

Fantastic Start To 2008

In the afternoon of Saturday 12th of January, Werner from Leeuwenbosh was having a drink stop with his guests at Rooi Walle when he spotted a newborn white rhino calf right next to its mum on Sunnyside East. The new mother was identified as the oldest cow, Nomabongo. The calf was only a few hours old as Mike from Woodbury had seen Nomabongo that same day in the morning, on her own without a calf.

Both mother and calf are doing very well. The calf, now 3 months old, has been identified as a male and named “Inkululeko” by Werner, meaning freedom in Xhosa.



Unfortunately for Nomabongo’s older male calf Geza, the new arrival meant that he was pushed out by his mum. Following close monitoring of Geza’s movements; it was observed that he initially joined up with Nomvula and her calf and now more recently with Nomtsha and Isipho. Both females appeared to be content with Geza hanging around and even protected him from the older males.

White Rhino Calf Facts

1. At birth, the calf’s wrinkled skin is pale grey with a pink tinge.
2. The outer horny layer of the skin is moulted at about 1.5-4.0 months, revealing a new paler skin. A further moult takes place at about 10 months.
3. The calf suckles on demand for 2-3 minutes or until satisfied.
4. At 2 months the calf begins grazing.
5. The calf is weaned at about a year and separates from its mother at about two or three years.

Precious Water



On the 13th of March, the conservation centre opened its doors to 72 children and 16 adults

from several local schools to celebrate Water Day.

The children spent half a day filled with fun activities aimed at creating water awareness and showing how precious it is. The children played games, made paintings as well as learnt about the water cycle and examined the Bushman’s river water quality.

The children had a thoroughly enjoyable time and took all their art creations back home.

We would like to thank Ettiene and the Hands-On students and Nicci of Woodbury Lodge for their help in the smooth running of the day.

Special Guest For Breakfast

It had been raining heavily during the night on the 10th of March, so Nathalie from the ACC had to check how wet the ground was before heading out on cheetah monitoring. She was walking around just outside the office and probing at the ground when she suddenly saw something at the corner of her eye. As she looked up, she saw an antelope lying less than 20m from her. After trying to get her eyes to focus for a couple of seconds in the half light, she suddenly saw something else was

lying down in front of the antelope. To her astonishment, that something else was a cheetah!!



It turned out that the male cheetah, Lightfoot, had chased a female

impala through the electric fence and onto the ACC grounds less than an hour earlier. Lightfoot claimed his kill metres from the office.

This meant a very easy cheetah monitoring for the conservation centre team but a real concern for safety as the ACC was hosting Water Day 2 days later for 72 local school children. It was therefore decided the carcass would be dragged outside the ACC grounds. Lightfoot took two days to eat the carcass before moving off.

Cheetah Cubs Update

Damara and the cubs are doing fantastically. They have been sighted frequently around the eastern section of the reserve between Big Hoek and Woodbury Flats, and have made great viewing for guests.

The cubs are now seven months old, have lost their dark grey hair and are looking like proper cheetahs!

They have reached the age when they practice hunting. Damara will

bring back small live prey for them to practice on. Although the cubs seem to feel they are ready for bigger game, they still bite off more than they can chew. They have been seen stalking gemsbok and even Chippie (the sub-ordinate male rhino). Mum normally sits back and lets the cubs learn for themselves what is cheetah prey and which animals to stay clear off. So far they have escaped injuries except for bruised eggs.

Unfortunately the cubs eagerness to make their first kill has

sometimes ruined Damara's own hunts. Hopefully, they will soon master this vital skill and take the tremendous pressure off Damara of providing food on a daily basis.



In Brief

More New Arrivals...

The buffalos have had a good start to 2008. A new buffalo calf was reported in February and a second one popped out in March. Both newborn calves are males.

Happy Birthday Bhuti!!!

On the 18th of March, Bhuti, the baby elephant, turned one. He was the first elephant to be conceived and born on Amakhala Game Reserve. He was joined a few months later by another 2 baby elephants. All are believed to have been fathered by Norman.

Lion Cubs Update

Bhuti was not the only one to celebrate. The first successful litter of lion cubs also hit the one year milestone back in February. All three cubs are doing fabulously, and are rapidly becoming as big as their mother.

In the past few months they have perfected the art of being lions, doing very little just like their father Mufasa. Ettiene and the Hands On Students continue to monitor their progress on a daily basis.

Dry Spell At The ACC

The ACC is delighted to welcome Mat Dry for the next three months. Mat graduated from Ulovane Rangers Training School last year as FGASA Level 2 guide and will join the ACC team in April.

Mat has an amazing love for nature, especially reptiles and insects. One of his first tasks will be to kick-start the Addo Flightless Dung Beetle breeding project at the ACC.

3C Tree Planting

The ACC is planning to plant 175 trees in April as part of their 3C conservation project. The trees were purchased with a grant provided by the Cape 3000 Foundation. Children from the President's Award Scheme will be planting the trees on Amakhala Game Reserve.

R10 will be donated to the local community for each tree planted.

Anyone interested in helping out should contact the ACC for further information.

Invasion Of The Bushpig

In recent months there seems to have been an explosion of bushpigs. Rangers have reported numerous sightings of bushpigs, including one sighting of a family of eight.

Isipho HIV/ AIDS Haven

Over the past few months there has been a frenzy of fund raising across the globe for the Isipho HIV/ AIDS Haven project in Paterson. Donations from the UK, USA and South Africa have been collected in an effort to purchase land and build new premises.

The project has been in operation for over 5 years, helping and protecting vulnerable children affected by AIDS and abuse. From its humble beginning, the project now offers safe shelter for 8 orphans and provides meals, care and support for over 90 children.

If you would like to make a donation or help, please contact the conservation centre for further details.

ACC Newsletter Goes Monthly

We are pleased to announce that the ACC Newsletter will be published on a monthly basis, keeping you more up-to-date with the goings on at the ACC and Amakhala Game Reserve.

Did you know?

The praying mantis is the only insect that can turn its head a complete 360°. Even this amazing talent doesn't avoid the decapitation of the male by the female during mating!