

NEWSLETTER OCTOBER

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Dear clients,

It seems we are now really into fast-forward mode towards the end of the year! The game capture season is to a large extent over, but we can still assist you with work on your farm itself. We like to introduce a little antelope to you that we have not worked with much before... the klipspringer! They are highly interesting animals, and we hope after reading the article you agree with us! Lastly, we discuss a case we recently had about a warthog in a snare. Kind regards, the Wildlife Vets Namibia team.

END OF THE GAME CAPTURE SEASON

In Namibia we are bound to a game capture season, where animals may only be captured and translocated from February (north)/March (south) until the end of September (north)/October (south). In some cases, an extension can be arranged at the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) until the end of October and sometimes even into November. Besides the fact that it is too hot to catch and transport animals outside of the season, animals are often in poor condition - following the long dry season. In addition, many females are heavily pregnant or have young calves at foot.

We can however still assist you with immobilisation jobs and movement of animals within your farm boundaries. This should ideally be done early mornings when it is a bit cooler for the animals. In addition, we have more time for consultation work. We can advise you on various topics, such as game- veld- and disease management, what species to introduce, genetics etc. Do not hesitate to contact us!



*“Wisdom is like a
Baobab tree; no one
individual can embrace
it”*

African Proverb

During a recent trip in Angola, we came across this massive Baobab tree along the Kunene River © M. Bijsterbosch

KING OF THE ROCKS – THE KLIPSPRINGER

A few weeks ago, we dart immobilized Klipspringers, a species we have not worked much with before...! Together with [Simon Wildlife Services](#) we went down south to an area with lots of klipspringers.

The klipspringer is a small antelope, but surprisingly heavy! They weigh between 8 and 18 kg, with females usually being slightly bigger. The name comes from two Afrikaans words; *klip*, meaning rock, and *springer*, meaning jumper. Some people also call it a *klipbok* (rock buck).

This was not an easy job! They are fast and incredibly agile in the rocky habitat, and they hide very well and crawl into tiny crevices. Since the area is very difficult to drive, the klipspringers had to be loaded in the helicopter, and brought to the recovery vehicle. From there, the klipspringers were woken up, and loaded in small dark transport boxes. They all went to different farms.

Klipspringers are fascinating animals; we could fill up this newsletter with interesting facts about these little antelopes! They have a bit of a strange thick coat with hollow, brittle hairs. The coat reflects heat from the sun, insulates against the cold and protects them from injuries should they fall.

They are primarily browsers, but do eat some grass as well. Especially in the arid areas, klipspringers derive most of their water intake from eating succulent plants. Another interesting feature are those black patches near the eyes. These patches are called pre-orbital glands, and animals use these glands to communicate and leave their scents behind on rocks and vegetation. Another way of communication is done via dung heaps (middens), which they make along the borders of their territories.

Klipspringers have very unique hooves. A hoof is basically the tip of the toe of an ungulate (hoofed animal), covered by a thick horny material (keratin). Hooves are very important; they support the weight of the animal, protect the tissues and bones in the hoof capsule, and provide traction. Hooves, comparable to our nails, grow continuously throughout an animal's life, and usually wear down as the animal walks.

A klipspringer's hoof structure is unique, because the last joints of the digits are rotated. This means that they walk on tip-toes. The hooves are cylindrical and have blunt tips, and on the inside of the hoof is a special sort of padding, which basically works like a suction cup. These adaptations means that the klipspringer hooves have great traction, and the padding absorbs the landings. They can thus hop from rock to rock without any problems!

If you are interested in klipspringers next year, please contact the Simon Wildlife Services team.



Klipspringers are extremely well camouflaged! Can you spot the klipspringer here? © M. Bijsterbosch



WARTHOG SNARE

A while ago we were called out to a place close to Windhoek to relieve a warthog from a snare. Snares are usually made of wires and then tied to a branch or fence on a game trail. When an animal walks on the trail, the loop of the snare will catch the animal, and pulls the snare tight as it tries to escape. In this boar, a snare made out of a steel cable was constricted tightly around the snout, preventing him from being able to drink and eat properly. Fortunately, people saw him in time, and we could intervene.

The warthog was immobilized with a high dose of immobilizing drugs to get him down as quickly as possible. Warthogs are tough animals and can run fast and far. To follow this little running machine is then a mission! Luckily for us, the warthog did not wander too far, allowing us to remove the snare swiftly. The snare had not done too much damage yet, and the boar just sustained a superficial scrape along the nose.



The snare, made out of steel cable was cut, and fortunately did not do much damage yet © M. Bijsterbosch

Helping these animals during emergency calls feels rewarding, but charity cases don't pay our bills. The drugs we use are expensive, as is the fuel, and then not to mention our time...

Fortunately, the NGO **Worth Wild Africa** comes to the rescue! We are incredibly grateful for their generous decision to set up a 'Namibia Vet Fund'. This fund aims to cover equipment and medical costs for wildlife welfare charity cases, like this warthog. At least our drug expenses are now covered. For more information about this fund, and how you can help, visit [this link](#).

Worth Wild Africa provides practical support for African wildlife, and supports several projects throughout the continent. Head over to their [website](#) for more information, or follow them on [Facebook](#) and/or [Instagram](#) 😊

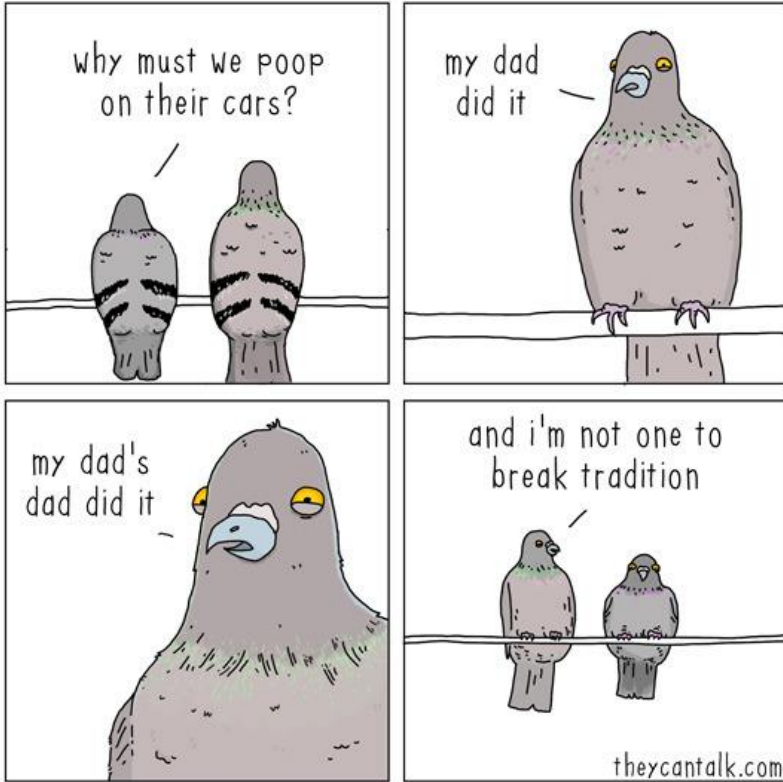


The warthog was quickly back on its feet! © M. Bijsterbosch



Snares are one of the cruellest ways of poaching, as they cause prolonged suffering and often lead to slow and painful death for the trapped animal. © M. Bijsterbosch

If you see snares, loose wire etc. in the field, please always remove it and throw it away in a safe place. When you notice people are setting up snares in your area, try as much as possible to collect evidence; take clear photos of foot prints (with ruler), and perhaps try to set up hidden camera traps in certain areas. The more evidence you collect, the better the local Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism Namibia officers and/or the police can assist.



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