

Jeedala Gazette

ETHIOPIAN WOLF CONSERVATION PROGRAMME

July 2009 | Editor: Zegeye Kibret, Dinsho, Bale Mountains, Ethiopia



Leta and the team vaccinate a wolf. © Anne-Maire Stewart

Saving Sanetti's wolves - Another rabies outbreak strikes in Bale

In May this year the EWCP monitoring and vet teams, accompanied by vets from EWCA and Dr Claudio Sillero, spent two weeks camped on the Sanetti plateau. They worked day and night trapping and vaccinating Ethiopian wolves to prevent a rabies outbreak from spreading through this valuable population.

The team was first alerted to the possibility of a rabies outbreak when the wolf monitors returned from a trip to the West Morebawa population. Here they found 11 wolf carcasses and only counted 23 wolves in a population that should number around 80! Brain samples were taken from the carcasses and were sent to laboratories both in Ethiopia and England. Unfortunately the results were positive for rabies.

EWCP was given permission by the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority to vaccinate 50 wolves in the Sanetti population against rabies, with the aim of isolating the disease and stopping its spread. We sprung into action and successfully vaccinated a total of 48 wolves in nine packs, ensuring that at least one female in each pack was vaccinated. For now, the threat of rabies seems to have been contained, but for how long? Interventions like these are a costly exercise, requiring a hefty investment in terms of both finances and EWCP resources. And it only takes one rabid dog to come into contact with one Ethiopian wolf for the disease to spread like wildfire. Left unchecked, a rabies outbreak could have devastating effects on a species that numbers less than 450 animals in the world today!

Anne-Marie Stewart & Chris Gordon

EDITORIAL PAGE

At the time of putting this issue together, our vet and monitoring teams were battling with yet another rabies outbreak, this time starting in West Morebawa with a rabid dog coming into contact with the wolves. Although our vet teams are working as hard as ever vaccinating more dogs in the wolf range to keep not only the wolves healthy but also people and their livestock, we need your help if we are to be successful. Please help the vet teams by bringing your dogs for vaccinations. It benefits not only Ethiopia's wildlife, but also the health of the communities and their livestock. A study by one of our students, Abera Yilma from Mekelle University's Veterinary Department, has shown that there are more rabies cases in humans, dogs and livestock in the non-vaccinated areas than in the vaccinated areas that our dog vaccination campaign has covered over the years. A summary of this very interesting study is included in this issue.

Please enjoy reading the Gazette, which also includes news on the new Field Director and Technical Coordinator for EWCP, a new nature club in Dinsho and recent achievements of the Arsi education campaign, including the Huruta workshop on increasing awareness of the Ethiopian wolf and the Afroalpine zone of the northern Galama range.

We have also started an art competition with the students of Dinsho Primary School and the winners appear in this issue.

Please stay in touch and keep up the good work.

Together we can make a difference!

**Zegeye Kibret
P.O. Box 215, Bale, Robe, Ethiopia
zegeye.kibret@gmail.com**

LETTERS

Dear Editor

I know that the Ethiopian wolf is among the unique heritage we find only in the mountains of Simien and south eastern highlands, which faces serious threats that could lead to extinction unless we act now. I really appreciate the efforts of EWCP. Thanks for the gazette from which I have learnt many things!

*Sbibru Merfo
Ecotourism guide
Dodola*

Dear Editor

Thank you very much for making me read about my home area in your newsletter. It was fantastic! In north Ethiopia we are carrying out the same conservation efforts for this country. Most of the information in your newsletter is about the Bale highlands massive. Could you include some news from the Simien Mountains, North Wollo, and South Wollo highlands?

*Fekadu Lema
Frankfurt Zoological Society
Afroalpine Ecosystem Conservation Project*

Ed: I hope the new education campaign in the north goes well. We would be happy to include more news about those areas. Please send us your contributions to zegeye.kibret@gmail.com

Dear Editor

I would like to thank Adaba Woreda for their efforts to stop rabies by helping the EWCP vet team during our recent dog vaccinations in Adaba. The collaboration and support of the woreda health, administration and town municipality offices was wonderful. May others follow such paths too, as we are all responsible for saving our natural resources and ensuring we have healthy people and livestock by preventing rabies together.

*Ibrahim Abduke
EWCP Bale Vet Assistant*

Dear Editor

We are planning to establish an environmental club in Dinsho consisting of volunteers from the town and schools, so that we can be hands-on and work towards environmental protection. The work of EWCP has inspired us and it must continue.

*Isayas Abera
Lab technician
Dinsho Secondary School*

NEWS

Arsi Education and Outreach Going Strong

On 15 March 2009 the 2nd EWCP Arsi Workshop was held in Arsi Huruta. This workshop involved local community leaders, school teachers, students, environmental NGO's, representatives from Forest Enterprises and tourism operators. A total of 53 people were present at the workshop. The agenda introduced EWCP and its work, and discussed threats and solutions to wolf conservation specifically and natural resource management in general in the Arsi area. Speakers included Dejene Dame and Zegeye Kibret, the EWCP education officers in Arsi and Bale respectively, and Dr Graham Hemson. The overall response from participants was that the workshop was a resounding success, imparting a better understanding of conservation issues in the area, as well as serving to increase the commitment of those present to play more of a role in environmental activities. In recognition of its conservation efforts, the Arsi education programme was presented with the 2008 Green Forum Award by the Arsi Zonal Administration. Congratulations to our Arsi team!

New leadership For EWCP

After two years in Bale as the EWCP Field Coordinator, Dr Graham Hemson and his wife Vanessa and daughter Edie have moved on, and are settling in Australia. Graham will be missed by all he worked with, and we appreciate his work over the time he was here. But we are happy to welcome two new people to EWCP, Anne-Marie Stewart and husband Chris Gordon, who join us after working in Namibia with cheetah conservation. Anne-Marie, who is EWCP new Field Director, and Chris, the Technical Coordinator, started with EWCP in April. Please welcome them both and give them any assistance and support they require while in Ethiopia.

Anne-Marie and Chris on the Sanetti plateau



GUEST SPEAKER

Farewell from Dr Graham Hemson



Graham's farewell party in Dinsho Lodge @ Graham Hemson

For the past two years my family and I have been living in the Bale Mountains while I coordinated the activities of EWCP in Ethiopia. The challenges the wolf and our team face are many in number and considerable in magnitude. Human population growth and the associated expansions of cultivation and movement of livestock into higher altitudes mean wolves are squeezed closer and closer to the brink of extinction. Compounding this steady increase in pressure is the elevated risk of rabies transmission as more people bring their dogs into the highlands.

The staff of EWCP are the best chance this wonderful species has of seeing out another decade or hopefully century. When rabies exploded into the Bale population late last year our staff responded with total commitment, heading into the mountains to battle the disease with the vaccination campaign. They worked in long shifts 24 hours a day in freezing conditions to ensure the wolves were caught, spent the minimum amount of time in the traps, vaccinated and released. It is a testament to this drive that the epidemic was stopped dead in record time.

Unfortunately our team, and the EWCP programme in general, have felt the effects of the global economic crisis, which has resulted in fewer donations from the public. More than ever we need your support to help us take this project further, and meet our goals for the protection of the endangered Ethiopian wolf and its habitat.

I would like to wish all the team my most heartfelt gratitude from all of my family for how well they treated us. Edie, my two year old daughter, will probably never know such warmth and patience from outside of her family again.

Proof of vaccination success! Combating rabies in kebeles.



An undergraduate student from Mekelle University, Abera Yilma, has been conducting research into the effectiveness of EWCP dog vaccinations in villages surrounding the Bale Mountains National Park, and has come up with some very interesting results.

Abera went from village to village, interviewing community members and farmers about the incidence of rabies in these areas over the past 5 years. Interviewees were asked how many cases of rabies there had been in humans, livestock and dogs. The answers from people in kebeles where vaccinations had not taken place were then compared to those people living in villages where EWCP vaccinations had taken place. The same numbers of people were interviewed in each area.

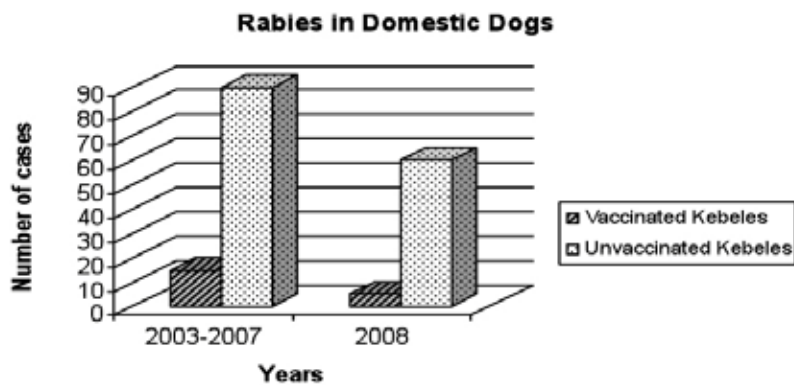
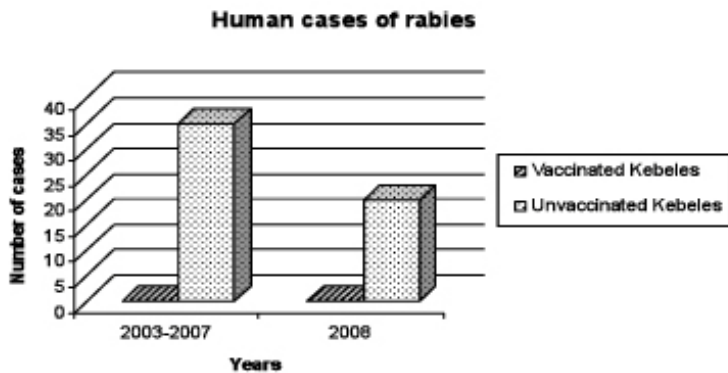
The results clearly showed that the number of rabies cases in unvaccinated kebeles was much higher, often with five times as many rabies cases occurring in these kebeles! In vaccinated kebeles, there were no reported cases of rabies in humans, while in unvaccinated kebeles there were a total of 55 cases in the past 5 years. The number of dogs with rabies was also drastically reduced when they were vaccinated. In the unvaccinated areas there were 150 cases of rabies reported in dogs over the past 5 years, compared to a total of only 20 cases in the vaccinated kebeles.

The table and graphs below clearly illustrate the difference between the vaccinated and unvaccinated kebeles.

Table 1: Number of rabies cases in humans, dogs and livestock: comparing vaccinated and unvaccinated kebeles

	Rabies cases 2003-2007		Rabies cases 2008	
	Unvaccinated Kebeles	Vaccinated Kebeles	Unvaccinated Kebeles	Vaccinated Kebeles
Humans	35	0	20	0
Dogs	90	15	60	5
Cows	70	20	55	5
Sheep	8	2	8	4
Horses/ Donkeys	22	5	11	2





Rabies is a viral disease that can be transmitted from animals to humans, and almost certainly results in death to the infected individual. In Bale, domestic dogs are the major hosts of the disease, passing it on not only to humans and their livestock, but also to the wildlife in the surrounding area. Rabies is the major threat to the survival of the endangered Ethiopian Wolf, and has the potential to wipe out the last remaining populations of this very special species. For the past ten years, the EWCP vet team has worked throughout the Bale area to vaccinate domestic dogs, helping to control and prevent the spread of the disease to humans and animals. Abera's rabies study has proved that vaccinations of domestic dogs are successful in preventing rabies in these villages. Please support the vet team when they come to your village by bringing your dogs to be vaccinated and encouraging your neighbours to do the same. We need your help to combat this disease and save the Ethiopian Wolf.

Talaalliin dhukkuba saree akka balleessu qorannoon mirkanaa'e!

Barataan Abarraa Yilmaa jedhamu Yuniver-sitii Maqalee irraa dhufee wa'ee talaallii sarootaa sagantaa eegumsa Jeedala fardaatiin gandoota nannoo paarkii Gaarreen Baalee keessatti kennamaa jiru irratti qoran-noo adeemsiseen talaalliin sarootaa miidhaa dhukkuba saree maraateetiin gahu akka hir'isu mirkaneessee jira.

Bu'aan qorannoo akka mul'isetti ka'umsi dhukkuba saree maraattee gandoota talaalliin hin kennamne keessatti hanga harka shanii olitti gandoota talaalliin kenname irra caalaa akka ta'e mirkaneeffamee jira.

Naannoo talaalliin kenname keessatti wag-gootaaa shaman darban keessatti dhukkubni saree maraattee namoota irratti kan hin mul'anne yammuu ta'u gandoota talaalliin hin kennamin keessatti immo namoota 55 irratti mul'atee jira. Gandoota talaalliin kenname keessatti saroota 20 irratti yammuu mul'atu gandoota talaalliin hin kennamne keessatti immo saroota 150 irratti mul'atee jira.

Dhukkubni saree maraattee vaayrasii yammuu ta'u saroota, horii ykn bineensota vaayrasii kanaan qabaman irraa namatti ni darba. Harmahosistoonni dhuukuba kanaan qabaman carraan isaan qaban immo du'a qofa dha. Du'a Jeedala fardaatiif sababni guddaan dukkuba saroota irraa itti darbu yammuu ta'u jeedaloota gutuumaan guututti ajjeesee balleessuu ni danda'a. Sagantaan Eedumsa Jeedala Fardaa dhukkubni kun akka hin tamsaane gochuuf waggoota kurnan darbaniif talaaii sarootaa gaarreen Baale keessatti kennaa jira. Qorannoon Abarraan adeemsise akka mul'isetti talaalliin sarootaaf gandoota keessatti kennamu dhukkuba kana dhaabuuf akka qarqaaru mul'isee jira jira. Saroota keessan talaalchisaa!

EWCP



Hinjifattoota waldorgommii fakkii fi walaloo M/b Diinshoo irra

The new nature club in Dinsho (Dinsho Youth Nature Club) is working to protect the environment and raise some money to run the club by growing vegetables in the school garden. They also have a nature area where they will grow indigenous trees as a demonstration site. We want to express our appreciation for their hard work and support to, Abdurahiman Mama, Asfaw Kebede, Demelash and Danel Tilaye.

CLUB PAGE

The Bale Beauty Nature Club is really moving forward with their aim of increasing climate change awareness in Goba and Dinsho woredas, and is distributing fuelsaving stoves. This is a fantastic initiative. Well done!

We started a competition in Dinsho Primary School, asking students to draw a picture or write a poem about the wolves and wildlife in Bale. We had so many good entries that it was very difficult to pick a winner. Finally we decided on the following three winning entries. Congratulations to Fu'ad Abubakar (15), Sayfudin Huse Hiko (14) and Mohamnur Idris Hasan (17), whose brother received the prize on his behalf as he was unavailable. We will be holding the competition again in another school for the next issue. All the entries to the competition will be displayed on Wolf Day in Arsi and Bale.

KUNUUNSA NAANNOO FI EEGUMSA QABEENYA UUMAMAA

Ilmaan namaa jireenya isaanii keessatti guyyaa guyyaan qabeenya uumamaa irraa karaa adda addaatiin fayyadama jiraatan. Ardii tokko qofa wwan qabnuunuuf qabeenyi uumamaa jiru immoo muraasaa fi murtaa'aa dha. Qabenyi uumamaa akaakuu adda addaatu jira akka fakkeenyaatti bishaan, biyyee, biqiltuu, bineensota bosonaa, albuudotaa fi kkf yammuu tuqaman itti fayyadama yeroo dheeraatii fi qusannaan ala fayyadamuu irraa kan ka'e kan badanii fi kan badaa jiran baay'een jiraachuun akka rakkiinna aduyaatti fi jireenya ilma namaa dhaloota itti aanuu fi kan ammaa dabalatee gaafii keessa galchuun qo'attootaa beekkamuu fi jiraattoota rakkinni kun irra gahe jiraachuun raga dha. Fakkeenyaaf badiiinsi bosonaa jijjiirama qileensa baramaa fiduun, roobni yeroo hintaane roobuu fi yeroo barbadametti dhabamuun, biyyeen haxaawamee deemuun fi lolaan lubbuu namootaa balleessuun rakkinoota manca'insa qabeenya uumamaa tti annee kan namoota irra gahu yammuu ta'uu kunis beelaa fi hiyyumaa hawaasa irra geessa. Kanaaf jecha paarkiiwwanii fi dawoon qabeenya uumamaa itti eegaman dhaabatani kunuunsi bineensotaa fi qabeenyi uumamaa keessatti akka raaw'atu taasisamaa jira. Fakkeenyaaf biyya keenya Itoophiyaa keessatti bara 1960 irraa eegalee paarkiiwwan sagal kan dhaabatan yammuu ta'u bineensonni hedduu fi baayi'nni isaanii immo kan biyya keenya malee biyya biratti inuyyuu hin argamne yammuu jiraatan kunuunsi iddoo jireenya isaanii kan fiixaan hin baane taanaan ardii irraa kan badan fi deebisuu kan hin dandeenye yoo ta'e gadisiisaa dha. Bineensota biyya keenya qofatti kan argamanii fi jireenya isaanii gaareen olka'iinsa meetira kuma sadi'ii ol keessatti jiraatan keessaa jeedala fardaa, waaliyaa lbex, jaldeessa cilaadaa, gadamsa baddaa, borofa, tuqaa guddi-

chaa fi hilleettii staarks akka fakkeenyaatti tuqamuu kan danda'an hanbaa jiruu biyyatii fi hawaasa keenyaati. Sababa kunuunsa sanyii marartuu kanitiin bineensonni iddoo jireenya akkasii keessatti hammatamanii fi iddoo sana irraa fayyadamais walumaan kunuunsaman. Kana malees sababa kunuunsa gaareenitiin bishaan qulqulluu, qileensa qulqulluu , biyyeen osoo hin haxaawamiin akka turu akkasumas rooba argachuu, biqiluu nyaataaf ta'u akka omishnu fi itti fayyadamuuf qooda guddaa qaba.

ACTION

Recently a spotted hyaena fell into a large hole in Dinsho village and was unable to get out. He was trapped in the hole for two days, and unfortunately some people took the opportunity to throw stones at the helpless animal, injuring it badly. Luckily the hyaena was eventually rescued by some youths from the town. Please, in the future, if a wild animal is trapped or helpless, rather call the National Park authorities or EWCP staff to help. Do not hurt the animal. All animals should be treated with respect.

ETHIOPIA'S AFROALPINE host many migrant birds

Africa's land surface covers some 20 million km² with a great variety of habitats for different migrant birds. This includes the Afroalpine region, 80% of which is found in Ethiopia. Besides its ecological, economic and social significance, the Afroalpine of Ethiopia plays a vital role as a biogeographic link with the northern hemisphere as a habitat for migrant birds.

The annual migration of birds has fascinated man for many years. Migration is defined as a regular movement by a species between habitats at different times of the year. Most species breeding at northern latitudes for instance, fly to escape the hard northern winter and up to more than half of all birds from the more temperate zones also move south to avoid cold weather. Many species of birds migrate twice a year between Europe and Africa, while some also migrate within Africa.

The major force behind migration is the seasonal cycle. By moving long distances at the appropriate time of the year, birds are able to take advantage of habitats at their most productive. Migrants have adapted to a life cycle during which they often occupy quite different habitats, complete with different species, and utilize different food resources at different times of the year. The abundant wetlands (lakes, rivers and swamps) in Ethiopia's Afroalpine areas attract many palearctic waders and other migrants, such as the peregrine falcon and common stilt.



ANIMAL PAGE

Several thousand wigeon and shovelers spend the winter in the Bale Mountains, together with waders like the ruff and greenshank, while golden, imperial and booted eagles live off the high altitude rodent fauna. The conservation of Ethiopia's Afroalpine is therefore vital not only for species within this country, but for the survival of many migrant birds from other countries that rely on the region as a winter retreat.



THE HIGH MOUNTAINS OF ETHIOPIA

The highlands of Ethiopia are of interest for many reasons, such as their high levels of endemism, the palearctic connection and the specialised adaptations of the species found here. The collection of organisms that colonized Ethiopia in glacial times became isolated at high elevations and in many cases have become new species. For mobile forms, like birds, many of the same species occur on different mountain ranges in Ethiopia, while for small mammals and plants, separate species may occur on the different mountains within Ethiopia.

Some 19 of the 30 mammals currently known to be endemic to Ethiopia live in the high montane area. Rodents are the dominant herbivores of the Afroalpine grasslands, occurring at high densities. For the endemic Ethiopian wolf, these endemic rodents form its primary prey source. Other highland endemics include the endangered mountain nyala south east of

FACTS

- More than 835 bird species occur in Ethiopia.
- The Bale Mountains are the most important area for birds in the country, with 6% of the species recorded here being Ethiopian endemics (they occur nowhere else but Ethiopia).
- The large number of rodents in the Bale Mountains attracts many raptors, making this area host to one of the highest concentrations of raptors in Africa.
- The Abyssinian catbird, common in the highlands, has been described as the finest singer in all of Africa.
- The golden eagle population in Bale is the only population of this species south of the Sahara.

Thanks to Addisu Asefa, BMNP Biologist, for his contribution to the bird facts.

the rift valley, and the endangered walia ibex and more common gelada baboon in the North.

Half of the 24 endemic amphibians in Ethiopia are found at high elevations, and 15 of Ethiopia's endemic birds can also be found in the Afroalpine.

In addition, the highlands of Ethiopia form an important biogeographic link with the temperate lands of Eurasia. During the temperate winter the mountains provide habitat for an array of palearctic migrant birds. The Afroalpine areas of Ethiopia are the only breeding sites for some of these birds.

Damaging these mountains will endanger the life of all organisms that have adapted to exist within them and all others that rely on the ecosystem services that the mountains provide.

SAGANTAA EEGUMSA JEEDALA FARDAA ETHIOPIAN WOLF CONSERVATION PROGRAMME Jeedala Gazette Issue 9 July 2009

11th Wolf Day in Dinsho

Dinsho Wolf Day is among the largest public events in the area, held annually since 1998 and attracting up to 3000 people each year. On 22 February the 11th Wolf Day was celebrated attracting an even bigger crowd than previous years. Up to a week prior to the event, qualifying sports matches were held at Dinsho High School and the Jeedala Farda sports centre, with the assistance of the woreda sport head. Besides the football and volley ball matches, other games held on the day included pot smashing, a raffle and a quiz, as well as entertainment from local singers. The day was supported by the Dinsho tourism officer and included an exhibition by the Bale Beauty Nature Club (BBNC). The Dinsho Woreda Workers, BBNC and Hersho Primary School were football champions, while Garamba Dima Girls and Hora Soba Youth were volleyball champions.

Wolf Day brings communities and conservationists together to highlight the importance of biodiversity in Bale and the importance of rabies vaccinations to conserve Ethiopian wolves.

Arsi Wolf Day will be held in November this year.

Do you know about EWCP?

The mission of the Ethiopian Wolf Conservation Programme is to conserve the endangered Ethiopian wolf and its Afroalpine habitat by addressing the most urgent threats to its long-term survival.

EWCP promotes sustainable solutions for the conservation of Ethiopian wolves by addressing particular aspects of the most serious threats affecting their populations. The work is centred on capacity building, monitoring the wolves and the use of Afroalpine resources, disease prevention and control, community education campaigns, habitat protection support, and population management.

EWCP, PO Box 215, Bale, Robe Ethiopia
info@ethiopianwolf.org
www.ethiopianwolf.org

EWCP

