African Wildlife Conservation Fund

Listen up - We have some news for you!

It's been a busy few months for the African Wildlife Conservation Fund – However, we never tire of protecting Zimbabwe's wildlife, safeguarding critical populations of endangered African wild dogs, or uplifting and empowering local communities:

- **Launched our revised and strengthened schools' Environmental Education Program** (September 2021) for improved conservation awareness and engagement from the local youth.
- **Persistence of healthy populations of African wild dogs** in both Savé Valley Conservancy (77 adults/yearlings) and Gonarezhou National Park (˜100 adults/yearlings).
- **Vaccinated 801 domestic dogs in a high-risk area for the rabies virus** (March 2021).
- **Collared two wild dogs from two high-risk packs** for snare wires (Gomo and Snap pack) for improved monitoring and protection (June and September 2021).
- **Saved two endangered wild dogs from death from snare wires** (September 2021).
- AWCF is a **key partner in pioneer research on the effects of climate change on African wild dogs** (May 2021).
- Library books (10,000), solar lamps (950) and two solar panel sets were distributed across our supported schools to **improve literacy and learning opportunities** (April 2021).
- **Eight ladies from Muvava Community trained in garment making** and provided with start-up equipment (May 2021).

Addressing threats and protecting our resident wildlife

A critical part of our work is identifying the key threats to wild dogs and other carnivores, and taking calculated action to effectively reduce those threats. With the lingering economic and social effects of Covid 19, it is no surprise that **snare wire poaching is at a high**. The AWCF team continues to work hard to combat this threat by regularly checking our resident wild dog packs, responding to all reported cases of wildlife carrying wires, and by tackling the problem at the source through our environmental schools' program, and community engagement and upliftment programs.

Left to right: AWF team remove a nasty wire from the neck of Lady (Gomo pack) and from around the waist of Staccato (Snap pack), and AWCF scout, Akim Nemaringa removes a snare wire from the field.

Please adopt me!

Would you like to hear news about our resident wild dog packs more often? Then please consider ADOPTING A PACK and supporting our work at the same time!

Click here to choose from 4 beautiful wild dog packs to support. You will receive an adoption package and certificate, as well as regular updates from the wild about your pack.

A big thank you to everyone who has already adopted one of our packs, and we'll have another update for you very soon!

Welcome to the team, Godknows Nyuwani

Godknows is our new community education officer for our schools' Environmental Education Program around Gonarezhou National Park, through which we support 44 primary schools. He is a Zimbabwean from the Tsonga/Shangani community in the south-eastern lowveld. Godknows has over seven years of experience working with local schools and communities, and his background and multilingual skills make him a valuable team member.

He joined AWCF at the start of the year, and at the perfect time as we **begin to roll out our re-structured and rejuvenated schools' education program**. Covid-19 has delayed this process tremendously, but we are so keen to finally be able to **engage the schools with our exciting new conservation inspired lessons and activities!**

Collaring for improved monitoring and protection of high-risk packs

Due to our comprehensive monitoring of our resident packs, **we are able to effectively identify 'high-risk' packs; these are packs which tend to move across the boundaries of the protected area, closer to human settlements, and which are at the biggest risk of picking up snare wires.** We deployed satellite collars on two of these packs (Gomo and Snap pack), and thankfully we did, as the two wild dogs we have had to save from wires recently have both been from these packs!

Right: The AWCF team with Legy from Gomo pack post collaring.

Expanding our impact in the greater Gonarezhou landscape

Presence in the Sengwe Corridor: Since June 2021, AWCF's Rueben Boté has been based full-time in the Sengwe-Tchipise Wildlife Corridor (Sengwe Corridor) south of Gonarezhou. This work is being carried out in partnership with the Chiredzi Rural District Council and Chief Sengwe, and **aims to better understand trans-boundary movements of wild dogs, and other key wildlife species, between Gonarezhou and Kruger National Park in South Africa.**

Lion Research Project: In response to the strengthened lion population in the park, we, in partnership with Gonarezhou management established a focused Lion Research Project (June 2021). This work aims to build on our long term trend data (13 years), and **to better understand the population dynamics, pride structures and distribution of lions within the park.** This work is being led by AWCF Research Assistant, Nkosilathi Ngwenya.

A leap of faith for African wild dog conservation!

We could not be prouder or more motivated by our CEO's father, John Groom, who is going to extreme lengths to support our work. On the 1st of October, or thereabouts weather depending, **John will be completing an adventurous skydive in an effort to raise funds for our work!**

Please support John (AND US!) and donate towards this cause:
You can do so safely and easily through his JustGiving Page.

To quote John directly:
"The passion, dedication and hard work of the AWCF team in Zimbabwe, together with the positive impact that is so apparent from the work they do, has motivated me to take this giant leap (literally!) to try and get them some much needed funds."

Go John, we are behind you all the way!

Targeted research and conservation action under climate change

In May, and **as part of a multi-site and international study on climate change**, the AWCF team worked with local and international veterinarians to **deploy state of the art collars (which record daily movements) and temperature logger implants on eight wild dogs.** The movement data and core temperature of the individual wild dogs will be logged and correlated with data from an on-site weather station, and will over time allow us to understand how changes in ambient temperature might affect the daily movements, hunting, and the provisioning of puppies of wild dogs.

Below: BeeBee from Chapungu pack in Savé Valley Conservancy with his specialised movement collar.

This research is coordinated by the National Environmental Research Council and Zoological Society of London in the United Kingdom.

We hope you are all fighting strong and ferocious – just like these Chapungu pack puppies – as the world continues to battle through the Covid-19 pandemic.

THANK YOU – we could not achieve all that we do without you!

We would like to express a genuine thank you to all of the organisations and the handful of private donors who have so generously supported our work recently.

Thanks to National Geographic; Painted Dog Conservation Inc, Australia; Bright Light Foundation; Frederick S. Upton Foundation; Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden; SAVE African Rhino Foundation; Zambezi Schoolbook Project; Bourke Family Foundation; Trumbull Foundation; Woodchester Trust; Africa's Wild Dog Survival Fund.

Thank you… We are very grateful to the Research Council of Zimbabwe for permission to conduct this work and to the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority and the Gonarezhou Conservation Trust for their support of our programs, and their permission to conduct the research in Gonarezhou National Park. We thank the managers of the Savé Valley Conservancy for their support as well as access to their properties for our research and work, and the Ministry of Education and local District Schools Inspectors for their support of our education program.

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