

# Newsletter

Autumn 2004



The last few months have been a fairly busy time for PCT, although very little field work has been done. Unfortunately, conservation like many other fields involves a large amount of paperwork, including applications for permits, writing project proposals for government approval, making grant applications to acquire funding, writing research reports and much more. Don't let the lack of field reports in this newsletter fool you into thinking that Lise and Flip have been taking it easy - in fact they have been very busy on this "unseen" work.

In the past few months, Flip Stander took delivery of the new aircraft, and spent several weeks using it to perform a number of aerial surveys for government and conservation clients. This work meant that both Flip and the aircraft were unavailable for PCT work, but as Flip purchased the aircraft himself, it has to pay for itself. The aircraft is currently in the Kunene region being used to track the desert lions.

Lise has recently visited the UK on a fund-raising tour, and followed this up with a trip to South Africa. While Lise was on her travels, Flip was also travelling - first to Mozambique, and then on to Thailand for the CITES conference. They have both now returned to Namibia and are currently in the Kunene region tracking the desert lions and working with a BBC film crew and we should have reports from them in the next newsletter.

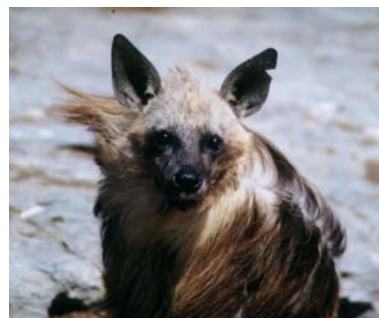
The Trustees of PCT UK have approved a grant to the Brown Hyena Research Project for the purchase of a digital camera to document the various brown hyena clans, Cape fur seal colonies and for the inventory mapping of the Sperrgebiet.

Until now Ingrid Wiesel has been using her own 35mm camera and scanning the photographs but the quality is less than perfect and the necessity to take many photographs in order to obtain one perfect shot means unnecessary expense developing films.

Brown hyenas are one of Namibia's largest carnivores. Population size in Namibia is unknown but is estimated to be between 500 and 1200 animals. They weigh up to 50kg, their body hair is up to 20cm long, brown in colour and have long pointed ears.

The Brown Hyena Research project has developed a new method of identifying individual brown hyenas through the unique stripe pattern on their forelegs and the occurrence of natural ear notches. Ear notches change over time but the stripe pattern is permanent. To obtain a reliable ID, photographs of the forelegs from the front and side and of the ears have to be taken. The quality of the photographs is of major importance as the plan is to develop a bar code system for the stripe pattern to allow reliable identification of a large number of animals.

We are very happy that we have been able to help Ingrid to further her study of these relatively unknown animals.



Jean May

## COLLABORATION WITH UNAM

A collaboration between the PCT in Namibia and the Science Department at the University of Namibia (UNAM) was set up last year when PCT provided blood samples from lions in Western Etosha National Park for a genetics study undertaken by one of the students. The student graduated from UNAM and went on to take up a position in the Ministry of Mines and Energy.

In July this year we were contacted by Dr. Percy Chimwamurobe, head of the Science Department, to provide further samples for a follow up study by Ruth Aryao, a final year Molecular and Physiological Biology student. The title of the project is "The assessment of the genetic diversity among a sub-population of lions in Western Etosha using PCR:RAPD".

Ruth explains: "My primary objective is to determine the level of genetic diversity among this particular sub-population and if time allows, compare the genetic patterns of Western Etosha lions with their Kalahari counterparts. PCR-RAPD is a molecular technology tool that involves the random amplification of the DNA collected from the individual lions. Upon amplification using the PCR, the DNA is run on agarose gel and viewed under ultra-violet light. The result is called a RAPD -profile that shows the different lions' DNA appearing as distinct bands. The arrangement of the DNA bands will determine how closely related the lions are. This project hopes to contribute to enabling authorities to make informed decisions concerning these big cat's conservation."

We look forward to the results of Ruth's research and a prosperous collaboration with UNAM for many years to come.

*Lise Hanssen*

## PCT ART EXHIBITION UPDATE

The Art Exhibition and Sale which has been running throughout the summer holidays closed in mid September.

It attracted a steady stream of visitors and purchasers and the final total came to almost £2000.

The UK Trustees would like to thank Edwin and Bidy Collins for generously donating all the paintings and prints, Chester Zoo for hosting the exhibition and the Education Department at Chester Zoo for all its input and help.

## LISE HANSSEN'S UK VISIT

Lise visited the UK in September to give a number of talks. It was planned that Flip Stander would be with her but the day he was due to leave Namibia he was called to assist with a CITES problem.



Lise gave three presentations. The first one was to the North West branch of Fauna and Flora International (FFI) on September 24<sup>th</sup>.

Lise is well known to FFI and has a standing invitation to speak to supporters during her UK trips. Her talk was well received and the only snag was the failure of the sound equipment during the showing of her desert lion film. Undaunted Lise gave her own commentary.

The following afternoon she spoke to Members of Chester Zoo. Again, her talk was very well received and resulted in new Friends of PCT. Marwell Zoo in Hampshire was the venue for Lise's third and final talk where she was able to meet with old and new friends and supporters and raise awareness of PCT's work.

Many thanks to Penny Rudd and her helpers at FFI, Maureen Allsopp and Amanda Wright of Chester Zoo and Charles Wilson of The Friends of Marwell Zoo.

Thanks also must go to Edwin and Bidy Collins and Sir Charles and Lady Pringle for hosting and transporting Lise during her stay and generally spoiling her.

It was a flying visit and Lise returned to Namibia on 30<sup>th</sup> September leaving us all to remark on how empty our homes seem without her. A return visit is planned for next year.

*Jean May*

## NAMIBIA LARGE CARNIVORE ATLAS REPORT

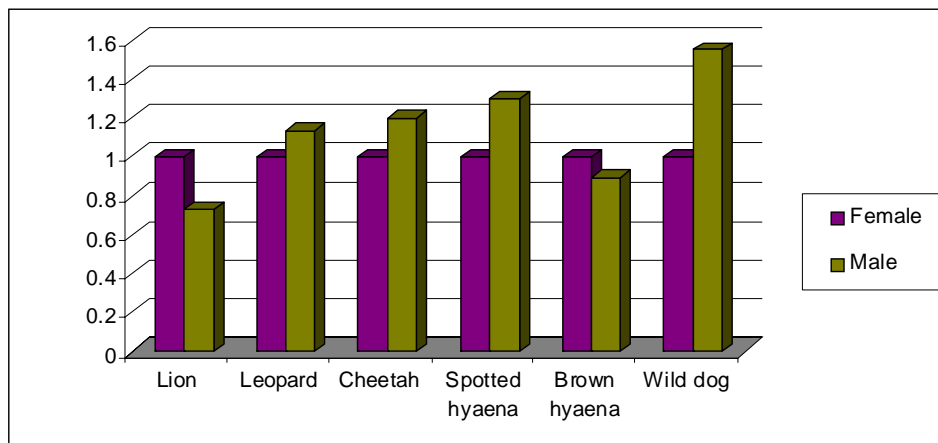
The latest report of the Namibia Large Carnivore Atlas is now available. A further 229 observations have been added to the database bring the total number of observations to 5410 including 11 436 individual carnivores.

Results from 1999 to 2004 are as follows:

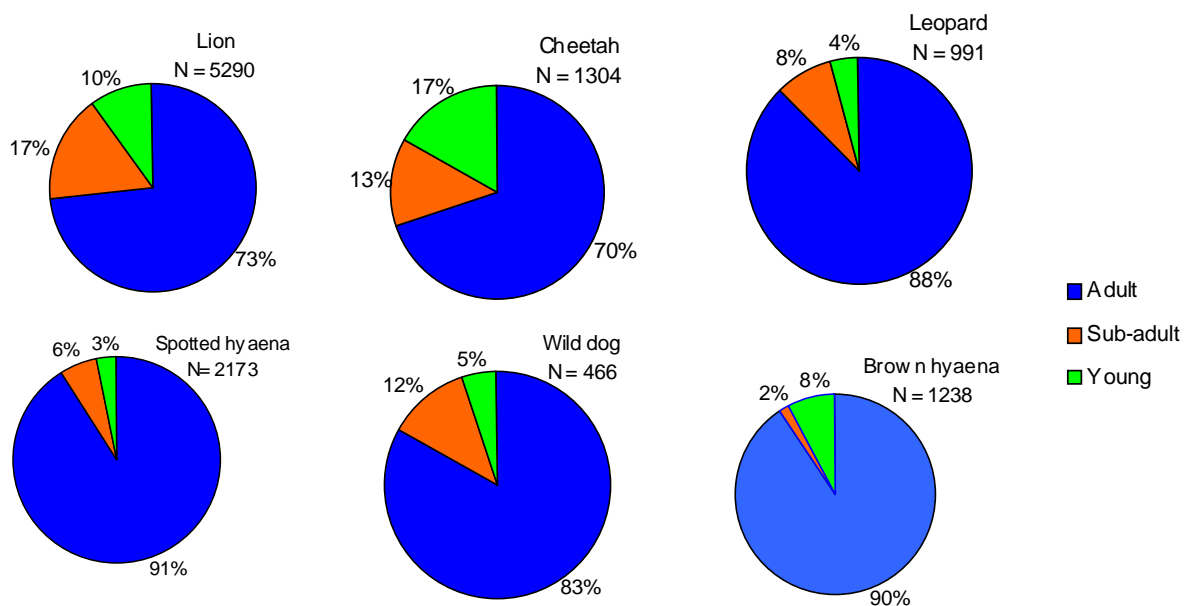
### Total number of observations for each species

<b>Lion</b>	<b>1788</b>	<b>Spotted hyaena</b>	<b>1076</b>
<b>Leopard</b>	<b>939</b>	<b>Brown hyaena</b>	<b>1007</b>
<b>Cheetah</b>	<b>701</b>	<b>Wild dog</b>	<b>91</b>

### The sex ratio ratios of the six large carnivores (Ratio of one female to x number of males)



### The age structure of the six large carnivores



## Different habitats where carnivores were observed

Habitat	Cheetah	Leopard	Lion	Spotted Hyaena	Brown Hyaena	Wild dog
Woodlands	19%	20%	23%	19%	11%	51%
Plains	43%	22%	9%	37%	2%	5%
Waterholes	4%	18%	28%	24%	4%	27%
Dry river beds	9%	9%	11%	7%	5%	2%
Mountains	6%	16%	16%	3%	4%	0%
Coastal areas	0%	0.2%	1%	1%	66%	0%
Other habitats	19%	15%	12%	9%	8%	15%
Sample size (n)	746	927	1794	1082	1074	94

Close to 600 hard copies of the report are distributed by post and almost 300 by email. The report is also available to download in pdf format from our website at [www.predatorconservation.com](http://www.predatorconservation.com)

We would like to acknowledge the following organisations for their support of the Namibia Large Carnivore Atlas: national Biodiversity Task Force, Namibia Nature Foundation, Ministry of Environment and Tourism and Predator Conservation Trust in the UK.

---

## CHESTER CAT SHOW

On 14th August 2004, several volunteers manned a PCT stall at Chester Cat show, held in Chester's Northgate arena. The aim was to raise funds for the work of PCT, and also to raise awareness of the Predator Conservation Trust, and the work that it does.



The day got off to a good start when we managed to get an extra table for the stall due to another exhibitor having cancelled. This gave us a lot more space to display the merchandise we had.

It was a long day with the team setting up the stall at 7am and not leaving until 5pm but it was productive with plenty of purchasers.

The team spoke to a number of people who were clearly interested to learn about PCT's work.



PCT (UK), 29 Pensby Avenue, Chester, CH2 2DD, Tel 01244-381429 [jean@predatorconservation.com](mailto:jean@predatorconservation.com)  
 PCT (Namibia), PO Box 90427, Windhoek, Namibia [lise@predatortrust.org](mailto:lise@predatortrust.org)

[www.predatorconservation.com](http://www.predatorconservation.com)