

DOG TAILS

ISSUE #1

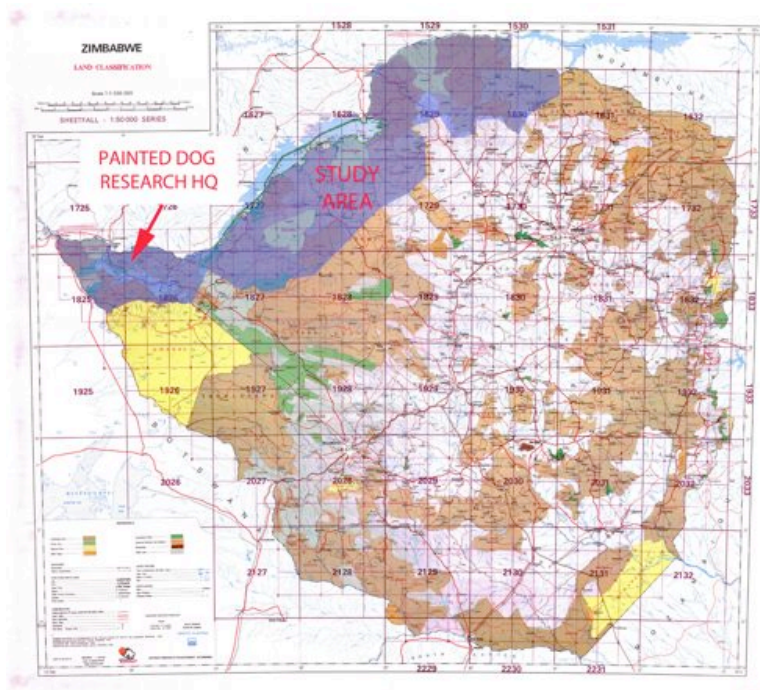
JUNE 30, 2014



Welcome to the inaugural issue of Dog Tails from Painted Dog Research Trust.

The New Year brought enormous changes, experiences and directions for Dr. Greg Rasmussen. Greg who 25 years ago started researching Painted Dogs that led to the foundation of Painted Dog Conservation, now has left PDC and has established Painted Dog Research Trust. This move facilitates meaningful opportunities for Dr. Greg and his students to concentrate on better science and to focus on Zimbabwe's largest painted dog populations residing along the Zambezi river from Kazungula to Kanyemba (see map). This change also offers the exciting chance to pursue his dream of constructing a conservation ecology centre to further the progress of young Zimbabwean as well as international students with the intention of inspiring them to be future conservationists.

February was a month of negotiations with the Rural District Council and Village of Sizinda on the perimeter of Victoria Falls, to secure a piece of property for Greg's new base of operations and Centre. The Painted Dog Research Trust was legally formed with noted Board Members: Dr. Chris Magadza, Nobel Laureate, University of Zimbabwe, Margie Gibson (Greg's post-crash physiotherapist), and Dave Gardner from Harare. MK will continue to assist Dr. Greg and a large contingent of his students have opted to continue their studies with him at the Sizinda base of operations. Hearteningly they also are helping with construction of the new site.



March was a month of travel for Dr. Greg, returning to the US starting with a visit to Dr. Richard Bergl and Corinne Kendall at the North Carolina Zoo to set custom made cyber-tracking parameters for collection of sightings and fecal samples using tablets. Then on a plane to Sea World Orlando, Florida to network with Emerging Wildlife Conservation Leaders (EWCL) Brandon Davis for an update on the protective collar initiative for which Dr. Greg is principal investigator. Then over to Sea

World Tampa, Florida for a lovely dinner with Amber Wisler and Rob Yordy. Another hop to Houston Zoo to see Brandon Paterson who is currently working on a new prototype collar to be field-tested by the Working Dogs for Conservation Group. While in Houston, at the behest of PDRT supporter Elizabeth Cosgrove, Rene Bumpus arranged for Greg to make a presentation at a West University Elementary School in Houston to a very inspired class. Another flight to the West Coast took Greg to San Jose, California to finalize the electronic components for the new collar design. Then a quick hop up to San Francisco to discuss with Wildlife Conservation Network the establishment of PDRT and future collaboration efforts with WCN. Next was a red-eye flight to St. Louis, Missouri where an ardent supporter happily met him at the airport at 4:00 a.m. Regina Mosotti arranged for Greg's presentation to the Endangered Wolf Center group and a link-up with St. Louis Zoo studies on stress and reproductive hormones and their impact on non-breeding animals. Back to the East Coast for prawns and crabs at Captain White's Fish Market in Washington DC and a presentation to Africa Wildlife Foundation on the current trans-boundary and corridor work being undertaken. This was followed by an always enjoyable visit for updates with Nina Fascione and team at Defenders of Wildlife.

Next on the rigorous itinerary was across the Atlantic for a short stop in England where Greg met with Jerry Ranger at Power Traveller to discuss solar power for a new protective collar that will reduce overall weight and extend life expectancy.

Back on another plane to The Netherlands where Greg was keynote speaker at the three-day 1st European Painted Dog Workshop. Then over to Belgium for a visit to the Veterinary Department at University of Ghent to establish collaborative efforts for research of painted dog anatomy and physiology. Back to Artis Zoo in The Netherlands to consult on a den box design.

Three continents and four countries, returning to Zimbabwe in April to start construction of the key buildings for PDRT. Greg's students are on-site to learn efficient and conservation minded construction methods and practices, one being to incorporate lizard habitat in the form of an intricate rockery. Not to mention drilling in holes in bedrock rock to provide for both a water cistern that will form part of a water reclamation scheme, and rock for building.

April 25th was yet another flight from Zimbabwe to the US to be keynote speaker at the four-day 2nd Annual Painted Dog Conference held at Brookfield Zoo, Chicago. Here Greg met with Dara Kelly, staff member from Brookfield Zoo, who kindly set up and manages the Painted Dog Research Trust Facebook page. [.<https://www.facebook.com/painteddogresearchtrust>](https://www.facebook.com/painteddogresearchtrust) . Here a lot of the day to day progress can be followed on the various building projects as well as Painted dog news.



May continued with great progress in building construction with a mid-month break for Greg and graduate students who presented papers at the AHEAD Trans-boundary Workshop held in Hwange. Greg's presentation was his current work on satellite imagery; Tendai Nekatambe, working on her Masters, presented her work on

footprint recognition through computer analysis; and Tafadzwa Shumba spoke on painted dog dynamics in Hwange and Mana Pools National Parks. Mary Wasserman rejoined the team to help organize Greg and arrived with designs for the student study/sleep rondavels and ancillary buildings architecturally prepared by Magnolia Jao, ready to build!

June was time for Greg and MK to head to Mana Pools for the start of denning season, where they located the Vundu packs that were 9 dogs short. The big question remains.. WHERE have they gone?? Answering where dispersing painted dogs disappear to, is going to be one of the major foci for the study. Tragically, the last time dogs dispersed from the Vundu pack because one had a satellite collar it was found that they only survived a few weeks as they dispersed into Mozambique and were snared. On a happier note, Tait the Alpha female of the Vundu pack was seen well and heavily pregnant with about 9 days to go. Also on the trip Greg co-hosting with Steve Leonard avid painted dog supporters from the UK and US on a tour organized by Liz Drake of Spencer Scott. A lot of dog talk was done and Steve kindly went through Greg's darting box with Greg, MK and the group providing valuable information on how to manage severely injured dogs and particularly those in shock from being hit by cars. Also joining Greg and MK was great friend and supporter of Painted dogs, Ron Van der A, chairman of the foundation "Stichting Painted Dog Conservation" from Netherlands, which is dedicated to supporting the conservation of Painted Dogs.



Tait Pregnant with some days to go. Excuse the date time stamp as its obligatory on a research photo.

Flipping through the calendar pages for the balance of the year shows promise of the new buildings under roof, more chaotic travel schedules, student lessons and lectures and continued advancements with painted dogs around the world.

Thank you for your continuing support and hope you are looking forward to the next issue of PDRT Dog Tails.

In addition to those named in the Newsletter we wish to acknowledge those that have kindly made donations or have helped with good friendship and support and over these last and exceptionally critical six months. THANK YOU.

Our new mailing address is:

Painted Dog Research Trust

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Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe

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Donations, which must be designated as being for "Painted Dog Research", can be made via

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USA : Africa Environment US <elainejolson@gmail.com>

Australasia: Painted Dog Conservation Inc AUSTRALIA<lemonj@osemail.com.au