



CHEETAH CHAT

Hoedspruit Endangered
Species Centre



BLOG

THE CIRCLE OF LIFE

This issue of *Cheetah Chat* showcases a very special lady: Lammie, our resident Pedi sheep. She is 'surrogate mother extraordinaire' to our rhino residents, in particularly Gertjie, who has become a complete mommy's boy and hangs on Lammie's every 'baa' and 'meh'.

Awesome foursome Gertjie, Matimba, Stompie and Balu's plunge pool gets a makeover, and poaching survivor Phillipa's healing process has been nothing short of a miracle.

In a short space of time, four new rhino orphans arrived at the sanctuary. After experiencing severe trauma, toddlers Nhlanhla, Olivia, Muddy and Khulula were loved back to health and have become firm friends.

We follow the journeys of a few of our former resident cheetahs and report on how well these cats have adjusted to life in their natural environment.

In other news, we discuss Rent-A-Dog's highly-trained tracking dogs who are arriving soon to protect our rhino; Zeta the zebra's new relationship status; and we say goodbye to Caesar, our resident lion, who enjoyed many dignified years here after being rescued from a circus in Portugal.

We also report on groundbreaking research conducted by Wildlife Pharmaceuticals and exciting developments regarding the Wildlife Conservation Experience (WCE) in our local community.

As the nights become shorter and the days dawn earlier, all of us at HESC, humans and animals alike, await the arrival of spring... and bringing you **our next issue of *Cheetah Chat***.

RESCUED RHINOS @ HESC





In March, the Wildlife Conservation Experience (WCE) participants helped us to enlarge the mud bath for our four rhinos, **Gertjie, Matimba, Stompie and Balu**. As the rhino bulls grow quickly, their 'pleasure pan' seemed to start shrinking just as fast, much to their dismay. [Read more](#)

Up until mid-April 2016, Gertjie, Matimba, Stompie and Balu were the only rhino orphans in our sanctuary. They've become firm friends and have grown very close and enjoy spending a lot more time together. [Read more...](#)

In the previous **Cheetah Chat** we introduced you to poaching survivor, Philippa. She's since had numerous treatment procedures to the gaping wound left by poachers when they hacked off her horn. Her healing progress has been amazing, and there are even signs of horn re-growth. [Read more](#)

■ NEW ORPHANS ARRIVE

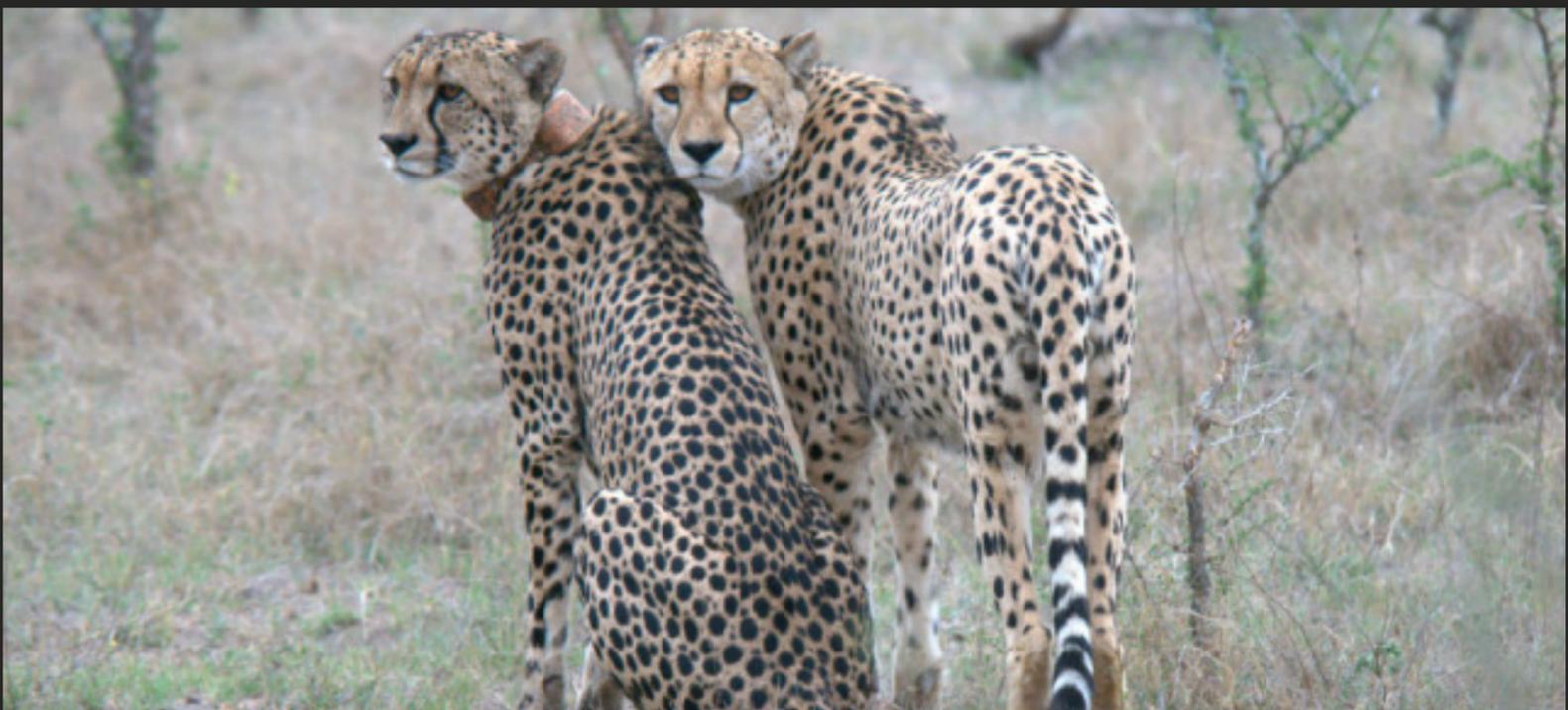


- The number of babies in our rhino sanctuary has dramatically increased. This has been challenging as all four new orphans arrived at the centre within a short space of time.

On Wednesday 13 April 2016, we took in a young rhino bull. Fortunately for this tiny baby, his mother had not been poached, but sadly she rejected him. The approximately two-week old rhino was named Nhlanhla, which means 'luck' in Zulu. [Read more...](#)

- Within days of **Nhlanhla's** arrival, another baby rhino was brought to the centre on Sunday 24 April 2016. Olivia's mother was savagely mauled by poachers, and the young calf was found next to her carcass. [Read more](#)
- Just as we thought things were settling down, on Wednesday 4 May 2016, **Muddy** was brought in. Although not a victim of poaching, this little one was found all alone, stuck in mud. [Read more](#)
- We were beside ourselves when on Saturday 21 May 2016 yet another rhino calf was brought in. **Khulula** was found at a neighbouring property. She was in distress and had blood on her face. Her mother had been poached and the blood was from lying next to her dead body. [Read more...](#)
- Although these babies belong with their mothers in the wild, we are blessed to be able to provide them with the sanctuary they require to be healthy and stable in our care. These four young rhinos have since been introduced to each other and formed a close friendship. [Read more](#)

■ CHEETAH UPDATES



- One of the resident cheetahs at HESC had to get stitches after injuring his eye during a rough play session with one of his mates. Boys will be boys... [Read more](#)
- In 2012 we released Susan, a female cheetah, onto Kapama Game Reserve. A ranger from Camp Jabulani spotted her one afternoon, as she displayed her prowess in stalking impala. [Read more](#)
- Our **resident cheetahs** are given bones to chew on after each feed. This is not just an aimless activity, but helps with their development. [Read more...](#)
- Releasing cheetahs back to their natural environment is one of our greatest achievements. It makes us proud to see these cats thrive on their own in the wild, with some having been born and raised in captivity. [Read more](#) about a few of these.



- Part of our **conservation mission** is to educate the public, especially residents in our immediate Hoedspruit community. We believe it's best to start them young, so we adopted another school, Lumukisa Primary School. [Read more...](#)
- Another one of our programmes dedicated to imparting knowledge is the **Wildlife Conservation Experience (WCE)**. The WCE gives participants an opportunity to learn more about conservation while 'in the thick of things'. [Read more](#)
- Adine was requested to share her knowledge, on behalf of HESC, at a camp designed for Grade 7 learners called the Voortrekker Inheritance Specialisation Programme. [Read more...](#)
- Our student coordinators paid a visit to **Lumukisa Primary School** in order to teach about various conservation topics and interact with the learners. [Read more](#)
- **The WCE programme at HESC** is more than just about conservation. A number of participants through the years have achieved things they never thought they would ever do. One such person is Youp Jaski who has overcome a lifelong fear. [Read more...](#)
- We love it that our attempts to teach young people about the importance of conservation is not only restricted to South Africa. Student coordinator, Tanita, held a session via Skype to educate learners from a US school. [Read more](#)
- The WCE participants had such a wonderful time with Grade R learners at our adoptive school, while Tanita delivered some essentials for the school's feeding programme. [Read more...](#)
- We've joined forces with the **Rhino Art project**. The project's aim is to gather the largest number of children's 'Art Voices' ever recorded against the plight faced by the endangered rhino species. Together with our partners we visited a number of schools. [Read more](#)

- We launched the **Hescie Scouts Programme**, which is a way of empowering and involving young kids in the Hoedspruit area in wildlife conservation matters. [Read more...](#)

■ FUNDRAISING



- Our friends at Rhinos in Africa took on a mammoth challenge to make the biggest rhino cake in the world in an effort to raise funds for the Rescued Rhinos @ HESC. [Read more](#)
- Last year we collaborated with Misty Mountain, Project Rhino KZN, Forest Ventures and Cadence Cycling to host the **Hope for the Horn** Mountain Bike Challenge. We did it again this year. [Read more...](#)
- After an eventful weekend of fun(d)raising, in the name of bringing attention to the plight of rhinos, we gave an update about the 'run and ride for rhinos' events. [Read more](#)

■ GENERAL NEWS





- Away from the **rhino sanctuary**, which keeps us on our toes, our other resident animals keep the place buzzing too. [Read more...](#)
- **Lammie** is probably one of the most well-known animals at the centre. This 'mother sheep' has featured in news articles (local and international) because of her extraordinary mothering abilities of the rhinos, especially Gertjie. We turned the spotlight on her. [Read more](#)
- Gumpie and Skewie are the **resident southern ground hornbills**. These two lovebirds have quite a fascinating relationship. [Read more...](#)
- The baby duiker that our curators rescued from the clutches of an eagle earlier this year is growing up amazingly well. [Read more](#)
- The security of our rhinos is a **high priority for us**, because of the critical danger in which these animals are. Tracking dogs play an important role in ensuring that any potential danger is detected soon enough. 'Rent-A-Dog' breeds and trains tracking dogs, and agreed to send two of their best hounds to assist with the plight. [Read more...](#)
- Zeta the zebra was a week old when she arrived at HESC. We've watched her grow over the years, and it's been incredible to see this beauty 'come of age'. We recently got her a mate in the hope that she'll soon start her own family. [Read more](#)
- Earlier this year, Wildlife Pharmaceuticals conducted research into the anaesthesia of cheetahs by using a combination drug known as BAM (Butorphanol / Azaperone / Medetomidine). They returned to conduct more research, but this time on leopards. [Read more...](#)
- We were saddened by the death of **Caesar**, our resident lion. Although he was suffering from arthritis and had reached old age, we hoped that he would remain with us a bit longer. Having been rescued from a circus in Portugal after enduring years of abuse, it's reassuring that we were able to make his last few years comfortable and much more dignified. [Read more](#)

■ OUR PEOPLE





Karen Swiegers is one of our long-serving staff members, and because of her diligence and hard work, she has been promoted to General Manager. [Read more...](#)

Having been at HESC for over 20 years, Lafisi Malokoane, was like a family member to us. We bade her farewell as she retired to enjoy her golden years. [Read more](#)

The passing of **John Seerane** left us shattered. John grew up with Mrs Lente Roode, and was like a brother to her. She paid a special tribute to him. [Read more...](#)

■ THANK YOU

We are grateful to everyone and every organisation for their continued support in an effort to ensure that we are able to continue with our work. [Click here](#) to meet some of the people who made contributions in March. [Click here](#) to see some of the people who made contributions in May (Ricki to send content)

To all those who have made donations via our [online platform](#), THANK YOU.

Without our supporters we would not be able to do what we do.

help.hesc.co.za

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

GET INVOLVED