



RESERVE REPORT

August 2017

Introduction

Chris and Auriel Thorpe in Bungalow # 197 share the following leopard experiences with you:

LEOPARD ENCOUNTER

It all started at about 10 o'clock on Monday morning. The monkeys outside our house started alarm calling and scattered to the treetops. We decided to go into the river bed and investigate. We watched the monkeys high up in the trees but couldn't spot anything on the ground. We figured a leopard must have passed through. We went home and forgot about it. During the day the impala passed by, but they all stopped at the gulley and looked at the scotia tree - not their normal behaviour when they pass our house. The nyala did the same.

That evening at about 6 pm, as we sat around our fire, a leopard came to drink from our pond. Usually the leopards come from one direction, drink, and move off in another direction. This time the leopard came from the gulley, drank, and returned to the gulley. A little later four hyenas appeared, looking very unsettled, and hung around the gulley all evening. We suspected then that perhaps there was a kill close by. We scoured the gulley with our binoculars, but couldn't pick up anything.

The following morning, I made a cup of tea, got comfortable outside, and scanned around the gully. Lying peacefully on the opposite bank of the gulley was a leopard. I called Chris and as he came outside the leopard walked down towards the river bed. We checked our camera trap and a leopard had come down to drink from our pond early that morning.

Later in the day a family of warthogs came by, and as they passed the gulley they all put their scruffs up. They drank from the pond and went back to the gulley, keeping their scruffs up. They remained for a long time and we decided the leopard must have moved off and it would be safe to investigate. We carefully stepped off our patio and as we started to walk slowly towards the warthogs and the gulley, a leopard literally swung from the branches and quickly disappeared. Our suspicions were now confirmed - there definitely was a leopard on a kill.

Later in the day we saw the leopard return and with our binoculars, through the thick vegetation, we could see leopard spots! There was literally one spot on our patio where we had visual of just spots. Throughout the day we kept checking and could hear crunching of bones. At one stage, we could clearly see the leopard's tail hanging down.

That evening we enjoyed our braai to the sound of bone crunching.

On Wednesday, we could still just see the leopard spots through the thick vegetation. We had invited friends for dinner and as we set up outside, the leopard drank and went back to the tree. We were enjoying the evening, four hyenas constantly lingering around the tree. Twice during the evening there was a huge commotion and the hyenas came scuttling out of the gulley but they soon returned. We suspected the hyenas and leopard were having a standoff.

Then Barnes called on the radio to say there was an injured leopard lying up against our fence. We got into the Landy and went to investigate. It was a large leopard with a gash on its right thigh. Was this the result of the skirmish we

kept hearing between the leopard and hyenas? The leopard slowly walked back to the gully and after a while moved into the open.

John Llewellyn called to ask if he could come and see the injured leopard. He and Natalie came by as did a couple of other friends. We chatted a while and discussed the goings on in the gully. They then left.

Back on our patio Paul de Luca said he felt the injury was not a recent injury, there was no blood running down the leg. We decided to look at the earlier camera trap photos on the laptop. The photos showed no injury, and we also realized that the leopard with an injury was much larger than the one in the photos! Were there two leopards? As we were pondering the possibilities, our peace was shattered. There was a sudden explosion from the gully. A simultaneous raucous of roaring, snapping, growling, hissing, and as we looked up expecting to see the hyenas running away, two leopards ran straight towards us from the gully at lightning speed. We froze. As they reached our patio they veered away from us as the smaller leopard chased after the bigger injured leopard, into the bush and around the back of our house. We all quickly moved in, hearts racing. We were all speechless. We poured ourselves a much-needed drink, and sat inside pondering what could have happened had the leopards not turned away from us. Needless to say, we didn't go out onto our patio again that evening!

We sat inside thinking the leopards had gone, when we saw the big injured leopard walking back to the gully and then out into the open plain. By this time everyone in camp was out looking as they had all heard the commotion. The leopard sat for quite a while, allowing everyone the chance to see him.

That night we had at least two leopards calling almost the whole night, as though they were trying to lay territorial claim.

What was interesting was that nothing drank from the pond for at least a week after the event. For example, impalas would approach the water and then suddenly jump back. We were not able to find any evidence of spraying by leopards anywhere near the pond.

We have been Members of Ingwelala for many years and had amazing experiences during this time. However, this leopard experience must top the list as our most frightening experience. One that won't be forgotten.

The moral of the story - never assume you are safe because you are in camp. There could be a leopard behind any bush, up any tree. Or literally on your doorstep!

Chris & Auriel Thorpe #197



GREY HERON (*Ardea cinerea*)

Charlie Lynam in Bungalow # 6 shares these stunning images of a grey heron fishing.



Grey Herons are commonly found in South Africa, and it may be confused with the Black-Headed Heron (*Ardea melanocephala*). The main identifying characteristic is to look at the head. The Grey Heron has a black streak on its head whereas the Black-Headed Heron has a solid black head. Feathers are predominantly grey.

Grey Herons are waders, they have long legs and can measure up to a metre in height. Average body weight is 1.5 kilogrammes. The preferred diet is aquatic creatures, feeding in shallow water or from the bank. The beak is large and pointed to assist its predatory behaviour. It is not restricted to fresh water only, being able to adapt and feed in shallow salt water if necessary. Diet is fish, frogs, insects, beetles and small birds.

Grey Herons breed in colonies, known as *heronries*. Breeding takes place in spring. Incubation of a clutch of 3-5 eggs is approximately 25 days. Both parents feed the chicks which fledge after two months. Heronries can be rather noisy with adults and chicks vocalising.

In flight herons curve their necks into a characteristic “S” shape, whereas other species such as storks fly with a straight outstretched neck.

Grey Herons are known to regurgitate “furballs” which is a bolus of indigestible material.

Words by John Llewellyn, facts researched on the Internet.

Note: I mentioned in the July Reserve Report my intention to write about pollination, but request this topic stands over until I can research more on this fascinating topic.

Game Drive And Bush Etiquette

A Member e-mailed Reception and shared the following:

“I don’t like to moan but we had an incident on the tower on Argyle, and I thought maybe John could just put out a reminder to Members, that if there are people there having drinks at the top, it would just be bush etiquette to drive on, not to park your vehicle at the bottom, leave it running and climb the stairs to use your cell phone. Not even a hello, do you mind, just so entitled to do what they want and I was told by the person that she was not disturbing me and basically I should be quiet..... it was interesting!!!! We were so gob smacked 😊”

Another Member, who’s parents have owned at Ingwelala since its inception, shared with me her belief that older Members should set the example to the younger Members when it comes to behaviour at game sightings, especially

where sightings are of a sensitive nature. An example was mentioned where people got out of their game viewers at a leopard and cub sighting. The leopards were not that close to the vehicle but her feeling was that should not matter. Animals should not associate people with vehicles.

I thought it may be an idea to visit the Ingwelala Bush Etiquette, which is essentially asking all Users to approach wildlife in a particular way to minimise our human impact and influence on our wildlife. I have chosen to comment where necessary on the purpose of the of points listed in the **Bush Etiquette**.

Prevent overcrowding at sightings. Once you have had a good view of the sighting, move off to give others with a poorer vantage point, a chance.

JL: Most commercial lodges practice a rule of no more than three to four vehicles present simultaneously at a sighting. This is an indication when determining "overcrowding" at sightings. Topography and circumstance can affect this rule of thumb, sometimes it may be that only two vehicles have a good view.

Respect other people's sensitivities when approaching an obvious sighting. Switch off unnecessary lights and spotlights and be sensitive to those who have been waiting for the sighting to better show itself. Be quiet, and ensure that your vehicle is positioned so that others can move away if they wish. Don't move more than a vehicle width off the road. If you are the most recent arrival on the scene and if your vehicle would overcrowd a particular vantage point, switch off your engine at the earliest opportunity, be patient, and await your turn for a better position.

JL: This goes hand in glove with the point above, where basic considerateness towards other viewers and the wildlife is the tenant of courtesy.

Do not stand up in a vehicle while viewing game or hang over the side of the vehicle. People should remain within the vehicle so as not to break the shape of the vehicle while viewing game, this is imperative when viewing dangerous animals.

JL: Animals don't recognise the individual shapes within a vehicle, they see the basic outline as one form or shape. Therefore, to protrude over the sides or sit on the roof of the vehicle is not good, because it breaks the basic shape of the vehicle and this stresses the animals, enough to influence behaviour change. Animals naturally fear humans, so when you break the shape of the vehicle they feel threatened, and so behaviour can become defensive and/or aggressive.

Do not call, whistle or throw things at animals to get them to react.

JL: This is to respect their space.

The noise level on the vehicle is to be kept to a minimum for the benefit of the animals and other vehicles.

JL: Covered in the above point.

Do not shine spotlights in animals' eyes; shine on the ground in the front of or on the back of the animal. The use of coloured filters on spotlights is encouraged as this is less disruptive to the night vision of the animals and their activities.

JL: Spotlights blind the animals and so they become disorientated. In prey, this lends to an unfair advantage for predators who may be hunting/stalking and this man influence is unnatural.

When following predators which appear to be hunting, limit your intrusion so as not to interfere with the animals' hunt. This implies keeping a good distance, avoid shining unfiltered spotlights directly onto the scene and keep all noise including that of the engine, to a minimum. There should be no jockeying for better positions. Once the kill is made, spotlights may be used.

JL: Within reason, still avoid shining spotlights directly into the eyes.

Do not follow an animal whose behaviour is aggressive or if they are agitated. If you are unsure about the possible reaction or temperament of an animal, be cautious and remain at a safe distance. It is often sensible, once a sighting has been made, to observe the animal from a distance before considering approaching.

Approach animals slowly and consider your exit route especially in regard to elephants in which case the vehicle should if possible be turned well in advance to face an escape route.

JL: It is essential at any elephant sighting to have an escape route. Circumstances can change in a flash, and elephants are highly mobile, intelligent and enormously strong. You do not want to be on the wrong side of an angry elephant, with no escape route. The youngsters who are in "play/inquisitive" moods can often agitate the older cows and bulls who interpret the presence of a vehicle as a threat.

Do not block the escape route of an animal you are viewing; or that of another vehicle, as the animal may become stressed and unpredictable.

Do not try and make an animal act unnaturally for photographic opportunities.

Learn to anticipate the behaviour and movements of the animals and avoid making them move if they are not inclined to. Try not to enter the 'comfort zone' of the animal.

JL: Every animal has a natural "flight or fight" zone, stay within the "flight" zone, moving too close will place it in the "fight" zone and this provokes unpredictable and aggressive behaviour.

Drive around animal droppings and not through them to prevent killing dung beetles and other insects.

JL: There is a hive of hidden insect activity in animal dung, an integral part of ecology and nutrient cycling. Avoid driving over dung, irrespective of its age.

When finding the road blocked by a tree having been pushed down, please return to a point where an alternative road can be used and then report the blockage to Reception as soon as possible. By merely bundu-bashing around such a blockage we widen existing roads or create extra unwanted roads.

Rhinos are sensitive animals, do not use spotlights on them at night.

Please do not allow passengers to hang out of your vehicles while moving.

Avoid the use of tracker seats as they pose a serious threat to the occupier.

JL: This was reviewed and should read "tracker seats may not be used".

Respect the privacy of occupied units.

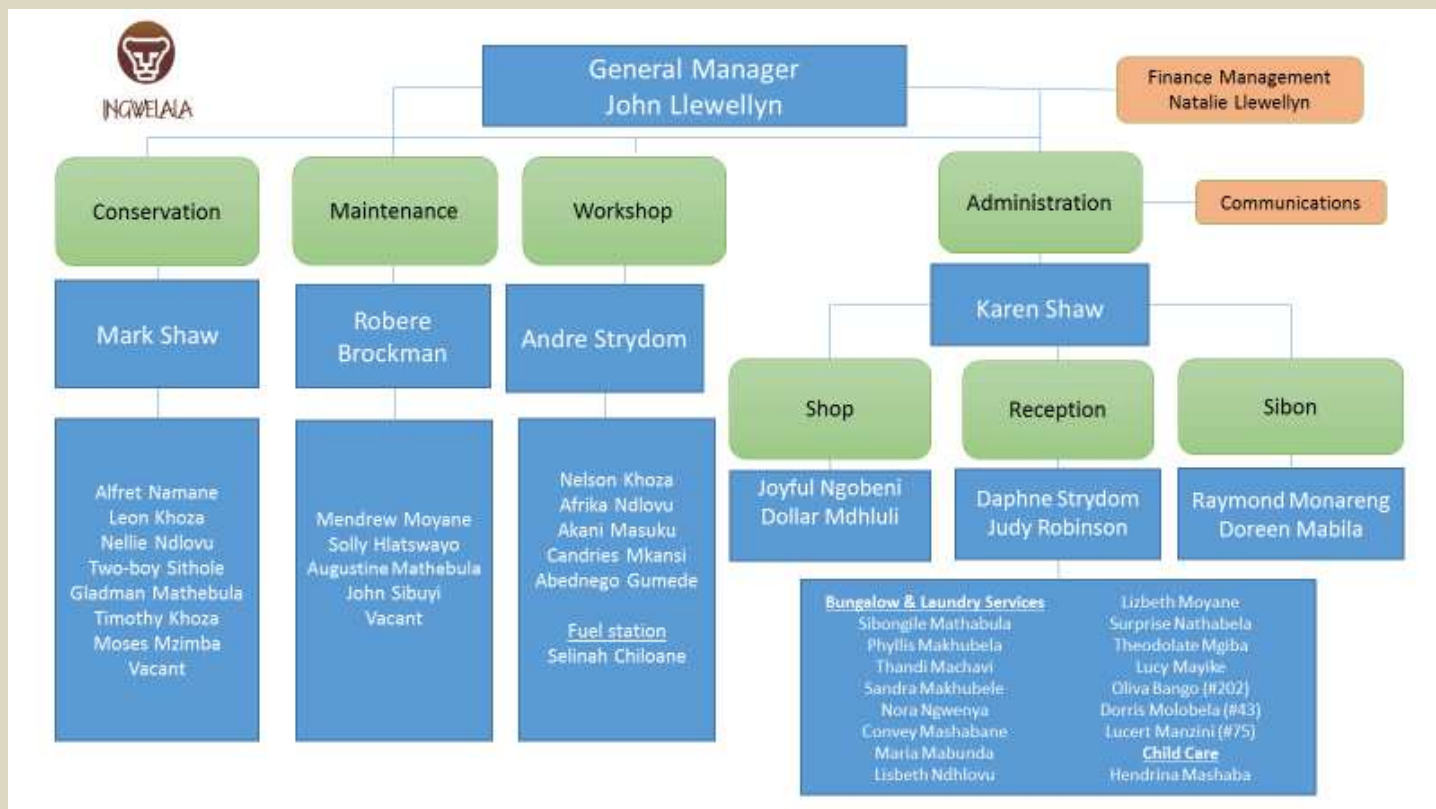
Keep noise and movement to a minimum at waterholes.

Enter hides quietly and make no sudden movements.

Respect the environment you are in and other members who share in the joy of it with you.

Expect the unexpected.

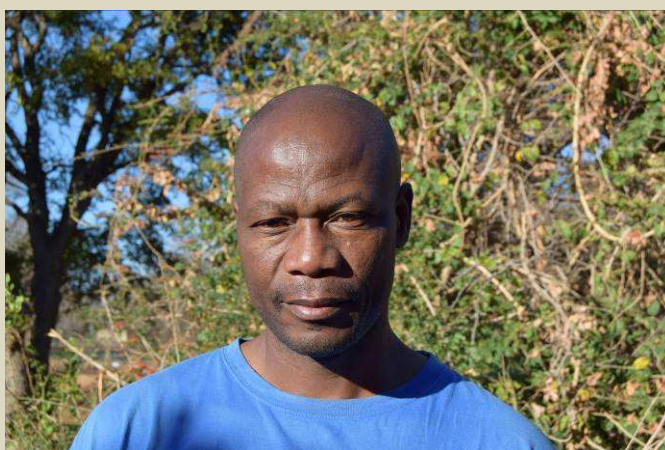
Staff complement



Staff Movement

Nil.

Staff profile (Meet the team):



Gladman Mathebula joined the Conservation Team on 05 July 2010 to assist with driving the tractors and 4-ton truck. Duties include road maintenance, veld rehabilitation, refuse removal to the local recycling plant and relief duty of water provision and care for hides and bomas. Prior to Ingwelala's employment, Gladman worked for ISKOR as a general assistant, stationed in Van der Bijl Park.

Gladman's family home is in nearby Welverdiend, where he was schooled, passing matric. Sadly, he has lost two brothers who died in separate motor car accidents. Gladman is married to Angel, who stays at home in Welverdiend to

look after their three children Martia, Glyden and Natie. Angel has in the past assisted in Housekeeping with general cleans and laundry servicing.

Gladman enjoys working in the Conservation Team, he believes there is a good team approach to getting the job done. He appreciates the infrastructural improvements in recent years, such as the administration complex and surrounds, and enjoys watching the swimming pool grounds and garden improving. Being a driver, Gladman acknowledged the company efforts to improve the general condition of the vehicle fleet.

A leopard is Gladman's favourite animal, making it very clear how pleased he is when he sees a leopard as he goes about his work. The marula tree is his favourite tree because the fruit are used to produce a tasty beer.

Gladman was an accomplished athlete at school, excelling at both track and field events, but currently only plays soccer, and supports Orlando Pirates.

Bungalows for sale

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

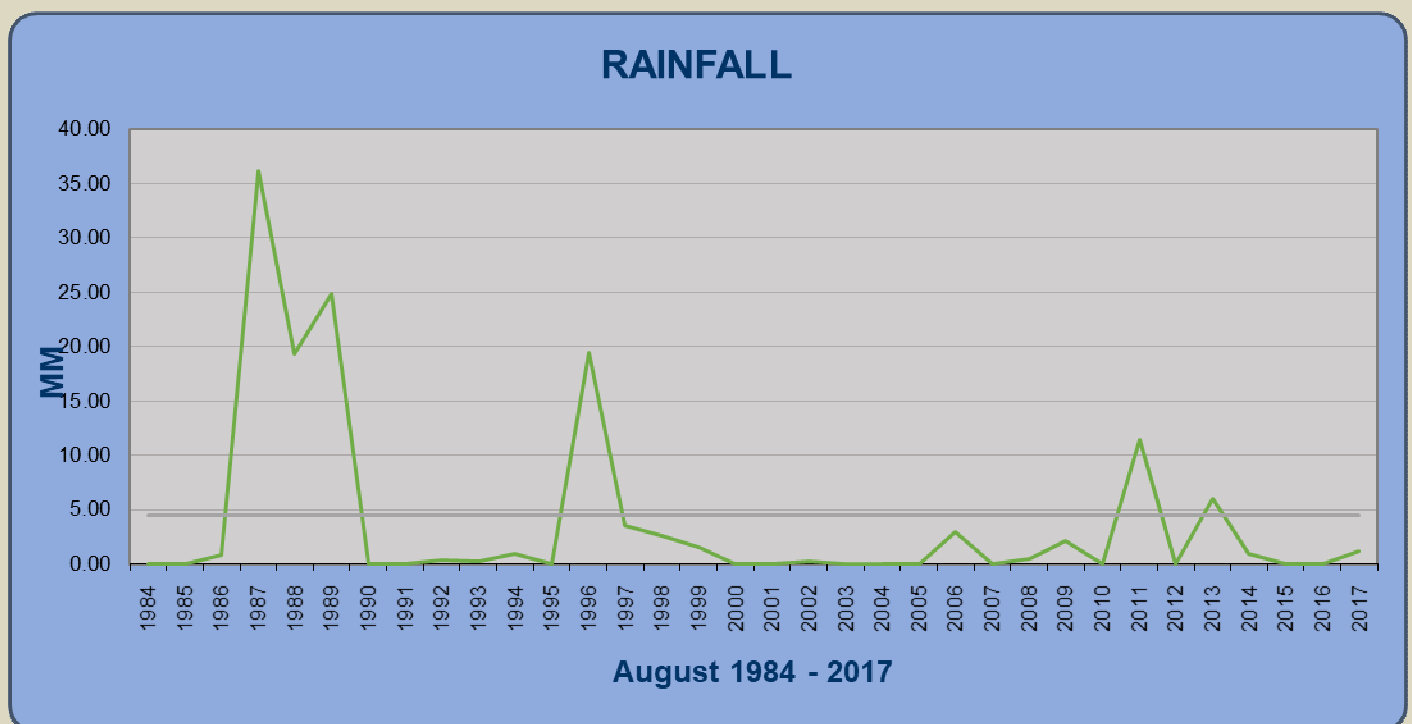
Bungalow # 37, 60% of seven shares for R1.58 million.

Bungalow # 97, a full (100%) share of seven shares for R5.90 million.

Climate and rainfall (summary)

Rainfall: 1.2 mm
Minimum temperature: 07 degrees Celsius.
Maximum temperature: 34 degrees Celsius.

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



(Note: August 2017: 1.2 mm rainfall is less than monthly average of 4.6 mm)

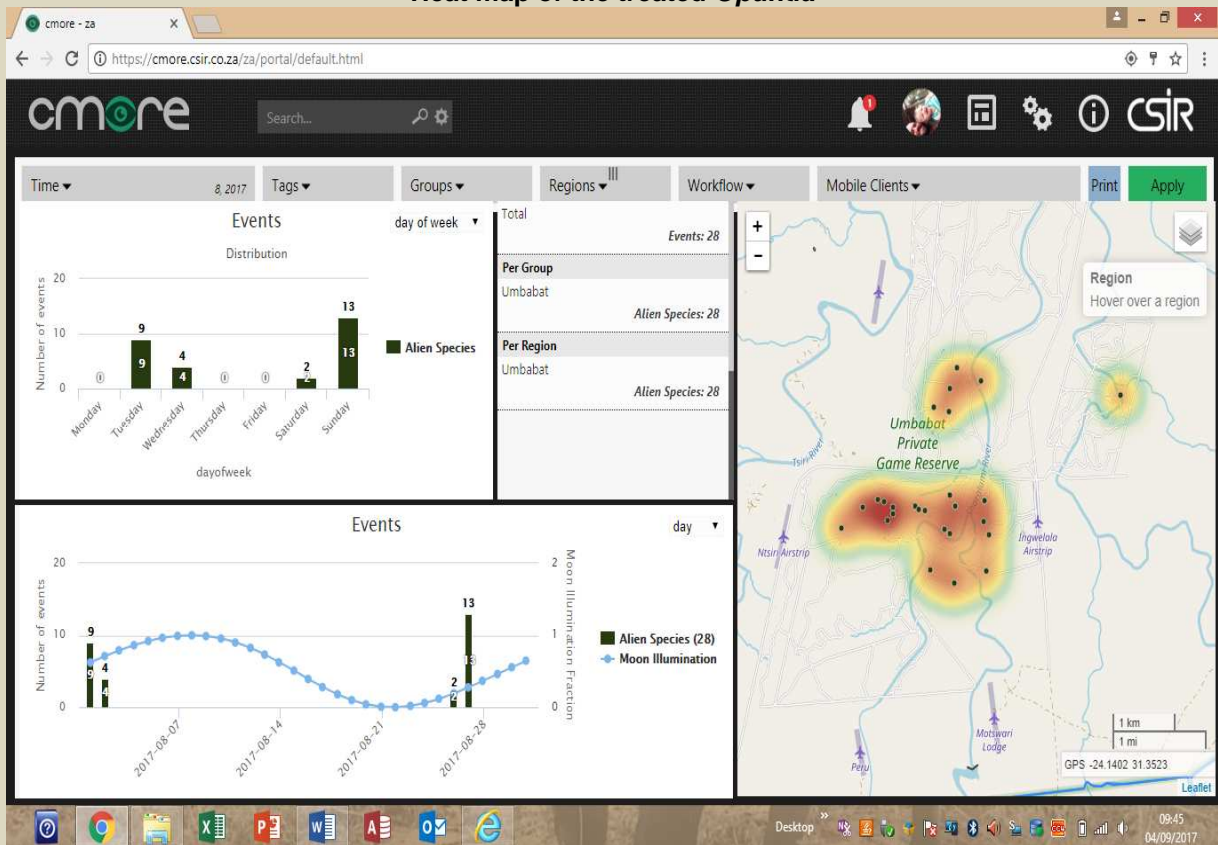
Conservation

Alien plant eradication

163 *Opuntia* plants (Prickly Pear) treated this month, please map below indicating where the plants were treated.

90% of the plants monitored after last month's treatments are dead.

Heat map of the treated *Opuntia*



Veld Rehabilitation

The mopane trial site on Goedehoop is work in progress. A tractor was used to break off all the small branches from the main stems of the trees thinned out. The main stems were then collected and carefully packed in drainage lines that are showing signs of potential gully erosion. These structures will assist with decelerating water run-off, thereby trapping silt and aiding sedimentation.

Erosion Control



Before tractor use (to trample thin branches)



After tractor use



Branches packed into drainage lines/gullies



Notice very sparse ground cover in general

Roads and Tracks

Fence Road river crossing was graded and compacted.

On Ingwelala drive, potholes were filled with suitable material and levelled.

Along Thorpe's boundary on Buffelsbed, the northern end river crossing was graded and compacted.

Airstrip

The surface was dragged with tractor and tyre.

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 Guest pilots must also complete the form before using the airstrip.

Fencing

The Camp fence was breached on three different occasions, a significant change to previous months.

Regular maintenance was done on the fence throughout the month.

Bomas, Hides and Picnic Sites

These facilities are inspected and cleaned on a regular basis.

Game sightings

Through the reporting period there were daily sightings of elephants, predominantly breeding herds, with one sighting counting as many as 60 elephants. A Member reported being charged by a young bull elephant, serving as a reminder to us to always identify an "escape route" when watching these magic giants. No large buffalo herds ranged on Ingwelala, the buffalos seen were small bachelor groups. Lion sightings were plentiful, including cubs. Leopards were seen most days. An interesting sighting was of two leopards with a kill "cornered" in a tree by wild dogs which were in turn chased away by two hyenas. On another occasion, seven hyenas milled around the tree of a leopard kill.

Wild dogs were seen often, providing excellent photographic and video opportunities for viewers. This included several sightings of kills, and pups feeding at these kills. A Member described the one kill where adult dogs pulled down a steenbok, and then retreated a short distance to stand guard as sentries while the pups ate the steenbok. Fantastic to witness this behaviour.

Game sightings included spotted hyena, side-striped jackal, black-backed jackal, giraffe, zebra, impala, kudu, nyala, bushbuck, Sharpe's Grysbok, grey duiker, steenbok, warthog, genet, civet, porcupine, honey badger, banded mongoose, dwarf mongoose, vervet monkey, African wild cat, hippo and crocodile.

Birds noted in the sightings register were Martial Eagle, Tawny Eagle, Fish Eagle, Verreaux's Eagle-Owl, Ground Hornbill, Temminck's Courser and Green-winged Pytilia. The Yellow-billed Kites have returned for the summer months.

Security

No incidents on Ingwelala during the reporting period.

Road Kills

Nil.

General Fire Risk Management

Veld fire and general fire risk remains very high due to the dry veld conditions.

Fire-fighting equipment is checked on a weekly basis.

X 2 tractors available to assist with fire-fighting (x2 water drawn carts).

X 1 "Bakkie-Sakkie" serviceable and responsive on a "first call" basis.

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

Umbabat

A new security service provider, Noctum, was appointed to the Umbabat, following Ntomeni Rangers Services (NRS) serving notice.

Thank you to NRS for its dedicated service over the years. Wishing the NRS team every success with its future ventures.

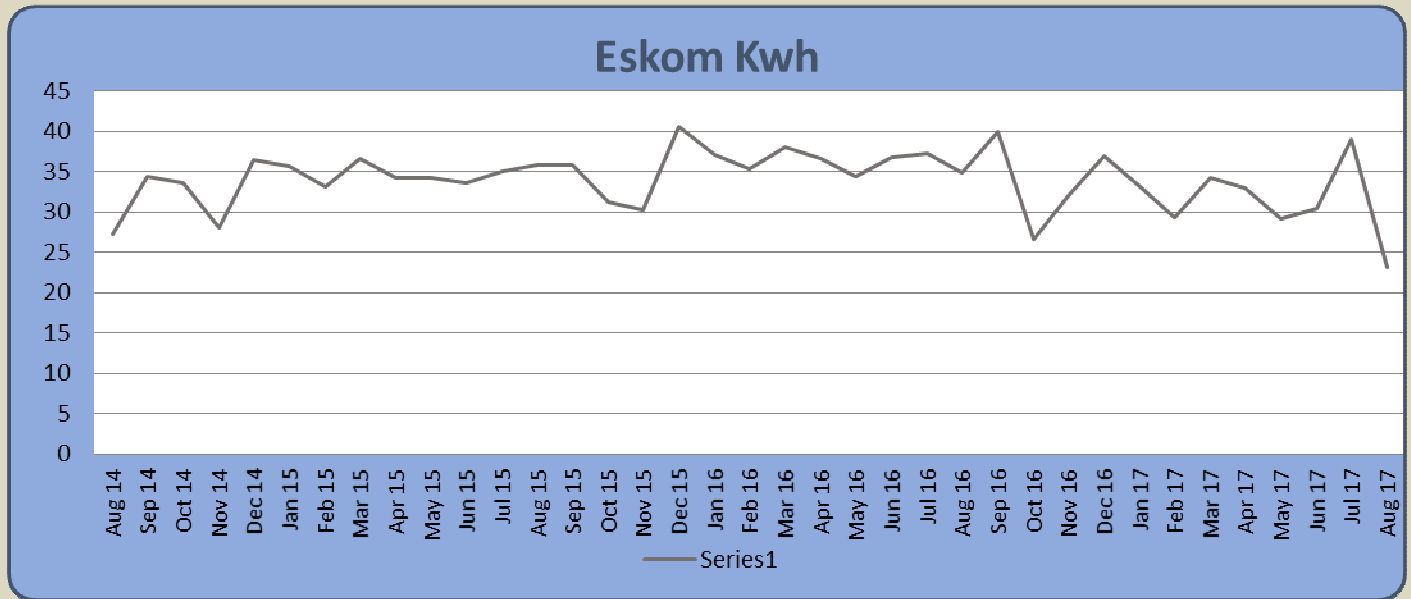
Water reticulation

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

BOREHOLE	AUG 17	JUL 17	JUN 17	MAY 17	APR 17	MAR 17	FEB 17	JAN 17	DEC 16	NOV 16	OCT 16
BH NO 1	428	0	34	298	188	87	97	1095	175	53	106
BH NO 2	959	1113	1043	1000	1141	1005	669	949	883	814	642
BH NO 3	531	1176	151	557	681	342	683	193	320	473	518
BH NO 4	0	78	181	483	425	322	753	812	884	911	894
BH NO 5	151	158	238	467	445	353	245	345	392	470	446
BH NO 6	1018	769	367	675	622	683	107	650	690	394	586
BH NO 7	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	288	207	455	565
BH NO 9	Solar	Solar	Solar	Solar	Solar	Solar	Solar	Solar	Solar	Solar	Solar
JB	350	1282	491	278	43	0	0	0	0	0	0
GOEDEHOOP	664	290	1312	1395	780	0	0	0	507	870	762

Eskom Usage

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



Vehicles and Workshop

WORKSHOP	AUG 17	JUL 17	JUN 17	MAY 17	APR 17	MAR 17	FEB 17	JAN 17	DEC 16	NOV 16
JOB CARDS OPENED	75	68	48	67	46	55	38	37	53	39
JOB CARDS CLOSED	54	53	58	63	57	56	30	19	56	42
GENERATOR HOURS	1	2.6	0	6.6	10.9	0	2.1	3.8	13.7	2.4
DIESEL TANK (L)	430	500	575	575	650	850	850	100	205	425

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

Building project

Current (major) building projects are listed below:

Bung No	Name	Work requested	Approval	Builder	% Complete
10-13	Peter Dittberner	New gazebo & internal upgrades	August 2017	Dukes Construction	10%
38	Gordon Pascoe	Demolish & rebuild	July 2017	Dukes Construction	0%
44	Cecil Bodenstein	New patio & gazebo & internal upgrades	June 2017	Owner builder	0%
86	Martinus vd Reyden	New patio & gazebo & internal upgrades	July 2017	Chameleon	0%
115	Phil Raymond	Internal modifications	November 2016	Dukes Construction	45%
116	Geoff Watson	Demolish and rebuild	February 2017	Chameleon	45%
124	Wayne van Rensburg	Lath pergola for shade	July 2017	Dukes Construction	0%
185	Weston Dickson	Demolish and rebuild	January 2017	Chameleon	20%
186	John Hawkins	New gazebo and raise patio	July 2016	Dukes Construction	90%
202	Jan Kitshoff	Rethatch & internal upgrades	August 2017	Chameleon Hoffmans Thatching	15%

Reception Statistics

GATE STATISTICS	AUG 17	JUL 17	JUN 17	MAY 17	APR 17	MAR 17	FEB 17	JAN 17	DEC 16	NOV 16
VEHICLES	282	263	251	162	397	245	145	179	458	185
MEMBERS GUESTS	945	940	818	465	1328	798	437	481	1341	614
UNACCOMP GUESTS	4	4	3	0	34	0	8	0	0	2
UNITS OCCUPIED	161	147	150	114	222	140	91	159	213	113
AIRBORNE VISITORS	5	17	16	2	17	3	7	8	2	7

COTTAGE NIGHTS	AUG 17	JUL 17	JUN 17	MAY 17	APR 17	MAR 17	FEB 17	JAN 17	DEC 16	NOV 16
HORNBILL	18	24	12	7	28	20	20	13	18	12
FRANCOLIN	11	26	17	0	19	13	10	8	18	9
GUINEAFOWL	20	26	12	6	17	4	9	11	7*	0

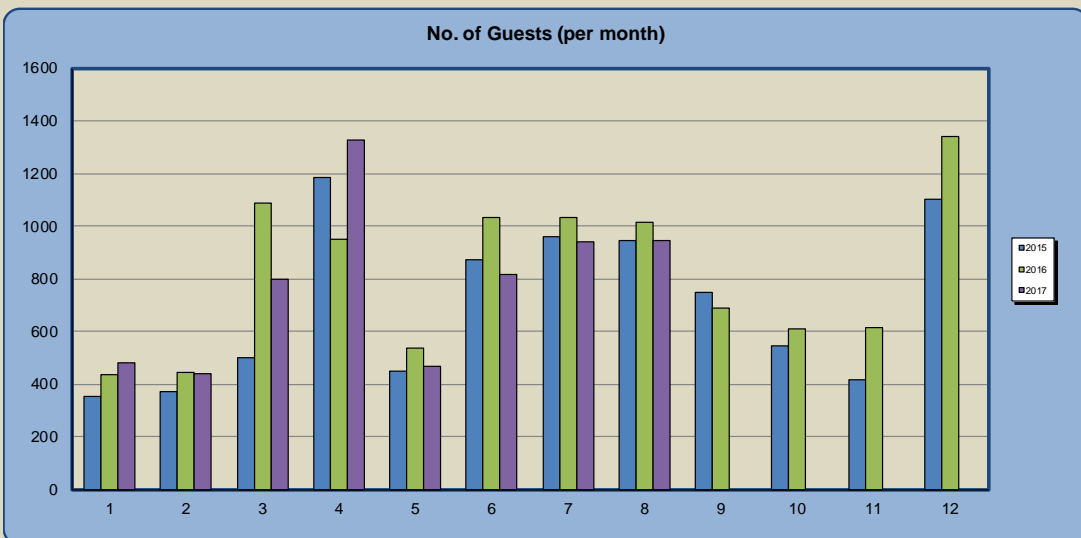
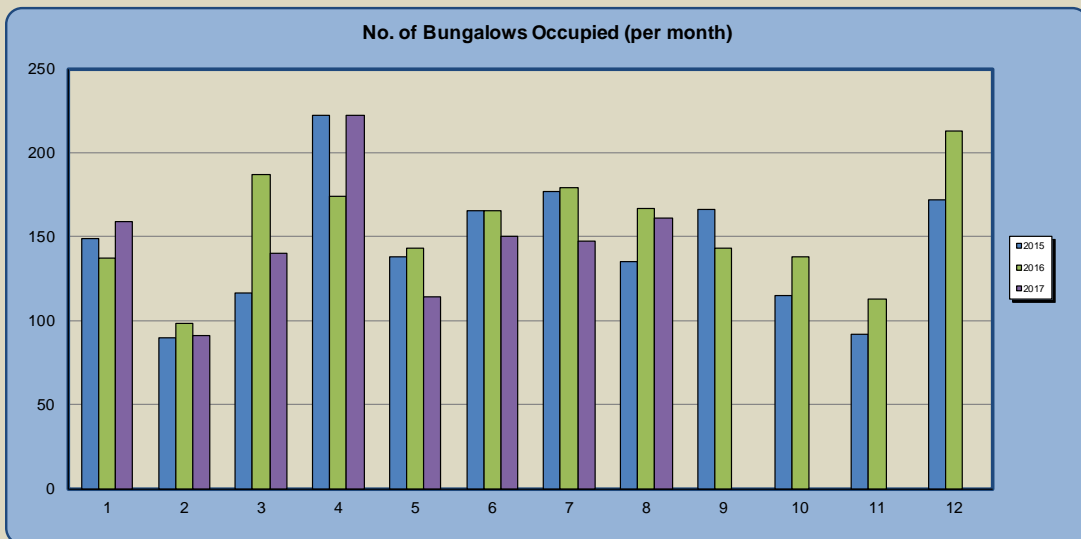
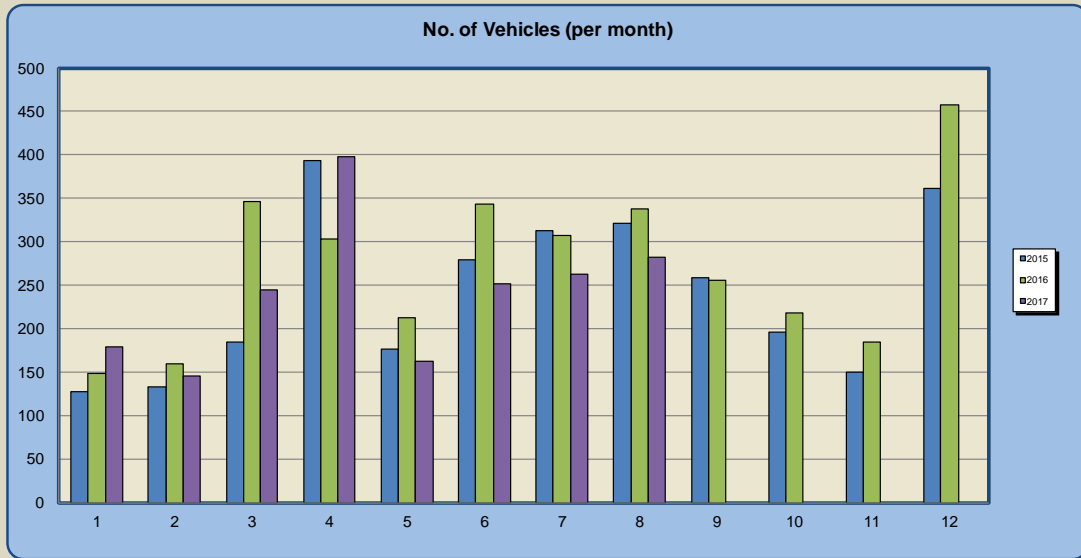
General:

1. Our condolences are expressed to the Bezuidenhout family in Bungalow # 62 over the recent passing of a close family member.

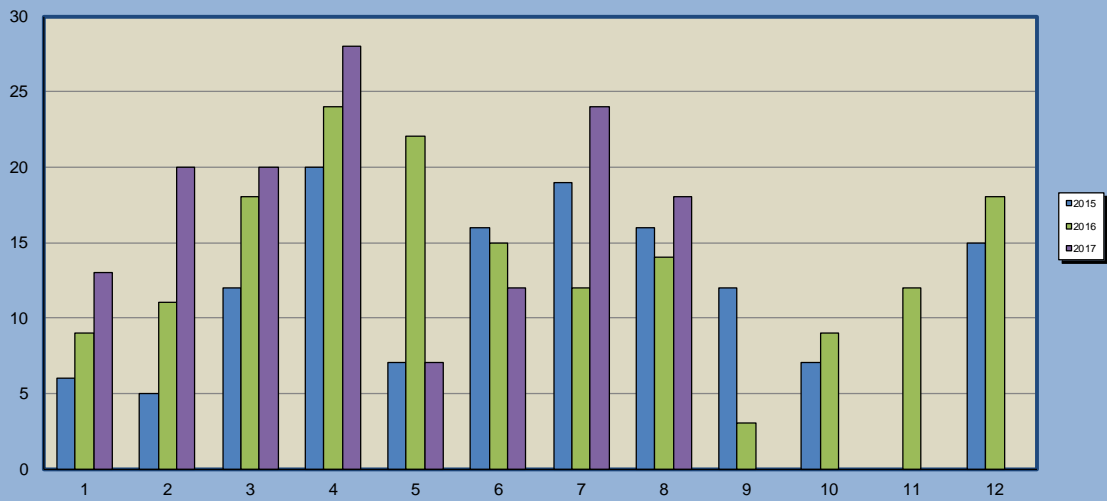
Thank you for your continued support.

John Llewellyn
Reserve Manager

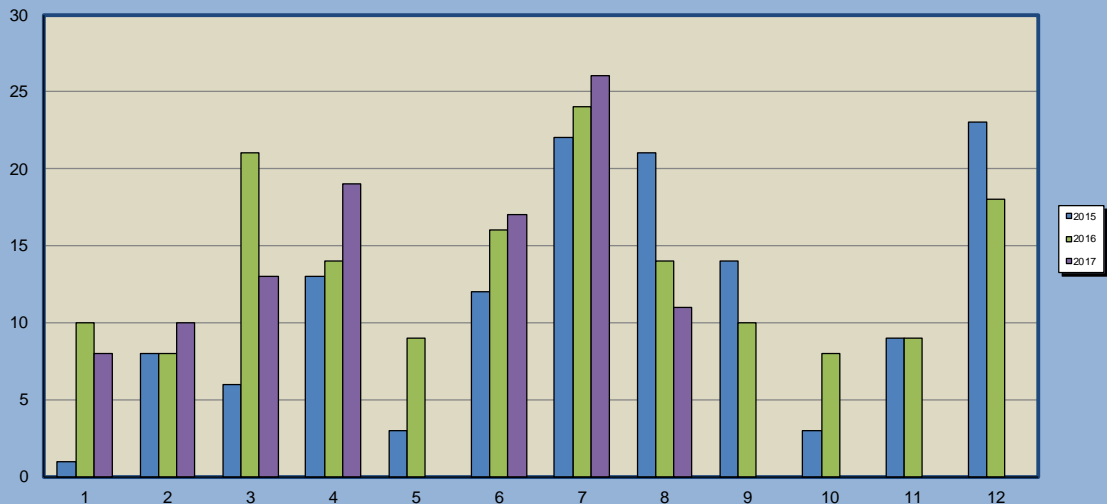
ANNEXURE 1: GRAPHS



Hornbill Occupancy (nights per month)



Francolin Occupancy (nights per month)



Guineafowl Occupancy (nights per month)

