



Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre (Pty) Ltd

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**PRESS RELEASE**

DATE: 11 May 2018

### Orphaned baby elephant successfully introduced to Jabulani herd

An elephant calf that has been in the care of the [Hoedspruit Endangered Species Centre](#) (HESC) for the past 16 months, was successfully introduced to the resident **Jabulani herd** early April 2018, and will remain with the herd going forward.

In **November 2016**, the elephant calf, whom we have named **Shawu**, was found wandering along the R40 between Klaserie and Hoedspruit. He was brought to HESC, where we have the facilities and expertise of the highest standard, to care for and accommodate orphaned and injured elephants.

Shawu arrived at HESC extremely distressed, hungry and thirsty, without anyone's knowledge of the amount of time he had survived on his own. Our dedicated HESC team of curators and experienced elephant carers worked around the clock to ensure his survival. This entailed being bottle fed every two hours and 24hour care, and his state of healthy improved rapidly.

Although human intervention by qualified individuals is essential to his survival, our aim was always to reintroduce him to a herd of his own, once again. Since elephants have a very strong sense of family and elephant calf's are cared for by the entire herd, and not just the biological mother, the decision was made to introduce Shawu to the Jabulani herd. Careful planning, consultations and scientific research were carried out extensively before we made that final decision.

The introduction date was set for **7th April**, and we decided that the least stressful way of getting Shawu to the herd, would be by foot, so that Shawu would not experience unnecessary emotional stress from transportation.

Preparation for the **18km walk from HESC to the Camp Jabulani**, included increasing his daily walking distance every day, to get him physically ready. On the day, we took numerous pit stops to drink, rest, and enjoy a mud bath en-route too.

The much anticipated **introduction** took a different direction than what we had planned, with Shawu running away from the herd, towards the Jabulani stables. The herd followed his trail eagerly, excited to protect and welcome this young elephant to the family. **Tokwe (the matriarch) was the first elephant to approach Shawu directly**, and placed her trunk protectively around the little elephant, in a hugging-like manner, as if to reassure him that everything would be okay.

Shawu has adapted extremely well to his new surroundings with his new herd. He is eating, drinking and sleeping normally, and looking very confident in his new environment. We will continue to monitor him closely with the assistance of the **Camp Jabulani** team.

Should you have any queries or wish to comment with feedback, please email: [adine@cheetahcentre.co.za](mailto:adine@cheetahcentre.co.za)

With kind regards,

Lente and Adine Roode  
Directors



#### Attachments (1)

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