



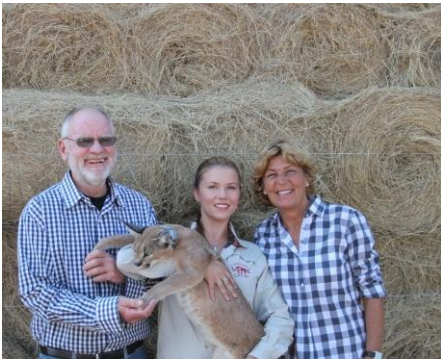
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Namibian Caracal Project

Caracals are majestic medium-sized cats that range throughout Africa. Despite an extensive range, caracal populations have declined universally, and Namibia may represent one of the final strongholds for this species. Virtually nothing is known about caracal ecology or population status. In January 2011, Aletris Neils, an American PhD student and Executive Director of the non-profit organization Conservation CATalyst, began researching caracals. The Caracal Project represents the first large-scale research project conducted on this species. Working collaboratively with Namibian farmers, Aletris and her fellow researchers are trying to learn more about caracal ecology in respect to diet, home range size, reproduction, and general behavior. Not only is this research vital for scientific reasons, it also has tremendous potential to benefit people.



Caracals, like all cats, are strict carnivores. Thus, some cats can be drawn into conflict with farmers by preying on sheep and other livestock. Such losses can negatively impact farmers that rely on livestock for food and income. A better understanding of these cats can provide opportunities to manage caracals and caracal-livestock interactions with the overall goal of reducing conflicts and losses. To ensure that this research truly benefits Namibians, the project is being conducted exclusively on livestock farms where caracals coexist with livestock and people.

Bitterwasser flying center has helped make conducting caracal research in the area possible. They are supporting the Caracal Project by accommodating researchers and allowing them to track and gather information about caracals on the farm. With Bitterwasser's continued support, one of the caracals seen below may soon be fitted with a GPS collar to gather more vital information on these cats and their habits.

This groundbreaking research is completely dependent on donations. If you wish to read more about the project, or make a donation, please visit our website at: www.ConservationCATalyst.com



Caracals caught on film in September and October 2011 with camera traps in the Bitterwasser game camp.