

KRUGER CANYON NEWS



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Orphaned at just two weeks old

Kerstin Nyberg Peart

HOEDSPRUIT - Yet another young rhino is facing life as an orphan, and will be raised with love and care but without his mother and outside his natural environment. On the morning of Sunday 16 November, Hoedspruit wildlife vet Dr Peter Rogers was contacted by the owner of a game reserve between Hoedspruit and Tzaneen to come to the rescue of a tiny calf, found next to its slaughtered mother.

The adult rhino had been shot on the reserve the previous evening, and when the carcass was discovered it was so badly hacked that it was impossible for the owner to recognise which of his rhinos it was. After an hour or two, the tiny calf came out of the bush, and the owner called for veterinary assistance. This calf had been lucky: according to Peter Rogers, most calves are hacked to death, because they get in the way when the mothers are killed for their horns. He adds that there has been ... continued on page 3...



The baby rhino, now named Matimba, seen here in the loving care of his substitute Mum, Karriën Smit.

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Orphaned at just two weeks old...cont...



Peter Rogers of Provet sedating Matimba as he awakes from the anaesthetic

...from page 1...an upsurge in rhino poaching in recent days, and to his knowledge five or six animals were killed in the Hoedspruit area only in the previous week.

The Provet team immediately went out to assist with the emergency. The baby rhino was

darted and put on a drip, and was taken to the Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre (HESC). At present another young orphan rhino, Gertjie, is being successfully raised at HESC, having been brought there in May this year. When the call came from the Provet

team, HESC staff were able to prepare for the new arrival with the benefit of recent experience. The boma where Gertjie usually sleeps was quickly cleaned and prepared again with all that was needed to give the baby the best possible chances of survival.

When the Provet team arrived, staff at HESC were taken aback by how tiny the rhino was. The male baby rhino was about two weeks old, and weighed only 60 kg. It needed no special vehicle for transport, but fitted comfortably into the back of Peter Rogers' Toyota Prado.

The heavily sedated rhino could easily be carried to the prepared boma, where he could receive the antidote to wake him up.

As the baby rhino woke up, everybody was relieved and delighted to watch him try to suck on his blanket, making it clear that he was very hungry. He was obviously traumatized and very scared, but as he was left alone in the care of Assistant Curator Karien Smit, he drank his first bottle with gusto. HESC staff had been in the same situation very recently

and knew what to expect. The calf enjoyed his first bottle, which is crucial for survival, and is now being fed every three hours, receiving a total of around six litres per day. The latest news is very good: the baby rhino is doing very well, has got used to Karien, and is very hungry!



Matimba's mother (poached on Saturday 16 November) was so badly hacked that the owner of the farm was unable to identify her

Santa Shoebox contributions bring delight to little ones



Janette Genis of Provet at Matimba's side soon after arrival at HESC



Southern Cross Schools were delighted to receive these pictures of their learners' Santa Shoebox contributions being distributed to their beneficiaries. It is such a privilege and pleasure to share the joy on all their faces.

Our thanks go to Come Haveraga and Children's Eco Training for delivering them, as well as to our parents and learners for their generous participation in this wonderful initiative.

Presenting THE ANIMATED ADVENTURE

FROZEN

Thursday 27th November
Sami Hall
18h00 - 20h00

