

Practical conservation and amelioration of human wildlife conflict with Worth Wild Africa (WWA) - a global collaboration with zoos and other donors.

By Andrew Rae, Worth Wild Africa, Co-founder

Worth Wild Africa (WWA) is a not-for-profit organization with fundraising bases in the USA, South Africa, and the UK. WWA provides equipment, not cash (e.g., radio collars, trail cameras, IT kit, etc.), to support established field conservation projects and help conservationists and researchers work more effectively. WWA has assisted with projects throughout Africa and for a variety of species. This poster will highlight African wild dogs (*Lycaon pictus*) and the projects WWA has supported.

African wild dogs are a critically endangered CITES Red List species, perhaps only 6,000 remaining in the wild, of which only a very small percentage will ever breed but who contribute to the social rearing success of their pack. Found in such disparate populations as to require a metapopulation management program across southern Africa to improve breeding success and help ensure genetic diversity. This increasingly requires darting, relocation and 'pack building' of unrelated dogs in suitable new habitat.

The first supported project's aim is to improve the survival chances of relocated African wild dogs. This study is taking place in Namibia and is led by PhD behavioral candidate, Helen Reynolds. The second project is located on the Madikwe Game Reserve in South Africa with an aim to help monitor seasonal pack movements, breeding, and social behavior to better understand how to protect, manage, and conserve two 'manufactured' packs of introduced relocated dogs. Both projects are critical to assist field conservationists to make scientifically based management decisions.

WWA continues to connect field conservationists and researchers throughout Africa with zoos and aquariums throughout the USA. 100% of donations sent to Africa are spent to provide practical support for current projects. Once deployed, WWA reports back to our donors, sometimes live from the field, so that donors can see where and how their support is directed and relay the information 'same day' to their visitors, donors, and colleagues via social media, etc. WWA also can engage a donating zoo to support appeals for work with animals held in their collection so to relate the zoo's conservation dollars directly to species' protection in the wild!