



CHEETAH CONSERVATION FUND VETERINARY STUDENT INTERNSHIP/PRECEPTORSHIP PROGRAM



BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF) is a non-profit organization founded in 1990 by Dr. Laurie Marker. CCF is located at the base of the Waterberg Plateau Park on a large private nature reserve east of Otjiwarongo, Namibia. Namibia is home to the largest number of free-ranging cheetah in the world, about 20% (3000+) of the world's population.

Cheetah Conservation Fund has as its mission “to be an internationally recognized centre of excellence in research and education on cheetahs and their eco-systems, working with all stakeholders to achieve best practice in the conservation and management of the world's cheetahs.” CCF undertakes basic research regarding cheetah and their habitat and maintains a major public education program that includes ecotourism. CCF strives to maintain its resident animals to the highest standard of husbandry and enrichment while providing a world-class educational experience to each and every visitor, volunteer, and client in a secure and exciting environment. CCF creates and disseminates educational materials worldwide, conducts programs of community upliftment and predator conflict resolution, and assists in the management of captive and free-ranging cheetah throughout the world.

While CCF is home to resident non-releasable cheetahs, it is not a sanctuary. CCF maintains a specialized veterinary clinic, an ecology and research department, a visitor's centre, a museum, and a model farm. CCF works actively to develop integrated programmes throughout the world that enable the cheetah to live in harmony with the people and the land. In Namibia, 90% of the cheetah population lives on livestock farms, thus CCF's Namibian focus is to work with farming communities to reduce conflict and to establish sustainable and integrated livestock, wildlife, and ecosystem management programs. Through its Future Farmers of Africa program, CCF teaches farmers “cheetah friendly” methods of livestock management to help increase their acceptance of the cheetah and other predators as part of the ecosystem. One of the most successful methods is through the use of livestock guarding dogs; CCF's Livestock Guarding Dog Program (LSGD) uses the Anatolian Shepherd, a breed which has been used in Turkey for over 6000 years to protect sheep from wolves.

Currently, CCF is home to 34 resident cheetahs, some of which are slated for future release; a herd of approximately 200 Boer goats and Damara sheep that is used as a demonstration flock for our farmer education program and also as a training flock for our livestock guarding dog program; a herd of between 60 to 70 dairy goats used for goat cheese production; and twenty Anatolian Shepherd or Kangal dogs in the LSGD program.

The current veterinary staff at CCF:

- Anne Schmidt-Kuentzel, DVM, PhD– Assistant Director of Animal Health and Research
- Andrew Di Salvo, DVM – Clinical Veterinarian
- Grace Warner, DVN – Veterinary Nurse

PROGRAM OUTLINE:

Veterinary students undertaking an internship or preceptorship at CCF will be required to assist the resident veterinarian and veterinary nurse with daily husbandry, medical treatments, and preventive medicine for all animals at CCF requiring care. Post-mortem exams are performed on all animals which die or are euthanized. The student will also be required to help with other veterinary clinic-related duties as indicated, including laboratory evaluations, data entry, cleaning, maintenance of equipment, and inventory updates.

Students will be assigned a project to be completed during their time at CCF; the nature of the project will partially be dependent on the length of time the student plans to spend at CCF, the experience of the individual student, and on the current research focus at the time of application. Students are encouraged to submit their own project ideas. Examples of past projects and potential future projects for veterinary students at CCF include the following:

- Captive cheetah parasitological evaluations (ecto- and endoparasites)
- Wild ungulate parasitological evaluation at waterholes
- Giraffe parasitological evaluation
- Carcass health evaluations in the abattoir where meat for the cheetahs is processed
- Goat kraal nutrition and health management
- Dairy goat milking protocols and hygiene
- Evaluation of cheetah anaesthetic protocols
- Case studies on particular health issues

PLACEMENT DETAILS:

CCF will accept veterinary interns/preceptors on an on-going basis throughout the year; however, a maximum of two students will be accepted during any given time period. The minimum duration of the internship/preceptorship is 6 weeks, with a maximum duration of 3 months. The summer season (summer in the Northern Hemisphere) is usually very busy and competition for internship spaces is strong, thus we encourage students to apply for time periods outside of the northern hemisphere summer.

ESTIMATED EXPENSES:

Accommodation: CCF provides simple on-site shared housing and three meals per day. The facility is located 45 kilometres from Otjiwarongo and is quite isolated, but relatively modern with hot water, electricity, internet, and telephone service available.

Estimated Weekly Living Expenses: Approximately N\$150; only for personal items such as toiletries or food/beverages that the student wishes to purchase that are not provided by CCF.

Internship Costs: Dependent on length of internship/preceptorship; however, the general fee is US\$2020.00 per month. This internship fee EXCLUDES visa fees and the cost of flights to and from Windhoek, Namibia. Please refer to the CCF website for further student internship and pricing information, www.cheetah.org, as follows:

- How you can help
- Volunteering/internships

- Volunteering in Namibia
- Student internships
- Pricing/Fees

Application for an internship/preceptorship is made via the website, from which the application form can be downloaded. The volunteer application is sent to CCF's Volunteer Coordinator, Heike Stackmann at ccfinfo@iway.na

VISAS:

A Namibian work/volunteer visa must be obtained prior to coming to CCF. The visa application process should be started early, as a visa can take approx. 6 to 8 weeks to be processed and issued. Please contact CCF's Volunteer Coordinator, Heike Stackmann at ccfinfo@iway.na