



Conservation of Asiatic Cheetah
and the related biota project



سازمان حفاظت محیط زیست
معاونت محیط طبیعی و تنوع زیستی

Project:

**Presence/absence study on Asiatic Cheetah in
Bahram'gur Protected Area-Fars, Iran
2006-2007**



Final Report (abstract)



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Citation: Plan for the Land Society[©]. 2008. Presence/absence study on Asiatic Cheetah in Bahram'gur Protected Area-Fars, Iran 2006-2007 Final Report (abstract). Plan for the Land Society, Tehran, Iran.

Published by: Plan for the Land Society. www.plan4land.org

Financial support: Conservation of Asiatic Cheetah and the related biota Project.

Logistical support: Department of the Environment of Fars province.

Cover photo: A landscape of Rig'jamshid plain and Kouh'sorkh mountain in core zone area of Bahram'gur protected area by: Mohammadali Habibi Moghaddam.

Presence/absence study on Asiatic Cheetah in Bahram'gur Protected Area-Fars, Iran 2006-2007

Final Report (abstract)

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Executive Summary:

Asiatic cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus venaticus*) is one of the most endangered wild cats on earth and is clearly on the verge of extinction. IUCN Red list of threatened species has categorized this subspecies as "Critically Endangered" in 2007. It has been extinct in wild from 15 countries within its former range and the distribution is now restricted to central deserts of Iran. In recent years many international and national efforts has been made for the survival of this elusive cat in its natural habitat. Assessing the population trend in the known cheetah reserves of Iran like presence/absence study in Bahram'gur P.A. was one of the research priorities of the "Conservation of Asiatic cheetah and related biota project" (CACP) from the start.

Field surveys including camera-trapping, night and day transects, local and game-wardens information gathering and carnivores scat analysis was undertaken during this one year project. All of the confirmed and un-confirmed cheetah reports in Bahram'gur P.A. were compiled and the recent status of the locations was assessed. In this study we didn't find any evidence on presence of Asiatic cheetah but some new reports from the area received lately. Presence of large carnivores like Persian leopard (*Panthera pardus saxicolor*), Striped hyaena (*Hyaena hyaena*), Wolf (*Canis lupus*) and Caracal (*Caracal caracal*) approved by different methods from potential prey competitors, during our project. From main prey species population of Jebeer gazelle (*Gazella benettii*), Wild sheep (*Ovis spp.*), Wild goat (*Capra aegagrus*) and Cape hare (*Lepus capensis*) were monitored through our surveys. Invaluable data gathered by cheetah reports from game-wardens and locals and the level of their knowledge from the animal was examined.

The main threats for survival of the species in the Bahram'gur are: 1. Poaching wild ungulates (cheetah's prey species) in high numbers 2. Several years of severe drought in the region 3. Herding massively without any management and control, causing in different problems for wildlife and nature including the herd dogs as a direct cause of killing cheetahs.

We strongly advise to facilitate the protection staff and improve their units, establishing anti-poaching squads by game-wardens and NGO's and controlling the domestic livestock grazing and their stay in protected area for better wildlife management and a clear future for the survival of the Asiatic cheetah in Bahram'gur P.A. as a potential natural habitat in Iran.

Clearly Asiatic cheetah inhibited the Bahram'gur P.A. in the past years but unfortunately their numbers had dramatically reduced or even eliminated from this famous game-reserve of Iran and few more years of neglect on conservation of this species could lead to complete extinction. Education of game-wardens, locals and younger generation is a must for reversing the complete vanishing of Asiatic cheetah in Bahram'gur P.A.