

ASKARI WILDERNESS CONSERVATION PROGRAMME

The Askarian – November 2020

<http://www.askariwcp.com>

The month in view



Coming up.....

- Conservation & Sightings
- New Askari staff team
- Buffalo & nyala darting
- Female cheetah release
- #AskariTV

Amazing news this month as South African borders re-open to ALL travellers, regardless of country of origin. Just a negative covid test needed for entry. We can't wait to have you all back in 2021.

New staff on the team

In preparation for our re-opening in early 2021, we are so excited to welcome Edward back to the Askari team.

So I'm pretty sure you're going to love our newest addition to the staff team, Edward in back with Askari



Many of you have already enjoyed amazing Askari days working alongside of being guided by Ed. We're looking forward to lots more in 2021.



Remember to 'Like' the Askari Facebook page to receive daily sightings and project updates to your news feed <http://www.facebook.com/Askari.Wilderness.Conservation.Programme>



Veterinary dartings

Our first patient this month was an adult female nyala in one of our breeding camps. It was noticed that she was limping but then a few days later the reason became clear. She had a piece of plastic piping stuck around her foot.



Vet Dr Peter Rogers was called and the female was darted with anaesthetic. Once asleep, the piping was cut off with a pair of wire cutters. There were some maggots present and an infection. The wound was cleaned and antibiotics administered. The drug was reversed and she was shortly on her way...feeling 100 times better I'm sure! The vet team informed us that nyala are the most common antelope they deal with having funny things stuck to their feet! Most likely due to their close association with human settlement.

This Cape buffalo male also required some assistance this month after, what we suspect to be, an injury sustained from another buffalo. The flesh, muscles and tendons on the back of his front leg were badly cut and damaged. The wound was cleaned and treated and antibiotics administered. It was too hot there and then but the decision was made to move him to a boma for recovery and further treatment the following day.



As murphy's law would have it, it then took over a week to relocate him again. Even when we finally did he was too weak to stand under the influence of the drugs and it wasn't possible to move him. We have therefore left him in the wild but we were extremely encouraged by how much the leg had already improved. Although his survival is not guaranteed we have done as much as we can to help him now.

Female cheetah release

This month the moment finally arrived for the release of female cheetahs Rumi and Rae. They spent a little longer in the boma just due to their young age but we coincided their “day to the wild” with the birth of the impala lambs to kick-start their hunting career! In fact they didn’t seem to need it as the 1st kill they made, just 2 days later, was an adult female nyala! The day before that they were also seen chasing off a brown hyaena from their patch! We are so pleased with the start they have made. They have made some good explorations of their territory and also discovered those impala lambs since and made a further 2 kills. Although there are many challenges ahead they have made the best possible start!



Wildlife monitoring, Conservation & Sightings

Sightings this month were amazing and varied. One of Katie's favourites was obviously the moment when she came round the corner to find a pair of **spotted hyaenas** at Eland dam. One with a set of wildebeest horns in its mouth and the other taking a swim. It was an EXTREMELY hot day! Check out the #AskariTV episode of the sighting by following this link <https://youtu.be/9w4wl-pW8Kk>



Our first born impala lamb was spotted in November, and for the first time, this was on the EXACT same day as our first Woodland kingfisher. The kingfisher makes a familiar and repetitive sound signalling to all around that summer is really here. I'm not sure we really needed the kingfisher to tell us that however with yet another record temperature over 41 degrees Celsius!!!

Big Birding Day



The team took part in the annual Birdlife South Africa 'Big birding day' and counted an amazing 122 different species in 24 hours, including many recently returned migrant species.



Wildlife monitoring, Conservation & Sightings



We enjoyed a beautiful sighting with one of the elephant herds and associated bulls. Video footage here <https://youtu.be/jTDZdB6jaMk>



On a herbivore count through buffalo camp we counted 6 new sable calves, all born in the wild this season. This video shows a few of the calves <https://youtu.be/rHIV5OzFOag> . There were also new lambs born in the nyala breeding camps.

