



## RESERVE REPORT

March 2017

### Introduction

Each (summer) season that passes owns its own peculiarities, and this season was no exception. One phenomenon was an abundance of praying mantises, of various species, shapes, colours and sizes. The world of entomology is a massive field in its own, just in the order of Mantodea which represent mantises, there are more than 2400 species identified.

Distinguishing characteristics of praying mantises are their extended oblong bodies with triangular heads joined to highly flexible necks. The eyes are large, as are the exaggerated sizes of their forelegs. It is the characteristic stance of how they hold their forelegs that give them the common name "praying mantis", these large forelegs specially adapted to catch and grasp their prey. It is derived from the Greek word *mantikos*, meaning prophet that describes the forelegs clasped together, as if in prayer.



*Praying mantises can have interesting shapes and colour for concealment.*

Praying mantises are more common in tropical regions, have been around for a long time because the earliest fossil finds are considered to be more than 140 million years old.

Mantises are cunning diurnal hunters, using colour for concealment, and using their impeccable eye-sight to locate their prey. Some studies show they can detect movement from 25 metres away. The two compound eyes contain thousands of ommatidia which assist with crystal sharp vision.

Cannibalism is known to take place, sibling on sibling for example, as well as sexual cannibalism where the female may eat the male after mating takes place.

“Eat, or be eaten” as we often hear this metaphor, and to avoid being eaten mantises need to watch out for hungry birds, lizards, geckos, insectivorous bats and frogs who love making a meal out of them. Again, mantises are masters of camouflage, and they blend with their back-ground objects to avoid detection by predators. In the wild, the average life span of a mantis is 12 months.



*Phyllocrania spp.*

The size of a mantis can vary from 12mm to 150mm in length. Once sexually mature, mating takes place where after the female lays hundreds of eggs. The eggs are protected in a cocoon type structure before the nymphs hatch. In colder climates, this egg protection forms a hard case referred to as an ootheca. Nymphs at the hatching stage appear in the form of mini mantises, minute copies of the adults.

Mantises are not fussy eaters, consuming a large array of palatable insects, crickets especially among their preferred foods. Praying mantises are closely related to cockroaches and termites.

10 more interesting facts about praying mantises:

- They can swivel their heads 180 degrees.
- Mantises have reflexes so fast, it is difficult for a human to see these movements with a naked eye.
- A single ear is present, located on its belly.
- Nocturnal flight is more common amongst males, in search of resting females.
- Four categories of mantises occur, viz: long-winged, short-winged, vestigial-winged and wingless.
- The forelegs are spikes to assist easier claspings of prey.
- Some mantis species can “hiss”, by expelling air from the abdominal parts.

- Mantises show “rocking” behaviour to mimic wind movement.
- Many ancient civilizations thought that mantises have supernatural powers.
- In martial arts, there are recognised movements developed from the mantises fighting techniques.

***Facts researched on the Internet, words by John Llewellyn. Pictures courtesy Charlie Lynam.***

**Staff profile:**



This month we chat to Sandra Makhubele who was first employed at Ingwelala in February 1987. Sandra has been a loyal employee with 30 years' service! Congratulations to Sandra, what a wonderful mile stone and achievement.

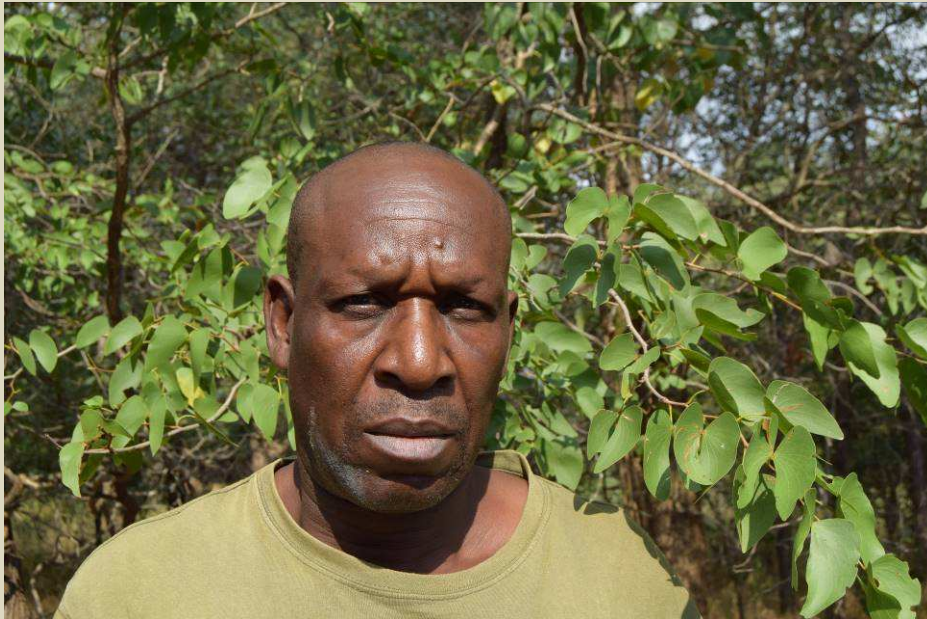
Sandra is married to Solly Hlatswayo (also a sterling contribution of 25 years' service!). Their family home is in Acornhoek. Together Sandra and Solly have five children, two sons and two daughters and five grand-children. Their oldest daughter is studying law at the University of Limpopo. Sandra has two close relatives working at Ingwelala, her sister Phyllis, in Housekeeping, and her nephew, Augustine, who works in the Maintenance team.

It was interesting to learn that in her early days of employment Sandra assisted in the general administration grounds including maintaining the original swimming pool. Sandra assisted as the domestic worker in the home of Glen Divine, and for a long time now has worked in Housekeeping.

The leopard is Sandra's favourite animal, because she described to me that any leopard sighting is very special, leopards are seldom seen and therefore it is a privilege when you do see one. Sandra went on to further describe that her job brings her great joy because she sees all types of animals during the day. When walking between bungalows you never know what animal you may see next.

Sandra acknowledged the kindness of Members, especially those Members who she has known for a long time, who's bungalows she cleans on a regular basis.

When asked about her views on the future at Ingwelala, and what she hopes for, Sandra humbly replied that formal education it is very costly, and that any salary increase will assist their family life enormously.



Solly Hlatswayo (above), married to Sandra, who joined Ingwelala in April 1992. Solly's first work responsibility was maintaining the electric fence. Later he became the tractor driver, before assisting with water provision and the cleaning of Hides & Bomas. For the past decade Solly has worked in the Maintenance team, chief-in-charge of gas lights, repair of camp water leaks, and a large part of his job is transporting Housekeeping Staff to and from bungalow cleans and laundry deliveries.

**General travel information:**

When traveling to Ingwelala please note that SANRAL e-tags now work for:

Below are the names of the Toll Plazas on the N4:

- Diamond Hill Mainline Plaza
- Middelburg Mainline Plaza
- \* Machado Mainline Plaza
- \* Nkomazi Mainline Plaza
- \* Donkerhoek Ramp
- \* Cullinan Ramp
- \* Valtaki Ramp
- \* Ekandustria Ramp

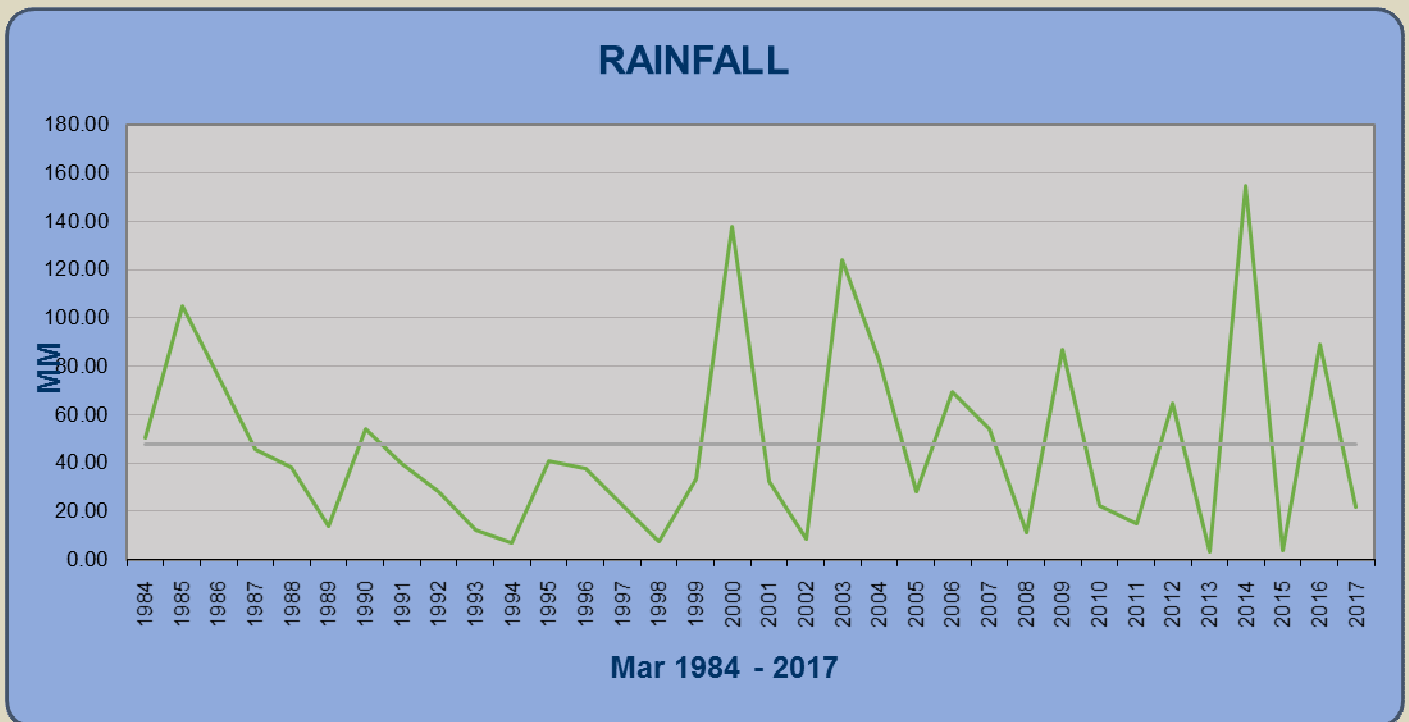
All lanes now accept your tag as a toll payment method on the TRAC N4 toll route.

***NB! Between Ohrigstad and the Abel Erasmus tunnel, there are currently several compulsory "stop and go" sections where traffic is limited to single lane. Travel with care!***

**Climate and rainfall (summary)**

Rainfall:	22. 3 mm: Season Total = 367.9 mm.
Minimum temperature:	14 degrees Celsius.
Maximum temperature:	37 degrees Celsius.

The following graph summarises total rainfall recorded at Ingwelala for the month of March over the past 33 years.



(Note: March 2017: 22.3 mm rainfall is less than half of the March monthly average of 47.7 mm)

### **Staff complement**

Reserve Manager (1)  
Conservation Manager and 2iC (1)  
Camp and Systems Manageress (1)  
Front Desk Manageress (1)  
Accounts Manageress (1)  
Workshop Manager (1)  
Maintenance Manager (1)  
Reception and Housekeeping (1)  
Field Assistants (6)  
Grounds staff (2)  
Domestics (14)  
Maintenance Assistants (4)  
Workshop Assistants (4)  
Petrol and Stores Attendant (1)  
Shop assistants (2)  
Sibon (2)

### **Staff Movement**

Nil.

### **Bungalows for sale**

Bungalow # 18, a full (100%) share of seven shares for R4.90 million.

### **Conservation**

#### **Alien plant eradication**

Conservation staff treated 40 Opuntia (prickly pear) with herbicide on Argyle.

## Veld Rehabilitation

A total of six hectares of selective bush thinning (*Grewia* spp) has been cleared between River Road and Route 1 on Argyle.

A total of two hectares of Mopani has been cleared on the identified trial site on Goedehoop. This selective clearing is a trial site in Mopani Woodland to monitor the effects of woody/grass competition. It is hoped that natural grass swards can be re-established in these woodland areas as part of the long-term veld rehabilitation. Currently the method is labour intensive, with the future objective of contracting a specialist service provider, using specially adapted machinery to clear areas of meaningful volumes. Quotations from service providers are in hand and being reviewed for selection.

## Erosion Control

Nil.

## Roads and Tracks

The Conservation Team spent a lot of time and effort on the roads this past month. Where necessary the “middle-mannetjie” was slashed to control seed build up against vehicle radiators. An interesting observation this summer has been the abundance of grass seeds, a noteworthy crop indeed, perhaps Nature’s way of restoring the seed bank during cycles of below average rainfall?

All river crossings were graded and numerous water damaged surfaces (caused by cross run-off) were attended to.



*Grasses with a useful seed crop this season*

## Airstrip

The airstrip surface is inspected on a weekly basis and the general condition recorded in a register.

A reminder please that all airstrip users must complete (once off) an ***Ingwelala Airstrip Indemnity Form*** before landing. Indemnity forms are obtainable from [reception@ingwelala.co.za](mailto:reception@ingwelala.co.za) Guest pilots must also complete the form before using the airstrip.

## Fencing

All the fences are working within the APNR Protocol and Norms and Standards.

No elephant breaches to the Camp, Sibon or Vuka Ingwe fences during the reporting period. However, regular fence inspections took place and minor maintenance carried out where necessary.

## Bomas, Hides and Picnic Sites

These facilities are checked daily.

Refurbishment (concrete) work that commenced at the Platform was completed.

Treatment (oil/varnish) of the timber at Beacon Boma was completed.

A new gate was installed at the entrance screen to Bird Hide.

### **Game sightings**

Game viewing through March continued to be very good. Lions and leopards were seen on most days. Special sightings of the cats included lion cubs at Third Crossing and on Eastern River Road a leopard carrying a new born cub in her mouth. Elephant herds continue to enjoy bathing in the river at Farmhouse. Surprisingly, there were very few buffalo (breeding) herds seen, assumingly they have dispersed to areas that experienced higher rainfall where the veld will be greener.

General game sightings were giraffe, blue wildebeest, zebra, impala, kudu, nyala, grey duiker, steenbok, hyena, spring hare, porcupine, hippo and crocodile.

The birders noted a great mixed bag of Martial Eagle, Fish Eagle, Tawny Eagle, Greater Striped Cuckoo, Jacobin Cuckoo, Yellow-billed Oxpecker, Temminck's Courser, Ground Hornbill, Black Stork, Saddle-billed Stork, Verreaux's Eagle-Owl and White-headed Vulture.

### **Security**

No incidents on Ingwelala during the reporting period.

### **Road Kills**

X1 Nightjar.

X2 Squirrels.

### **General Fire Risk Management**

Veld fire risk continues to be rated low due to "green" summer conditions.

Fire-fighting equipment is checked on a weekly basis.

Two tractors available to assist with fire-fighting (x2 water drawn carts).

X1 "Bakkie-Sakkie" serviceable and responsive on a "first call" basis.

X1 250-litre water cart and pump available for "fast response", back up to "Bakkie-Sakkie".

X 20 fire beaters and x4 knap-sack sprays in good working order.

### **Umbabat**

No incursions (suspected poachers) into the Umbabat during the reporting period.

### **Water reticulation**

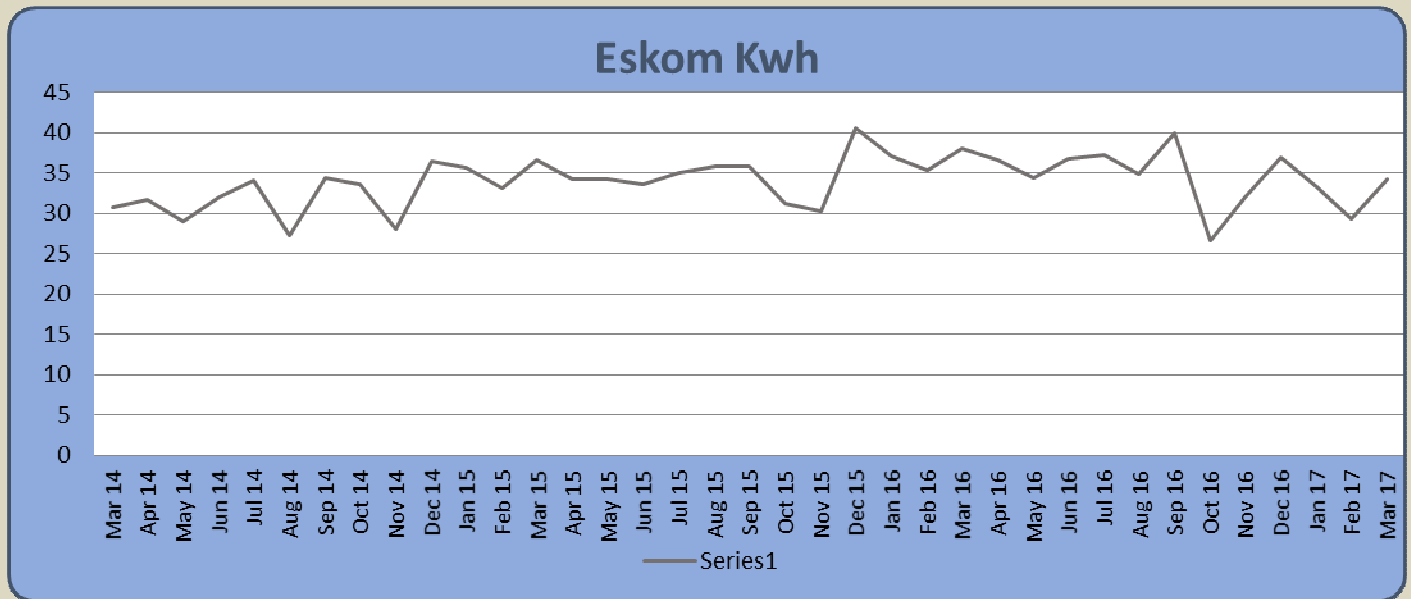
Yield data for the boreholes is reflected in the following table, comparative with previous months.

<b>BOREHOLE</b>	<b>MAR 17</b>	<b>FEB 17</b>	<b>JAN 17</b>	<b>DEC 16</b>	<b>NOV 16</b>	<b>OCT 16</b>	<b>SEP 16</b>	<b>AUG 16</b>	<b>JUL 16</b>	<b>JUN 16</b>	<b>MAY 16</b>
BH NO 1	87	97	1095	175	53	106	283	153	165	0	0
BH NO 2	1005	669	949	883	814	642	921	590	603	382	517
BH NO 3	342	683	193	320	473	518	834	575	721	343	1129
BH NO 4	322	753	812	884	911	894	855	832	772	801	742

BH NO 5	353	245	345	392	470	446	473	462	320	477	324
BH NO 6	683	107	650	690	394	586	593	709	553	662	548
BH NO 7	0	2	288	207	455	565	425	232	165	434	295
BH NO 9	Solar	Solar	Solar	Solar	Solar	Solar	Solar	Solar	Solar	Solar	Solar
JB	0	0	0	0	0	0	111	329	285	345	265
GOEDEHOOP	0	0	0	507	870	762	753	1018	825	774	787

### Eskom Usage

The following graph shows the monthly Eskom Usage (Kwh) for Ingwelala.



### Vehicles and Workshop

WORKSHOP	MAR 17	FEB 17	JAN 17	DEC 16	NOV 16	OCT 16	SEP 16	AUG 16	JUL 16	JUN 16
JOB CARDS OPENED	55	38	37	53	39	43	51	51	63	65
JOB CARDS CLOSED	56	30	19	56	42	45	49	55	56	57
GENERATOR HOURS	0	2.1	3.8	13.7	2.4	6.8	11.7	0	8.2	8
DIESEL TANK (L)	850	850	100	205	425	475	550	700	700	350

The general fleet and static plant maintenance is 100% compliant with the servicing schedule.

C1 (Water Hilux) continues to undergo suspension and chassis problems (metal fatigue), and will be replaced by end June.

### Building project

Current (major) building projects are listed below:

Bung No	Name	Work requested	Approval	Builder	% Complete
69	John Segeren	Demolish & rebuild	October 2016	Chameleon	95%
115	Phil Raymond	Internal modifications	November 2016	Not yet selected	0%
116	Geoff Watson	Demolish and rebuild	Approved February 2017	Chameleon	8%
185	Weston Dickson	Demolish and rebuild	Approved January 2017	Chameleon	8%
186	John Hawkins	New gazebo and raise patio	Approved July 2016	Dukes Construction	70%



## Reception Statistics

<b>GATE STATISTICS</b>	<b>MAR 17</b>	<b>FEB 17</b>	<b>JAN 17</b>	<b>DEC 16</b>	<b>NOV 16</b>	<b>OCT 16</b>	<b>SEP 16</b>	<b>AUG 16</b>	<b>JUL 16</b>	<b>JUN 16</b>
VEHICLES	245	145	179	458	185	218	256	338	307	343
MEMBERS GUESTS	798	437	481	1341	614	609	689	1013	1033	1034
UNACCOMP GUESTS	0	8	0	0	2	0	3	0	0	20
UNITS OCCUPIED	140	91	159	213	113	138	143	167	179	165
AIRBORNE VISITORS	3	7	8	2	7	11	8	3	19	18

<b>COTTAGE NIGHTS</b>	<b>MAR 17</b>	<b>FEB 17</b>	<b>JAN 17</b>	<b>DEC 16</b>	<b>NOV 16</b>	<b>OCT 16</b>	<b>SEP 16</b>	<b>AUG 16</b>	<b>JUL 16</b>	<b>JUN 16</b>
HORNBILL	20	20	13	18	12	9	3	14	12	15
FRANCOLIN	13	10	8	18	9	8	10	14	24	16
GUINEAFOWL	4	9	11	7*	0	3	5	14	18	13

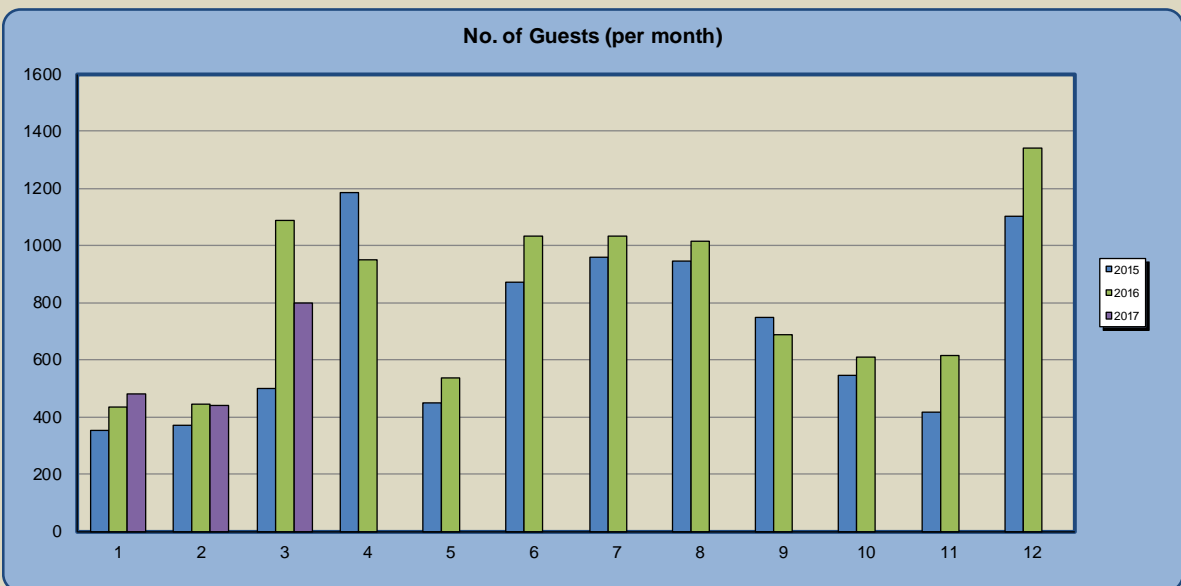
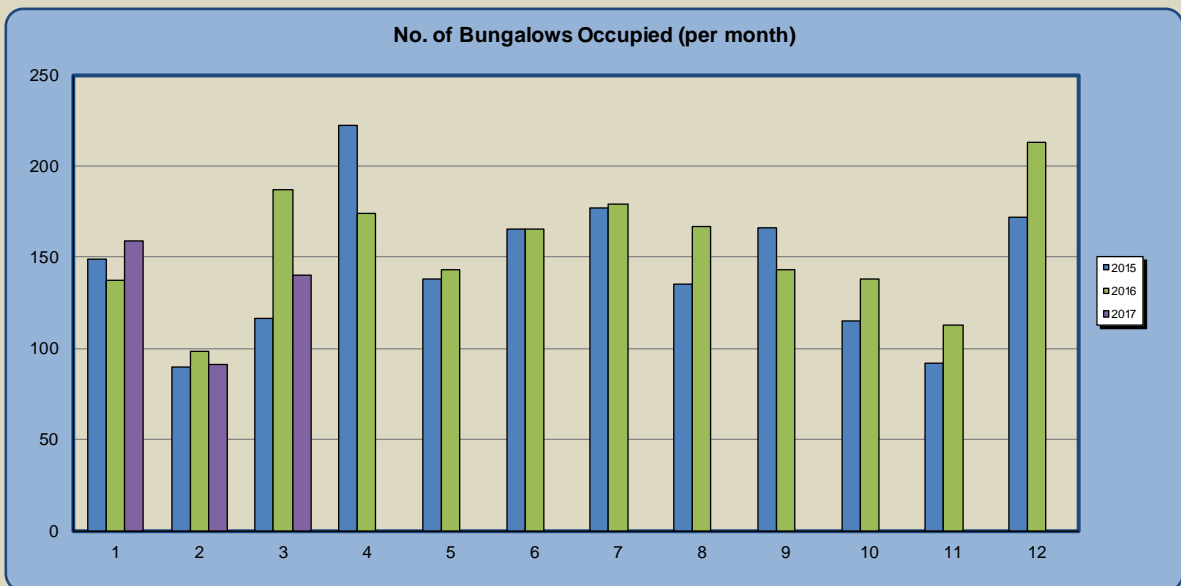
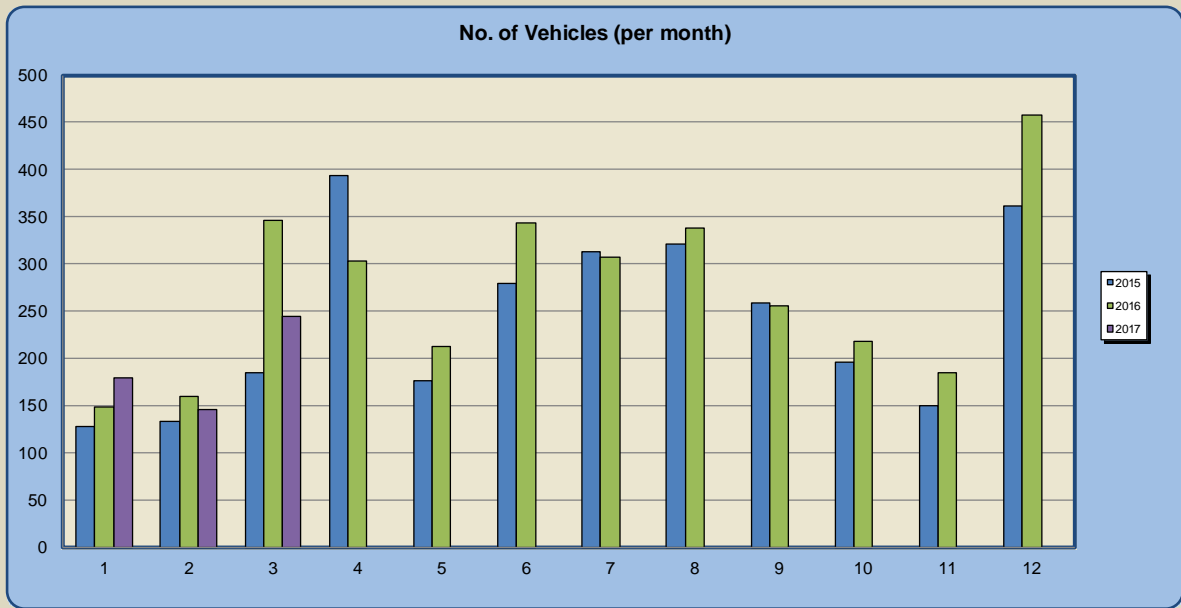
General:

1. Our condolences are expressed to the Holmes family in Bungalow # 49 and to the de Villiers family in Bungalow # 41 over the passing away of close family members.

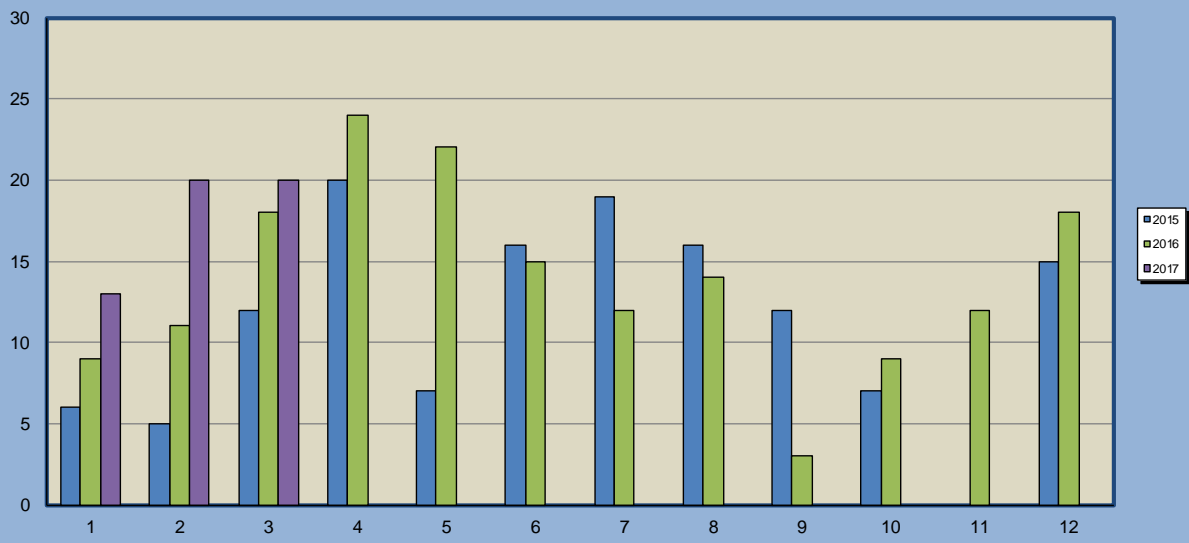
Thank you for your continued support.

**John Llewellyn**  
**Reserve Manager**

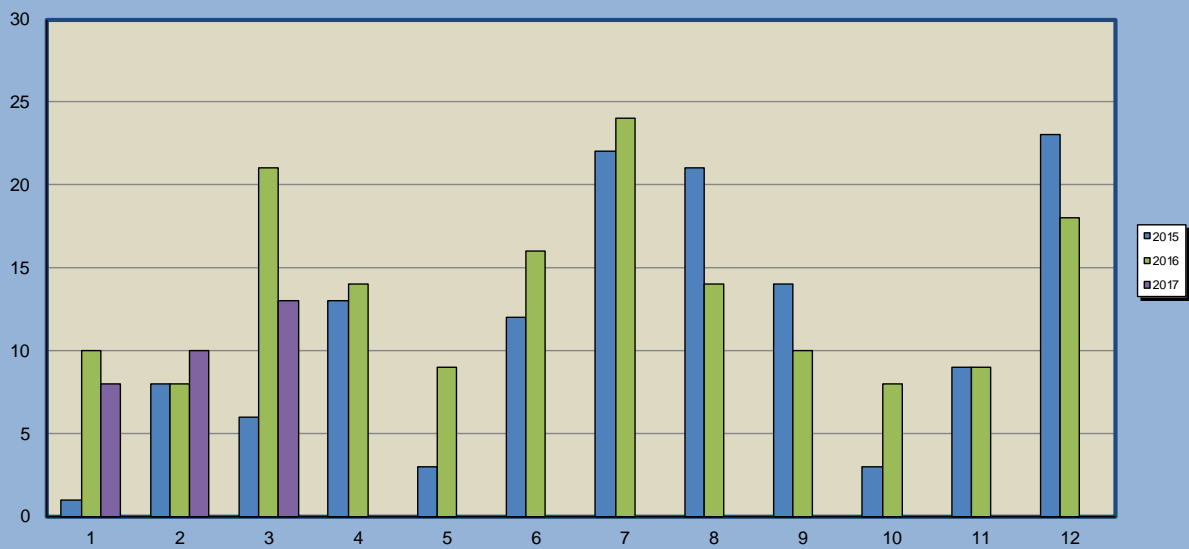
### ANNEXURE1: GRAPHS



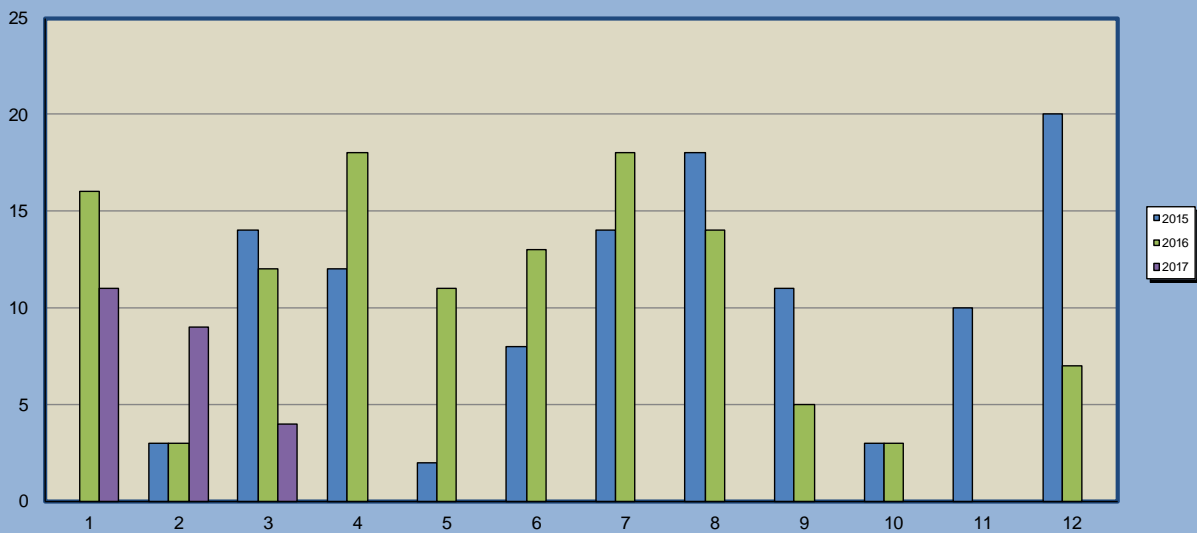
Hornbill Occupancy (nights per month)



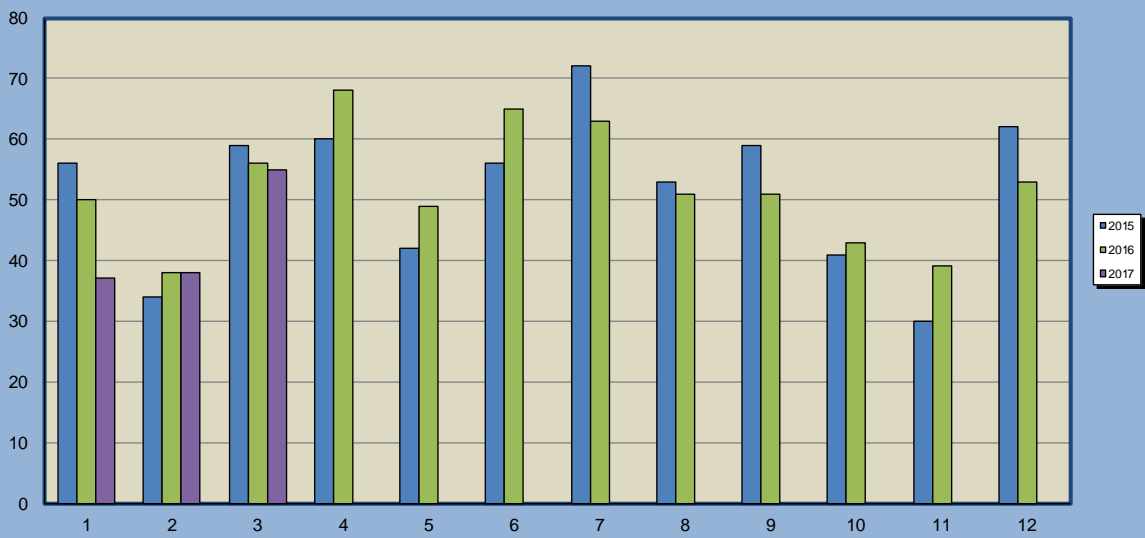
Francolin Occupancy (nights per month)



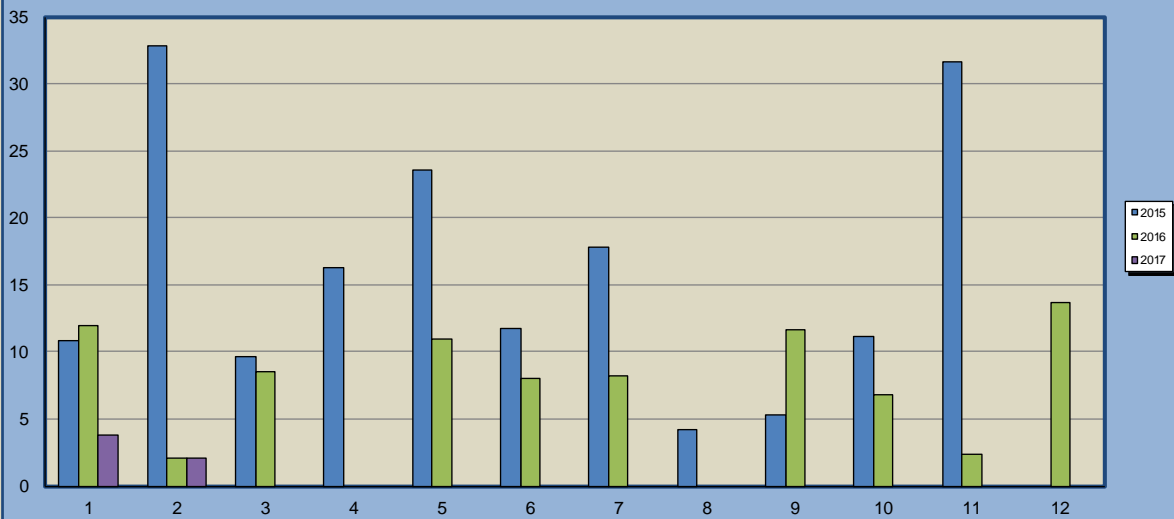
Guineafowl Occupancy (nights per month)



No. of job cards opened (per month)



Generator Hours (per month)



Ground Water Extraction m<sup>3</sup>  
(combined boreholes per month)

