



## LARGE CARNIVORES WIN IN THE WATERBERG PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

*Start*

The results are in for the Endangered Wildlife Trust's Carnivore Conservation Programme (EWT-CCP) Waterberg photographic competition! The aim of the competition was to gather data on the numbers, distribution and habits of large carnivores living in the Waterberg area; and, as a result, to reduce conflict between people in the region and these charismatic predators.

Said Kelly Marnewick, Manager of the EWT-CCP: "We had an overwhelmingly positive response to the competition. Photographs were submitted by land owners, hunters, tourists and reserve managers and they are all valuable as they will help us to learn more about the Leopards, Cheetahs, Hyaenas and Wild Dogs of this valuable conservation area."

Leopards, Brown Hyaenas, Cheetahs and African Wild Dogs are found throughout the Waterberg in farmland as well as in protected areas and while some people consider them a rare and important component of the ecosystem, others view them as a danger to their livestock and livelihood. Very little is known about how large carnivores function outside protected areas including breeding, intra-specific interactions and population sizes. In order to make sound decisions about conserving, managing or utilising carnivore populations, it is critical to first have an understanding where they occur and in what numbers they occur in.

"The Waterberg is an extremely important region as it is the only unprotected area where the large carnivore guild is mostly in-tact, with the exception of Lions, and the only unprotected population of African Wild Dogs occurs in the area," continued Marnewick.

60 entries were received and comprised 24 Leopard entries, 11 Cheetah entries, eight Brown Hyaena, 12 African Wild Dogs, two Lions (in protected areas), one Serval and one Jackal.

First prize in the competition goes to Scott van Zyl of SS Pro Safaris. Scott submitted camera trap video footage of a Brown Hyaena and a treed Leopard having a bit of a stand-off at a bait. This is very interesting as we don't know much about dietary niche partitioning and inter-specific interactions between large carnivores in areas where there is no facilitation by Lions and Spotted Hyaenas. It was fascinating to see the direct competition over a carcass. Scott's prize is a two night

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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  
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stay for two at the elegant Makweti Safari lodge in Welgevonden Game Reserve valued at R18 000 – including meals and safaris.

The second prize belongs to Wimpie Pretorius of Nungu Private Game Reserve. Wimpie entered a camera trap photo of three Leopards. Leopards are seldom observed in groups and this is likely a female with her two, sub-adult cubs. The sighting is highly unusual and was made even more delightful by the playful behaviour of one of the Leopards chewing the others tail. Wimpie wins a 7 night self-catering stay at a luxury cottage in the Waterberg's Izintaba Private Game Reserve valued at R10 400.

Third Prize goes to Dean from Koshari Game Lodge. Dean sent us several camera trap photos of young Brown Hyaenas at their den. There are very few records of these animals breeding outside protected areas and this entry adds to our knowledge of the species. Dean's prize is a Reconyx HC-600 Hyperfire TM trail camera from Reconyx valued at R 7000.

The Waterberg photographic competition is kindly sponsored by Land Rover Centurion, Camera Traps CC, the Izintaba Private Game Reserve, the Makweti Safari Lodge, the Welgevonden Game Reserve and Knowsley Safari Park. Many thanks too to all who entered the competition. All of videos and photographs will help us to implement measures to protect these beautiful carnivores.

*End.*

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