

2022 Cheetah Project Report



The Cheetah Project started in 2019 when Serendipity Wildlife Foundation was invited by Ol Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya to conduct a census on the the number of cheetahs on the conservancy.

What started off as census, has now turned into a scientific project, where team members from 14 countries are involved in behavioral studies, determining territory, monitoring hunting patterns, and maintaining a file on every cheetah discovered at Ol Pejeta Conservancy.

In 2023, we will be expanding our Cheetah Project to the area north of Ol Pejeta Conservancy, and to the south of Loisaba Conservancy, where we believe that cheetahs have possibly established a wildlife corridor.

Since February 1st 2021, we have conducted a field study at Ol Pejeta Conservancy, where our first cheetah was documented. At the end of 2022, we had observed 14 cheetahs.

Serendipity Wildlife Foundation's collaboration with Ol Pejeta Conservancy and the results and data it has acquired to date has provided fruitful towards cheetah conservation in Kenya, and understanding more of the fastest mammal on earth.



Serendipity Wildlife Foundation
CSIwildlife.org



Our cover photo is of Kondo, who was a a star cheetah with his brother Kito. Kondo was found dead in July 2022.

Cover photo by Alice Petterson (Cheetah Project Team)

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We were told It would be like "Finding a needle in a haystack"

The area is approximately 90,000 acres. The habitat consists of swamp, riverine, dense bush, open bush, and grassland. Add another 20,000 acres to the north, which is called Mutara, and you have an area of 110,000 acres where cheetahs can roam. Separating the main conservancy and Mutara is the wildlife corridor, enabling any cheetahs to easily cross from one side to the other.

METHOD OF OPERATION

In 2021 much research was conducted by the Cheetah Project to determine and mark territory. Field work by our teams, information supplied by visitors to the conservancy, and field personnel of Ol Pejeta Conservancy contributed. This made it easier for the field teams coming in 2022 January, July, and August to search in particular areas to locate cheetahs. Also assisting us was the software from Sensing Clues that would help us immensely in collecting data, exploration of data, and analysis. Heat maps that were produced, would enable us to fine tune areas with a high probability of locating cheetahs.

When our Team Members arrived in January, July, and August, they would be divided into two teams: Alpha Team and Bravo Team, and patrol the conservancy in 4WD vehicles. Each team would comprise of a driver, team leader, GPS & software handler, photographers, spotters, and a scribe. Radio communication would be by UHF radio handled by the drivers, and also by hand-held radios among the team members. When a cheetah was observed by a team, the other

team would be notified via radio. Each team would flank the cheetah and maintain a minimum distance of 30 meters. If the tracked cheetah was known to have high anxiety issues, a minimum distance of 50 meters or more would be maintained.



THE NUMBERS

12

The number of cheetahs in Ol Pejeta Conservancy

30

The number of researchers that worked in the field in 2022

9

The number of countries represented in 2022

1,152

Number of field patrol hours at Ol Pejeta in 2022

5,800

Number of KM on patrol within Ol Pejeta in 2022

23,200

Number of trap camera images retrieved in 2022

Identification

Prior to arriving in Kenya every Team Member participates in cheetah Identification and behavioral training. The class is taught live, after which, every team member needs to take the Identification certification test with a 100% score.

Why 100%? Because in cheetah identification one has to be 100% positive when identifying cheetahs and any mistakes made will have dire consequences in the future. Even after a positive identification has been made by a team member, a second team member has to confirm the identification. After passing the test, every team member needs to participate in online exercises once in two weeks.

Every cheetah located at Ol Pejeta Conservancy has to be identified positively, with a "Standard Sheet" that has different photographs of the cheetah. If the cheetah has a negative match on the Standard Sheet, this means that it is a new cheetah, and a new Standard Sheet will be produced and filed.








**WHAT PARTS OF THE
CHEETAH CAN BE USED FOR
IDENTIFICATION?**

Cheeks/Neck

Thighs

Tail

Forehead

ZURI 	KITO 	KONDO 	NYOKABI 
TISA 	KIOJAH 	AYANA 	ZAWADI 
KIP 	ZOHARI 	ZEBAKI 	

REPORT CHEETAH SIGHTINGS! APP: "CHEETAH PROJECT"
E-mail: cheetahproject@csiwildlife.org

The Five most Frequently Seen Cheetahs During 2022

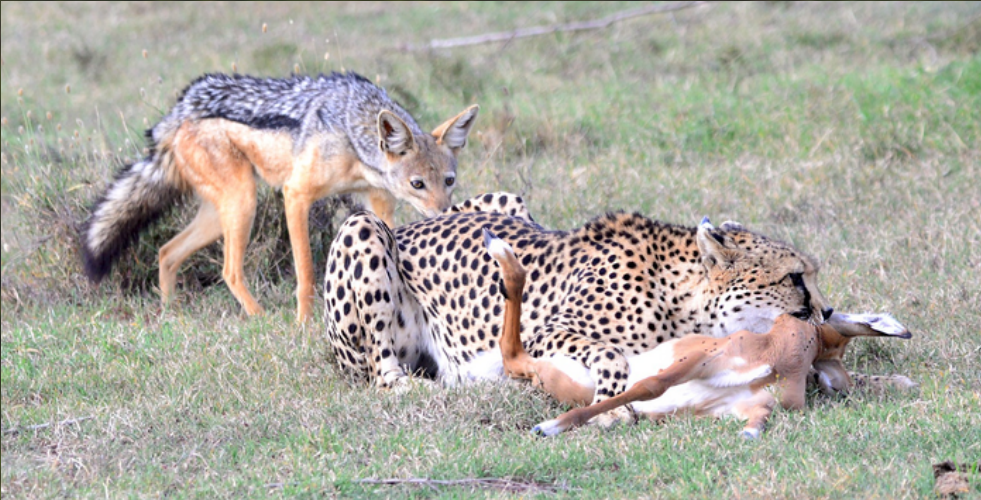
ZURI

was the very first cheetah that we observed on the first day of the Cheetah Project in 2021. She has remained as the queen of Ol Pejeta, never failing to amuse us and surprising us with her unusual behavior, sometimes taking it to the extreme. The first time we saw her, she wanted to tease a buffalo drinking water at Ol Pejeta dam. She went and rolled in the dirt approximately 15 meters from it, but always looking away to show that she was not interested in the buffalo. The buffalo had enough, and charged her. She calmly trotted away.

Then, there was the time when she was seated looking for prey and a full grown male lion started walking towards her. Without running away, she started walking towards the lion. At approximately 20 meters away, Zuri turns around and slowly runs away. The lion gives chase but is unable to reach her. She slows down giving time for the lion to get closer, but maintaining that 20 meter distance. The lion sits, and she sits. The lion takes a quick rest, and she does the same. Zuri runs away into the bushes and the lion gives chase. She dives into a bush and the lions runs past her. Zuri returns, bored.

Another time , Zuri makes a kill after after a short chase and brings back her kill to the shade. Two jackals approach and one of them keeps biting on Zuri's tail several times hoping that Zuri will release her prey and give chase, while the other jackal steals the prey. Zuri takes all the biting's she can receive, but never let's her meal go.

Zuri had two cubs - Zohari and Zebaki. Seen last in 2021 as sub-adults, and never seen again.



The jackal keeps biting on Zuri's tail, but she does not release her prey.

KONDO

and his brother Kito have been the most photographed cheetahs at Ol Pejeta for the last 12 years. They were always seen together, and often not more than a few meters away from each other. Their coalition was unique and rare as they would always support each other if one was under the weather and not able to hunt. They were notorious hunters with a high success rate. Cheetahs in the wild were not known to survive that long, and the average life span for a wild cheetah was 8 - 9 years.

Kito died between July 23rd - 29th. According to eye-witnesses Kito tried to defend his brother from lions, and got killed by the lions. Ever since, Kondo has been heard calling out to Kito for several months. Our observations of Kondo saw a minor limp, which probably hindered his hunting.

Kondo was last spotted by the Cheetah Project on July 23rd, 2022. On July 26th, 2022 Kondo was found dead by safari vehicle drivers and Ol Pejeta Rangers.



Photo by Prathibha Amugoda (Cheetah Project Team)

ZAWADI

has been observed with unusual behavior patterns. He has been known to move away from vehicles, and for this reason, we have been maintaining a minimum of 50 meters distance away from him. The fear of vehicles could mean that he has been possibly traumatized by safari vehicles. Even while tracking Zawadi while on patrol there have been several times where he has done a complete "U" turn to lose our vehicles. He even tried hiding in bushes sometimes. Our observation of Zawadi in early 2022 was when he once again fled into thick brush. Later that year, we were surprised to find Zawadi seated within 15-20 meters of safari vehicles while he was being photographed. He paid no attention to the vehicles or the photographers. Our Alpha team and Bravo team observed his behavior, and came to the conclusion that he is no longer scared of vehicles.

On December 8, 2022 Zawadi gave chase to a family of warthogs that quickly disappeared into their den. Seconds later, the chase was reversed, and Zawadi was being chased by a female warthog, closely followed by several piglets.



Photograph taken off a video clip by Kavi Gunaratne (Cheetah Project Team)

NYOKABI

was the last female cheetah to give birth at Ol Pejeta Conservancy. This was back in mid 2020. Nyokabi is known as a great hunter, and whenever observed by us, has had a 100% success rate once she has started her run. Nyokabi was also documented in January doing one of the longest runs we have ever seen. The approximately 330 meter run was a success, and the baby Impala was brought back into the shade approximately 100 meters away.



KIP

is the the only surviving cub of Nyokabi. His two siblings were killed by hyenas when they were approximately 6 months old. Kip escaped, and has now grown into an adult that hunts independent to his mother Nyokabi. Throughout 2022 our teams observed that Kip was not a confident hunter, and often making mistakes and ultimately having his prey get away. He has improved remarkably through his mistakes, and is now a confident hunter.

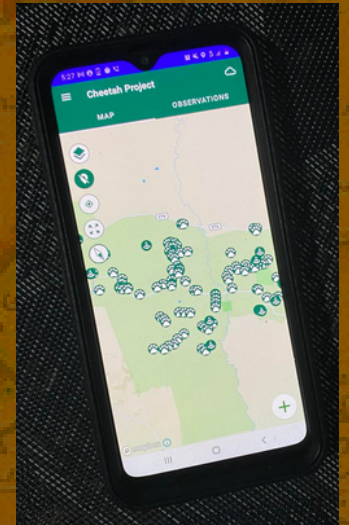


Photo: Andy Web of Safari Cottages in Ol Pejeta

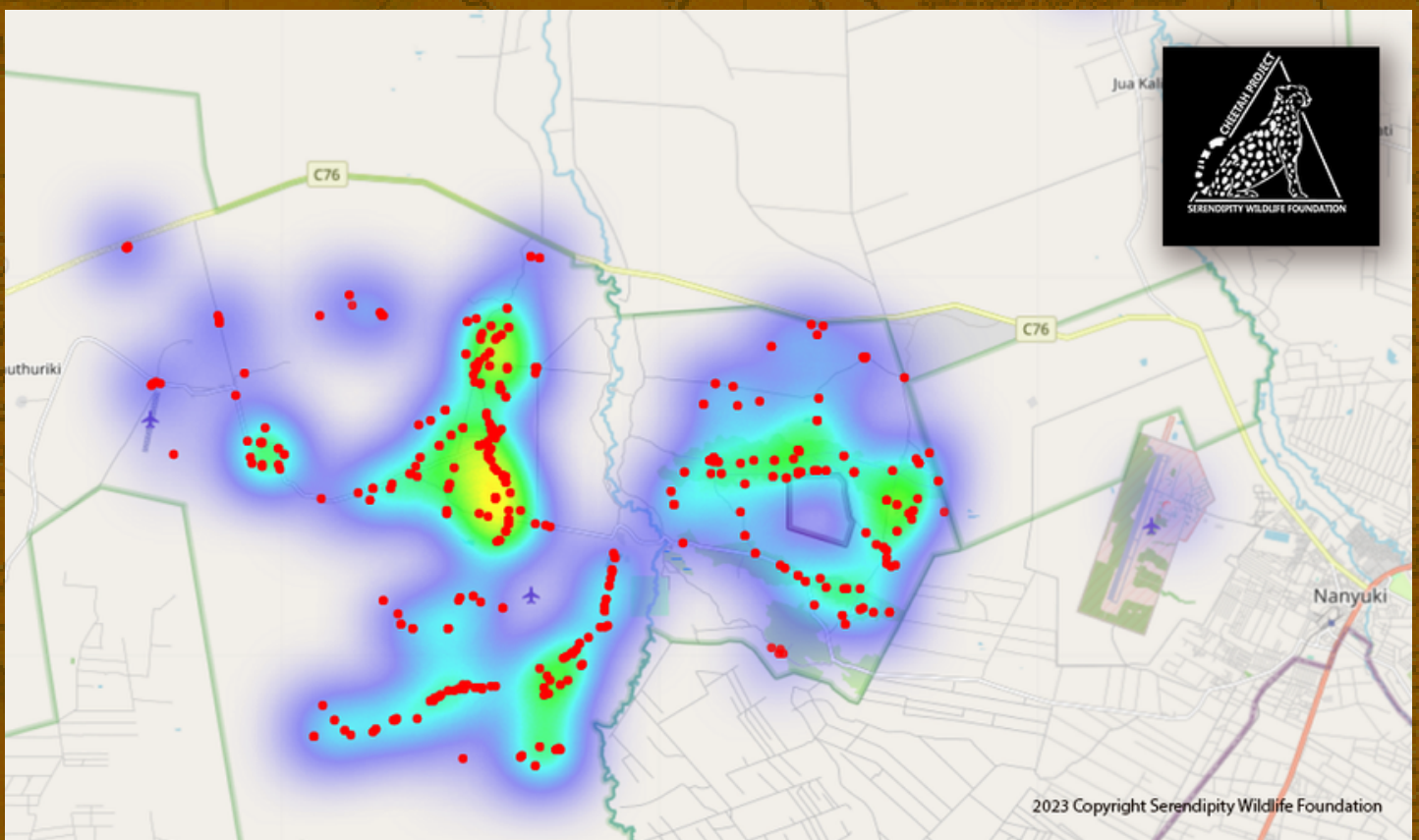
How Do We Document Cheetahs?

With the support and assistance of Sensing Clues, our partner in wildlife data, we use CLUEY out in the field to document cheetah sightings, behavior, photography, GPS reading, and tracking.

Each team is assigned a trained member who's primary responsibility is feeding information into Cluey. Once the data is entered into Cluey, it is saved in the servers at an undisclosed location. A software called FOCUS DATA EXPLORER, which transforms data into concepts, and easy to understand analytics. We also use WILDCAT to generate a heat map (hot spots) to identify high probability areas for cheetahs, and areas that has potential problems.



The map below was produced with 'Wildcat'. The red dots show cheetah sightings in 2022 that have been positively identified by our teams in the field or by safari vehicle guides, and visitors to Ol Pejeta Conservancy. Visitors can use the Cheetah Project app (which can be downloaded for iOS or Android). The light blue, dark blue, green, and yellow is the heat map display, with yellow being the strongest and giving us the best possibility of spotting cheetah in that area.



Are other carnivores affecting the cheetahs at Ol Pejeta Conservancy?

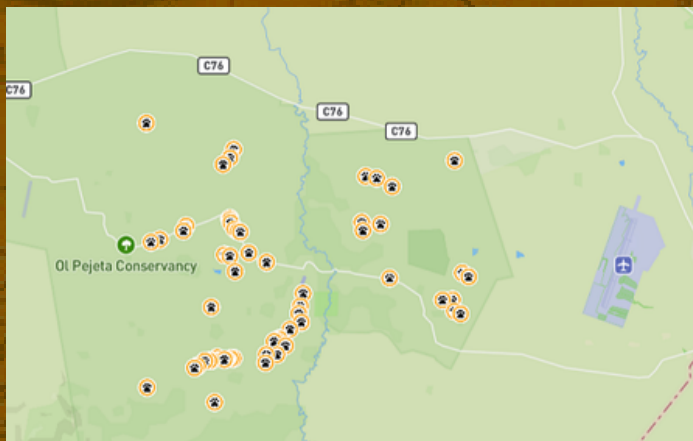
During field patrols in 2021, we discovered that there was a massive increase in the Black-Backed Jackal (*Lupulella mesomelas*) seen at Ol Pejeta Conservancy. The jackals, who we have observed as scavengers, were being seen as hunters, often ripping apart young baby Impala, Grant gazelle, and Thompson gazelle as soon as the mother gives birth. Other times, we observed babies that were even a few weeks old being attacked by jackals while being in close proximity to their mothers.

While we recorded over 164 jackals in 2021 in Ol Pejeta, we returned in January 2022 to find that the number of jackals had dropped to 64. In July the count of jackals was 51, and in August it was 46. A jackal count was not taken in December as there was a very noticeable decline.

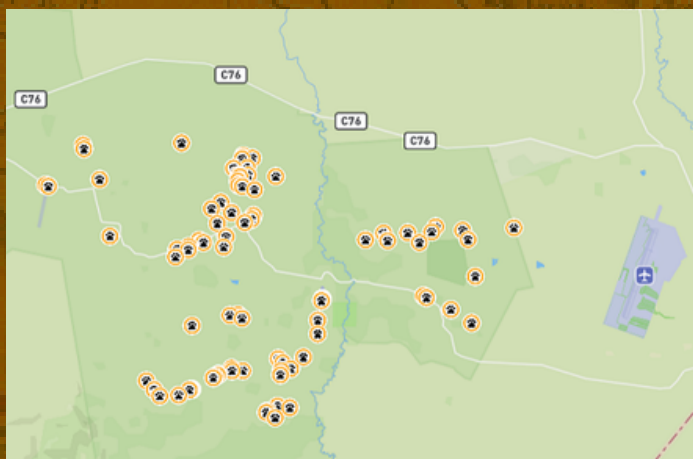
We believe that if there were any cheetah cubs born in 2021, none of them would have survived. A cheetah mother would certainly have had extreme difficulty protecting her newborns from jackals, specially as the jackals are often found in groups of two or more.

Surprisingly, we have not discovered hyena's posing a threat to the cheetahs at Ol Pejeta.

The cheetahs seem to stay away from the hyena dens. Lions do pose a threat to the cheetahs, but we have often observed that unless there is a surprise ambush, cheetahs are able to easily run away from the lions, and most importantly, keep away from them. The only fatal incident in 2022 which we have recorded resulting in death of a cheetah, was the death of Kondo, and he was reported to have been injured and unable to run away.



The map on top shows the jackal observations in the month of January and early February 2022.



The map at the bottom shows the jackal observations in July and August.

Note: The locations marked on the map do not indicate the number of jackals at a location, which could be two and six.



NYOKABI'S 330 METER RUN
 Oryx Plain at Ol Pejeta Conservancy
 January 30, 2022



On January 30th, 2022 Alpha Team and Bravo Team were tracking Nyokabi on Oryx Plain. The previous day, Nyokabi was also tracked by both teams while she was looking to hunt, but she was disturbed twice by safari vehicles, and she gave up. She was very hungry when we saw her in the morning, and she was determined to hunt. When Nyokabi was trying to lock on to her target - a baby Thompson's Gazelle, she was too far away to start her run, but to our surprise, she left the cover of scrub and started a slow run. She increased her speed just before she reached the dirt road, and was running at her maximum speed from then on. She was lucky to have been noticed by the gazelles only when she was crossing the road, which gave her an advantage. This approximately 330 meter run was the longest run we have seen, and uncommon for any cheetah.

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BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS

After experimenting with various methods of documenting cheetah behavior, in January 2022 a committee was appointed to recommend the best source of documentation. The committee recommended ethograms. An ethogram is a catalog of behaviors or action by a cheetah that will be documented in the field and then exhibited via a graph. In July 2022 ethograms were used to document cheetahs in the field, and in August 2022 the results and procedure were analyzed by experienced ethogram users, and the procedure was fine-tuned and used in the field.

The Cheetah Project has trained team members who have been successful in using ethograms during cheetah observations. However, to analyze results, it would require a minimum of two years of documentation.

Table 1. Ethogram for the Cheetah Project. Based on Stanton et al., 2015.

Title	Definition
Lying	Cheetah's body is on the ground in a horizontal position, including on its side, back, belly, or curled in a circular formation.
Moving	Forward locomotion in a slow, swift or rapid gait.
Eating	Cheetah ingests food (or other edible substances) by means of chewing with the teeth and swallowing.
Looking up	Lifting head up and moving it around in a lying position.
Sitting	Cheetah is in an upright position, with the hind legs flexed and the ground, while front legs are extended and straight.
Standing	Cheetah is in an upright position and immobile, with all four ground and legs extended, supporting the body.
Grooming	Cheetah cleans itself by licking, scratching, biting or clamping its body. May also include the licking of a front paw.
Chase	Cheetah runs rapidly in pursuit of prey.
Drag/Carry	Cheetah moves prey from one location to another.
Panting/covey	Cheetah lying down or sitting with kill before or after the prey animal.
Choke held	Cheetah delivers a strong bite to caught prey.
Out of sight	Cheetah is not visible to the observer.
Other	Any behaviour that does not fit into one of the other categories.

Cheetah Project Behavioural Studies Manual

Created by Alice Pettersson, Sushma Sharma, and Arya Horon

INTRODUCTION

Our desire to understand animal behaviour is deeply ingrained in the human psyche. Knowing how to avoid predators or successfully hunt prey was critical to the survival of our ancestors. Domestication and taming of wild species such as cattle, horses and other livestock significantly reshaped human societies, by allowing more permanent human settlements. At the peak of the current Anthropocene era, it is no surprise that our contemporary attention to animal behaviour has not waned, but is increasingly gaining relevance in sectors outside of human survival such as wildlife conservation.

The science of understanding animal behaviour is known as Ethology. The field deals with studying animal behaviour in the wild as well as in captivity. It is fundamental in understanding animal welfare, training, evolution and conservation. Some questions an ethologist may ask include: How solitary vs. group animals live and share resources? How does a young one learn to find food? When is the animal most active and what habitat spaces do they occupy? How does competition for space and resources occur between similar species? How has human activities influenced animal behaviour? Studying these aspects provides deeper insights into animal ecology and evolution.

An animal's behaviour is influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. It is dependent both on their evolutionary history and the environment around them, including processes at the local scale (e.g., scents, habitat and abundance of predators or prey) all the way up to the global scale (e.g., land use change and climate change). Understanding how animals adapt their behaviour to changing conditions is an important piece to understanding the viability of populations over the long-term.

With increasing human activities that are causing serious threats to wildlife conservation, scientifically sound ethological studies can be an important tool to understand human impact on animal behaviour. This, in turn, can help inform management strategies that facilitate the conservation of endangered species within and outside protected areas.

Cheetahs are a large felid species that is categorised as “vulnerable” in the IUCN red list. Historically cheetahs were wide-spread across three continents, but have disappeared rapidly from its former range. The current declining population continues to face threats from human-cheetah conflict, habitat loss, illegal wildlife trade, and loss of genetic diversity. Scientific research and focused conservation interventions are vital to ensure long term survival of cheetahs. Serendipity Wildlife Foundation’s Cheetah Project aims to apply ethological techniques to study cheetah behaviour at Ol Pejeta Conservancy, Kenya.

AIM OF THE CHEETAH PROJECT BEHAVIOURIAL STUDY

- 1) Documenting cheetah behaviour and compare common behaviour across individuals.
- 2) Studying the underlying patterns that could have an impact on specific behavioural traits (temperature, human/vehicle presence, seasonality, etc.).
- 3) Creating behavioural and personality profiles of individual cheetahs for public awareness campaigns.

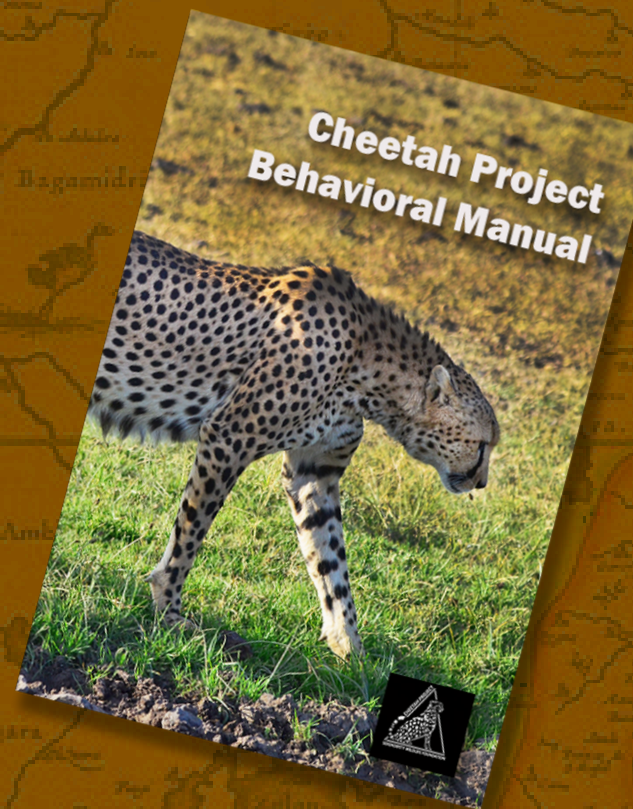
METHODOLOGY

STUDY AREA

The cheetah project is conducted in Ol Pejeta Conservancy, Kenya (0.037154N; 36.933962 E), which is a private conservancy that covers about 364 sq km (see Figure 1). The management also extends to Mutara conservancy which covers 80 sq km area. Ol Pejeta is the largest black rhino sanctuary in East Africa and has achieved IUCN Green List of Protected and Conserved Areas status. It is situated between Mount Kenya and the Aberdare Mountains at an average altitude of 1810 m with a mean annual rainfall of 739 mm. The vegetation type in the conservancy includes grasslands, *Acacia drepanolobium*, *A. xanthophloea*, *Euclea divinorum*, and mixed bushlands which provides safe haven to a plethora of species. The conservancy is surrounded by electric fencing stretching across a perimeter of 120 km, with exception to the three corridor spaces that allow for wildlife movement. Ol Pejeta is surrounded by agro-pastoral communities and is contiguous with neighbouring wildlife conservancies.

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Ezekiel Mberu was the first Kenyan citizen to join our Cheetah Project. He gained his field experience with the Cheetah Project in August 2022, and a summary of his thesis is below. The research was done by Ezekiel, while the information was provided by Serendipity Wildlife Foundation.

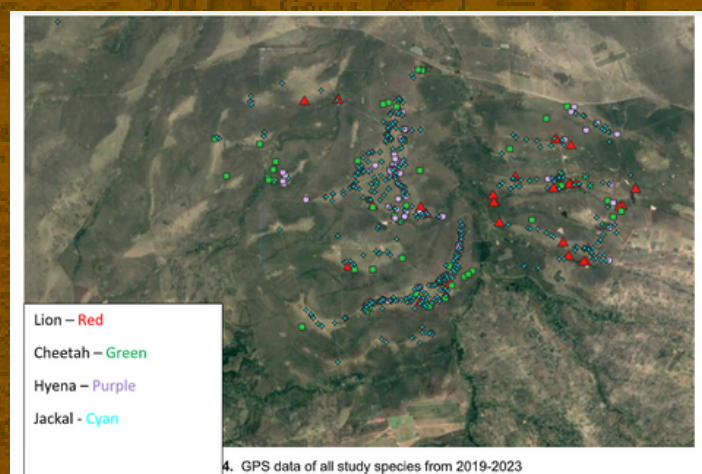
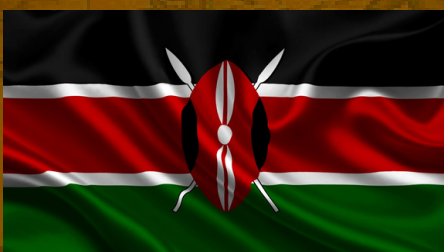
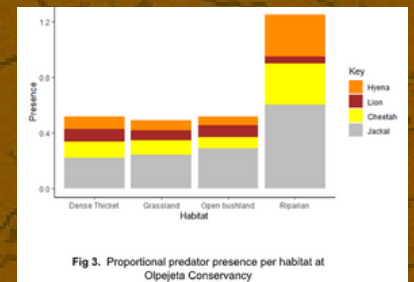
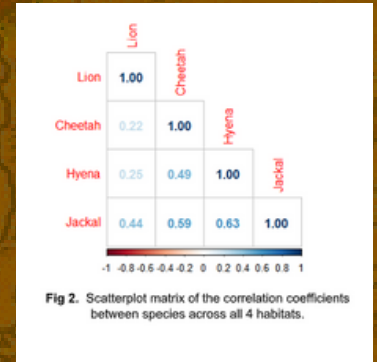
PREDATOR THESIS AT OL PEJETA

SUMMARY

According to the ANOVA results, statistically there was no apparent change in cheetah, lion, or jackal mean occupancy between different habitat types. The mean abundance of hyenas varied significantly between habitats, with riparian habitats having a much higher abundance than grassland and open bushland environments. According to this, hyenas are habitat-specific and may need riparian areas in order to survive and proliferate in large numbers. Jackals may also exhibit some degree of habitat specificity, as evidenced by the slight difference in mean presence for jackals between the Riparian-Dense Thicket compared to other habitats.

As far as associations go, lions and cheetahs were found to have a weak positive association in the correlation analysis given their shared habitat preferences. The scavenging habits of hyenas and their interactions with lion kills may be used to explain the significant association between the two species across all 4 habitat types. Additionally, due to possible scavenging and rivalry between the two species, the strongest association is between jackals and hyenas. Given that hyenas are known to scavenge on cheetah kills, the clear correlation between cheetahs and hyenas may point to potential predator-prey dynamics. Alternately, it may point to a spatial overlap between the two species and their shared preferences for different kinds of habitat.

Hyena, cheetah, and jackal appear thrive in riparian habitat at Ol Pejeta. Predators can rely on these habitat's propensity to host a diversity of prey species as a regular source of food. We can predict how ecosystems may react to stressors like habitat loss or climate change by using relationships between predator species. Keystone species, or predators with a disproportionately high impact on the ecosystem relative to their population, include lions and hyenas. Positive correlations between these species imply that they may be co-managing the environment by regulating the distribution and behaviour of other predator species while also restricting the number of prey species. Overall, the results emphasize the significance of taking biodiversity into account when examining animal abundance and behaviour. Furthermore, they raise the possibility of underlying ecological relationships between species, which may have significant ramifications for management and conservation plans. To investigate these correlations in further detail and identify the primary mechanisms causing them, more research is necessary into the population dynamics of each species, GPS movement data of individuals and the effects of shifting habitat ecology.



REPORT ON THE INVESTIGATION OF KONDO'S DEATH

On July 28, 2022 the Cheetah Project received information from the Ecological Monitoring Unit of Ol Pejeta Conservancy advising of a carcass of a cheetah located at Londro Plains. The Cheetah Project was requested to identify the carcass from the photos provided. The carcass was identified as Kondo, a male 12+ years cheetah.

With several reports of the death coming in from additional sources in the next 24 hours, The Cheetah Project confirmed to Ol Pejeta's Ecological Monitoring Unit that the carcass was of Kondo, and informed the the EMU that the Cheetah Project would like to investigate the cause of death.

BACKGROUND

Kondo's approximate age was 12+ years and lived in Ol Pejeta Conservancy with his brother Kito. The two brothers were always seen together, and were probably the most photographed big cats on the conservancy. Sometime between July 23 - 29, 2021, Kito was killed by a pride of lions, and according to eye witnesses Kito had jumped in to save Kondo, and while Kondo escaped with minor injuries, Kito was killed. There were at least two safari vehicle drivers that were witnesses to the killing. Kondo was last seen by the Cheetah Project on July 23, 2022, and was observed with a slight limp to his right rear leg.

INITIAL INFORMATION

Initial information received indicated that Kondo's head was missing, and the day after he was killed, his tail was missing. Photos submitted to us from Ol Pejeta and various other sources were carefully analyzed and we found that Kondo's head was not missing, and was secured to his body. His tail was also covered by his body.

THE INVESTIGATION

The investigation team took many factors into consideration, and several witnesses who were at the scene were happy to provide information on what they saw. The investigation team is thankful to everyone who was interviewed, and who described freely what they saw.

Upon investigation, it was discovered that another male cheetah - Zawadi, was possibly competing with Kondo to mate with Nyokabi, a female cheetah. Nyokabi has been previously known to frequent male cheetah territories when she was in estrus. While female cheetahs could mate with multiple male cheetahs, it is presumed that both males did not want to give the other a chance to mate first. A fight ensued, and both male cheetahs were injured.

Kondo left the scene of the fight, injured badly, and limping. That's when some lions approached him. Unable to run away due to his injuries, he was killed by the lions.

We received information that there was a male cheetah with facial injuries in the area after Kondo's death, and a few days later our Cheetah Project team photographed Zawadi, and observed injuries to his face.

INJURIES TO KONDO

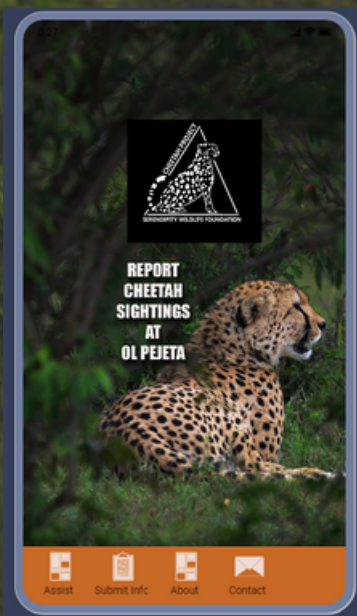
Since an autopsy was never conducted, It is unknown what internal injuries Kondo sustained. External injuries could also not be determined due to the tampering and contamination of the carcass.

INVESTIGATION TEAM: Siya Baghat, Khushi Singla, Federica Zaborra, and Ravi Perera



In August 2022, the Cheetah Project team was invited to speak to employees of Ol Pejeta Conservancy regarding how the Cheetah Project operates. We found those employees that attended to be very interested in how we identified cheetahs, and our work on the conservancy.

The Cheetah Project was requested to provide training on Cheetah identification to three participants of the Immersive Conservation Experience (ICE) conducted by Ol Pejeta. The three participants were trained to identify cheetahs and also participate in field patrols. They were also fortunate to observe a cheetah in the wild and follow the protocol and document behavior.



The Cheetah Project App has been popular with visitors to the conservancy. It can be downloaded iOS and Android and when visitors observe a cheetah, they can transmit their sighting information to us. The GPS reading for the location is automatically registered.

THE 2022 CHEETAH PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS

Arya Horon (Canada), Stephanie Caplin (UK), Sushma Sharma (India), Shanu Gunasinghe (Sri Lanka), Nora Oosters (Belgium), Prathibha Amugoda (Sri Lanka), Ashley Holmes (US), Kithmee Gunasekera (Sri Lanka), Maggie Dewane (US), Alice Pettersson (Sweden), Ishira Liyanage (Sri Lanka), Minali Madanayake (Sri Lanka), Meagan Boggess (US), Rahal Rambukpotha (Sri Lanka), Lucky Ekanayake (Sri Lanka), Manela Karunadasa (Sri Lanka), April Alderete (US), Federica Zaborra (Italy), Johann Perera (US), Kevin Lee (US), Siya Baghat (India), Ezekiel Mburu (Kenya), Khushi Singla (India), Christina Cioppa (Italy), Kendall Ashby (US), Yaso Browne (UK), Kavindya Gunarathne (Sri Lanka), Ankita Rajasekharan (India), Emerson Wilson (US), Ravi Perera (US)

Looking ahead....

- We have seen that the biggest interference and disturbance to cheetahs is caused by safari vehicle drivers that illegally go off-road and get to within a few meters of a cheetah. While most safari vehicle drivers adhere to the rules and keep a safe distance, there are still many drivers that interfere with the cheetahs. Sometimes, cutting in front of a cheetah while it is walking will cause stress and disorientation. Surrounding a cheetah with vehicles is not only dangerous where a cheetah can get run over, it prevents the cheetah from seeing a carnivore approach it. Since cheetahs "lock" on to their prey from a distance before they start their run, blocking their view which will prevent them making a kill, will leave that cheetah with no food.
- During our research, we have found that there is a strong possibility of cheetahs found at Ol Pejeta migrating to adjacent conservancies. The absence of some of Ol Pejeta's frequently seen cheetahs, and observing new cheetahs at Ol Pejeta prove that there is movement between conservancies, with yet to be discovered wildlife corridors. In 2023 the Cheetah Project will use its resources to investigate areas north of Ol Pejeta, and expand the project.
- Ol Pejeta Conservancy consists of terrain suitable for cheetahs, and with the abundance of prey, cheetahs constantly overlap territory and have no problem in surviving. Our concern is that there have been no known births of cheetahs since 2019, and where only one cub survived. With the death of two adult males within 12 months, and only two males identified, and not seeing the births of any new cheetahs, causes a great concern. All of Ol Pejeta's cheetah population, except for one male, are 5 years or older. With the average life expectancy of a cheetah in the wild being 8-9 years, it is possible that this already endangered carnivore could disappear from Ol Pejeta Conservancy by 2027.

Ol Pejeta has the potential of becoming a leading cheetah conservation area, and with the proper planning, could even be a managed breeding location for cheetahs.

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