



WAG-SA WEBSITE LAUNCHED FOR WILD DOG SALVATION

Start

Today saw the successful launch of the Wild Dog Advisory Group South Africa (WAG-SA) website at www.wagsa.org.za developed by the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) in consultation with WAG-SA participants. WAG-SA is a collaborative advisory group made up of key stakeholders in the fight to keep South Africa's Endangered Wild Dogs alive, including reserve managers, landowners, researchers, veterinarians, non-governmental organisations and provincial representatives.

The website provides an online resource to guide national African Wild Dog management, to inform relevant stakeholders and to educate the general public. Furthermore it provides detailed information on the current status and ranges of African Wild Dogs in South Africa, all aspects of management of the species, as well as links to current and past research projects and literature – all of which will aid conservation decision making.

Said Brendan Whittington-Jones, Coordinator for the National Wild Dog Metapopulation Project: "There are, approximately 5,500 free-ranging African Wild Dogs left in Africa. They have disappeared from at least 25 countries during the past 50 years. With fewer than 450 free ranging African Wild Dogs left in South Africa it is the country's rarest carnivore."

WAG-SA, which operates under the auspices of the IUCN's Canid Specialist Group, was established in 1997 to monitor and facilitate the development and maintenance of the managed Wild Dog metapopulation in South Africa. The managed metapopulation comprises a series of geographically isolated private and state reserves that are capable of sustaining African Wild Dogs, but which need continual, intensive, collaborative efforts to manage these subpopulations as one, collective metapopulation. WAG-SA acts as a platform for reserve managers and interested parties to present and discuss Wild Dog metapopulation challenges and issues and, as a group, to recommend solutions. In this regard WAG-SA also collaborates closely with individuals and institutions actively involved with both the captive population and unmanaged free-roaming populations of the species, both in South Africa and throughout the region. These include provincial bodies, such as Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife and North West Parks and Tourism, as well as national bodies such as the National Zoological Gardens. Decisions made regarding the reintroduction and translocations of Wild Dogs within the managed metapopulation are made at WAG-SA meetings.

"Managing this species in South Africa is particularly complex as a result of the African Wild Dog's social dynamics and the significant threat posed by habitat fragmentation, continued persecution in some areas of South Africa, and snaring and vehicle strikes. The challenge remains to ensure active participation from metapopulation reserve members and to establish safe-passage landscape

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The Endangered Wildlife Trust is a non-profit, public benefit organisation dedicated to conserving species and ecosystems in southern Africa to the benefit of all people.

NPO Number: 015-502, **PBO number:** 930 001 777, **Member of IUCN** - The International Union for Conservation of Nature
The Endangered Wildlife Trust is US 501(c)(3) compliant under **US IRS Registration number:** EMP98-0586801.



linkages between subpopulations. This will allow for natural dispersals from among resident populations and ultimately reduce the intensive requirements of population management currently necessary due to the fact that the populations are geographically isolated," continued Whittington-Jones.

For further information about the Wild Dog Advisory Group and the EWT's National Metapopulation Project contact Brendan Whittington-Jones on brendanw@ewt.org.za. The EWT's Wild Dog conservation efforts are supported by Jaguar Land Rover South Africa, Land Rover Centurion, Richard Bosman, Vaughan de la Harpe, the South African Mint, Investec Property, Knowsely Safari Park and Global Supplies.

End

NOTES TO THE EDITOR

About the Endangered Wildlife Trust

The Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) is dedicated to conserving threatened species and ecosystems in southern Africa to the benefit of all people. Our Vision is a healthy planet and an equitable world that values and sustains diversity of all life. The EWT was established in 1973 and is registered as a Non-Profit Organisation. The EWT fills the key niche of on the ground conservation action. We identify the key factors threatening biodiversity and develop innovative methodologies and best practice guidelines to reduce these and promote harmonious co-existence and sustainable living for both people and wildlife. We achieve our goals through specialist programmes, and our skilled field staff are deployed regionally and throughout southern Africa. The EWT is a proud member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature and the United Nations Global Compact. Visit www.ewt.org.za for further information.

About the Wild Dog Advisory Group South Africa

The Wild Dog Advisory Group South Africa (WAG-SA), which operates under the auspices of the IUCN's Canid Specialist Group, was established in 1997 to monitor and facilitate the development and maintenance of the managed Wild Dog metapopulation in South Africa. Active participants include Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, North West Parks and Tourism Board, Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism, Wildlife ACT, SANParks, University of Pretoria, the Endangered Wildlife Trust, Mpumalanga Parks and Tourism Agency, the National Zoological Gardens, the African Association of Zoos and Aquaria, Rhodes University and several private individuals. Visit www.wagsa.org.za for more information.

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