



Painted Dog Conservation Inc

ABN:30 268 127 580
REGISTERED IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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Welcome

Special points of interest:

- The Association is formed for the betterment of the species.
- 75% of membership subscription is put towards the Dog. 25% is used for fundraising and news.
- 100% of donations and fundraising is put towards the Dog.
- No member gains financially from the Association.
- The membership will be notified through this newsletter or by email of merchandise offers.

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In this our 2nd newsletter I would like to thank all those members who have provided such positive feedback on the issue of our first newsletter.

Our organisation continues to grow and we now have a membership of 63 including the RAE Association of Western Australia who signed up after a well received talk by our vice chairman at their February meeting.

I would like to express my appreciation to the **DOCENTS** Committee for extending an invitation to our membership to attend their meeting.

Many of our newest members signed up during and subsequent to a meeting of the **DOCENTS** at the Perth Zoological Gardens theatre after an introduction and talk by John Lemon to which participants of an upcoming Rhino tour to Zimbabwe organised by Nicholas Duncan were also invited as a part of that tour was to visit the dog project in Hwange.

We have become an interna-

tional organisation with the membership spreading to France, USA and Germany.

News recently from Zimbabwe in spite of all the turmoil is that Peter Blinston, Jealous Mpfou, Forggie Wilson and an Ecovolunteer from the UK named Tom tracked and collared the alpha male and female of the Sethule pack which is the first pack I saw puppies at a den in 2001 and again had the fortune to have seen another litter in 2002. Tom's story can be found on our website on the Volunteers page along with a picture of the alpha male about to be collared.

We have received several enquiries from overseas expressing an interest in joining our organisation, however, at that time because of the high charges banks in those countries were going to charge to give us a negotiable instrument they did not pursue membership.

To cater for this we have amended our membership application to include for credit



Lycaon pictus "African Painted Hunting Dog"

card payments and this new form can be found on the web. Several of our existing and newer members have requested information on the Ecovolunteer programme. I have briefly described it in the following pages and more detailed information may be obtained by emailing me at pdinc@iinet.net.au.

Our logo is available as a cloth sew-on badge of 70mm and proceeds from the purchases is being set aside for vaccines, medical equipment and medications. The purchase cost for members is \$AUD5.00 postage free in Australia and \$8.00AUD for overseas and includes the additional cost for postage.

Morphometrics

Field biologists typically collect a series of standard size measurements that are used in identification, in monitoring the effects of environmental or genetic changes on body size and shape, and as baseline information for studies of the relationship between body size parameters and other aspects of biology, such as diet, reproductive rate, metabolic rate, home range size, and longevity.

With captive animals, the goals are much the same. Standard size measurements can be used to corroborate identifications, to monitor the effects of environmental or changes (in this case, particularly changes associated with captive management such as adjustments in diet, enclosure size, or breeding regime), and as baseline information for evolutionary and wildlife biologists. (Lundrigan, B et al 1996 Wild Mammals in Captivity p563).

Described in this issue is;

- **Distribution and Habitat**
- **Social Grouping**

In the next issue we will cover

- **Hunting and Diet**
- **Reproduction**



Our Logo

The Membership

New members, Please welcome the following to our “pack”—Bob & Steff Brackenbury, The RAE Association of WA, Mick Ryan, June Winsome-Smith, Deborah Marsh, Dave & Helen Watts, **France**, Trueman Faulkner, Rob Herkes, Mark & Silke Tyler, Nicole Taylor, April Sather, **Texas USA**, Allan Gray, Kathy Starr, Paul Eden, Rosemary Markham, Holly Thompson, Alex falconer, Diana Morgan, Joan-Jessie Daniels,

Lorraine Dunn, Peg Malcolm, Martin Storey, Vanessa Sturrock, Dot Wishart, Beverley Poor, Alan Thomson, Khim Harris, Jenny McGeachie, Peter and Jean Mc Skimming, Nicholas Duncan, Marnie Taggart, Joy Blyth, Evelyn Wong, Barbara and Katy Breden, Valerie Hemsley, Sandy Caporn, Dianne Gates, Martina Ter Steeg, Peter Clark, Robyn O'Brien, Elli Radinger, **Germany**, Sharon and Martin

Clarke, Sally Mace, Jon Keates.

Members of Note:

Mick Ryan is the President of the RAEWA, Nicholas Duncan is President of Save Foundation Inc (Rhino's), Dianne Gates heads up the Silvery Gibbon Project Inc at the Perth Zoo

Lycaon pictus—Distribution and Habitat

Distribution

Only approximately 2,500 Painted Hunting Dogs may be left in Africa (Rasmussen, G. 2001, pers comm., 1 August). There are, in **fact**, fewer dogs in Africa than Rhino, and the species has now disappeared from most of the 34 countries in which it was known to occur (Rasmussen 1997).

Unique to Africa, they occurred in tens of thousands, being widespread throughout most of the continent. Today, according to Rasmussen (1997), strongholds are found in four main countries; namely Zimbabwe, Botswana, Tanzania

and South Africa (restricted to Kruger National Park). Zambia, Senegal and Ethiopia may also be housing important populations.

Many of the remaining populations are, however, fragmented and isolated in protected areas. As a result, the Painted Hunting Dog now rank as one of the most endangered canids worldwide, and has been classified as endangered by the IUCN World Conservation Union (Rasmussen 1997).

Habitat

Painted Hunting Dogs are almost always associated with

the open grassy savannas of tropical Africa, but this image has more to do with the distribution of Zoologists and wildlife film crews than of the dogs themselves.

Times gone by saw the dogs widespread, as evidenced by the number of countries from which they have been **extirpated**, across much of Sub-Saharan Africa, occurring in every type of habitat except tropical rainforest. Packs can survive in marginal habitats such as swamplands and semi-desert, and a pack of five dogs was once sighted on the permanent snow on the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro,

5890m (19,337ft) above sea level (Animal World Issue 86).

Most pack dogs are scrub hunters at heart. The scrub provides plenty of scope for outflanking fleeing prey. The lure of the great herds grazing the plains has drawn the dogs out onto the open savannah, and it has adapted well.

They have adapted their behaviour, confining most of their hunting activity to the cooler hours of the day. They may hunt at night, although since they hunt mainly by sight, they normally save such nocturnal forays for moonlit nights (Animal World Issue 86).

The Rehabilitation Centre John Lemon

After spending the two previous years visiting and working for the project, the chance to be involved in the design and construction of a facility capable of dealing with any scenario the dogs could come up against in their daily lives was an opportunity to good to pass up.

Constructing a rehabilitation facility in a country where most people consider wildlife a food source that has not been harvested is a strange concept indeed. How were we going to achieve acceptance from all

involved stakeholders and still successfully complete a world class facility?

After many, meetings with stakeholders i.e. Councillors, National Parks, Forestry Commission, Chiefs, Witch Doctors (Inyanga), Elders, School Teachers etc, and countless funding proposals and years of planning, land was leased from the Forestry Commission and we were set to go. As mentioned in the last newsletter the rehabilitation facility is divided into three main areas: -

1 Rehabilitation/Intermediate

Facility

This area was the first completed and proved a great learning curve in engineering.

Adjacent to the 2.1km large enclosure and with a circumference of approximately 300m, the rehabilitation facility is divided into quadrants with each quadrant linked by a vertical slide gate.

The fence poles are Eucalypt species, imported from Australia for use as telegraph poles.

Each pole, 4m long, was hand dipped in a mixture of crude

tar and diesel to prevent termite infestation.

A hand auger was used to dig approximately 200 holes to a depth of 1m into the ground.

Sounds easy in sand!! But considering that each time the auger was twisted, water had to be poured in otherwise the sand just dug out would slip through like the sands in an hour glass. With no water readily available on site it meant continuous daily carting of water in containers in the back of a trusty Land Rover, then backpacked to the worksite.

The Rehabilitation Centre John Lemon



The Drillers

It was soon realised that building a facility of this scale in the middle of the African bush was going to test all our energies.

After an exhausting 15 hour day clearing the fence line and pegging the poles position using a GPS we looked forward to the following day as we returned to the “Dog House” had tea and a well deserved refreshment.

Imagine our surprise when we returned the next day to find that every GPS placed peg around the entire circle and the 2.1 km larger enclosure had been removed with the seeming skill of a surgeon and either placed into the bush or discarded like an old toy in the sand. Closer inspection confirmed that a herd of elephants had removed every last peg!

Not to be outdone, we set about the repositioning the pegs in sections and this time also digging the holes only to be thwarted by a troop of Chacma baboons that plagued us by filling in every hole as fast as we could dig them.

The facility was eventually completed. with the addition of a second fence surrounding the main perimeter fence to prevent elephants from pulling down the enclosure, lion chasing a herd of game through it or attacking the inhabitants or even other dogs attacking the sick and injured.

The perimeter fence is electrified with four live wires and two dummy wires on the vertical, and a further four live

wires on a 45° incline (see photograph).

The enclosure fence has a further four electric wires to prevent elephants from pulling the enclosure poles down as well as preventing dogs or baboons from getting out or into the enclosure respectively. An additional four wires at the base to prevent escapes and adverse behaviours through the fence with other rehabilitating animals. Skirting away from the base, travelling down 200mm, then buried under soil by about 500mm is a further 1m of chicken wire to prevent dogs from digging out.

Each quadrant has a keeper access gate, with one being a double to allow vehicle access and a dog shelter modelled off a traditional African hut, One quadrant has a large drainable concrete pond for bathing with another containing an overhead feeding device and several other behavioural enrichment devices.



Dog Shelter

2 Intensive Care Clinic

The intensive care clinic designed for critically injured dogs that need ongoing intensive care and treatment i.e. road accidents, serious snare wounds, shootings etc. It may also double up as an area where introduction of unrelated animals can take place to form new packs and is linked to both the rehabilitation centre and the long term holding area via raceways to allow movement of dogs with ease whilst minimising stress.

The clinic consists of three

yards, 4m x 15m, constructed entirely of steel and chain mesh, and interlinked by vertical gates with a handling raceway at the front to aid in animal movements and separations.



Intensive Care Clinic

The floor substrate is sand to prevent injury to the dogs pads and feet whilst under treatment.. The bottom half of the walls are clad with conveyor belting for visual screening of neighbouring animals as well as preventing the dogs trying to bite their way out. Beneath the sandy floor is more conveyor belting at a depth of around 600mm to prevent digging out. After treatment, dogs are relocated to the rehabilitation facility, then released or acclimatised in the long-term facility before release.

Each yard has a lockable shelter to allow medication through window openings.

3 Long term holding/Soft release Facility

With a circumference of 2.1km and an area approximately. 28Ha it is currently the largest single species purpose built in-situ rehabilitation facility in the world.

Surrounding this facility are a two storey visitor centre, Children’s bush camp comprising 4 teachers houses, 21 school student houses, the education centre and dining room, 2 showering and 2 toilet facilities, an educational trail area as well as the rehabilitation and clinic areas, along with a research laboratory and surgery.

The fence construction complete with a stand off fence is identical to the smaller rehabilitation facility with around 697 posts spaced at 3m intervals. It has two double vehicle access/soft release gates plus two keeper access gates.

Dogs in this area may be translocated packs removed from problem areas or longer-term animals that need further rehabilitation before release with reduced human contact.

Eventually visitors will be able to view the enclosure from the observation deck of the visitors’ centre and even wind their way along an array of tree top platforms that link up to the children’s bush camp.

Concluding the construction was a mammoth effort, with an outcome even first world conservation and zoological institutions would be envious of and also considering the political and socio-economic climate an even more amazing feat.



Main enclosure fence

“Conservation through action and education”

Lycaon pictus—Social Grouping

Painted Hunting Dogs live in packs ranging up to 49 members; **however**, four to eight adults, with two to six yearlings and five to eleven pups is most common, given the low population numbers today (Mills 1999).

Each wild dog pack is an extended family, potentially comprising of a breeding pair, their unmated brothers and sisters, and their young from several years of breeding. All of the adults help care for the new season's pups, guarding them in the den and bringing food; most of these helpers are male, and quite often there is only one adult female in the pack—the mother of all of the others (Animal World Issue 86).

Strong bonds between pack members are displayed through their care for the sick and injured pack members, through licking wounds and

regurgitating food (Rasmussen, G. 2001, pers comm., 1 August).

Wild dogs can give birth to huge litters of 16 or more pups—enough to form a pack in their own right. Two or three seasons of breeding at this rate could create an army of wild dogs, all sharing the same mother (Animal World Issue 96). Raising of the pups by the "alpha" female alone is not possible. All pack members are enlisted to help raise their pack's future.

Like all animals, though, other members of the pack would rather breed. The alpha female cannot afford this, as she needs help with her own pups. If other females wish to breed, the resulting tension between the two breeding females can erupt in violence, especially if food is scarce, and subordinate females are often driven away (Animal World Issue 86).

The upshot of this is a society in which females leave the pack while males tend to stay at home. Males also leave, particularly if the pack grows to a point where low-ranking brothers have little to gain by staying, and if dispersed, they often travel much further than females. The higher-ranking males are unlikely to abandon their advantages (Animal World Issue 86).

The most senior, apart from the alpha male, are his own brothers, who may have emigrated with him from their own natal pack, and consequently many wild dog packs revolve around a tight partnership of the alpha male, his brothers and his mate (Animal World Issue 86).

When dogs do emigrate, it is usually in groups of at least three so they can hunt effectively. Meeting a pack of the opposite sex could see the leaders pair up. A few males may join the party, and so doing create a new pack. One

male teams up with the senior female to create a new alpha pair, and the other females get restless again. Unlucky females may undergo a serial of dispersals, moving from one pack to the next in search of status to allow them to breed; this may be when females are between 18 months and 2.5 years of age (Alderton 1994).

Once the hierarchy is sorted, the pack tends to settle down, enjoying each other's company immensely. The dominant pair nearly always rests together, often in close physical contact, and all pack members greet each other extravagantly at every opportunity.



Painted Hunting Dog pack "Kansingas" resting

Hwange National Park

Hwange National Park is the **largest** park in Zimbabwe, located in the Matabeleland North Province and has an area of about 14,540 square kilometres.

Kalahari sand, geologically the youngest of three rock strata's, covers approximately 90% of the land mass and can be dated between 12 and 15 million years old.

It was about this time that the known canids of today branched out with a common ancestor from which *Lycaon pictus* came into being about the 3 million year mark.

There are **nine vegetation** types to be found however the main type can be described as woodland and open woodland for much of the park. Of the flora there are listed some **250 different trees** and **200 grasses** of the over **1000 plant specimens** recorded.

There were over **100 species** of mammals recorded in the park which has one of the biggest herds of elephants which are estimated to number in excess of 30,000, with buffalo, giraffe, Hyaena,

lion, leopard, impala, kudu, sable, eland, roan, bushbuck, duiker, warthog, painted dog to name a few.

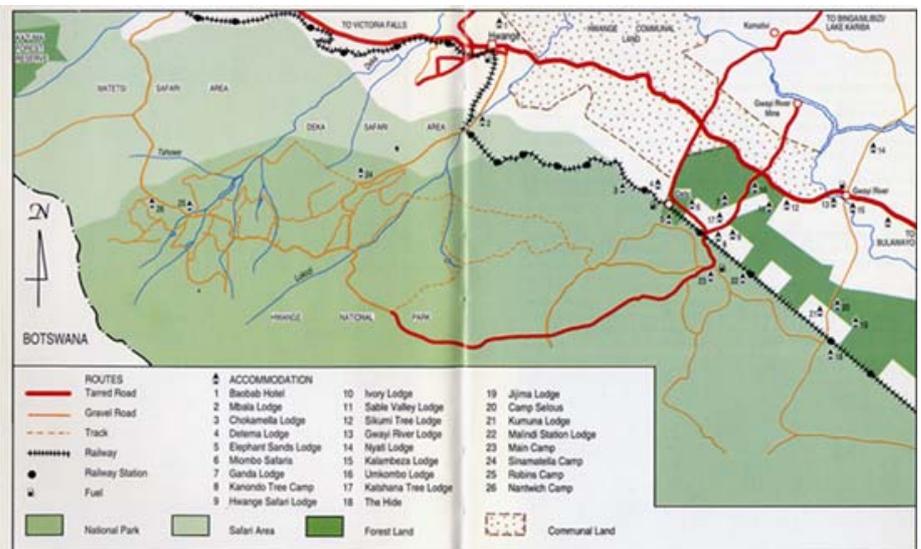
The bird list exceeds some **420 species**.

Looking at the map below the PHDR headquarters is near No 7 with the main

pubic entry to the park near No 23 which is also a fuel depot.

Detete is where the Arts & Crafts centre, headed up by Wendy Blakely, is located.

Reference: Hwange Elephant Country Zimbabwe © David Martin



Hwange National Park & surrounding areas © David Martin, Hwange Elephant Country Zimbabwe (4–5)

Feature—Other Wildlife—Lion (*Panthera leo*)

The lion is one of the most legendary and intriguing of animals on earth. They can run up to 60kms per hour and leap 12 metres! Its traditional title, the King of Beasts, conveys the high regard given to this magnificent creature. Venerated by the Ancient Egyptians and a symbol of bravery and dignity in countless other cultures, the lion has long commanded the respect and admiration of humankind.

Most lions live in prides, however some lions live alone. Males will bond together when they leave their natal pride. When a male takes over a pride, he kills most of the cubs to ensure all new cubs born are his offspring. Prides consist of one or more family units that have one or two males with a number of females and cubs. There can be as many as forty members in one pride.

The African lion has a broad face, rounded ears, and a relatively short neck. Male lions have a mane, which varies in colour from silvery-grey to a yellowish-red, the darker the mane the older the lion. Both sexes have sharp retractable claws on each paw and powerful shoulders that they use to bring down prey.

African lions are found in the



Panthera leo "African Lion"

open plains and woodlands of Africa. During the day, lions rest by waterholes or salt licks, but at night these places are usually reserved for hunting. Lions can climb trees to rest and cool off, or to escape stampedes. Males spray urine on tree trunks or bushes as a form of warning for other males to stay out of that particular territory, and also, as a way to attract females. Both sexes use a form of roaring to attract each other and warn other predators or prides of their presence.

During the breeding season the male and female mate once every 20 minutes for five days. During this time if the dominant male is not around, the female will breed with other males in his pride. The cubs are blind at birth and require constant attention from their mother. At around two years of age they weigh around 100 kilograms. Males stay with

the pride and mother until around three years of age, at which time they are expelled. Young males are nomadic for a time as they mature and gain experience when they start competing with other males to head a pride. Longevity is around 10 years in the wild due to disease and famine, injuries sustained during a hunt, and fighting with other lions.

Lions are carnivores. The lionesses are the hunters in the pride, hunting as a group either in the morning or at night. Ambushing their prey, they lie in wait until their prey is within reach. Running up to 60 km per hour they are able to bring down prey that out way themselves such as Zebra, Eland and Buffalo.

Populations of African lions have been reduced firstly due to human population expansion. Habitat has been greatly reduced due to expanded agricultural and grazing regions. Lions have been hunted as trophies, and because they pose a threat to humans and livestock.

Fast Facts:

Body Length Males 1.7-2.5m (Have been recorded to 3.3m)
Females 1.4-1.8m (Have been

recorded to 2.7m)

Tail 60-100cms

Weight Males 150-230kgs
Females 120-182kgs

Social Unit Pride and Nomadic Males

Avg Litter 2-3 (Anywhere from 1 to 5)

Gestation 100-120 Days

Weaning 3 Months

Longevity In the Wild 10-15 years

In Captivity 16-24 years
(Though have been recorded over 25 years)

Activity Period Diurnal/
Nocturnal

Prey Mainly animals between 50 - 500kg. May include antelopes such as impala, waterbuck and wildebeest. As well as Zebra, Eland and Buffalo. Other recordings include grubs, rats, fish, birds, foxes, porcupines, pythons, crocodiles, rhinos, hippos, giraffe and people!!!!

Vocalisations Roar that can be heard at distances over 8kms. Other sounds include low grunts as they walk at normal pace, noticeable growl when angered and a mother lion makes a soft sound when calling her cubs.

Ecovolunteer

Opportunities exist to join the project for either one, two or three weeks at a time between the months of April and November each year. Actual costs will vary depending on when you choose to travel as \$USD is the currency which will need converting to \$AUD.

You will **experience** firsthand the reality of operating in a conservation project in one of Africa's premier wildlife areas activities that might be undertaken include telemetry tracking, data entry, bush camping,

general repairs and maintenance, collaring of dogs and even given the incidence of snaring, assist in helping a dog to survive. You may even be asked to assist in the removal of snares

You must make your own way to either Bulawayo or Victoria Falls where you will be met and collected by project staff on arrival and dropped back or at one of the many lodges in the area on conclusion of your stay.

Accommodation

You will stay in simple huts or tents, often camping for several days in the bush with no facilities. You will need to bring your own sleeping bag and mat; a mosquito net could be required depending on the time of the year.

Meals

Meals and cooking utensils will be provided along with basic supplies. A cooking rota will be operated. The food will be simple and sufficient. You can purchase additional supplies

locally if you want to.

Please email Greg at

pdinc@iinet.net.au for the complete information pack.



A Volunteer (Sophie) with Projects Administrative Staff



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Conservation Through Action and Education

The objects of the Association are

To advance conservation for the public benefit of the African Painted Hunting Dog, (also referred to as a Wild Dog) *Lycaon pictus*, through education promoting and disseminating research into such conservation and seeking to achieve their sustainable management.

WE'RE ON THE WEB
WWW.PAINTEDDOGCONSERVATION.IINET.NET.AU
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Glossary

DOCENTS (doh cents) Tutor or Lecturer
Extirpated To destroy completely (abolish)
Iganyana (ee ganyana) Many dogs
Amaganyana (ama ganyana) One dog

Late News

- **WE DID IT!** On 12-14 May, 2004, after three years of preparations, the project hosted its first class of school children at Iganyana Bush Camp.
- If any member has a preference for the newsletter to be delivered by email as a PDF file please advise us by emailing pdcinc@iinet.net.au

Would you Like to Help

The project in Zimbabwe does **NOT** receive any Government assistance and is wholly reliant on donations to continue its operations.

The key factor in retaining the workers from the local communities both skilled and unskilled who are classed as

staff is to have sufficient funding available to pay them a reasonable wage.

Please consider a donation for the work to continue.

All donations received are put **without deduction** to the benefit of the dog.

Here's what to do

Forward a cheque or money order, (within Australia) made payable to:

"Painted Dog Conservation Inc."

C/- The Secretary
10 Blackboy Way
Morangup WA 6083

Credit cards: We can accept either Visa or MasterCard.

Please tear off the slip below and forward to the Secretary whose address appears above.

Credit Card Transaction

Please tear off below this line and mail to the Secretary. Thank you for your donation

****Select card** Visa / MasterCard Payment

Card Number: _____ Expiry Date: ____/____ (mm/yy)

Name on Card: _____ ****Block Letters only**

Amount: \$ _____ : _____ ****Select Currency** Signature _____
****Other Currency Please specify**