



INGWELALA

GATE LETTER

FEBRUARY 2018

Dear Member,

Welcome back to your home in the bush during February 2017. The staff wish you and your guests a fabulous and relaxing stay.

Please be reminded that Ingwelala falls within a **malaria area**. Please take the necessary precautions after consultation with your medical practitioner. Local Health Departments are currently issuing cautionary notices for (anticipated) increasing malaria cases/outbreaks from March.

During the previous month the maximum ambient temperature reached 40 degrees Celsius while the minimum temperature was 17 degrees Celsius. Of great concern is the lack of rainfall. In a month that averages 83.90 mm of rain, Ingwelala had two showers, 0.8mm and 0.5mm totalling 1.3mm of rain.

Most days registered temperatures in excess of 35 degrees Celsius. The evaporation rates remain high, placing excessive demands on the boreholes to supply sufficient water to the artificial watering points/dams. These water resources need to be managed carefully to ensure long term sustainability. The solar equipment and pump supplying Goedehoop Dam failed repeatedly. Despite several repairs the supply was under delivering. Because of the dry conditions, and the need to protect what little grazing there is in the vicinity of Goedehoop Dam, the best decision is to temporarily close Goedehoop Dam and rest the veld. If we don't get sufficient rain to help the veld (especially the grasses!) recover, it may be necessary to close additional artificial watering points as well. The Nhlalalumi River has natural water along most of its course, which will hopefully assist with attracting animals and support rotational grazing. Neighbouring properties have informed of similar practices to rotate water point closures.

Hoedspruit has recently introduced water restrictions, the challenges are therefore regional, so please continue to use water sparingly.

Kindly be reminded that elephants breach the camp fence on an ad hoc basis. It is common for these elephants to pull up water pipes in search of fresh water. The main water supply is then closed until staff can locate and repair the leaks. It is recommended you store a **back-up supply of water** in your bungalow for the odd chores and for the flushing of loo's etc. Staff attend to the water leaks as a priority. Either Reception or the Gate will keep you updated on repair progress on radio Channel 1.

During the reporting period the camp enjoyed higher than usual occupancy levels, for a longer period, when comparing year on year. This resulted in more eyes and ears on the ground, and plenty of sightings written up in the register. It was certainly the month for cats, lions seen almost every day. Several kills were made, one report of a "text book" kill by a lioness, catching a juvenile warthog which she carried to her cubs. The lions were often in camp, seemingly unperturbed by human activity. There were numerous leopard sightings, some with cubs, some with kills, one kill happened when a hyena arrived, stole the kill and devoured it in half an hour, while the leopard darted in and out feeding off scraps!

Elephant activity increased, month on month, more breeding herds ranging on Ingwelala. The largest herd size numbered 50 – 60. No buffalo to speak of, a single bull seen on three occasions.

Wild dogs were active, two different packs sizing each other up on Buffelsbed in an amazing sighting. One pack had 9 dogs and the other 20, with full on confrontation.

A black mamba was seen swimming in the water at Bird Hide. It swam out to the leadwood stump in the middle, slithered up to reach the Red-billed Buffalo Weaver nests to feed on the chicks.

The **scorpions are plentiful this summer**, take care to use a torch at night and wear closed shoes.

General game sightings included spotted hyena, giraffe, genet, hippo and crocodile.

The birders had an excellent month, noting Martial Eagle, Tawny Eagle (pale form), Lesser Spotted Eagle, Verreaux's Eagle-Owl, Pearl-spotted Owlet, African Scops Owl, Lanner Falcon, Red-footed Kestrel, Dark Chanting Goshawk, Ground Hornbill, Black Stork, Saddle-billed Stork, White-backed Night Heron, Levillant's Cuckoo, Eurasian Golden Oriole, Cardinal Woodpecker, Spotted Flycatcher, Dusky Lark, Brown-headed Parrot, Painted Snipe, Plum-coloured Starling and Little Bee Eater.

There is a troop of **baboons** that forage through camp. All food should be kept out of sight to prevent break-ins to bungalows for the food. The **vervet monkeys** that hang around the car park and swimming pool area have learnt to open cooler boxes and picnic baskets left unattended on vehicles. They do not back away from women and children, so please keep a close eye on small children.

General:

1. For security measures, please continue to disclose your Bungalow number when requesting a "radio check". Please report any suspicious vehicles/persons that you suspect to be a security risk, or any fresh human spoor seen (outside of camp). Your assistance in this regard is highly appreciated.
2. Gate staff are requested to ensure that Gate Indemnity Forms are correctly completed when entering the Reserve.
3. If for any reason, you are using your "town vehicle" for game viewing, please ensure you obtain temporary decals from Reception before traversing on Ingwelala so all vehicles are easily identifiable.
4. General Working hours are:

	Shop	Reception	Fuel	Workshop
Monday – Friday	08h00 - 12h00 14h30 - 17h00	08h00 - 12h00 14h30 - 17h00	07h30 - 12h00 14h30 - 17h00	08h00 - 12h00 14h30 - 17h00
Saturday	08h00 - 13h00	08h00 - 13h00	07h30 - 13h00	08h00 - 13h00
Sunday	08h00 - 12h00	08h00 - 12h00	07h30 - 12h00	08h00 - 12h00

5. A Duty Manager is available to assist you after hours with **emergencies**, contactable via the Gate Staff on radio Channel 1. An after hour **call out fee** of R 570.00 is applicable.

6. Please report any water leaks as well as any trees that may have been pushed over onto the roads by elephants.

7. The Do's and Don'ts and Game Drive Etiquette are attached for your attention.

John Llewellyn
Reserve Manager
Ingwelala Share Block (Pty) Ltd.

