



ewcnp

Conserving Ethiopian Wolves

2026 ANNUAL REPORT



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ABOUT US

The Ethiopian Wolf Conservation Programme (EWCP) is a partnership between the Wildlife Conservation Research Unit (WildCRU); Dinkenesh Ethiopia; and the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority (EWCA); in collaboration with the Oromia Forest and Wildlife Enterprise (OFWE); and Amhara's Environment, Forest and Wildlife Protection and Development Authority (EFWPDA); and with the support and cooperation of local authorities across Ethiopia.

OUR MISSION

Our vision is to secure Ethiopian wolf populations and habitats across their present distribution, and to extend the species range, stressing its role as a flagship for the conservation of the Afroalpine ecosystem on which present and future generations of Ethiopians also depend.



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CELEBRATING OUR PAST, SHAPING OUR FUTURE

This past year has given us a valuable opportunity to take stock at EWCP: to reflect on over three decades of work to protect Ethiopian wolves, while also looking ahead to the next chapter of their conservation.

We began by celebrating EWCP's 30th anniversary. Bringing together colleagues from across Ethiopia, alongside our Oxford team, our two-day workshop and celebration in Bishoftu was a very special occasion. It gave us time to share our experiences, to celebrate our remarkable staff, and to recognise the many people whose dedication has sustained EWCP over the years. Just as importantly, it gave us the opportunity to look ahead and make plans for the future.

Our anniversary continued with an evening and photographic exhibition at the British Embassy in Addis Ababa, hosted by the Deputy Ambassador and attended by friends, colleagues, and representatives from across Ethiopia's conservation sector. It was a fitting moment to reflect on the journey we have shared. As our long-time friend and colleague Zelealem Tefera reminded us in his closing remarks, "Ethiopian wolves would not be here if it wasn't for EWCP".

We are proud of the contribution we have made to Ethiopia's wildlife conservation journey and deeply honoured that our long-standing partnership with the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority was recognised this year through a special award marking our efforts to protect the country's endemic biodiversity. It was presented by His Excellency Taye Atske-Selassie, President of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, as part of EWCA's own 60th anniversary celebrations. Such recognition is a reminder that wildlife conservation is built through enduring partnerships, shared commitment, and the determination to keep going through difficult times.

On the ground, our work has continued to expand despite the challenges posed by insecurity in the north and major tourism infrastructure developments in the Bale Mountains. Among our notable achievements has been the expansion of our preventative wolf vaccination campaigns, bringing protection against rabies and canine distemper

to an additional 10% of the global Ethiopian wolf population. At the same time, our community conservation work in the Amhara region has grown, supporting highland livelihoods and helping to revitalise traditional institutions of community governance even against the backdrop of conflict.

Above all, I am immensely proud of our Ethiopian colleagues. Their knowledge, teamwork, and extraordinary endurance have driven EWCP's progress for over 30 years, and they are now laying the foundations for the next generation of conservation leadership.

Thank you to our staff, partners, donors and supporters for standing with us throughout this journey. Working together, we can continue to give Ethiopian wolves and their Afroalpine home a future.

Claudio Sillero
Founder and Director



"We are deeply honoured that our long-standing partnership with the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority was recognised this year through a special award marking our efforts to protect the country's endemic biodiversity."

MONITORING & RESEARCH

Long-term monitoring and research are at the heart of our work. Our data reveal how wolf populations change, help us detect emerging threats, and provide the science needed to guide conservation action. Wolf Monitors, supported by Wolf Ambassadors from local communities, normally spend around 20 days each month in the mountains. They follow packs through mating, denning, and pup-rearing, as well as recording mortality, unusual behaviours, and threats. Information that they gather has helped us develop targeted wolf vaccination campaigns, assess hybridisation risks and wolf dispersal capacity, and better understand denning behaviour among many other aspects of wolf ecology and conservation.



A GOOD YEAR FOR THE WOLVES

Another good breeding season has kept the Bale population strong, with packs filling the available Afroalpine habitat. Of the 19 packs followed closely, 13 bred, producing 57 pups, including an exceptional 7 pups in Badagassa, the largest litter ever recorded. Some packs like this are growing in size and expanding at the expense of their neighbours towards the edges of the mountains. 3 packs split to form new families, while we are also detecting subordinate wolves dispersing away from their natal territories searching for breeding opportunities. These are encouraging signs of conservation success, but they also suggest a population running out of room. Our Conservation Translocations project is looking ahead to this next challenge: keeping more wolves alive, in more populations (see p.8).

Our camera traps captured pups at den sites in Bale (top) and Simien (bottom). ©EWCP

KEEPING WATCH, WHATEVER THE CHALLENGES

Insecurity continued to restrict fieldwork in the northern Amhara region. For safety reasons, teams could not use EWCP vehicles and instead relied on difficult journeys by public transport, with some trips postponed or limited to areas where staff could work safely.

In Bale, heavy rains turned tracks to mud and rivers became difficult to cross, while on Sanetti temperatures dropped to around -15°C , freezing water at camp. Yet, whenever conditions allowed, everyone remained eager to return to the mountains. We celebrate the extraordinary commitment of the Monitoring Team, and the local knowledge and relationships that keep EWCP connected to even the most remote wolf populations.



KEEPING DISEASES AT BAY

Diseases have not disappeared, but they have remained at relatively low levels across several packs, without developing into the devastating epizootics seen in the past. Over the past two years, 12 wolves have died from confirmed or suspected disease (primarily canine distemper) across nine packs in Bale's two core wolf populations. Losses within individual packs have been small, and several sick wolves recovered—something rarely documented in the past.

Although mortality contributed to the decline of some already small packs, pushed to the edges by larger families, the local populations remained stable or increased. The contrast with the 2015 CDV outbreak is striking: then, 34 carcasses were recovered in just six months and another 31 wolves disappeared.

Years of vaccination against rabies and canine distemper have helped build protection within the Bale population (see p.12).

WOLF HYBRIDS

In the small Menz-Guassa population, Ethiopian wolves have hybridised with African wolves (*Canis anthus*), a widespread African canid previously confused with the golden jackal (*C. aureus*). So far, hybridisation appears remarkably restricted. Monitoring points to a single original mating between a male African wolf and a female Ethiopian wolf, followed by hybrids breeding back with Ethiopian wolves. Today, five putative hybrids remain in two packs and behave much like Ethiopian wolves, although their ancestry still awaits genetic confirmation.

To prevent further introgression without disrupting these wolf families, we plan to capture, vaccinate, and sterilise the hybrids before releasing them back into their packs. This humane approach will allow them to retain their social role while preventing them from breeding.

MOUNTAINS AS WILDLIFE REFUGES

As natural habitats disappear at lower elevations, Ethiopia's highest peaks are becoming important refuges not only for endemic species, but also for other more wide-ranging wildlife species moving into the highlands. We are seeing this changing community around Ethiopian wolves: African wolves are increasingly using Afroalpine ranges, while this year mountain nyalas (typically a forest-dwelling antelope) were observed in the open Afroalpine in larger numbers than ever before – notably licking nectar from *Kniphofia* flowers alongside wolves, baboons, dogs, and even children!

Our long-term records of serval cats (311 sightings across six mountain ranges since 1995) have extended their known altitudinal range to an extraordinary 4,300m, with encounters ranging from confrontations with Ethiopian wolves, to wolves and servals simply sitting together apparently oblivious to each other. Leopards too are finding refuge in these landscapes, with livestock predation creating conflict in some northern highlands. These changing communities can bring new competition, predation, disease and even hybridisation risks for Ethiopian wolves. A new study led by Matt Hendren is investigating this wider carnivore community, and what an increasingly crowded mountain refuge means for its most specialised inhabitant (see p.6).



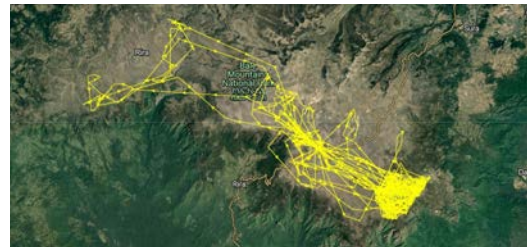
© Thierry Grobert

NEW TECHNOLOGY TOOLS

Technology can transform how we study and protect wolves. We are now fitting satellite collars to one adult male in each pack targeted for vaccination, helping Monitors locate them and revealing unexpected movements. Three of ten collared males made excursions beyond their territories, sometimes travelling far from the packs they normally help patrol and defend, seemingly searching for breeding opportunities in an increasingly crowded population.

We are also deploying seismic sensors to measure traffic and disturbance, camera traps to survey biodiversity and monitor dens, and environmental DNA to identify prey species from faeces. Rapid field tests are helping us detect disease faster. Together, these tools are allowing us to see more, respond faster, and ask questions that field observations alone cannot answer.

EWCP monitoring officer Abdi with a VHF radio antenna (top). This GPS-collared male 'KON19' (bottom) travelled from Chafadalacha on Sanetti Plateau all the way to Morebawa and back again - over 40km away! ©EWCP



PHD DIARIES: THE NETWORK BEHIND THE WOLF

Matthew Hendren

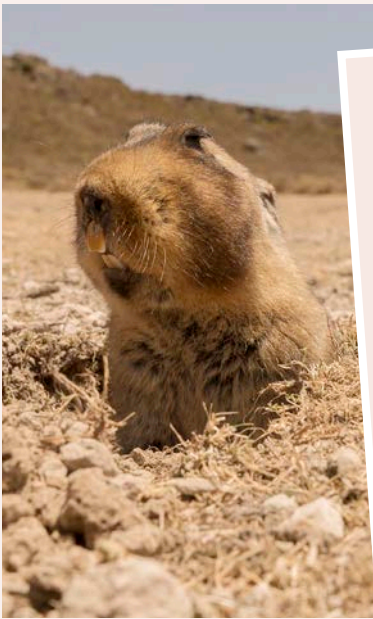
Ethiopian wolves face multiple, often simultaneous pressures. From disease and competition from domestic dogs, and livestock grazing pressure, to climate change pushing lower-lying species up into their range - these threats share something in common. They all work by changing how Afroalpine species interact with one another. After all, Ethiopian wolves don't exist in isolation.

My doctoral research maps this hidden network of relationships. Using camera traps and dietary surveys, I am studying what each species eats, where their ranges overlap, and how these interactions vary between core wolf habitat and areas of increasing human land use.

Identifying prey species from faecal DNA requires a lot of existing knowledge. Specifically, you have to know what to look for, and many of Bale Mountains' rodent species (the wolves' main prey) are missing from global genetic databases. Part of my work involves building a local reference library so that species can then be identified once the DNA results come back from the lab.

No species exists in isolation, and this project adopts a 'network perspective' as a framework to understand and document the changes in this landscape. By mapping the wider carnivore network surrounding Ethiopian wolves, I aim to identify which wolf populations are part of resilient food webs and which are more vulnerable.

Ultimately, this work could help EWCP and their Ethiopian partners understand not only where wolves are struggling, but why – providing a basis for targeting conservation where the underlying networks that sustain them are most fragile.



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"The first time I saw a wolf with my own eyes was a moment I will never forget. What had once been only a childhood dream became a reality."

Abdi Samune, EWCP Monitoring Officer



CONSERVATION TRANSLOCATIONS

ARE WE READY TO TRANSLOCATE ETHIOPIAN WOLVES?

Around 450 Ethiopian wolves remain in six isolated mountain populations, and none are held in captivity. Translocation is therefore becoming an increasingly relevant conservation option. After more than 30 years of research, we know the wolves exceptionally well - but they have never been translocated. This year, we developed a preparedness framework using a simple traffic-light approach to ask three questions:

What must we know before acting? What risks can we manage? What can we only learn by doing?

Conservation translocation goal

Maintain as many viable populations as possible across the species' range =>
A **managed metapopulation** where natural connectivity is no longer possible.

REINFORCEMENT

To rescue or boost declining populations

REINTRODUCTION

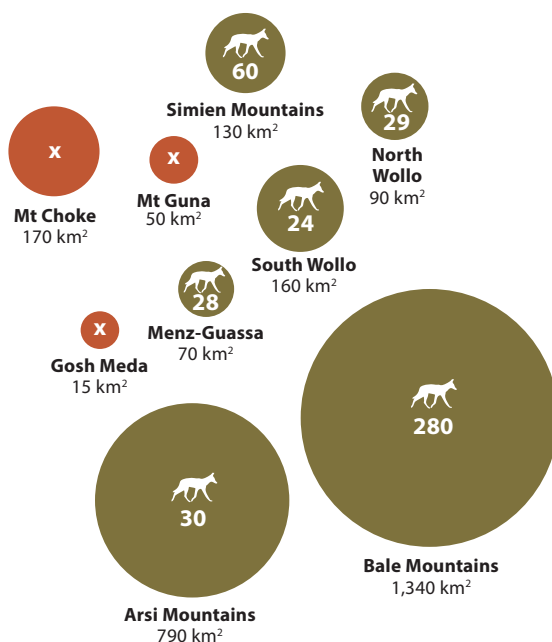
To restore populations after extinctions

GENETIC RESCUE

To prevent high genetic load & inbreeding depression

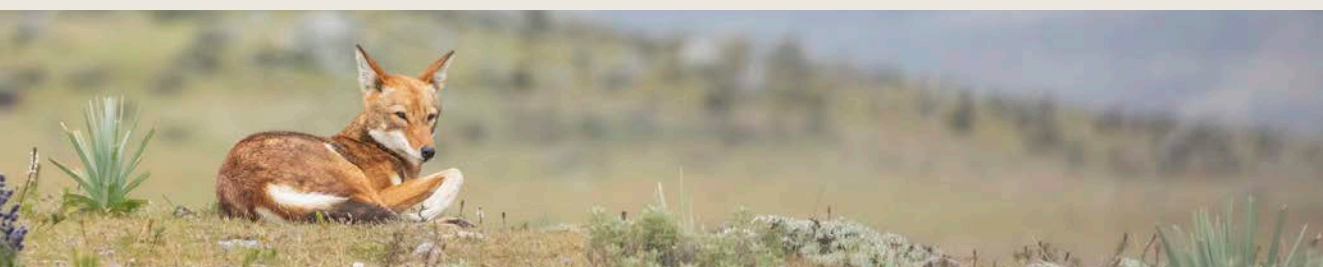
Small populations on habitat islands

Circle area = proportional to habitat remaining. White figure = wolf population



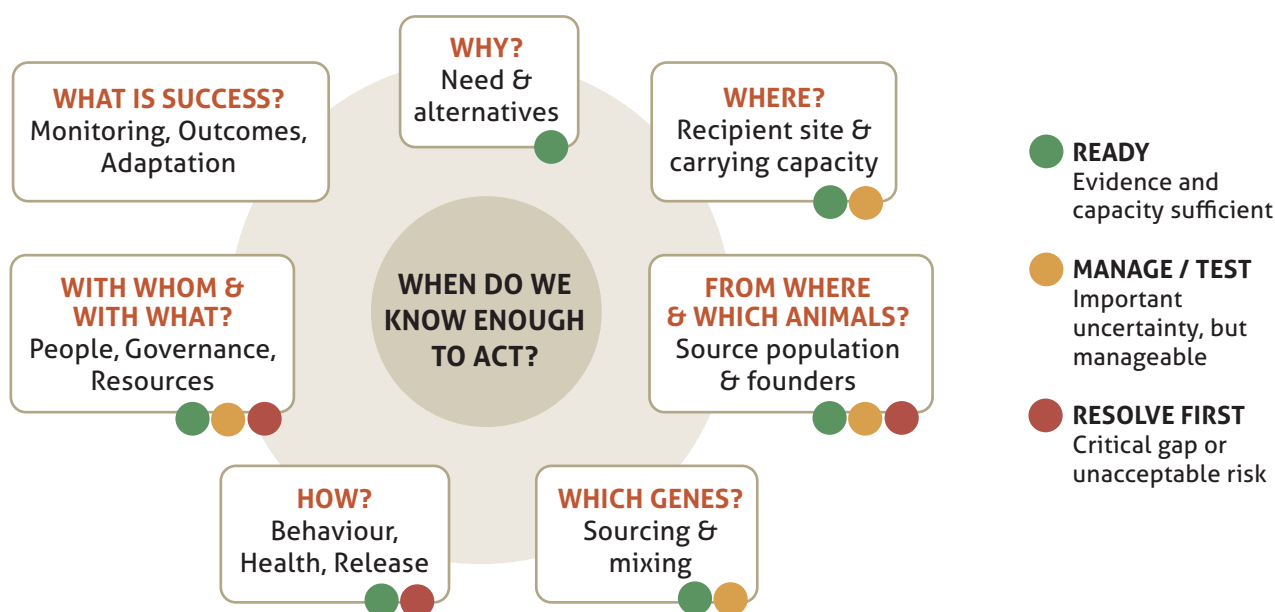
Small populations can persist, but without connectivity, local declines can become extinctions. We have documented three population extinctions (in red), driven by interacting pressures including small habitat area, isolation, disease, and human-mediated mortality. Some populations, such as Bale, are large and filling their available habitat, while others, including neighbouring Arsi, have considerable room to recover. Even some mountains where wolves have disappeared retain substantial areas of potential habitat.

The challenge is understanding where translocation could help, what conditions would need to be in place, and how the risks could be managed.



© Adrien Lesaffre

A preparedness framework for conservation translocations



Assessment of readiness:

KNOW BEFORE

- Where to release wolves
- Impacts on source populations
- Range-wide genomics
- People and governance

MANAGE *Risks that will remain*

- Disease
- Genetic trade-offs
- Long-term management

LEARN BY DOING *Pilot & test*

- Which wolves to move
- How to release them
- How they settle and establish

We already know a great deal, which is encouraging. Much of the evidence and capacity needed for conservation translocations is already in place, and many remaining risks can be managed.

Preparedness does not mean making every light green. It means knowing what needs to be resolved, what risks we can manage, and what we can learn by doing.

iWOLF: BIOBANKING ETHIOPIAN WOLVES FOR THE FUTURE

EWCP is partnering with higher-education and veterinary institutions across Europe and Ethiopia through the iWOLF project, led by scientists Gareth Sullivan, Monique Paris, Alemayehu Lemma, Tesfu Fekensa, and Claudio Sillero. The project aims to collect and preserve tissue samples from Ethiopian wolves, creating the world's first biobank for Africa's rarest and most threatened carnivore.

The project takes a proactive approach, preserving genetic material that could support future complementary ex-situ conservation efforts. Just as importantly, iWOLF is strengthening conservation science in Ethiopia by supporting technology transfer and training, helping build the skills and laboratory capacity needed for modern conservation biotechnology.

By safeguarding the wolf's unique genetic heritage while strengthening in-country scientific capacity, iWOLF is laying the foundations for the future of Ethiopian wolf conservation – and potentially offering a model for other threatened species.

© Katha Dittombée



BIODIVERSITY FRIENDLY FUTURES

The Biodiversity Friendly Futures project helps highland communities in Amhara develop sustainable livelihoods based on native “guassa” grass and Erica honey, while promoting the conservation of Afroalpine biodiversity. As we approach the end of a three-year cycle, we are asking: Are household economies improving? Is biodiversity benefiting? Can these approaches continue with little or no external support? And are we ready to scale them up?

The stories in this section offer encouraging signs. Despite political unrest, communities have continued project activities, supported by traditional institutions and local leaders. This resilience is itself a sign of sustainability. Guassa grown by the first beneficiaries now provides both income and seedlings for new communities - a livelihood beginning to support its own expansion. Community-led monitoring is bringing local knowledge and values into the management of Community Conservation Areas. Crucially, the links between livelihoods and conservation are becoming visible on the ground: communities producing honey are protecting Erica forests, while Ethiopian wolves are now foraging in restored guassa grasslands. The circle is beginning to close!

This coming year, we will complete our assessments of impacts on people and wildlife, building the evidence for the next phase: scaling a community-led model that brings poverty alleviation and biodiversity recovery together across more Afroalpine landscapes.



FROM SEEDLING TO SEED BANK *by* *Marshet Girmay, BioFF Social Scientist*

When, in 2022, we introduced guassa grass cultivation as an alternative livelihood in the South Wollo highlands, skepticism ran deep. The idea was not warmly welcomed by all, but Sheik Mohammed was among the few willing to take the initial step. With technical guidance from EWCP and peer-to-peer learning, Sheik Mohammed planted his first plots of guassa as a forerunner. Season by season, as the roots anchored into the earth, his fields transformed from highly degraded land into lush, resilient stretches of green. While they provided immediate hope, the true magnitude of that initial investment only became clear years later.



Guassa planting (top); Sheik Mohammed (red hat) participating in a training workshop with other community members and EWCP project staff (bottom). ©EWCP

When, in 2026, we wanted to expand the project into neighbouring villages, the team could not find high-quality seedlings for the new beneficiaries. The only viable, thriving source was where the initiative had begun: the fields of existing beneficiaries in Tenta *kebele*.

Sheik Mohammed had cultivated far more than just a mature harvest: he had built a living seed bank!

We purchased around 30 donkey bundles of guassa seedlings from his farm to supply to the beneficiaries in Legambo *kebele*. This transaction delivered a substantial financial income to his household and became an example to the new communities: benefits will come both from the harvest of guassa but also from the sale of seedlings. What began as a novel conservation and livelihood activity is becoming compelling and sustainable economic model.



© Caroline Sauvin

COMMUNITIES MONITOR THEIR LOCAL BIODIVERSITY

A knowledge-exchange workshop was organised this year in the holy city of Lalibela, bringing together EWCP staff and over 50 participants from 17 *kebeles* in the Abune Yosef Community Conservation Area, home to an important Ethiopian wolf population. Members of local communities, including women, priests, and elders, shared their traditional knowledge, with a particular focus on the value of different animals, plants, and natural resources in their Afroalpine landscapes. The openness and engagement of all participants made the meeting a great success. Together, we developed a community-led monitoring scheme and data-gathering protocols that reflect their interests and needs. We also provided field equipment, followed by practical field training for selected community guards.

The communities are now collecting information that will be brought to their traditional Conservation Councils to inform decisions about the management of the Abune Yosef Community Conservation Area. With our support, these councils are being revived amidst continuing instability in the region.

REVITALISED TRADITIONAL INSTITUTIONS SUPPORT CONSERVATION

Political instability and armed conflict continue in the Amhara region of northern Ethiopia, requiring immense flexibility from both our project and local communities. With formal government weakened or absent in some localities, traditional modes of community governance and organisation have been revitalised, such as *Qire* judges, *Idir* leaders, church councils, sharia and peace committees.

These institutions are politically neutral, recognised by all sides of the conflict, and some have adapted their traditional roles to meet new needs. *Idirs*, for example, traditionally support bereaved members of the community, providing collective financial help, burial, and consolation. *Idir* leaders and *Qire* judges now hold authority within a collective body formed to ensure the fair and equitable management of the community's natural resources in these highlands. Such institutions have been vital collaborators in implementing our project activities, demonstrating the strength of community self-governance and its importance for the long-term sustainability of these initiatives.



Livelihood beneficiaries in South Wollo planting guassa grass seedlings as part of the project's expansion. © EWCP

ONE HEALTH

EXPANDING THE FIGHT AGAINST DISEASE

This year, EWCP has continued to expand the scope and activities of the One Health project, strengthening disease prevention and surveillance for Ethiopian wolves, wildlife, livestock, and people. In doing so, we have set an exciting and ambitious trajectory for the next few years to continue our critical impact on disease management.

During 2025-2026, we expanded our proactive vaccination of Ethiopian wolves in southern Ethiopia against rabies and canine distemper. This year, we carried out five further vaccination campaigns across the Bale Mountains National Park, targeting wolf packs in Sanetti, Morebawa, and Web valley, and vaccinating a further **45 wolves**. Proactive vaccination of Ethiopian wolves on this scale is a new approach for us and represents an important advance in our efforts to reduce the risk of disease outbreaks.

At the same time, EWCP veterinary teams continued large-scale vaccination of domestic dogs, alongside expanded disease awareness and surveillance. Working across the Bale Mountains and surrounding kebeles, the Veterinary and Living with Wolves teams have worked closely with local communities, cementing EWCP's role as a trusted local leader in disease prevention and control.

These interventions remain vital, but important gaps persist in Ethiopia's capacity for wildlife disease surveillance, rapid diagnosis, and molecular epidemiology. Looking ahead, we aim to develop stronger collaboration between the wildlife, livestock, and public health sectors, enabling more effective One Health responses across larger landscapes. This includes developing technical skills, improving diagnostic capability and alert networks, while supporting research to understand disease dynamics and immune responses to vaccination.

Building this capacity will reduce reliance on overseas laboratories and foster a more coordinated, locally-led approach to integrated wildlife disease management.

Meanwhile, the renewal of a pioneering oral preventative vaccination of Ethiopian wolves looks imminent, catalysed by the generous support of Ceva and the Ceva Wildlife Research Fund.

Together, these advances are helping EWCP build a more proactive and sustainable approach to protecting wolves – and the wider communities and ecosystems that share their landscape. The future of One Health in the Afroalpine looks bright.





The EWCP veterinary team vaccinating a wolf in the Web Valley, Bale Mountains National Park, 2026 (above).
©Adrien Lesaffre

®RABITEC: A NEW ORAL VACCINE FOR ETHIOPIAN WOLVES

Following EWCP's pilot study and delivery of oral rabies vaccines to inoculate the wolves between 2018 and 2020, long-term deployment was interrupted by the discontinuation of the SAG2 vaccine we had been using.

This year, we have been working in partnership with CEVA Animal Health, with generous support from the CEVA Wildlife Research Fund, to make a new oral rabies vaccine, Rabitec, available for use in Ethiopia. This exciting collaboration brings together all three EWCP partners - the University of Oxford, the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority, and Dinkenesh Ethiopia – and is paving the way for mass oral vaccination campaigns for wolves in the Bale Mountains and throughout their range.

The work will also include an important research component, expanding our understanding of vaccine uptake and coverage. Together, we are excited to take another step forward in the fight against rabies, one of the main threats to the ongoing survival of this iconic, endemic Afroalpine carnivore.



EWCP'S IMPACT THIS YEAR

18 Monitors and **10** Wolf Ambassadors recorded over **5,000** sightings of wolves and other wildlife across Ethiopia and confirmed breeding in **23** wolf packs



Awareness reached more than **1,000** people in local communities including elders, religious leaders, young people, and students

138 new families adopted sustainable livelihoods in wolf areas

16 packs vaccinated in the Bale Mountains
– around **half** of the population protected
against rabies and canine distemper virus

Over **3,500** dogs vaccinated
– almost every dog across
47 settlements in Bale



© Katha Dittombée

240 families
restored **12** ha
of grasslands and
protect **10** Erica
forests

20 model farmers
were trained, reaching
another **50** producers
through peer-to-peer
learning

158 kg of
highland
honey
harvested by
40 families

LIVING WITH WOLVES

TOURISM IN BALE: PROTECTING WOLVES IN A CHANGING LANDSCAPE

For more than 30 years, EWCP teams have followed the wolves across the Afroalpine landscapes of the Bale Mountains. Today, this landscape we know so well is changing fast, with tourism development bringing new infrastructure into some of the wolves' most important habitats.

A major government-funded tourism development is affecting the Web Valley and Sanetti Plateau within the Bale Mountains National Park. Over the past year, lodges, viewing platforms, access roads, and other infrastructure have been built, opening these areas to increased tourism. With further development expected, managing these new pressures will be an important challenge for the Park.

This year, EWCP wolf monitors and scientists have intensified their monitoring work in the areas affected by development. Our long-term database provides an important baseline: we know where packs lived and bred before these changes, allowing us to track how wolves respond over time. Monitoring has already recorded a significant impact on Sanetti, where the BBC pack, first described in 1987 and the oldest known to EWCP, has not been seen for over a year following the establishment of a construction camp within its territory.

Tourism-related disturbance has also become an emerging concern in Web Valley. Our teams have seen visitors and photographers driving off-road and approaching active wolf dens at close range and for prolonged periods. On some occasions,

mothers have responded by moving their pups and establishing new dens. As visitor numbers increase, these risks will magnify; careful management will be needed to minimise these disturbances.

Roads present another concern. The expanding network crosses large areas of prime wolf habitat, increasing the chances of encounters between wolves and vehicles as they move, forage, and patrol their territories. Road kills are not uncommon and are documented among the threats facing the wolves, and increased traffic can add to this pressure. Road kills have already been implicated in the extinction of one small wolf population. More vehicles travelling through Bale's wolf habitat will increase that risk.

Through our **Living with Wolves** project, EWCP will use the evidence provided by our monitoring and research to support a coordinated response with Bale Mountains National Park staff. This includes identifying and marking safe wildlife-viewing routes, protecting active dens, introducing signage and speed limits, developing guidance for visitors and tourism operators, and supporting effective enforcement.

Tourism can bring important opportunities to Bale and its communities, and to Ethiopia's economy. Our challenge is to ensure that tourism develops in a way that protect the wolves, other wildlife, and the Afroalpine habitats that make this landscape so special.





NEW WOLF AMBASSADORS IN NORTH ETHIOPIA

This year, EWCP welcomed seven new Wolf Ambassadors across the wolf habitats of Amhara in northern Ethiopia, including Simien, North and South Wollo. The Wolf Ambassadors initiative is designed to develop closer ties with local communities living alongside wolves in Afroalpine range, while extending EWCP's ability to monitor wildlife and threats in areas that can be difficult for our field monitoring teams to reach.

With conflict and insecurity continuing to disrupt access to some sites, the Wolf Ambassadors – who live and work in Afroalpine habitat – provide a vital local presence. They collect valuable data on the wolves and emerging threats, while also sharing conservation messages and raising environmental awareness within their communities.

Selected by the community themselves, Wolf Ambassadors embody the grassroots collaboration at the heart of EWCP's approach to wildlife conservation.



RABIES DAY: RAISING AWARENESS, PREVENTING RABIES

The Living with Wolves team organised a Rabies Day in Deneba Kebele, Bale, bringing together EWCP staff, a *Hadha Siinqee* (traditional female representative in the Oromo culture), and Woreda officials.

Rabies Day events are focused on raising awareness about this deadly disease and promoting preventative efforts – complementing EWCP's long-term One Health work. The fight against rabies across all Ethiopia is a challenge shared by people, communities, domestic animals, and wildlife, making local awareness and collaboration an essential part of prevention.

NEWS & OUTPUTS

EWCP 30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

In late 2025, we had two wonderful celebrations to mark the 30th anniversary of the programme.

First, overlooking the crater lake of Bishoftu, just south of Addis Ababa, we gathered all EWCP staff members from across Ethiopia for an inspiring get-together. We reflected on three decades of success, the challenges we face, and our hopes for the future of Ethiopian wolves. We were honoured to have Kelly Wilson from WCN travel all the way from Oregon to be with us. Inclusivity and respect are core EWCP values, and this was beautifully demonstrated throughout the event. There were heartfelt speeches, gifts for those who have been with EWCP for 30 years, and lovely traditional presents exchanged.

Then, a more formal affair followed at the British Embassy in Addis Ababa, honouring the strong long-term links between Oxford University and UK funders, and bringing together many partners, collaborators, and friends who have been part of our journey. A photographic exhibition by French photographer Adrien Lesaffre showcased the magic of the Bale Mountains and the wolves, conveying the beauty of Ethiopia's natural riches.



CELEBRATING 60 YEARS OF EWCA

In parallel to EWCP's 30th anniversary, the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority has been commemorating their 60th year working to protect the country's unique wildlife. We are proud of our enduring partnership, and look forward to many more years of collaboration to protect Ethiopian wolves and their ecosystem for future generations.

We were also honoured to be recognized with an award during the celebrations at Adwa Victory Museum in Addis Ababa. Presented by the Ethiopian Federal Democratic Republic President Taye Atske Selassie, it was collected on behalf of all EWCP by Dr Girma Eshete, Executive Director of Dinkenes Ethiopia!

TUSK PRINCE WILLIAM AWARD FOR EWCA DIRECTOR GENERAL

Congratulations to Ato Kumara Wakjira, winner of Tusk's Prince William Award for Conservation in Africa 2025.

Ato Kumara is the Director General of the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority, EWCP's partner. *"He was honored for over three decades of leadership and dedication to wildlife protection in Ethiopia and the Horn of Africa."* Having such a prestigious award going to Ethiopia is a timely recognition for all the hard work from Ato Kumara and many of our other colleagues operating in an environment of insecurity and financial hardship.



WILDCRU AWARD: MAKING A DIFFERENCE GLOBALLY

The Wildlife Conservation Research Unit (WildCRU) has been presented with The University of Oxford Vice Chancellor's 'Making a Difference Globally' Award. The award acknowledges the valuable contributions of the team to making a difference to lives overseas. EWCP are proud to be one of the contributors to this collective success, sharing our work to protect Ethiopia's unique Afroalpine ecosystems for the good of both people and wildlife. ***Congratulations to all our colleagues!***



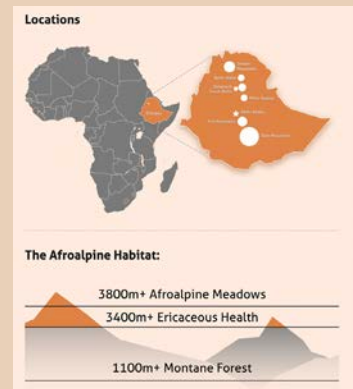
NEW EWCP VEHICLE

With the generous support of the Dry Creek Foundation, EWCP are now the proud owners of a new vehicle in Bale. Our work takes us deep into the mountains in all weather and at all times of year. This can be very tough on vehicles, and this new car is a very important and impactful addition to the ageing EWCP fleet.



NEW LOOK FOR ETHIOPIANWOLF.ORG

We are very pleased to announce that we recently updated the EWCP website! From a bank of information about the wolves to all our projects, partners, reports, and other news from the programme, this is the go-to place for all things Ethiopian wolves. Check it out at: **www.ethiopianwolf.org**



PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION TO CELEBRATE 30 YEARS OF EWCP

In early 2026, long-time friend and collaborator Adrien Lesaffre came to visit the EWCP Oxford team. Adrien is a very talented wildlife photographer, whose excellent images have been generously lent to EWCP over the years to illustrate the programme. In the decade since he first travelled to Ethiopia, few people have done more to raise the profile of these beautiful wolves and bring attention to EWCP's conservation work. With the generous support of the Ecology & Conservation Section in the Department of Biology, we organised an exhibition of Adrien's work and used the occasion to mark the 30th anniversary of EWCP with our friends and colleagues in Oxford.

Wildlife Photographer Workshop

Adrien also delivered a workshop on wildlife photography for interested amateur photographers from across the university. Covering all aspects of his approach, from his philosophy of wildlife photography as a bridge to conservation action, to the more nuanced technical details of his set-up and editing process, he demonstrated everything it takes to produce such impactful images.



VETERINARY TEAM LEADER MUKTAR LEARNS NEW SKILLS IN INDIA

Supported by a vet-track scholarship from our partners at WCN, EWCP vet team leader Muktar Abute travelled to Rajasthan, India, to participate in a prestigious field training course.

The Interventions in Wild Animal Health (IWAH) course is run jointly by the Zoological Society of London (ZSL); The Wildlife Institute of India (WII); The Royal Veterinary College, The University of Edinburgh (UoE); The University of Melbourne (UoM); Toronto Zoo; Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) and the Wildlife Research and Training Institute (WRTI), and is designed to train wildlife health professionals from East Africa, South Asia, and other globally-important biodiversity hotspots.

Learning through a range of theoretical and practical tasks - from wildlife monitoring to infectious disease screening - Muktar has brought these new skills to bear on his role with Ethiopian wolves, increasing the capacity of EWCP's vet team and strengthening Ethiopia's conservation leadership.





ARTICLES, PUBLICATIONS, CONFERENCES

Popular articles

- Biotechniek, Volume 64, December 2025: *From the North Pole to the roof of Africa. The nectar-sipping social Ethiopian wolf.*
- *The Conversation: Africa's rarest carnivore: the story of the first Ethiopian wolf ever captured, nursed and returned to the wild.*
- International Wolf Center: *Ethiopia at a glance.*
- Terre Sauvage: *Loup d'Éthiopie.*
- The Rainforest Trust: *Save the Ethiopian Wolf from Extinction.*
- The Airbus Foundation: *The last stand of the Ethiopian wolf.*
- Getaway: *Ethiopian wolves in the highlands.*

Conferences

- **Wolves across Borders: Conference on Wolf Ecology and Management**, Lunteren, The Netherlands, June 2025
 - * *Wolves in the clouds: Climate and breeding phenology in Ethiopian wolves.* Marino Jorgelina, Karl Reiman, Elizabeth Preston, Alo Hussein and Claudio Sillero.
 - * *(Re)Connecting the dots: assessing connectivity loss and landscape demogenetics of Ethiopian wolf populations.* Sandra Lai, Claudio Sillero and Jorgelina Marino.
 - * *Wolves in Africa – Diverse ecological strategies navigating common threats.* (plenary presentation) Claudio Sillero.
- **African Wild Dogs United**, March 2026. Virtual Conference
 - * *Distribution status and knowledge gaps of African wild dogs in Ethiopia.* Claudio Sillero
- **Small Cats Symposium**, March 2026. Virtual Global Event
 - * *Servals on the Roof of Africa: Naturalistic observations of a high-altitude population.* Claudio Sillero, Sena Gashe, Alo Hussein, Sandra Lai & Jorgelina Marino.

Theses

- Lucy Hudson, 2026. Group size and territory size relationships in the Ethiopian wolf: A study of sociality in a high density, specialised carnivore. MBIol thesis, University of Oxford, UK.
- Esme Stewart, 2025 "Drivers of den site selection in Ethiopian wolves (*Canis simensis*) in a human-dominated landscape." MBIol thesis, University of Oxford, UK.



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Scientific publications

- Lai, S., Asefa, G., Abute, M., Eshete, G., Léandri-Breton, D.-J., Regassa, F., Sillero-Zubiri, C., & Marino, J. (2025). Successful first rehabilitation and release of an endangered Ethiopian wolf. *Conservation Science and Practice*, **7**(7), e70075. <https://doi.org/10.1111/csp2.70075>
- Mengistu, G.A., Atickem, A., Kebede, N. & Eshete, G. (2025). Incidence of gastrointestinal helminth parasites of free-ranging domestic dogs from the web valley, Bale mountains National park, Ethiopia. *BMC Veterinary Research*, **21**, 713. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12917-025-04871-0>
- Preston, E. F. R., Chalkley, J., Abute, M., Hussein, A., Bedin, E., & Marino, J. (2026). Designing effective oral rabies vaccination strategies for endangered carnivores: Lessons from bait uptake in Ethiopian wolves. *Journal of Applied Ecology*, **63**, e70458. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1365-2664.70458>
- Sadeta Tiye, F., Korecha, D., Mekonnen Gutema, T. et al. (2026). Analysis of the observed and projected changes in rainfall and temperature under climate change scenarios in Bale Mountains National Park, South Eastern Ethiopia. *Science Reports* **16**, 26708. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-026-57492-4>
- Scholte, P., Admasu, S., Berhanu, L., Damtie, M., Gizaw, G., Oehm, S. & Wakjira, K. (2025). The protected area system of Ethiopia: Development, present state and perspectives towards the '30x30' target. *Parks Journal*, **31**:1. <https://doi.org/10.2305/SRUC8758>
- Tadele H., Bekele, A., Archibald G. & van Niekerk, M. (2026). Nest-site selection and breeding ecology of the Wattled Crane (*Bugeranus carunculatus*) in the Afroalpine ecosystem of Bale Mountains National Park, Southeast Ethiopia. *Frontiers Bird Science*. **5**:1787991. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fbirs.2026.1787991>

Research collaborations

Addis Ababa University – Ecology and conservation of Afroalpine natural resources

Addis Ababa University, CVMA – Reproductive physiology

Animal & Plant Health Agency – GOV.UK - Immune response to CDV vaccine

Ceva Animal Health & Ceva Wildlife Research Fund – Oral vaccination of Ethiopian wolves

Ethiopian Public Health Institute – Rabies diagnostics in wolves and dogs

Gondar University, Dept History and Heritage – Traditional Ecological Knowledge

Hawassa University – Ecosystem engineers and carbon sequestration

Jimma University/Oslo University – African wolf ecology and competition

Mekelle University – Large Carnivore Survey of Ethiopia

Phillip University Marburg – Climate monitoring in the Bale Mountains

Royal Veterinary College – Disease dynamics and vaccine testing

University of St Andrews/IBREAM – iWolf Biobanking and iPSC-based conservation

THANK YOU

EWCP is deeply grateful for the support it has received over the programme's lifetime. We are thankful for every gift, since each contributes to the future of the Ethiopian wolf.

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HELP EWCP

The Ethiopian Wolf Conservation Programme is a WildCRU (University of Oxford) endeavour to help protect these endangered wolves and the Afroalpine habitats they inhabit. It works under an agreement with Ethiopia's Wildlife Conservation Authority and Regional Governments, with the aegis of the IUCN SSC Canid Specialist Group and Wildlife Health Working Group. In 2023, the local NGO Dinkenesh Ethiopia joined the EWCP partnership and started formally implementing components of EWCP's conservation work from April 2024.

Ethiopian wolves are only found in a handful of scattered mountains in Ethiopia and are threatened by loss of highland habitats, disease and persecution. The most threatened carnivore in Africa, and the world's rarest canid, these long-legged charismatic animals need your help.

Informed by sound research, the Ethiopian Wolf Conservation Programme targets the greatest threats to the survival of Ethiopian wolves and their Afroalpine habitat. We promote this charismatic species as a flagship, thereby protecting many of the Ethiopia's highland endemics and natural resources.

If you or your organisation is interested in helping to fund our activities, contact us. You can donate to EWCP specifically through the organisations opposite:

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