



NEW FRIEND: Gertjie bonding with a new human friend, Xander van Eeden who will help baby sit during this school holidays.



FEEDING TIME: Assistant curator Anri de Waal feeding Gertjie at the Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre.

Orphaned baby rhino with a sense of humor

GERTJIE, a orphaned baby rhino who lost his mother at the hands of cruel poachers has adapted quickly to his new home at the Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre.

The baby rhino requires round-the-clock care and HESC curator, Christo Schreiber and his team take turns to look after him during the day. At night, Skaap the surrogate sheep babysits him. The energetic little rhino never ceases to amaze the team that has been taking care of him from the first day he arrived. Gertjie gave his total trust to the team from day one. "The first day he arrived at the centre he allowed me to touch him and that is amazing compared to other orphaned rhinos. Gertjie will be at the centre until he's 18 months. Rhinos are solitary animals so it

won't be difficult for him to survive when his release time arrives,' said Schreiber.

The baby rhino is fed 4.2 litres fat free milk 6 times a day which is mixed with medication to prevent stomach ulcers.

During the night, energetic and playful Gertjie sometimes puts a bucket which is used for Skaap's food on his head.

Through the help of generous people, Gertjie has put on weight since his arrival. He weighed 100 kg in May; his weight is now 180kg.

HESC would like to express their heartfelt appreciation for all the support they received from people and the milk donation they receive from Pick n Pay supermarket.



GOOD COMPANY: HESC curator, Christo Schreiber taking Gertjie on a walk at the centre.



COOLING OFF: Gertjie mud bathing to cool off while Xander van Eeden looks on.