Wildlife Conservation Action

Annual Report 2022

www.wildlifeconservation.org

Acknowledgments

We wish to express our heartfelt gratitude to Tapiwa Prosper Chimbadzwa for taking charge of our Annual Report and making it all come together. We'd also like to give a special shoutout to Tapiwa Prosper Chimbadzwa, Brendon Dube, Kuda Chuma, Vimbai, and Lorain for their incredible work in bringing in valuable content from various sources.

Without the dedication and passion of these individuals, our report wouldn't be half as impressive as it is. Their collective efforts have injected life and energy into this report, turning it into a compelling piece of work that we are truly proud of. Thank you all for your hard work and contribution!

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DIRECTOR'S STATEMENT

Dr. Moreangels Mbizah

Director, Wildlife Conservation Action

The year 2022 was a year of growth, we were able to expand our geographical footprint and impact as we took on two new projects. We are excited about 2023, we will continue to work with the local communities and reduce the impact of carnivores on their lives and livelihoods.

Putting communities first in conservation and enhancing their livelihoods is key to realizing our goal of conserving wildlife and wild spaces in Zimbabwe and beyond. We are grateful for the continued support of our donors, partners, collaborators, and supporters.

Our Team

Dr. Moreangels Mbizah

Founder and Executive Director

Born and raised in Zimbabwe. She has a DPhil in Zoology from the University of Oxford. Moreangels is passionate about inspiring the next generation of African conservationists and building the capacity of future African conservation leaders.

Simbarashe Pride Chatikobo

Conservation Science Project Manager

Simba holds a Bachelor of Science Honors Degree in Animal and Wildlife Sciences. He is passionate about local involvement in conservation matters and cultivating locally driven solutions to conservation challenges.

Tapiwa Prosper Chimbadzwa

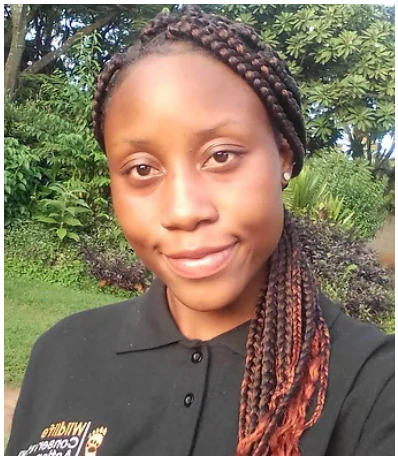
Environmental Education & Awareness Project Manager

Tapiwa is a certified Peace Practitioner whose interest is vested in advocating for pro-poor policies for development, equal and meaningful participation of local communities in decision-making, and human-animal conflict mitigation. He holds a BSc Hons Degree in Peace, Conflict, and Governance from Great Zimbabwe University.

Kudakwashe Chuma

Nyaminyami Project Officer

Kudakwashe is an astute environmentalist with a strong desire to see humans take full responsibility for environmental preservation. He holds a BSc Hons Degree in Geography and Environmental Sciences from Midlands State University.



Lorraine Jowa

Environmental Education Project Officer

Lorraine holds a Bachelor's Science Honors Degree in Natural Resources Management. She loves to do game drives, and nature walks, and her hobby is Beekeeping.

About WCA

Our **Mission**

To promote human-wildlife coexistence and sustainable socio-economic development of communities through wildlife and habitat conservation, human-wildlife conflict mitigation, conservation education, training, and public engagement.

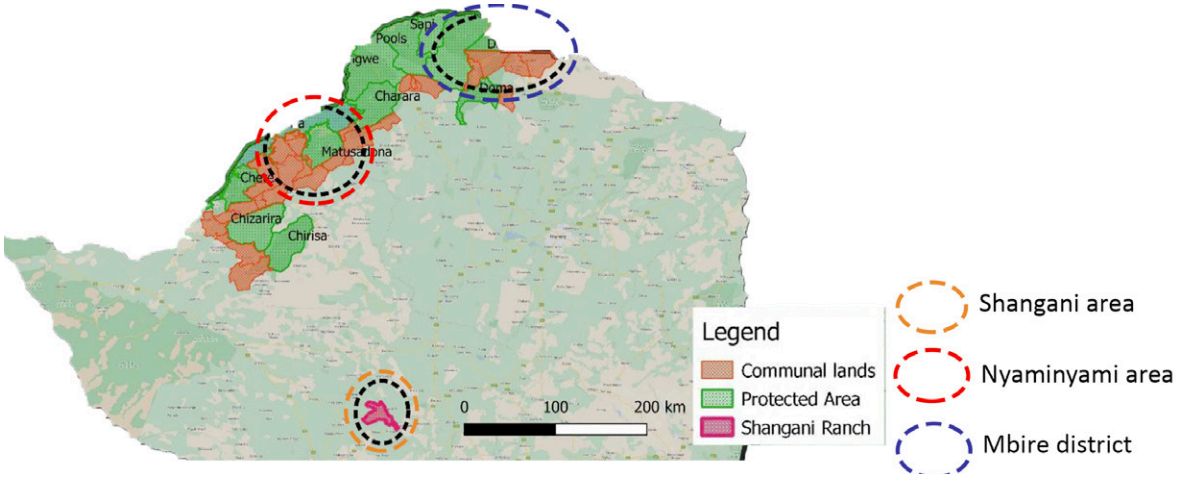
Our **Vision**

We envisage a world where biodiversity is protected through community based conservation.

Our **Approach**

One of the ultimate goals is to conserve wildlife. We also focus on empowering communities living adjacent to wildlife areas and improving their livelihoodas. We believe that seeking and developing economic empowerment opportunities will have a net effect of reducing the community's reliance on illegal activities, such as bush meat poaching and illegal wildlife trade.

We are located in Zimbabwe, having 3 research statios in Mbire district, Shangani district and Nyaminyami district. This is where most of our conservation stuff took place.



Extract Map of the Zimbabwean landscape showing protected areas and where we are working

Nyaminyami
Coexistence Project

This project is dedicated to implementing a Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) mitigation strategy aimed at countering livestock predation by hyenas and lions. The overarching goal is to rejuvenate wildlife populations that have historically provided significant benefits to communities in the Sebungwe landscape of northwestern Zimbabwe. In landscapes dominated by human activity, successful coexistence between humans and wildlife can only be achieved by minimizing the loss of human lives and livelihoods, including crops and livestock, to wildlife.

One of the primary focuses of our project is to empower local communities with the skills and knowledge to coexist with and protect wildlife, all while improving their own livelihoods.

01 PROJECT

Text box 1

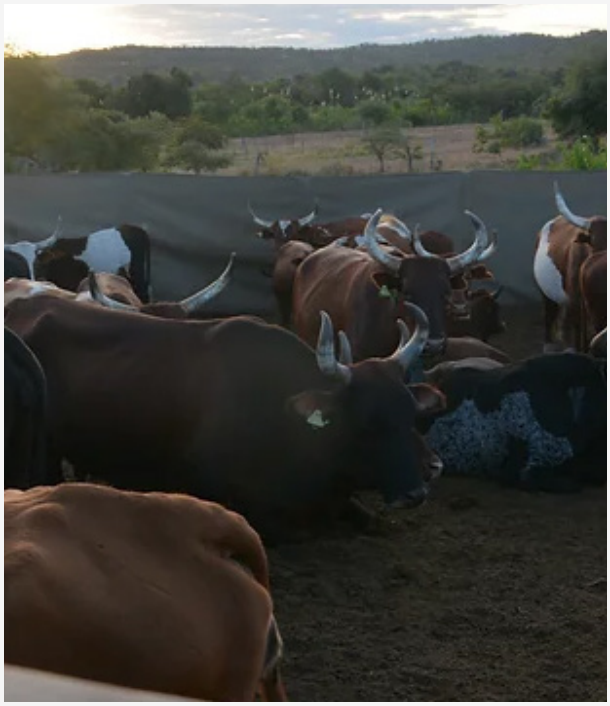
Since the inception of the project, we've trained and employed nine Community Guardians, affectionately known as "Batabilili," which translates to "the protectors." These dedicated Guardians have been actively engaged in a range of critical tasks, including responding to and managing human-wildlife conflict incidents, the setup and relocation of mobile bomas, kraal assessments and improvements, random herd evaluations, occupancy surveys, and spoor transects.

To ensure a standardized and efficient approach to their work, we've developed and finalized a set of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). These SOPs serve as a comprehensive guide, providing direction and clarity to the Community Guardians in carrying out their day-to-day operations and fulfilling their responsibilities.

Text box 2

In 2022, we successfully installed a total of 73 predator-proof mobile bomas in both Naminvami Ward 3 and Ward 4. These innovative mobile bomas have proven to be remarkably effective, achieving a 100% success rate in safeguarding livestock from attacks by large carnivores. Notably, there were no reported incidents of livestock predation within the mobile bomas.

The utilization of predator-proof mobile bomas not only enhances livestock protection but also offers a promising avenue for improving soil fertility and crop yields. For instance, one of our boma beneficiaries who diligently relocated their boma in the field experienced remarkable results. They harvested nearly a tonne of maize, a testament to the enhanced soil fertility in the area due to this innovative approach.



A total of 1,392 herds were observed in both pastures and near water points. Out of these, 1,200 herds, which accounts for 86%, were found unattended by herders. The remaining 14% of herds were encountered with herders present. This trend can be primarily attributed to the winter season when farmers typically allow their cattle to graze in pastures without constant supervision.

Since the inception of the Nyaminyami Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) Mitigation Project, farmers have gained valuable knowledge about their responsibility to bring their livestock back from pastures and safely kraal them during the night. Farmers have also started to prioritize the well-being of their livestock over their crops, resulting in only a small number of livestock being left outside kraals. The dedicated Community Guardians have played a pivotal role in helping farmers identify suitable grazing areas where their livestock can spend a significant amount of time grazing.

In 2021, we assessed a total of 785 kraals, out of which 508 were identified as needing reinforcement. Notably, 58% of these kraals were subsequently reinforced and improved, achieving a score of 8/10 or higher.

Moving forward to 2022, we extended our efforts to reassess 2,214 traditional kraals that required reinforcement. Remarkably, 61% of these kraals have undergone reinforcement, scoring 8/10 or higher, with a particular focus on enhancing kraal visibility, height, and pole strength.

Between May 2021 and December 2021, the Community Guardians addressed a total of 139 human-wildlife conflict incidents. In the following year, between January 2022 and December 2022, they responded to 142 such incidents, offering personalized advice to each victim of human-wildlife conflict.

Tragically, in 2022, three individuals lost their lives due to elephant encounters, and one person was fatally injured by a buffalo. Despite these challenges, it's encouraging to note that the overall incidence of conflict decreased, dropping from an average of 17 incidents per month in 2021 to 12 incidents per month in 2022.

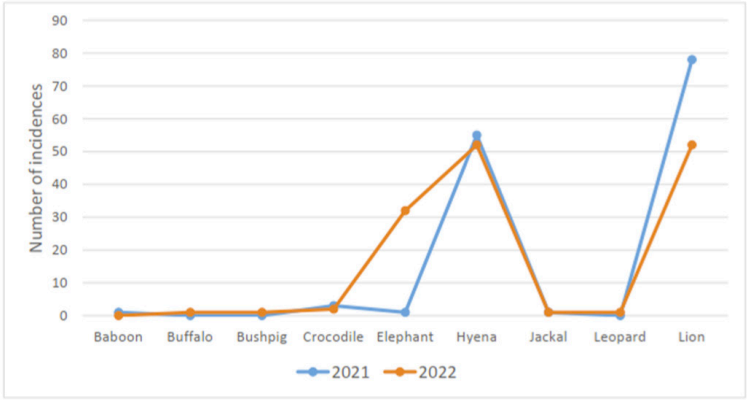


Figure 1: Number of Incidents

Lions and hyenas remained the primary species responsible for most livestock predation in both 2021 and 2022, as depicted in Figure 2. In 2022, the community suffered losses of 120 goats, 12 donkeys, 21 cattle, and 15 dogs due to livestock predation in Mola Ward 3 and Ward 4.

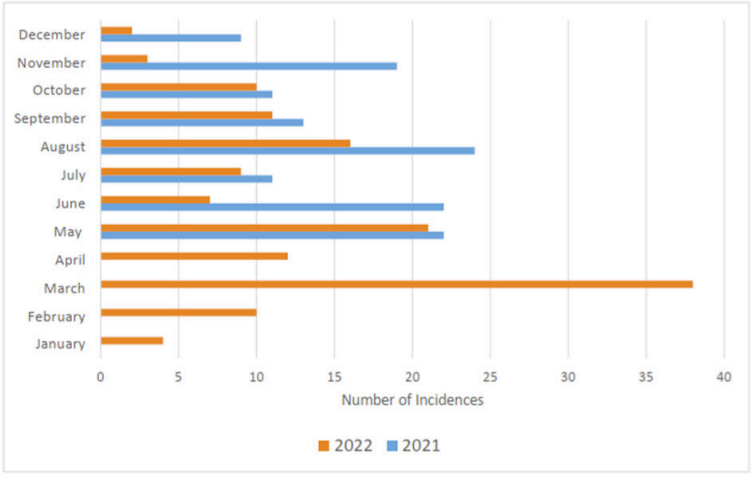


Figure 2

In 2021, a majority of livestock predation incidents occurred in pastures, primarily attributed to suboptimal herding practices. Fortunately, there was a significant improvement in these practices in 2022. The number of incidents happening outside of kraals also reduced from 55 in 2021 to 43 in 2022, thanks to enhanced kraaling practices.

However, it's worth noting that incidents of predation within kraals increased from 13 in 2021 to 24 in 2022. This spike can be attributed to predators resorting to attacking livestock inside poorly constructed kraals when they couldn't find stray livestock or animals outside of kraals.

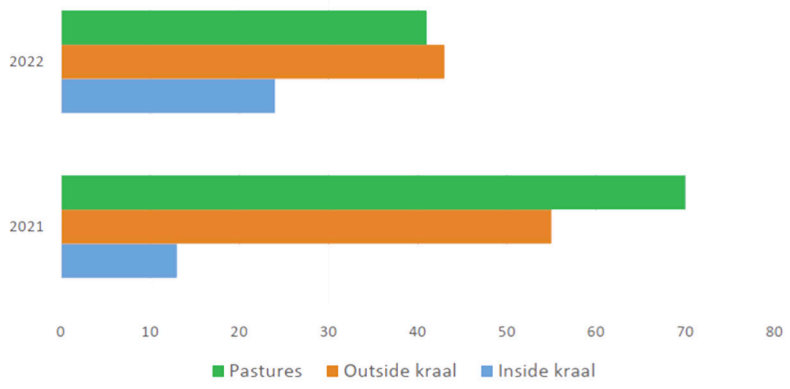


Figure 3

Text box 3

The Wildlife Conservation Action team in Nyaminyami collaborated with the Matusadona Conservation Trust (MCT) during their mobile boma sensitization and installation meetings in Kasvisva and Nebiri areas. Mr. Siadembe, one of the beneficiaries of WCA's mobile bomas from Mola, delivered a comprehensive presentation on the success of mobile bomas in safeguarding livestock from nocturnal predators and their positive impact on soil fertility.

Community members embraced the idea of utilizing mobile bomas to foster harmonious coexistence with wildlife. They also stressed the importance of exploring effective elephant deterrence methods. The demand for mobile bomas in the Kasvisva and Nebiri communities is high. As a response, the Nyaminyami Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) mitigation team attended a Matusadona Conservation Trust workshop on chili farming, including harvesting techniques and the production of chili bricks and bombs, which are currently employed in other regions to deter elephants from crop fields. An Agricultural Extension Officer provided guidance on planting, harvesting, and the preparation of chili bricks and bombs, while emphasizing safety precautions.

Farmers expressed their willingness to use chili peppers to deter elephants from their fields and suggested that organizations should investigate alternative methods like energizers for elephant deterrence. Witnessing the effectiveness of chili peppers in protecting crops from elephant raids reinforced this commitment.

The Nyaminyami Human Wildlife Conflict mitigation team organized a workshop that brought together local leadership, community lead farmers, and mobile boma beneficiaries. Key partners such as Matusadona Conservation Trust, Nyaminyami Rural District Council, and African Bush Camps were also in attendance. The central focus of the workshop was to enlighten farmers about their responsibility in livestock care and the importance of adopting sound livestock management practices, both in kraals and pastures. The Nyaminyami HWC Project Officer provided an update on livestock losses attributed to poor livestock management. Additionally, a mobile boma beneficiary presented on the dual benefits of mobile bomas in protecting livestock and enhancing soil fertility.

A total of five livestock husbandry management workshops were conducted in both Ward 3 and Ward 4, with a participation of 152 community members, including our partners. This demonstrates the community's enthusiasm to learn and enhance their livestock management skills. Farmers pledged to collaborate with the Community Guardians to collectively combat livestock predation by predators, realizing the need for increased efforts in protecting their livestock. It was also agreed that all problem animals should be directed back into the park to facilitate coexistence with wildlife.

Text box 4

The Nyaminyami Human Wildlife Conflicts mitigation team received 44 lion lights. Three of these were installed at a farmer's homestead in various areas of the kraal, facing outward, and were found to be effective in deterring predators.

Wildlife Conservation Action purchased agro-vet chemicals and salt blocks (as supplementary foods) for farmers in Nyaminyami. These were used for livestock treatment and to reduce the risk of disease transmission between domestic animals and wildlife. Meetings were held in both Ward 3 and Ward 4, where committees were established to oversee the use and management of these agro chemicals.

Various types of chemicals and supplements were purchased, including Hi-tet 120, penstrep 400 LA, Valbazen, Tickbuster, dip tank packs, deadline, liquid paraffin, Hitet 200, Tryponil, Albendazole tablets, salt blocks, and seeds. Committees were formed in each ward, and livestock treatment would only be administered in the presence of committee members and Agritex or veterinary officers. A signed document by committee members was implemented to ensure accountability and transparency during chemical usage.

An industrial mobile boma sewing machine was acquired, providing job opportunities for two community members who were trained and employed by WCA as mobile boma tailors. They successfully sewed and installed 30 mobile bomas in Mola Ward 3 and Ward 4.

The Wildlife Conservation Action team joined the Matusadona Conservation Trust and engaged with Mola High School students for a bird identification day. This educational activity included a park walk to identify various bird species and their preferred habitats. The importance of birds to the environment was explained, highlighting how certain bird behaviors can indicate changes in climate and help identify areas with dangerous animals or creatures. The students not only enjoyed the experience but also developed a keen interest in bird and wildlife protection.

Mbire
Human-Wildlife Coexistence Project

The project's objective is to improve HWC mitigation and monitoring in Mbire District hotspot areas. It is specifically addressing human-carnivore mitigation through provision of predator proof cattle bomas and reinforcement of existing conventional livestock kraals.

The project is also collaborating with community scouts as a way to harness indigenous knowledge and integrate it with modern human wildlife conflict mitigation strategies in order to achieve excellent outcomes because community involvement is essential to the success of conservation efforts.

02 PROJECT

Text box 5

The Mbire project commenced in March 2022, and Wildlife Conservation Action (WCA) convened the first meeting of the Human-Wildlife Coexistence Committee. This committee comprises 17 individuals representing various stakeholders involved in Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) within the district. These stakeholders include Mbire Rural District Council, the Environment Management Agency, the Forestry Commission, Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority, Community Scouts, the District Development Coordinator, Agricultural Extension Services (AGRITEX), the Veterinary Department, and the African Wildlife Foundation (AWF).

During this meeting, the project's objectives were presented and explained to the committee. Hotspot areas for human-carnivore conflicts in the district were identified. Drivers of human-carnivore conflicts, such as habitat fragmentation and human settlements in wildlife corridors, were discussed. The meeting also delved into the mitigation strategies employed by farmers in the district against livestock predation, which included traditional livestock enclosures, livestock herding, and the use of chili to deter hyenas in certain wards.

A community engagement plan was developed, and committee members agreed to conduct a series of activities, including workshops with community leaders (both traditional and political), household surveys, focus group discussions, and community consultations.

During the second meeting of the Human-Wildlife Coexistence Committee, hotspot wards for human-carnivore conflicts were ranked based on the severity of the conflict. The ranking placed Ward 10 as the most affected by lions and hyenas, followed by Wards 8, 16, 2, 12, 17, 15, 4, 1, 3, 11, 6, 14, 9, and 5 as the least affected.

A human-wildlife coexistence workshop was held with traditional and community leaders to introduce the project to these key stakeholders. The workshop aimed to understand how they manage their wildlife and natural resources, and the project's activity plan was presented and discussed with the participants. The project received a warm welcome from the leadership, who also provided valuable input on how to collect conflict data effectively in the district.

During the workshop, participants expressed their concerns about the significant livestock predation in the district, primarily attributed to hyenas and lions. They proposed several mitigation strategies, including raising awareness, implementing signage around wildlife areas, and relocating villagers who had unlawfully settled in wildlife corridors. The project's activity plan received unanimous approval from all workshop participants, underscoring their commitment to addressing these critical issues.

Text box 6

The third meeting of the Human-Wildlife Coexistence Committee took place in July 2022. During this meeting, the findings from the baseline data collection activity were presented, and the mitigation strategies to be implemented were identified. In this meeting, a human-carnivore conflict mitigation strategy was developed. Committee members reached a consensus to conduct demonstrations on the construction of robust and standard kraals for both small and large ruminant livestock in Wards 8, 10, and 16. This decision was based on the results of the baseline data collection and community consultation activities carried out in the previous quarter.

Text box 7

Community environmental education and awareness were conducted in seven wards of Mbire District, led by the Mbire Rural District Council and involving various stakeholders, including WCA. The main objective was to educate communities on the significance of wildlife and natural resource conservation. Communities were informed about the advantages of kraaling and herding practices, as it had been observed that many villagers were not consistently herding their livestock. This activity aimed to foster positive attitudes toward wildlife conservation, enhance knowledge about wildlife conservation, and promote an understanding of environmental laws.

One of the notable achievements of this initiative was the opportunity to address questions and concerns related to conservation. Emphasis was placed on discouraging participation in snare setting and poaching, while encouraging increased community involvement in anti-poaching activities. Communities were also educated on how to report incidents of livestock predation and other wildlife encounters, contributing to the monitoring of conflict patterns and wildlife movements.

In collaboration with the Mbire Rural District Council, the Forestry Commission, and the Environment Management Agency (EMA), veldfire management activities were carried out.

The primary goal of this campaign was to enhance community preparedness, prevention, suppression, and recovery strategies as vital components of veldfire management. The rising frequency of disasters such as veldfires poses significant threats to biodiversity, which deeply concerns the community. Therefore, communities were educated about the causes and effects of veldfires, as well as the creation of fireguards and other methods to prevent veldfires. Members were encouraged to establish fire guards or breaks that were sufficiently wide and long to effectively prevent the spread of veldfires to neighboring wards and wildlife areas. Enhanced communication among community members in response to fire hazards, which can have a detrimental impact on the environment, was also emphasized.

Between May 2021 and December 2021, the Community Guardians addressed a total of 139 human-wildlife conflict incidents. In the following year, between January 2022 and December 2022, they responded to 142 such incidents, offering personalized advice to each victim of human-wildlife conflict.

Tragically, in 2022, three individuals lost their lives due to elephant encounters, and one person was fatally injured by a buffalo. Despite these challenges, it's encouraging to note that the overall incidence of conflict decreased, dropping from an average of 17 incidents per month in 2021 to 12 incidents per month in 2022.

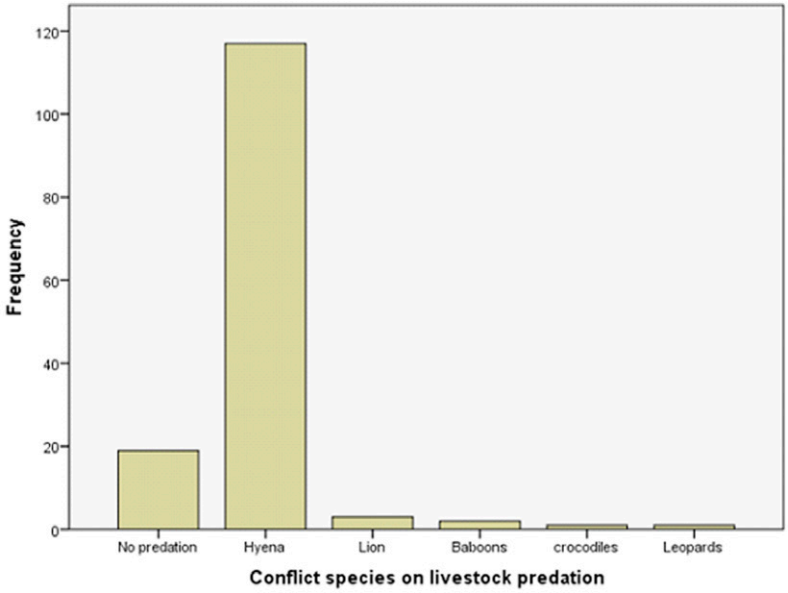


Figure 4: Conflict species on livestock predation

Shangani
Canivore Project

This project seeks to carry out a fine scale assessment of the ecology and conservation of four of Africa's largest carnivores on a privately owned game and livestock ranch. Many top-order predators have been extirpated from private land because of the perceptions that they deplete herbivore species and predate on livestock and this has had a negative influence on the population of large carnivores and their conservation on ranches and conservancies.

03 PROJECT

Text box 8

The Shangani Ranch Large Carnivore Project was established with the aim of exploring opportunities for the conservation of large carnivores on private land. The project team consists of the Project Manager and two student interns selected from local universities, who are attached to the project for periods ranging from 9 to 12 months. Since its inception, the project has confirmed the presence of at least three large carnivores: leopard (Panthera pardus), brown hyena (Hyaena brunnea), and spotted hyena (Crocuta crocuta). The team conducted field activities such as scat collection, leopard baiting, leopard collaring, and kill site investigations to gain insights into the ecology of these large carnivores. In addition to these activities, the team conducted camera trapping and road count exercises to better understand the spatiotemporal behavior, densities, and age-sex characteristics of their prey species.

Camera Trapping: Utilizing a 36-point camera trapping grid, we have completed a total of five camera trapping surveys. These surveys help us understand the spatiotemporal behavior of different wildlife species. They were conducted during the early dry and late dry seasons each year.

We encountered challenges similar to those faced in camera trapping surveys elsewhere, such as theft and vandalism. Regrettably, we lost 12 camera traps to theft or vandalism, which is a significant challenge due to the prevalence of illegal activities in protected areas.

We calculate camera trapping rates and perform occupancy analysis for all large carnivores and important herbivore species as part of our preliminary data analysis. Camera trapping rates serve as a valuable index for species density and distribution and exhibit a strong linear relationship. For instance, a decrease in the camera trapping rate could indicate a potential change in the density and/or distribution of that species. In the case of the large carnivores we studied, we observed a decrease from 2.32 to 0.05 for the brown hyena. This led us to speculate that there may have been a decrease in their densities and/or distribution, which was supported by the observation that it was increasingly difficult to capture brown hyenas feeding at our bait sites, eventually leading to their exclusion from the carnivore collaring plan.

Regarding herbivore species, we focused on impala, kudu, and zebra. We observed a gradual decrease in camera trapping rates for impala (from 22.76 to 14.15) and zebra (from 18.27 to 11.65), while it remained unchanged for kudu. However, it is important to note that impala consistently exhibited the highest camera trapping rates across all surveys, as expected due to their high densities and widespread distribution within Shangani Holistic Ranch.

Text box 9

We used a simple method to see how often certain animals were found in different areas. We saw that some large carnivores like leopards, spotted hyenas, and brown hyenas were appearing less frequently in these areas. This could be because of changes in how we studied them or maybe changes in their populations. Among them, leopards were seen more often compared to the others, suggesting they might be more common.

For herbivores like impalas, kudus, and zebras, we noticed that they were also appearing less frequently. However, zebras, even though they aren't as common as impalas, were seen quite a bit. This might be because zebras are good at living in different parts of the area.

Regarding road counts, our team has conducted three road count surveys to date. Road counts employ a distance sampling technique to estimate animal densities using roads as transect strips, which is particularly useful for less cryptic species like herbivores. In Shangani Holistic Ranch, road counts are conducted over 3-5 days, utilizing five transects (T1-T5) with an average length of 26.6 kilometers. We have observed a total of 15 species during road counts, including baboon, black-backed jackal, common duiker, eland, elephant, giraffe, impala, kudu, sable, steenbok, tsessebe, vervet monkey, warthog, waterbuck, and zebra. The density of selected herbivore species from 2019 to 2022 was calculated using the distance package in R, along with the computation of age-sex structures for the same herbivore species.

It is worth noting that visibility likely affected both the density estimates and age-sex structures for all species due to an increased level of bush encroachment within Shangani Holistic Ranch.

For impalas, we noticed a significant increase in their numbers in 2021, which was quite different from the previous years when their population was more stable, ranging from 5.00 to 8.00 per square kilometer. This kind of up-and-down pattern has been seen in impala populations in Shangani Holistic Ranch before, where their numbers go up and down every few years. We also saw that there were more female impalas in the adult and subadult age groups, but the numbers varied among the young ones.

As for zebras, the numbers were a bit tricky to figure out from 2020 to 2022 because we saw fewer of them, but when we did see them, they were in big groups. So, we couldn't confidently say much about their population during that time. The last number we could be sure of was 1.62 per square kilometer in 2019. Similar to impalas, we saw more female zebras among the adults, but it was hard to say for the young ones.

For kudus, we noticed a gradual decrease in their numbers, going from 3.55 per square kilometer in 2019 to 2.11 per square kilometer in 2022. Just like with impalas and zebras, we saw more female kudus in the adult and subadult age groups, but it was unclear for the young ones. There was also a concerning drop in the number of adult males, which could mean that

they were being hunted more than the females in the same group. These observations suggest that wildlife in Shangani Holistic Ranch might be facing disturbances, like illegal hunting, which often leads to populations with more females than males, from birth to adulthood.

We've been studying what carnivores like leopards, spotted hyenas, and brown hyenas eat. To do this, we collect their scats (poop) and investigate sites where they've made kills. So far, we've gathered 198 carnivore scats, with 95 from spotted hyenas, 72 from leopards, and 31 from brown hyenas. We haven't found any cheetah scat yet. Althought we've cleaned and described all the scats we've collected in the first and second years of the project, we haven't yet determined what the animals ate by examining scale patterns and cross sections. However, one of our student interns is working on this as part of an undergraduate project.

While we wait for the scat data, we've used information from kill site investigations to get an idea of what leopards mainly prey on in Shangani Holistic. We investigate kill sites using GPS data, accidental discoveries, and reports of livestock being attacked. From these investigations, we looked into 41 kill sites between February 2021 and August 2021, and then from October 2022 to December 2022 when we had collared leopards.

During these investigations, we identified 10 types of prey, including impala, cattle, kudu, warthog, zebra, common duiker, scrub hare, steenbok, goat, and sheep. Impala and cattle were the most common prey items, making up 36.59% and 24.39% of the kills, respectively. On average, we found the remains of the prey about 350 meters from the road and 400 meters from water sources, in areas with moderate visibility.

We used telemetry to track the movements of carnivores. In the first year of the project, we baited, collared, and monitored two leopards, a female and a male. However, we later removed their collars and decided to focus our efforts on leopards only. Baiting for brown and spotted hyenas was stopped.

In October 2022, we successfully collared a female leopard named Nancie, and we've been monitoring her since then. The average home range sizes for the leopards we have collared up to now are as follows:

Nancie (Female) with a home range of 24.19 square kilometers.
Anita (Female) with a home range of 33.07 square kilometers.
Otin (Male), with the home range size yet to be provided.

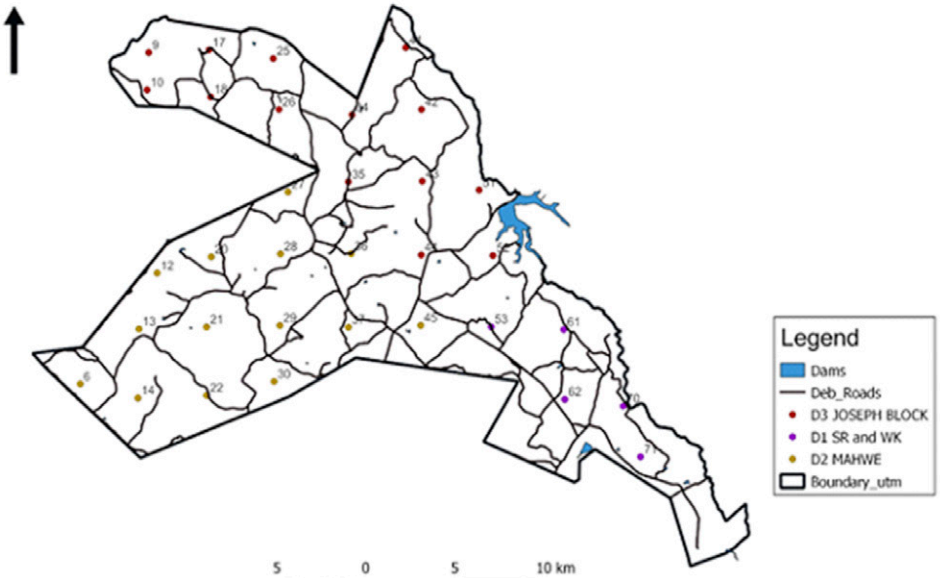


Figure 5

Table 1: Naive Occupancy (%) for selected herbivore species 2020-2022.

Species	Sept/Oct 20	Apr/May 21	Oct/Nov 21	Jun/Jul 22	Sept/Oct 22
Impala	75.00%	63.89%	55.55%	25.00%	44.44%
Kudu	58.33%	63.89%	41.66%	22.22%	33.33%
Common Duiker	63.89%	47.22%	33.33%	19.44%	30.56%
Warthog	63.89%	52.78%	33.33%	16.67%	27.78%
Zebra	83.33%	66.67%	77.78%	33.33%	61.11%

**Simple single season occupancy analysis [model=psi(.)p(.)].*

Table 2: Naive occupancy (%) for carnivore species 2020-2022.

Species	Sept/Oct 20	Apr/May 21	Oct/Nov 21	Jun/Jul 22	Sept/Oct 22
Leopard	30.56%	25.00%	16.67%	8.34%	13.89%
Spotted Hyena	19.44%	11.11%	13.89%	5.55%	13.89%
Brown Hyena	25.00%	11.11%	8.33%	2.77%	α

**Simple single season occupancy analysis [model=psi(.)p(.)].* α = no detections for the survey.

Table 3: Density Estimates for Impala 2019-2022 in Shangani Ranch.

Year	Model	Density	se	cv	lcl	ucl
2019	Hazard-rate key function	**7.81**	2.61	0.34	2.76	21.98
2020	Hazard-rate key function	**5.89**	2.59	0.44	0.92	37.64
2021	Uniform key function + cosine adjustment	**15.65**	4.78	0.31	7.04	34.82
2022	Hazard-rate key function	**8.05**	2.43	0.30	4.12	15.72

A total of 56-mammalian and 4-avian species were captured in our 2-camera trapping surveys. Some of the images captured are shown below.

Schools
Environmental Education

Guardians of the Wild

This program is focused on equipping local communities with wildlife and environmental conservation knowledge and alternative livelihood skills. The program's overall goal is to increase community involvement in conservation initiatives through the transmission of information and skills. We believe that education and awareness can influence local communities' behavior, resulting in a harmonious coexistence between people and wildlife.

04 PROJECT

Text box 10

The Environmental Education and Awareness team at WCA has been working hard to make sure that both school children and the general public are well-informed about biodiversity conservation. This helps to improve community knowledge and involvement in conservation efforts. In March 2022, we launched a program called “Guardians of the Wild” (GOTW).

Throughout 2022, we partnered with sixteen private schools in Harare, including five primary schools and eleven secondary schools, as part of the GOTW program. These schools were given lesson plans for their conservation and environmental clubs, and they also took part in our events. These events included a seminar, a field trip, and an environmental day celebration.

In total, we educated 651 students, with 255 from high schools and 360 from primary schools, on various environmental and conservation topics. Our team conducted approximately 52 lessons in the schools that participated in the GOTW program.

Text box 11

The GOTW program hosted five interschool events in 2022, including a launch event, a patron workshop, two seminars, and a World Rhino Day event. Here's a summary of these events:

01. Launch Event (March)

Held at The Heritage Senior School in Borrowdale, Harare, this event was attended by Dominican Convent Senior School, Red Cross Independent College, and The Heritage School. Each school presented their knowledge of conservation and the initiatives they were undertaking. A representative from the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Authority educated students about their role in preserving wildlife resources.

02. Patron Workshop

This workshop was organized to train club patrons on how to effectively use our lesson plan materials and assessment tools. All schools signed up for our program attended, enabling the program to roll out more effectively.

03. First Term

Schools completed one lesson plan and participated in a seminar on Wildlife Crime and Protection. Two schools collaborated on the Earth Hour Campaign with the World Wildlife Fund.

04. Second Term

Activities included an environmental day commemoration and Rhino Day. Four high schools and one primary school participated in the commemorations, showcasing their knowledge of rhino species and conservation. Westridge High School students delivered an exceptional skit highlighting community-based Rhino Conservation.

05. Third Term

The first field trip took place at Lake Chivero Game Park for the mammals lesson plan. A total of 83 students from three high schools attended. Awards were given to schools and students for excellence. Three high school students and one primary school student received awards for their outstanding participation. Maranatha High School won the first prize for the best Project Innovation, specifically for their excellence in Protected Area recreation.

In 2022, we hosted two webinars to address pressing conservation challenges. These discussions focused on the growth of elephant populations, human-wildlife conflict, and the role individuals with disabilities can play in conservation. Our webinars brought together a diverse group of experts and participants, helping local communities better understand these important topics. By raising awareness of these issues, we made strides in fulfilling our organization's objectives.

Community
Environmental Education and Awareness

To reach a broader audience beyond schools, we've been actively engaging local communities through various online initiatives. This includes sharing conservation awareness through social media, interactive webinars, and informative blog posts. To enhance the effectiveness of our efforts, we brought on board a student with expertise in content creation and web design.

Our strategy on WCA's social media platforms proved highly effective in raising conservation awareness among the general public. By the end of 2022, we had reached over 3.5 million individuals through Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

1990 Followers

646 Followers

425 Followers

590 Followers

In an effort to highlight and celebrate Zimbabwean women in the conservation sector, we introduced a "Women Crush Wednesday" campaign on our website and social media platforms. This campaign aimed to showcase the achievements and contributions of these women, inspiring and encouraging more women to pursue careers in conservation. Every Wednesday, we featured a different woman and shared her unique story and journey in the conservation field. In 2022, a total of 17 remarkable women were profiled. These stories served as a source of motivation and inspiration, helping other women in the conservation field overcome challenges as they learned from the experiences of their peers.

The WCA team initiated the “Animal Crush Monday” social media campaign to educate and raise awareness about the diverse wildlife found in Zimbabwe and Africa. Each week, the campaign introduced the audience to different wildlife species, accompanied by intriguing facts about these animals. This platform allowed WCA to address prevailing beliefs and stereotypes in local communities concerning certain animal species, including vultures, hyenas, and owls. These creatures, despite their vital roles in the ecosystem, often face threats from human activities. In total, 51 educational infographics were created, and the campaign also featured informative videos to further educate the public.

Our **Partners**

WWF

Lion Recovery Fund

AFRICAN WILDLIFE FOUNDATION

African BUSH CAMPS

MRDC

RESEARCH AND CONSERVATION OPPENHEIMER

Matusadona National Park Zimbabwe

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