

CHEETAH SPOTS

Cheetah Conservation Fund Australia

| Winter 2022

The pitter patter of tiny paws

Monarto Safari Park's cheetah breeding program is introducing a new generation of cubs: Hani and Absame, born to Kesho, are now three months old.

The two extra special names were chosen this week in honour of another brother and sister duo across the seas in Somalia.

Hani (hah-nee) meaning 'happy' and Absame (ab-sam) meaning 'great one', are also the names of two three-month-old cubs rescued by the [Cheetah Conservation Fund](#) (CCF).

In March, the cubs were two of 15 confiscated by the Somaliland Ministry of Environment and Climate Change from a man in the eastern Togdheer region, who planned to ship the Cheetah to Yemen and sell them into the illegal pet trade.



Monarto's cheetah twins

Ranging from six weeks to five months old, each cub was underweight and dehydrated. CCF veterinarians provided the cubs with around-the-clock medical care and began the slow process to increase their calorie intake to get them back to a healthy weight.

Unfortunately, many of the cubs were in such poor condition they did not respond to treatment and six of the youngest cubs died shortly after arrival.

Hani and Absame survived and were given their Somali names through a social media campaign in April. The pair are now thriving, continuing to get stronger each day and gaining weight.

Keeper Michelle Lloyd said the keepers at Monarto Safari Park wanted to honour the amazing work of the CCF through the naming of the park's newest arrivals.



“We saw the CCF’s naming competition and thought it would be really special to name our cubs after Hani and Absame,” she said.

“It will be lovely for our cubs to have ‘sister’ cubs in Somali so our visitors can see that connection to the conservation work on the ground with organisations Zoos SA support.

“Hani and Absame will also be ambassadors for their species and highlight the challenges Cheetah face in the wild. We want to ensure these amazing animals are here well into the future.

“We hope to keep in touch with the CCF so Kesho’s cubs can grow up alongside Hani and Absame at the CCF and we can give our visitors regular updates on how they are doing.”

A spokesperson from the CCF said they were very excited to have the Monarto Cheetah named after two of the cubs in their care.

“It is a wonderful idea to have 'sister' cheetah cubs to talk about the illegal trade and CCF's efforts to stop it,” they said.

“Currently, we have 90 cheetahs and one leopard who were all rescued from being smuggled out of Africa for the illegal pet trade. They need ongoing care and rehabilitation so we are always grateful for support and opportunities to educate people about Cheetah conservation.”

This week, Hani and Absame ventured out on exhibit for the first time with their mum, nine-year-old Kesho. They can now be seen by visitors when touring the park on the Zu-loop bus or from the Cheetah platform.

Visitors can support Hani and Absame both here and abroad, by taking part in a [Cheetah experience](#) or [adopting a Cheetah](#) at Monarto Safari Park.



Hani (girl)



Absame (boy)

Namibia Update



The newest cheetah cubs in Namibia are growing fast! These photos are from when they were nearly two months old and they began eating more meat in their diet. On April 30th they were given their very first bones to chew on! Bones are extremely good for cheetah cubs as it helps them to help develop strong jaw muscles as they are growing. The bones also provide some extra calcium in their diet, and are good enrichment to keep them occupied and busy for a couple of hours. It's hard work being a growing baby cheetah, and after food is always nap time to digest and rest so that they can enjoy an afternoon of playing and running.



Somaliland Update

New Cheetah Rescue and Conservation Centre

In 2021, CCF took significant steps forward with the development of the Somaliland Cheetah Rescue and Conservation Centre (CRCC). I joined the CCF Somaliland team in May 2021 and have been focused on this development project since. Earlier in the year, Dr. Laurie Marker CCF's Founder and Executive Director, welcomed Landscape Architect and Building Planner, Matt Renninger to Somaliland to conduct site visits with her at Geed-Deeble and work on the Master Plan for the new Centre. Matt had previous experience working with CCF in developing the Master Plan and designing some of the facilities at the International Research and Education Centre in Namibia. Most recently the Cheetah View Lodge and the Lightfoot Educational area, and the new commissary and office block.

In partnership with the Somaliland government, the new Cheetah Rescue and Conservation Centre will serve as a rehabilitation site for sick and injured orphaned cheetah cubs confiscated from the illegal wildlife trade by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change (MoECC). The cheetahs, mostly seized when they were weeks to a few months old, will be cared for at the CRCC for the remainder of their lives. Due to the nature of their injuries, suffered from their initial capture and/or from nutritional deficiencies and improper care in the hands of their captors, most will require long term veterinary care. Even as adults, they can never be released back into the wild. When completed, the centre will feature vast outdoor enclosures providing a naturalistic environment for the animals.



The CRCC site is set on more than 800 hectares at Geed-Deeble, a forest reserve about an hour's drive from Hargeisa. In addition to the clinic and care facilities, the center will include education and vocational training facilities that will benefit students, teachers, pastoralists, wildlife caregivers, eco-rangers, and local staff. It will also be open for public tours, with the purpose of educating local and

international visitors about Somaliland's ecosystems and indigenous wildlife. It is the first facility of its kind in the Horn of Africa.

In 2021 we worked closely with the Hargeisa Water Department to identify a stable water source. We drilled for water in November and were delighted to find a great bore hole which meant we could proceed with building. Construction began shortly after our groundbreaking ceremony in December. The event marked the official launch of the project's first phase, beginning with the staff housing units. To date, the staff housing, meal house facilities, animal care and veterinary clinic, and manager's quarters are all under construction. A 2.8-kilometer water line is being installed to bring fresh water to the facility. Six 10,000-liter concrete water storage tanks are being constructed to hold enough water for the needs of the project. In addition, a solar system for off grid electricity is being developed for the entire Centre.

We are now anxiously awaiting the delivery of the steel barn being shipped from South Africa to sit on a newly poured foundation. Fencing components and supplies are also coming from South Africa via seven shipping containers. We still need to install 11 kilometers of perimeter fence and 22 kilometers of animal enclosure, but that should start by the end of April.



CCF staff and volunteers helped to survey potential cheetah enclosure areas. This required lots of long hours walking the landscape and looking for sites that avoid drainage areas and rock outcrops, as well as thick thorn bush. We have identified 20 potential sites for enclosures and there is a lot more land to explore. In exploring, we have found the perfect spot for our resident leopard named Milo. He will now have a birds-eye view of the comings and goings of staff as well as the wildlife around him.

Babul Rayan Construction is the contractor working to construct staff and support facilities. Clear Sky Power was selected to design and install all the off-grid power needs of both the facility and the solar pumping needs. The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change remains supportive of CCF's efforts in bringing the project to fruition. We will soon employ a Community Engagement officer to work with local communities to start awareness programs about the project and work with other communities throughout Somaliland on behalf of CCF and its upcoming programs.



Kids Supporting Cheetahs



One small idea has led to a big outcome for cheetahs. During the school holidays, Bonnie set up a stall outside her family home to sell avocados to raise money for cheetahs and CCFA. Her stall was a success and was able to raise \$120 by selling avocados. Bonnie has also spent the best part of the year talking about cheetahs and how important it is to save the cheetah due to their low numbers.

Well done Bonnie! You are a true cheetah hero!

If anyone else would like to share their stories about how they are helping to save the cheetah, please share your story at ccfaustralia@cheetah.org.

As always, many thanks to our friends at Goodwill Wine. Remember to get some cheetah wine to celebrate a free Christmas with family and friends! We all hope to be able to visit our beloved cheetahs in Namibia soon as we learn to live with this devastating pandemic. These excellent amazingly priced wines make excellent gifts too. And, of course, don't forget to pick Cheetah Conservation Fund Australia as your chosen charity! You can enjoy a beautiful drink knowing that you're benefiting our cause.



We would also like to thank our friends and partners at ZOOSSA for their contribution and support since our inception in Australia. Take the opportunity of the holiday season and the loosening of state borders to visit Monarto Safari Park and say hello to the new cheetah cubs.

We have also benefitted, from the assistance of the Henry and Cecilia Foundation. Please head for their webpage at <http://www.henrycecilia.org/> to check out their mission.

Finally, we would like to thank all of you for your continued support and interest in the plight of the wild cheetah, the fastest land mammal and the most endangered of African big cats. Although their population has been stabilised in Namibia, it continues to dwindle in other African countries, with the remaining number of wild cheetahs estimated to be approximately 7,500. These cheetahs are counting on you to support them through these difficult times. Please don't let them down. **At the end of this financial year, please make your tax deductible donation, however small through our website: <https://cheetah.org/australia/>, or to our bank account at Westpac: BSB 03205, account number 149530, in the name of Cheetah Conservation Fund Australia.**

We would welcome any contribution you can make to our newsletter. Please send us your stories of encounters with cheetahs, and photos you have taken at open range zoos or on trips to Africa. Let us know how you met your first cheetah, or became interested in this unique and graceful feline. We would be particularly grateful for suggestions for events to raise awareness and funds to promote the cause of the survival of the wild cheetah. Please communicate any ideas to ccfaustralia@cheetah.org. Thank you all in advance!

CCF Book on Cheetahs Soon to be available in Australia

Limited copies of *A Future for Cheetahs* 2nd ed., by Dr Laurie Marker, with photography by Suzi Eszterhas, will be available for sale at ZoosSA (Monarto Safari Park and Adelaide Zoo). These can also be ordered directly from CCFA. Please lodge your expressions of interest at ccfaustralia@cheetah.org

