

CHEETAH CHAT



summer edition 2015

RESCUED RHINOS @ HESC

TWO NEW ORPHANS ARRIVE

EDUCATION BEYOND BORDERS



The 22nd of September was World Rhino Day, and as a result we dedicated the entire month to this endangered species.

Dingle Dell and Lion's Den were dehorned to keep them safe from would-be poachers. Their respective procedures went well, and we are more comfortable that they are no longer at risk. [Read more](#)

Gertjie reached an important milestone when he was weaned off his formula. Read more about what this growth phase means for him.

The safety of our rhinos is critical, and after a scare (thankfully a false alarm), we decided to improve the security around Gertjie and Matimba's enclosure. [Read more](#)

On Tuesday 10th November, a new baby rhino was flown into HESC. Estimated to be about 7 months old, the young bull arrived in a critical condition. He had lost his mother to poachers. Our curator named the young rhino Stompie. [Click here](#) to read his story.

Within days after Stompie's arrival, another orphaned rhino arrived on the 17th November (almost a year to the day of Matimba's arrival). The two-week old rhino was named Balu, and weighed barely 54 kilograms! He was in a poor physical condition, and it is assumed that he spent days alone in the wild without his mother. Sadly the full story on how he came to be with us will never be known, as his mother was not found.

By his second day with us, Balu had taken to his

During the month of September, our rhino poaching awareness initiatives went far beyond the borders of South Africa.

We collaborated with Queens Creek Elementary School in the U.S.A to give their kids a virtual lesson about rhino poaching, and the long term importance of protecting this critically endangered species.

Ruan Roos, one of our field guides, shared information and answered questions from learners via a live online chat. Read more about their Skype exchange.

Said Anita, US teacher; "It was awesome. Our students were highly motivated after the conference. Ruan was very well prepared for our

On a much lighter note, Adventure Skydives has partnered with the Wildlife Conservation Trust to offer a high-energy experience in aid of the rhinos. In an effort to raise awareness and funds for the orphaned and rehabilitated rhinos in our care, 'Jump for Rhino' is a skydiving campaign set to run for the next six months at three venues around the country. People can jump for this worthy cause in Vereeniging at Deneysville, Vaal Dam; in Cape Town and in Durban.

How about giving this incredible experience to your loved ones for Christmas? Vouchers are available, and you would be remembered for the most memorable gift ever AND for a great cause.

For further information and details you can contact Ricki at:

fundraising@cheetahcentre.co.za

By his second day with us, Balu had taken to his bottle of milk formula with gusto. This is always the most important factor on a young animal's road to recovery.

Amazingly Balu and Stompie quickly bonded, and they now never leave one another's sides. Our quest to find a surrogate sheep for the babies was abandoned, as they are clearly drawing the comfort they need from each other.

We are pleased to report that both babies are thriving, and in just over a week with us, had both gained a healthy amount of weight - Balu with 6kg (weighing in at 56kg), and Stompie 10kg (bringing him to 240kg).

students and answered all of their questions. They wanted to get more and more information after the conference. Thank you for teaching us so much. We are looking forward to many more Skype conferences in the future."

The Rhino Art Initiative was a movement started to give young people

a voice against poaching through their art. The movement travels to different schools to involve children from all walks of life. Every child is given an A3 piece of paper to colour in the picture of a rhino. There is also place for the children to write a comment, or make a statement about their feelings on rhino poaching.

We've partnered with Rhino Art on this very valuable initiative, and have been busy with

visits to a few schools. [Read more](#) about our experiences at Blairgowrie Primary School, and Southern Cross School.

CHEETAH UPDATES



Salome's cubs reached their six-month milestone in October, and as is the norm with cheetahs this age, they were moved to the crèche. This means they had to undergo a few adjustments, especially pertaining to their diet. [Read more](#) here.

HESC has had a long-standing partnership with Air Force Base Makhado for the release of captive-born cheetahs onto the base. With the air force base being in such a remote wilderness area with animals roaming free, a great risk was posed to both man and animal. As wild animals become habituated to noises from aircraft, they are no longer frightened off the airstrip at the sound of an oncoming plane. Not only is the animal's welfare threatened in the process, so too are the humans on board the incoming aircraft. Predators help to regulate and control these animal populations.

This initiative is a great achievement for us, as releasing cheetahs to the wild is perhaps our most significant long term goal. Such a case proves that captive born cheetahs are able to survive in the wild. [Read more](#) about the preparations required to get the two male cheetahs, Wim and Tobie, ready for their release at the base.

The two cheetahs were finally successfully released on the 2nd of December. [Read more](#)

GENERAL NEWS



When it comes to conservation, some animal species seem to 'fly' below the radar. This is the case with African wild dogs. Many have wondered why we keep these animals at The Centre. [Read more](#) to learn why the 'painted wolves' are close to our hearts.

We have been involved in the southern ground hornbill breeding project, as these very characteristic birds are endangered. When the project manager for Mabula Ground Hornbill Project, Lucy Kemp, visited us in October, she noticed that we needed a nest. Before we knew it, one of her contacts, Kate Carstens, called and offered to donate one to us. Naturally we were delighted to accept!. [Read more](#) here.

Now in his twilight years, we try to ensure that our resident lion, Caesar, lives out his years in contentment. This poor beast has endured such suffering in his life, and we pledged to ensure that in our care, his comfort would always be 'king'. Dr Rogers paid him another visit to treat him for his arthritis. [Read more](#)

We were surprised to learn that an eagle owl, which we had released to the wild years ago, had had two babies. She had opted to stay close The Centre even after being set free. Imagine our delight when we discovered the owlets right outside our Television Room! [Read more](#) here

OUR PEOPLE



Elephants Alive and Black Mambas hosted a march aimed at raising awareness of elephants. We sent some of our staff members to represent us. [Read more](#)

A team of cyclists represented HESC at the 94.7 Cycle Challenge in Johannesburg. Some staff members and supporters took to the challenge as part of 94.7's 'Ride for a Purpose'. [Read more](#) about their preparations, and also about their final ride on the big day on Sunday 15 November. [Read more](#)

Guide Andre de Jager learned a very valuable lesson about messing with an ostrich which clearly needed its space.

Andre had a big job on his hands as he was tasked with hosting a photographer who was to capture pictures of the animals at HESC, and out in the wild on the Kapama Reserve. Knowing that the ostrich makes for a very interesting photographic subject, Andre & Renier defied Christo's the curators instructions to leave the male ostrich alone and stay out of his way.

Shortly after Andre entered the enclosure, the bird made it very clear that he was a very unwelcome intruder. The feathered creature descended upon Andre, and chased him out.

Thankfully no harm came to bird or human, aside from a few 'ruffled feathers' on both sides. But the pictures Renier managed to capture in the process are priceless! [Click here](#) to view the

the process are priceless. [Click here](#) to view the images.

THANK YOU

We would like to recognise a few special supporters.

Curro School, Nelspruit

Tamryn Baird, a grade 4 student at Curro School in Nelspruit, is a passionate youngster and a great inspiration. This self-confident young lady teamed up with Adele Van Zyl (foster parent of our orphaned rhino Gertje, and Marketing Manager of Panarottis Illanga Mall, Nelspruit). Tamryn presented a proposal to the headmaster at Curro School to get involved in collecting products needed to help the team at HESC. Tamryn's proposal was accepted. The collection yielded a fantastic result! Well done Tamryn, we are very proud of you!

Evolutionary ScreenPrinting Embroidery

We would like to say a big thank you to our friends at ScreenPrinting Embroidery who designed a special T-shirt for Gertje in an effort to raise funds for our orphaned rhinos' ongoing care. An amazing \$369 has been raised so far. The T-shirts are available for purchase at our curio shop, or you can order your T-shirt online now. Thank you to all of our supporters who have purchased an "I am a Little G Fan" T-shirt.

Kyron Laboratories

Kyron Laboratories is a specialist animal health company with a range of products in the animal health field. A huge thank you goes out to them for their continuous support by offering discounted products for our orphaned rhinos, Gertje and Matimba.

HELP.HESC.CO.ZA

To those who have made donations via our online platform, THANK YOU.

*Until next time, we remain yours in CONSERVATION,
The HESC Team*

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