalmologist, and Dr Cedric Tutt, a veterinary dentist, joining our regular team: Dr Mark Jago from the Otjiwarongo Veterinary Clinic and Professor Henk Bertschinger from the Wildlife Veterinary Unit at Onderstepoort, University of Pretoria.



Top: Dr Gary Bauer checks a cheetahs' eyes through a slit lamp.

Left: Dr Cedric Tutt does a thorough dental examination, with Diana Reynolds-Hale keeping the records.

Photos: Dave Houghton



To get an early start and avoid darting the cheetahs in the midday heat, the cats were caught in their holding camps the night before they were due to be darted. The confined space of these camps facilitates darting by limiting the cheetahs' mobility, as well as preventing the cats from running around too much both before and after receiving the anaesthetic.

Once asleep, groups of cheetahs were transported to the on-site clinic where they received a thorough health examination, were vaccinated and had blood samples drawn, with implants being administered to those requiring contraceptives. Each had their eyes examined for the presence of thorns and cataracts, followed by a

visit to the dentist who noted those cats that required dental procedures, which will be carried out by Dr Gerhard Steenkamp and Dr Sonya Boy during their follow-up visit in the middle of July. All the cheetahs were then weighed, dipped and brushed before they were returned to their camps or put in crates to recover from the anaesthetic.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Professor Bertschinger and Doctors Jago, Bauer and Tutt for giving up their valuable time to help AfriCat. Thank you also to Diana Reynolds-Hale, Natascha Nýhof and Shez Letten, as well as the staff of Okonjima Lodge, for their assistance during the two days, and to Dr Otto Zapke for the loan of his ultrasound machine.

Carla Conradie

BANGLES CASSIE BUTTONS BUBBLES

NEW ORPHANED CHEETAH CUBS

Within a three-month period we acquired four new orphan cheetahs, ranging between the ages of six weeks and six months. Bangles is a five-month-old cub that had been kept in a boxtrap for two weeks in the vain attempt at catching the rest of the family. Cassandra, six weeks old, seemed to have been abandoned and was picked up at a water reservoir on a farm in Otavi. Both the cubs were fetched from the different farms on the same day and since neither of them had to be darted, they travelled home in the same crate. By the time they reached AfriCat they seemed to be friends and find comfort in each other after the traumatic experiences of losing their respective mothers and siblings. We tried our best to try and establish the sex of the new arrivals but, since they were both young and weren't anaesthetised, this wasn't an easy task. We came to a decision that they were both females and put them together in the quarantine camp next to the clinic.



The sad little faces of Cassandra and Bangles in the transport crate.

Photo: Dave Houghton

Just over a month later Buttons arrived. It appeared that this eight-week-old cub had also been abandoned by her mother and it was for this reason that she had been picked up on a farm near Okahandja, where she stayed for two months before coming to AfriCat. On the way home she visited the vet to have a top canine removed, as the infection from a tooth abscess had caused the one side of her face to swell to such an extent that her eye had closed. Luckily it was still a deciduous tooth so the loss wasn't permanent.

Bubbles was six months old when he was fetched from a farm

(Continued on page 8)

LEOPARD CAUGHT NEAR LUDERITZ

During a very busy week of collecting cats, a call came from a farmer in the Luderitz district asking us to fetch a leopard that he had caught. This set me off on what seemed like a never-ending series of phone calls to try and arrange the pick up.

The farm was situated in the desert area close to Aus and would mean a 1400-kilometre round trip as the crow flies, longer as the car drives. After investigating many options it was decided that the most sensible thing to do would be to fly. We had been given permission to release the leopard next to the mountains in the NamibRand Nature Reserve. The farm was only 130 kilometres from NamibRand, reducing the length of time the cat would have to be in the plane under anaesthetic.

Dr Axel Hartmann accompanied me on the journey in order to sedate and monitor the leopard while we were in flight, as well as impart some of his many years of flying experience to a rookie pilot.

The plan was to fly from AfriCat to Eros airport in Windhoek, refuel and then go on to the farm and collect the leopard. From there we would fly to NamibRand, release the cat, then fly on to Windhoek to refuel again before returning to AfriCat.

Although it was very windy, the first part of the flight was uneventful. We landed at Eros and arranged fuel for the plane, did the necessary checks and started up for the next leg of the journey. We were then asked to switch off the engine and wait for the departure of a plane belonging to someone more important.

Now somewhat behind schedule, we got on our way and had another uneventful but stunning flight across the desert. The airstrip on the farm was inside a horseshoe of mountains and although there was a howling east wind, we landed safely and were met by the farmer. After securing the aircraft we were taken to the boxtrap, where Axel darted the leopard. Blood samples and measurements were taken before the cat was loaded back into the plane.

We were once again met at NamibRand airstrip, where everything was then transferred to a vehicle before driving to the base of the mountains near a waterhole. To wake the leopard up, Axel administered an antidote. There were a lot of very curious Springbok in the area but once the cat started to wake up they soon disappeared. As soon as he had recovered enough for us to leave, we returned to the airstrip and got on our way. By now it was three o'clock and with the fuel station at Eros closing in an hour, we resigned ourselves to the fact that we would not be returning home, and would have to spend the night in Windhoek.

As Axel was due to leave for South Africa the following morning, the necessary arrangements were made for him to leave from Windhoek and I returned to AfriCat the next day.

I would like to thank Mark and Laura Jago for letting AfriCat use their plane (especially as they knew how long I have been flying); Axel Hartman for having the guts to climb in with me, keeping me company and teaching me some useful lessons; Hermann Cloete and Achim Lenssen for arranging the leopard's release at NamibRand and giving her a second chance.

Dave Houghton

AFRICAT FUNDRAISER HELD IN VIRGINIA, U.S.A.

The Namibian Ambassador, his Excellency Mr Leonard N. Iipumbu opened the second annual AfriCat fundraiser on 27 March with a very gracious and humbling welcome. For a community like Alexandria, that knows little of Namibia and less of cheetah and leopard rescue, Ambassador Iipumbu's presence lent an air of experience and knowledge to the proceedings... maybe even a little bit of magic.

Hosted by Land Rover Alexandria and Dwayne Cook Photography, the event boasted a showroom full of wildlife photography and auction items donated by local businesses. Thanks to their participation, and that of the Alexandria residents, the evening was a huge success, raising over US\$4000 for wildlife conservation and awareness.

Using donations from Waterfront Gourmet and Trader Joe's, catering co-ordinator Carol Hames created tasty variations on African cuisine. Dwayne Cook presented a slide show on Namibia and AfriCat and the event came to a close with prizes donated by Land Rover. In all, it was an evening full of fun, excitement and education.

A very big thank you to the following sponsors:

- Land Rover Alexandria
- Dwayne Cook Photography
- Capitol Catering Supply and Wedding Cakes by Michael
- Yessi Burouk, Waterfront Gourmet
- Trader Joe's, Old Town
- The Alexandria Symphony
- Taverna Cretekou Restaurant
- King's Jewelry
- Bazzak Hair Salon
- Facial by Lori Pedemonti
- Lee's Market Wine and Gourmet
- Middleburg Humane Foundation
- King Street Blues Restaurant
- Ruffino's Restaurant

and

- Vienna Animal Hospital
- Gold Crust Baking Company
- For Pet's Sake Grooming
- Colours Photographic
- Art and Frame Gallery
- Bel Art Gallery
- Gallery Jamell
- The Trophy Room
- Solar Planet Tanning Salon
- Tarara Winery
- Journey Designs, Journals and Albums
- Sarah Powdermaker
- Kay Miller
- Jenny Quick

special thanks to the following volunteers:

Alena Fencil and Erin Haines

- Carol Hames
- Richard Dew
- Jane Kluge
- Carolyn Kriebel

- Teena Hourigan
- Dana Paine
- Michelle
- Rob

- Cesar
- Carolina
- Omara
- Ali



"Thank you Land Rover Alexandria."
Carla, Dave and the Addams Family

Photos: Ivan Carter



(Bangles, Cassie - Continued from page 6)

near Windhoek, where he had spent three months with the family that saved him after his mother was shot. Introductions are fairly easy with young cheetahs and both Bangles and Cassandra accepted each new arrival without any problems. Now came the next introduction

BOOTS

&

CURLY

I have previously reported on the trials and tribulations of trying to introduce Boots to the Addams Family, which in the end didn't work out. Our next plan was to try and match Boots up with Curly, who was around three months old at the time. This relationship wasn't without its problems but just as we started to think that Boots was never going to be friends with anyone, he and Curly slowly started to tolerate and accept each other. This didn't last long, as they then had to be separated when Boots had to go to the vet, where he spent a while undergoing and recovering from an operation to try and rectify a bone-growth malformation in his front leg. On his return the two were reunited and although they didn't seem overjoyed at seeing one another, the meeting and subsequent cohabitation went smoothly.

The two lots of cheetahs were housed in adjacent camps. Although they had the opportunity to get accustomed to each other through the fence, we expected a few spats when the six of them shared the same area. We were pleasantly surprised however, that when the inter-leading gate was opened and they were given the chance to mingle, they didn't even seem to notice that there were now more cheetahs than before. Over time Curly changed her allegiance to be with the others. Although Boots hasn't formed any firm friendships, being the oldest and the biggest, he rules the roost and is tolerant of the younger crowd.

In the meantime, it turned out that both Bangles and Cassandra are in fact males. We felt that Bangles could keep his name as it was fairly unisex but Cassandra has now become known as "Cassie".

Carla Conradie

Virbac
ANIMAL HEALTH

**SUPPORTS
AFRICAT**

Most of the cheetahs and leopards that are collected from farms are anaesthetised for transport and data collection. Anaesthetic is also required for darting the cats at AfriCat for their annual health examinations, as well as those requiring medical treatment. A large part of our annual budget goes towards medical care, with a substantial portion of this being anaesthetic. We have found that Zoletil is one the best and safest drugs to use for anaesthetising large carnivores, with very few side effects.

We were therefore delighted to hear that Virbac UK and Virbac South Africa were willing to support AfriCat's work by donating forty bottles of Zoletil 100, effectively reducing our medical expenses by N\$20 000.

Furthermore Virbac South Africa have agreed to cover the transport costs for Dr Gerhard Steenkamp and Dr Sonya Boy, the veterinary dentists who will be doing a follow-up visit to AfriCat in the middle of July. During this time they will be carrying out the surgical dental procedures that some of our cheetahs require. Part of the Zoletil donation will also be used for the cheetahs' initial anaesthesia.

AfriCat would like to thank Virbac Animal Health for their tremendous generosity and support, particularly Mr Retief Kotze from Virbac UK and Liz-Mari van Rensburg from Virbac SA, as well as Richard and Diana Reynolds-Hale for the part they played in organising the Zoletil donation.

A BIG THANKS TO.....

- 🐾 The AfriCat UK committee and members, for all their fundraising efforts and dedicated support.
- 🐾 Alena Fencel and Dwayne Cook for their continuous support, as well as their tireless efforts in organising fundraising events and promoting AfriCat.
- 🐾 Ivan Carter for his enthusiasm and efforts in giving presentations, as well as raising funds and donations for AfriCat.
- 🐾 Tony and Val Whitby for their donation of a colour scanner, a replacement for our old one that decided one day to just give up the ghost, as well as a wonderful computer programme, called PaperPort, that is used almost daily and is now indispensable.
- 🐾 Alfred Kormann for his donation of a new Dist-Inject high-speed blowpipe and darts that we use regularly for anaesthetising and vaccinating the cats.
- 🐾 Hendrik Vrey, for donating a percentage of the proceeds from the sales of his leather artwork during his exhibition at Okonjima Bush Camp.
- 🐾 Dr Marietta Bartels for her donation of antibiotic tablets, dressings, sutures and feeding tubes.
- 🐾 Dr Peeters, Dr Wijlens and Cees and Monic Wijffels for their donation of syringes and needles.
- 🐾 Donna and Wayne Hanssen for feeding and taking care of all the cats during our two-week absence.
- 🐾 Brenda Commins and Mark and Laura Jago for their input into and proofreading of the newsletter.



Carla Conradie

Photo: Ivan Carter

CHEETAH AND LEOPARD RESCUES

Although there have been a few lulls between calls from farmers, Dave has done a fair amount of travelling to rescue cheetahs and leopards from boxtraps on farms around the country. A six-year-old female leopard, two single adult male cheetahs, a single female cheetah, as well as two four-year-old sibling male cheetahs were fetched at different times from farms in the Omaruru area. One of the single males had been caught previously and was marked and released in September 2002. The trip to collect the female cheetah included a stop at the vet clinic, as the wounds on her rump required stitches.

Another two sibling male cheetahs, five years old, were caught together on a farm north of Kamanjab. Two leopards, a five-year-old male and three-year-old female, were trapped on the same farm in the Okahandja area within five days of each other. A trip to Grootfontein was required to fetch a young female leopard, around twenty months old. A male cheetah, slightly underweight from spending an extensive period of time in a boxtrap, stayed at AfriCat and was fed large quantities of food before his condition improved and he was fit for release two weeks later.



Photo: Dwayne Cook



Photo: Ivan Carter

Dave drove south of Windhoek on two occasions, the first time to collect a very large eight-year-old male leopard that weighed sixty kilograms. The second trip was to rescue a younger male leopard, around two-and-a-half years old.

A trip to Damaraland was made to fetch a three-year-old female leopard that had originally been caught on a farm in the district of Omaruru.

Twelve trips closer to home were to collect seven cheetahs, six males and a female, and five leopards from traps on farms in the Otjiwarongo and Waterberg areas. Two of the leopards, a male and female, both three years old, were caught on the same farm within a day of each other.

Carla Conradie

AFRICAT'S NEW ANIMAL FOOD FACILITY

With the phenomenal growth in the number of cats that AfriCat has taken into its care over the last few years, the need for a larger food preparation and storage facility became increasingly desperate. We had long outgrown the area that we had been using since the start of our welfare programme all those years ago. We are currently feeding nearly a hundred cheetahs, leopards, lions and caracals. This requires the preparation of the staggering amount of eight-and-a-half tons of meat, chicken and IAMS cat food every month, which has all been accomplished with three chest freezers and a floor-space of 20 square metres – high time for the construction of a new facility.

With the help of AfriCat UK, TUSK Trust and private donors we obtained the funding required to build a new food preparation facility. The building includes a large walk-in cool-room, spacious and hygienic food preparation areas, with tiled floors and walls and stainless steel work surfaces and an adequate storeroom. A great deal of thought went into the ergonomics, as well as the design of a suitable drainage system capable of handling a large volume of water, which doesn't just miraculously disappear as it does when you pull out the plug of the bath when living in a city. Construction has taken nearly six months, which has seemed like forever, but in spite of a few hurdles that had to be overcome along the way, the building has finally been completed and we have just moved in. It is truly a dream come true for all involved.

A big thank you to the following people, whose contributions, help and efforts we would not have been able to do without:

Carla Conradie

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Photo: Dave Houghton

QUALITY TYRES KEEPS AFRICAT ON THE ROAD

Assisted by Nandi, Carla and Friedel accept a donation of five Firestone tyres from PJ Coetzee and Joseph Damaseb from the Otjiwarongo branch of Quality Tyres. This annual donation assists AfriCat in its travels to farms throughout Namibia.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Quality Tyres for their dedicated support and commitment to saving large carnivores in Namibia.



NEW ACCOMMODATION FOR ORPHANED CHEETAHS

Twelve new cheetah enclosures have been erected to house the ever-growing influx of cheetahs that AfriCat takes into its care every year. The two hundred and thirty acres of land these camps cover provides for the spacious areas that the cheetahs require for a healthy living environment.

In order to facilitate the management and welfare of the cats, each camp includes a smaller enclosure where the cats are fed and their condition can be regularly checked on. These holding camps are also used to confine the cheetahs when they need to be darted for annual health examinations or if they require veterinary care. A sick or injured cat that needs to be separated from a group or requires medical treatment can also be housed in these areas. For safety and convenience, feeding hatches have been added to those camps where the cats are fed from bowls – preventing the feeder from coming into contact with the teeth and claws of hungry cheetahs.

We used the opportunity of the annual health examinations, which required the cheetahs to be anaesthetised, to move the majority of the cats into their new homes.

Carla Conradie

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AFRICAT WEBSITE: <http://www.africat.org>

AFRICAT CONTACT DETAILS
TEL. NO.: ++264 (0)67 304566/306585
FAX NO.: ++264 (0)67 304565
E-MAIL ADDRESS: africat@natron.net



AFRICAT MIDLANDS

Alan & Sue Hufton
17 Cramps Close
Barrow upon Soar
Leicestershire LE12 8ND
Alanhufton@aol.com

AFRICAT UK

AFRICAT NORTH

Joanna Oliver
Rose Cottage
Sproxton
York YO62 5EF
africat@admin-north.fsnet.co.uk

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☐ Sponsor a leopard for one year (£160, US\$290, €250)

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Post form to: The AfriCat Foundation, P.O. Box 1889, Otjiwarongo, Namibia

If you would prefer to do a bank transfer, the details are as follows:

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Branch number: 08-45-73-45