

NEWSLETTER AUGUST

Dear clients,

In this newsletter you can read more about our 'Dream-team'! Furthermore, we tell you a bit more about how we treated a shot rhino, and how we vaccinated the world's biggest land mammal, the elephant! We are also very proud to tell you more about an international translocation of rhinos that we did... per airplane! A first for us! We hope you enjoy this newsletter. Take care,

Kind regards, Ulf

TOGETHER WE DO BETTER!

We as Wildlife Vets Namibia are very proud to work closely together with two giants from the Namibian game industry; Simon Wildlife Services and Namboer Auctioneers/the Game Shop Boma Game Dealers. Experience is our key element, with myself (35 years of veterinary experience), Bernie Simon (15 years experience as a game capture pilot and game dealer) and Piet Coetzee (20 years in the game business and an auctioneer for 18 years). Between the three of us, we can offer you any wildlife-related service you can think of!

- 🐾 Dart immobilization
- 🐾 Boma capture
- 🐾 Translocation of all species of game
- 🐾 Import and export of game
- 🐾 (dart) Vaccination
- 🐾 Game counts
- 🐾 Boma facilities (Sees and Mariental)
- 🐾 Game Auctions
- 🐾 Consultancy



Want to see us all in action? Have a look at our promotional video [here!](#)



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SHOT RHINO

Last month we treated a rhino cow who was shot in her back in a poaching incident. We immobilized the rhino to examine the wound. The first thing we do after the rhino is immobilized, is to aseptically prepare and then probe the wound with a blunt arrow. This way we explore the wound tract to locate the bullet. An officer of the Nampol Protected Resources Unit was also at the scene, and with the use of his metal detector we confirmed that the bullet was lodged deep against a rib. Fortunately, it did not puncture the lungs. In poaching incidents retrieving the bullet is important since this is a vital piece of forensic evidence. However, just like in this case doing so it is not always possible... the bullet was too deep seated and the risk of retrieving the bullet would have outweighed the benefit. We treated the wound, administered antibiotics, and reversed the immobilisation. The body will eventually encapsulate the bullet and recovery should be complete.



When you encounter a poached animal on your farm, please ensure that nobody tampers with any pieces of evidence. Leave the crime scene alone and don't pick up shell casings etc. This preserves forensic evidence (e.g. finger prints etc.) which will become vitally important to secure a conviction.



BILLDU INVOICE PROGRAM

In one of our previous newsletters we announced that we would start making use of a new invoice program, called Billdu. We had some delay in getting the program ready, but... It is working now, and from now on we will send our invoices with this program. If you have any problems or things you want us to change (sadly we cannot help you concerning the total amount... 😊), please let us know!





RHINO TRANSLOCATION TO THE DRC

As you might know myself and Wicus Herholdt have been involved in game translocations to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) since 2017. A week ago, we had a very special translocation... We flew rhinos up to Parc de la vallée de la N'Sele, a game reserve close to Kinshasa. These rhinos were the first to be reintroduced back into the western part of the DRC. A very exciting time for us, since it was our very first translocation by air.

We caught 8 rhinos on a Namibian game farm; 2 big adults and 6 young animals. We immobilized the rhinos one by one from a helicopter. Once the rhino was immobilized enough, a ground team moved in to place a mask over its eyes, and to give it some supportive drugs to improve its breathing. When the rhino was down, we took samples (blood, hair, tissue and horn) and placed microchips in both horns and the body. This is all for better traceability in case when a rhino is poached. All these samples are entered in a DNA database, which is run from South Africa's University of Pretoria's Veterinary Genetics Lab (VLG).



Once we were done, we partially reserved the rhino, to enable it to stand and be walked into one of our specialized rhino crates.



Once in the crate, the rhino was tranquilized, and fully reversed. The crate was then loaded on a flatbed truck, and we darted the next rhino!



We finished the capturing and loading off all 8 rhinos late afternoon, and from there we drove to Hosea Kutako International Airport. Every +/- 2 hours we checked the rhinos. If they laid down for too long, we made them get up by giving them a small electric shock. A rhino should not lay down for too long, as this is bad for the blood circulation in its legs. The road trip went very well.

Around midnight we arrived at the airport. A big DC8 cargo plane was waiting for us. The crates were picked up from the trucks with a forklift, then loaded onto a big plate on a lift. The crate was then taken up to the cargo hatch, and pushed into the plane. The loading onto the airplane took a bit more time than anticipated, but luckily the rhinos remained calm. Around 05:30 we finished the loading, and it was time to fly the rhinos to their new destination!



The flight was a once-in-a-lifetime experience for us! It was not too comfortable as there were no chairs, nor air temperature control (=4°C during the flight...!), but it was an amazing experience! The take-off was obviously a bit scary for the rhinos, but once up in the air, most of them remained calm throughout the flight. If a rhino became too restless, we injected it with extra tranquilizer.



After a 2.45h flight, we arrived at N'djili airport in Kinshasa without problems. The offloading from the plane was quick and efficient and we were soon on our way to the reserve.



After a short drive we arrived at the reserve, and now the best part of the operation was about to begin! All the crates were taken from the trucks with a big crane and placed in a row. We opened the crates one-by-one. Rhinos are often a bit reluctant to leave the crate, but all the rhinos came out very quickly. It was an amazing sight, seeing them run off! The camp has lots of grass, so we are sure the rhinos will be very happy here! The fence soon will be protected with a surveillance system, and the reserve has several anti-poaching teams in place to protect the animals.



We are very proud to be involved in this fantastic conservation project in the DRC. We would like to thank all the people in the DRC who made this rhino re-introduction possible. We also would like to thank [The Rhino Momma Project](#) for participating in this operation. It is their aim to repopulate rhinos in Africa. All in all, it was a wonderful experience, and we are grateful that we could be part of it!



ELEPHANT VACCINATION

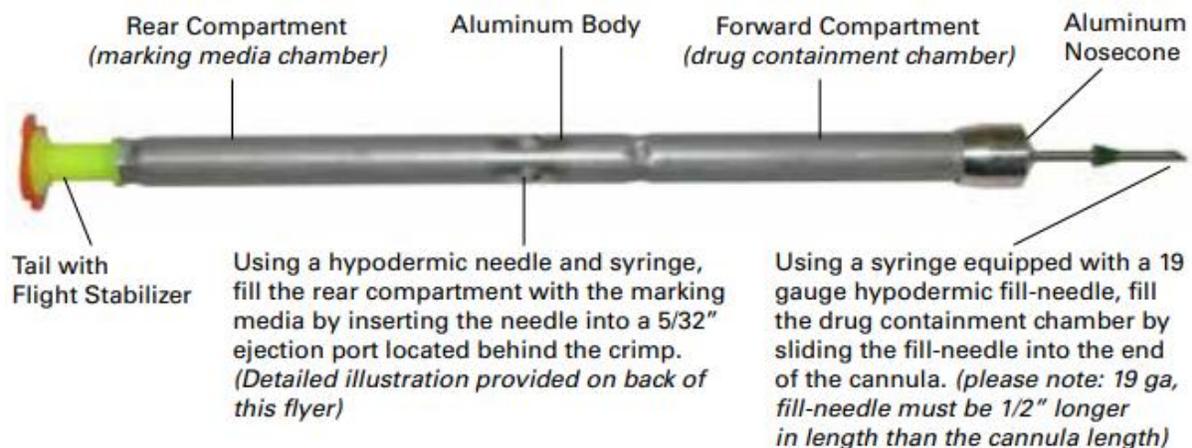
We have vaccinated the elephants at Mount Etjo Safari Lodge with Rhinovax. They were vaccinated from the helicopter.

Vaccination of wildlife is important to control infectious diseases which could have both economic and public health implications.

Rhinovax was formulated for the prevention of a wide variety of clostridium infections and anthrax in species such as the white rhino, buffalo, nyala, sables, roans and lions. Rhinovax consists of a combination of inactivated:

- 🐾 *Clostridium perfringens* type A
- 🐾 *Clostridium botulinum* types C and D
- 🐾 *Clostridium novyi* types A and B
- 🐾 *Clostridium chauvoei*
- 🐾 *Clostridium septicum*
- 🐾 *Clostridium sordelli*
- 🐾 *Bacillus anthracis*

We used special marker darts. These darts inject the drug while simultaneously placing a visible mark on the animal (picture →). Below you can see how these darts are composed.



Marker dart from Pneu-Dart (Click [here](#) for a PDF document with more information about these darts)

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