



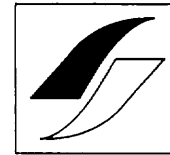
Rhino & Elephant Foundation

Newsletter No 21 July 1998

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African Rhino Specialist Group Meeting – Mount Etjo, Namibia



From the
REF DESK

A highly successful meeting of the African Rhino Specialist Group was held at Mount Etjo in Namibia, during the period 12 – 19 April 1998, under the able Chairmanship of Dr Martin Brooks. A wide and exhaustive range of topics was discussed, with numerous papers having been presented by representatives of the various range states. Clive Walker, Chairman of the Rhino & Elephant Foundation, represented the private rhino owners and had the opportunity to renew acquaintances with many mutual friends in the field of rhino conservation.

The threat to rhinoceros continues to remain high on the agenda, especially the northern population of white rhino to be found in Garamba National Park. In Africa in the wild, the number of black rhino has increased to some 2 640 and the white rhino now number 8 470. Levels of poaching have declined dramatically, however, no-one is under any illusion as to the continued threat posed by the demand for rhino horn, or as it may appear at the moment, lack of demand, which could be attributed to a number of reasons, for example:

- The market has sufficient horn to meet the demands of the consumer for the moment
- Rhinos are fewer and far between and under better protection

It was noted, however, that all government funding for rhino conservation is on the decrease and ways and means will have to be sought to develop more innovative strategies to raise funding in future.

The venue for the African Rhino Specialist Group Meeting was Mount Etjo Safari Lodge. The lodge and reserve is owned by a former Natal Parks Board Member, Jan Oelofse, and his wife Annette. Jan is widely known in conservation circles in Southern Africa and his reserve is one of a number that are custodian reserves of black rhino, from the sub-species *bicornis*. During the course of one of the afternoons, I had the privilege of going on a game drive with him, together with Dr Holly Dublin and Dr Martin Brooks, to view the amazing scenery and the variety of wildlife in this private sanctuary. Jan and Annette have managed to combine both tourism and hunting very successfully.

They invited Tony Conway of the KwaZulu-Natal Nature Conservation Service, who I was sharing a room with, to see the three year old, hand-raised black rhino Nossi, who had been born in the bomas at

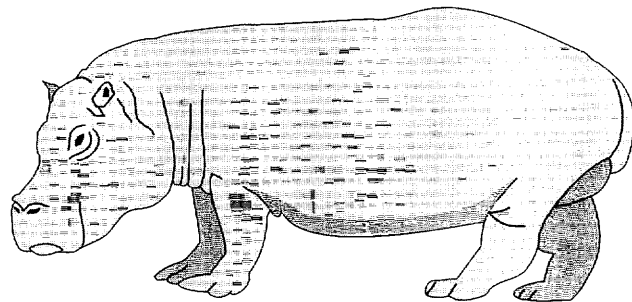
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Nossi, the three year old, hand-raised black rhino.

New Wildlife-in-Crisis Fund saves Hippos as its first project

Press release issued for SAVA by Alchemy Advertising – 16 July 1998



A group of hippos are threatened by starvation owing to the deteriorating drought situation in Northern and Eastern Province. In an attempt to save these hippos and to provide funds for similar wildlife-in-crisis projects, the South African Veterinary Foundation (SAVF) has established an Emergency Fund.

The aim of the SAVF Emergency Fund is to give the public the opportunity to contribute proactively to the health and welfare of our wildlife such as this "Hippo Project". Projects will be selected randomly, as and when these crises come to the attention of the South African Veterinary Foundation.

The new fund – to be administered by the SAVF's board of directors and managed by Rooth and Wessels Attorneys – will be open for public scrutiny and all donations will be acknowledged in writing. Trust Bank, Menlyn Park Pretoria, has allocated an account for the Fund and all donations should be addressed to the SAVF Emergency Fund. Any queries may be directed to Trudie Potgieter at Rooth and Wessels – Tel (012) 348-4902.

Other donations such as fodder, will also be gladly accepted and interested people are asked to contact Heather Cowie of the Rhino & Elephant Foundation at Tel (011) 453- 9829.

The Veterinary Foundation is hoping to raise approximately R250 000 for the "Hippo Project" in an ongoing effort to relocate and feed the hippos as long as the drought persists.

The plight of the hippos came to our attention as a result of requests by local farmers to have the game fence on the Botswana/South African border electrified. "The farmers complained that the fence – initially installed to control the movement of cattle and prevent the spread of foot and mouth disease - was extensively damaged by the natural migration of elephants and hippos and their crops were being eaten." says Dr Kobus du Toit, wildlife trustee of the SAVF.

The SAVF investigated and found that the electrification of the fence would indeed save the crops, but that several groups of elephant and hippo would then be compromised by the restriction enforced by the fence.

"Elephants who are browsers can survive next to the river bed, but the grazers, such as the hippos, will face certain death due to starvation, should they not be allowed to roam freely. The funds raised by the Hippo Project will be used to relocate some of the hippos while providing food for the remaining group," says Dr du Toit.

The SAVF is the non-profit, fundraising arm of the South African Veterinary Association (SAVA) and has contributed some R400 000 to worthy wildlife causes since its inception in 1997.

Contributions can be posted to:

The SAVF Emergency Fund
c/o Rooth & Wessels
PO Box 36365
MENLO PARK
0102

or paid into or transferred to:

Rooth & Wessels Trust Account
Trust Bank, Menlyn
Account Number: 4050522327

NEWS FLASH

Rhinos need help

The Democratic Republic of Congo urgently needs the help of the international community in order to save several protected areas in which some of the world's most critically endangered wildlife is found. Surveys show that only 24 northern white rhinos survived the civil war. There were estimated to be 31 rhinos as recently as 1996. Most of the equipment used for conservation in the country was destroyed during the civil war. *Great Outdoors – No 129*

African Rhino Specialist Group Meeting

• continued from page 1

Etosha. Her mother had been part of a group destined for a private sanctuary in South Africa. It is ultimately hoped to release Nossi into the main sanctuary. For reasons of security, the Group does not divulge the exact locations of rhinos and numbers.

Another important issue discussed, was the question of figures bandied about in the media, as to the value of rhino horn. Unfortunately, there is a tendency to over-inflate the price of horn at source, giving an entirely unrealistic impression of the market value.

The Group were highly appreciative of the hospitality and the special rate afforded their Members and all agreed that it was a most enjoyable venue to have held this important meeting. Once again, the organisers under the Chairmanship of Dr Martin Brooks, Mrs Lyn Harrison and the Honourable Richard Emslie, had done an outstanding job and were to be congratulated on their efforts.



Dr Martin Brooks, Chairman of The AfrSG, with Dr Hubert Planton from the Camerouns.



The Honourable Richard Emslie, with Dr Sue Mainka of IUCN'S SSC (Species Survival Commission).

New appointments to the Board of Trustees of REF

It gives us great pleasure to welcome new Trustees, Dr Andrew McKenzie and Dr J G (Kobus) du Toit, to the Board of the Rhino & Elephant Foundation.

Andrew McKenzie has played a number of roles in the wildlife field. Earlier in his career he worked as a wildlife veterinarian, reserve manager, ecologist, researcher and lecturer. He spent four years working in, and eventually running Mashatu Game



Reserve in Botswana. This was followed by a five year stint at the Mammal Research Institute in Pretoria. More recently he has been active in providing wildlife management services and equipment and in publishing – his largest and most recent project being WildNet Africa, a wildlife publication on the internet. Through WildNet Africa, he has assisted REF and the Wilderness Trust, amongst others, in establishing an internet presence.

Kobus du Toit, a wildlife consultant, is well known for his involvement in many areas of conservation. Co-author of *Game Ranch Management* with Professor J du P Bothma and *Capture and Care* with Dr A McKenzie, he also recently authored the popular



Rhino Ranching, a manual for owners of white rhinos. Amongst others, he is Chairman of the Wildlife Group of the S A Veterinary Association, Vice Chairman of the African Rhino Owners Association and a trustee of the S A Veterinary Foundation. His areas of interest extend to the management of endangered species (in captivity and in their natural habitats), the breeding of endangered small mammals and birds, for example the yellow bill oxpecker and the introduction techniques of endangered wildlife.

Rhino Awareness Expedition

The Rhino Awareness Expedition began in December 1993, when Klaus Schrupf and Pamela Bell left Cape Town and their specially designed 4 x 4 landcruiser was shipped to Chile, South America, where they began their trip. The objective for Klaus and Pam's trip, was to create a worldwide awareness of the plight of the rhino and the senseless killing of these wonderful animals. After four years in Latin America, they have arrived in the USA and intend extending their journey to take a total of 12 years, making it a world first, for the longest possible way around the world!

Spreading their conservation message, Klaus and Pam ensure that in all major cities, contact is made with the press, radio and TV, in addition to giving free slide presentations to various schools and universities.

Funded entirely by themselves, their message has been well received by everyone they have met. "We think the children in the schools are extremely interested, more so, in the Latin countries where they have so little on TV. We also encourage them to look after their own endangered species. Of course, the Latin public have no public awareness of the rhino, it is too far removed from their countries. They are very poor and are too busy trying to survive themselves", says Pam.

Through the efforts of Klaus and Pam, the Rhino & Elephant Foundation have received donations from both the San Antonio Zoo and the Trinity High School in Texas.

We wish you well for the successful completion of your Rhino Awareness Expedition.

Do not forget to visit REF's
exciting internet site at:

<http://www.ref.org.za>

and e-mail us your comments at:

school@wildernesstrust.org.za

Time to say Thank You

We would like to extend our grateful thanks to all those who have generously made donations arising from our most recent appeal, towards the Rhino Museum:

Dr & Mrs Hymie Ebedes (for rhinoceros figurines and various books)

Marchig Animal Welfare Trust (monetary donation)

Ms Robyn Harvey (monetary donation)

Jerry & Venus Keating (monetary donation)

Allan Day (typist's chair)

Mazda Wildlife Fund (vehicle assistance)

Mrs Heide Bär (monetary donation)

Mr Fernando Mwana Bermudes (literary and video donation for the Rhino Museum)

(at time of going to press)

WE WOULD STILL WELCOME FURTHER DONATIONS TOWARDS THE CENTRE

and for unspecified donations, thank you:

Mrs T Zschenderlein and Mr D Fullerton (a donation in memory of their late mother, Mrs Paddy Fullerton)

Mr C Haussman

Mr Simon Pillinger

Mr J Brankin

New Concept Africa Insurance Brokers

Mrs Conita Walker

San Antonio Zoo

Trinity High School, Texas

Mr K Lovell

Mr H Kornelius

Mr R Watts

Mr I Gabbay

Mr D Grant

Mr F H Fortgens

(at time of going to press)

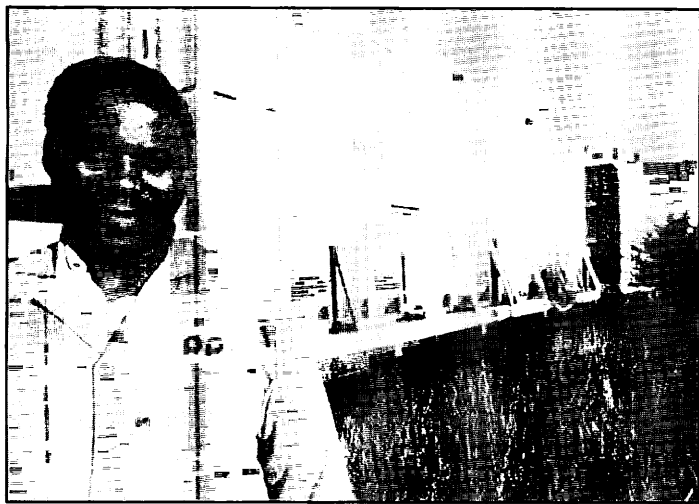
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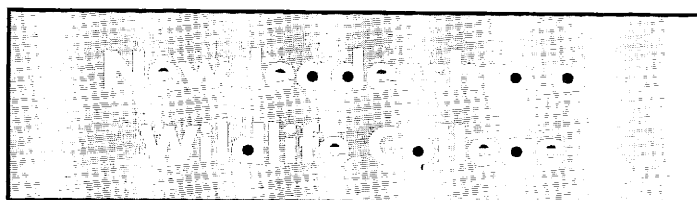
The trailer, sponsored by PPC Cement, is ready for action to transport two adult elephant bulls to their new home. In this case, to the Pilanesberg National Park where they will "kick butt" and sort out the delinquent behaviour amongst the younger elephant bulls.

PPC Cement puts its strength behind Elephant Conservation

The relocation of six adult elephant bulls from the Kruger National Park to the Pilanesberg National Park, was successfully completed in March this year, thanks to the two custom-designed trailers manufactured for the relocation of adult elephant bulls. PPC assisted the South African National Park by donating the necessary funds towards the manufacture of these trailers, which will relocate adult elephant bulls from the Kruger National Park to other parks and reserves in South and Southern Africa.

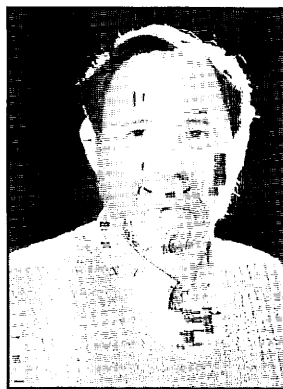
In the past, elephant family groups have been relocated to other game parks and nature reserves. The elimination of the elephant bull from this social structure, has resulted in the deviant behaviour of the younger bulls. It has now become necessary to re-introduce the adult bulls into these family groups for their social dominance to rectify the situation. It is also necessary for breeding purposes to relocate adult elephant bulls.

Says John Gomersall, PPC Group Managing Director: "PPC Cement's commitment to conservation and protection of our heritage is clearly indicated by our contribution".



The Southern African Wildlife College, which opened its doors to course participants in July last year, has appointed Professor Eugene John Moll, as its new Director.

In its first year of operation, the College, which is located 12 kms from the Kruger National Park's Orpen Gate, has gone from strength to strength. 1998 saw the start of its first Certificate course, which was fully subscribed by students from all over southern Africa, including Namibia, Lesotho, Moçambique and Zambia.



Professor Eugene John Moll, Director of the Southern African Wildlife College.

Moll is looking forward to the challenge presented by the Southern African Wildlife College. "The College, is at the cutting edge because it is training Protected Area Managers who are already active in the field of conservation. We have an enormous responsibility not only to our sponsors and donors but more importantly, to humankind." Professor Moll said.

For further information, please contact tel. (015) 793-2621/4/5 or fax (015) 793-2621.

NEWS FLASH

Record prices at Natal Game Auction

3 370 animals, to the value of R12 241 300 (an all time record), were sold at the KwaZulu-Natal Game Auction held at Hluhluwe on 20 June 1998. A record R235 000 was paid for a white rhino cow and calf, R8 000 for a waterbuck and R975 for a warthog. Brandon Leer, Stockowners Co-operative Ltd's chief Stud Auctioneer, handled the Auction admirably, disposing of more than 300 lots very quickly and competently. Game Marketing Manager, Frans Ras, and his staff, saw to it that everything ran smoothly. This Auction has been allocated to Stockowners for three years.

First International Wildlife and Photographic Convention – August 1999

South Africa has taken the initiative to organise the first international Wildlife and Photographic Convention at the Kruger National Park from August 10 to 13, 1999.

Says Chairman of the Convention Organising Committee, David Moore: "The Convention – the first of its kind ever to be held – will be hosted under the auspices of the Photographic Society of Southern Africa (PSSA) at Skukuza Camp in the Kruger National Park".

The Convention is not restricted to the photographic or wildlife fraternities. It is open to the public. And certainly it is not all work and no play, insists Moore. The four day agenda includes night drives, early morning outings with obvious photographic opportunities, guided tours, exhibitions and a laboratory to develop film.

For further information:

Convention Organising Committee
Johannesburg, RSA
David Moore – Tel + 27 11 880-2056
E-mail: dmoore@iafrica.com

NEWS FLASH

Pachy not guilty of killing woman

Minsk – A special investigative commission has found Marmot, a 41 year old elephant, not guilty of killing his keeper, a spokesman for Belarus' Nature Ministry said yesterday.

"The woman who had been temporarily taking care of the elephant was drunk. She brought his food one hour late and infringed certain rules on feeding the animal," said the spokesman, adding that Marmot would stay at Grodno Zoo. **Reuters. The Citizen – 27 June 1998**

Mazda Wildlife Fund comes to the rescue yet again

Whilst the Waterberg Centre for Environmental Education, incorporating the Rhinoceros Museum and the Cultural & Natural History Museum, is in the final stages of completion, Curator, Dr Kees Rookmaaker, has been stationed at REF's offices in Edenvale, *sans* a vehicle! But the good news is that help was soon on its way in the form of temporary vehicle assistance by Humphrey Le Grice of the Mazda Wildlife Fund. This has enabled Dr Rookmaaker to conduct a countrywide visit of museums in South Africa, which has provided him with invaluable support structures for running the new Centre.

Thank you Mazda Wildlife Fund – we are most grateful for your willing commitment to assist conservation!



Dr Kees Rookmaaker with Mazda Wildlife Fund's complimentary vehicle.

REF extends a big welcome to the following new members:

Dr Nic de Wet (Corporate Member)
Dr & Mrs S E Stewart (Individual Members)
Mr and Mrs R W van der Meer (Individual Members)
Mr Jan Havenga (Individual)
Mrs G E Phelen (Individual)
Mrs S P McGill (Individual)