



# The Barking Gecko

## Newsletter of the NamibRand Nature Reserve

VOLUME 4 NUMBER 1

### Devastating fire at Dunes' Lodge

On Christmas afternoon an overwhelming fire burnt down part of the Dunes' Lodge. The fire apparently started in a storeroom and although the staff tried to extinguish the blaze with a fire extinguisher, it spread so fast that very little was saved. It burnt down the dining room, kitchen and the two nearby staff quarters. The bar and lounge were lost. Stephan tried to move his Landrover, but the heat was so great he could not get near it. The fire was prevented from spreading along the wooden walkways by smashing them down with a vehicle.

To Stephan and his staff, from all of us on NamibRand, our sincere sympathies.

### The NamibRand Conservation Foundation – does it exist and what is its purpose??

The NamibRand Conservation Foundation (NRCF) was founded on the 29<sup>th</sup> July 1997, with the following Aims and Objectives:

- ♦ The primary aim of the NRCF is to promote and assist in any form with the environmental and general conservation, education and research undertaken in the NamibRand Nature Reserve (NRNR) and the south western Namib region, in the widest context and in any form and to conserve the environment for present and future generations.

In pursuit of the above aim, the Foundation has set itself the following objectives:

- ♦ To hold and administer funds on behalf of project initiator, donors and

executors whose activities accord with the NRCF's primary aim.

- ♦ To educate the Namibian decision maker, the general public and young people in particular in the conservation of that environment and the sustainable utilization of those natural resources.
- ♦ To support and raise funds for environmental research and education, for ecosystem conservation and specifically for the protection of endangered species, in NRNR and the southwestern Namib.
- ♦ To establish a cooperative communication network with national and international organizations, which have similar aims and objectives to those of the NRCF.
- ♦ To encourage and support natural resources management programmes in the NRNR.

To enable the NRCF to pursue its objectives, funds had to be raised as a first step. With this in mind, the "Adopt-a-Fairy-Circle" project was started very successfully, developed from ideas from Achim and Stephan. Complemented by donations from other sources the NRCF has raised some N\$ 90 000.00 to date, however, latterly the momentum seems to have slowed down with the argument that the funds collected so far have not been meaningfully applied.

Except for fund-raising, which was mainly driven by the Concessionaires on the Reserve, nothing much happened with NRCF – in fact the Foundation was dormant until May 2002, when the Trustees reconstituted themselves and appointed the writer as "Acting" Executive Trustee until such time, when a suitable person has been identified and appointed. The present Trustees of NRCF are Dr. Mary Seely, Amy Schoeman, Walter Boettger, Christiane Berker, Dieter Glaue, Stephan Brückner, Achim Lenssen and the writer.

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During the July 2002 meeting, the Trustees took three major decisions namely:

- 1 To "incorporate" NRCF as either a Trust or a "Section 21" company to give NRCF a legal status.
- 2 To advance N\$ 60 000.00 to the Namib Desert Environmental Education Trust (NaDEET) on the farm "Die Duine" as "starting up" funds.
- 3 To publish a "Coffee table" book on NamibRand.

I will update you in one of the future editions of the "Barking Gecko".

J.A. Brückner.



## The Big Fire at Wolwedans Dunes Lodge

During the afternoon of 25th December, I was sitting in front of the computer typing more recipes for our kitchen, when I heard people screaming that there was fire on top of the dunes. I ran out of the office and looked up towards the lodge. There was considerable black smoke rising into the sky and we all knew what that meant. Shaheed, our maintenance guy and some of the kitchen staff were the first to leave for the Lodge, to see what could still be done to stop the fire.

My first thought was to find out from the people up at the Lodge what had really happened and how serious it was, because we hadn't heard anything from them. As I listened to the radio, the Barman Wise was on air, saying that we had to come quickly as everything was burning.

I started calling all our neighbours "Mayday, Mayday the Lodge is on fire".

At least I got hold of Peter Bridgeford who promised to be at the Lodge as fast as he could drive.

Then the rest of us jumped into another car, grabbed some blankets and drove up to the Lodge faster than I had ever driven before. The black smoke cloud was getting bigger and bigger and once we arrived we could see that the whole main complex (bar, restaurant, staff quarters and kitchen) was burning. In addition, one of the cars, parked too close, was also on fire.

None of us was able to do anything; we just stood around and watched this somber sight. The wind was blowing very strongly and this made it even worse, luckily, the grass didn't catch fire.

Stephan Brückner had cut off the wooden walkway on the left of the Lodge, by smashing one of the Landrovers into the walkway to break it down, thus preventing the fire from spreading to the guest chalets.

After about 30 minutes, Achim Lenssen arrived at the Lodge with 200 litres of water and a pump. Fortunately, I must say, as just then one of the closest chalets "Hermann's Ruhe" started burning just from the heat. We could extinguish this fire with the water Achim had brought. After 40 minutes everything was over, the whole main complex was totally gone, what a tragedy.

However, there was not much time to think about the loss, as we had 20 guests that day to look after. After we had decided to first take the guests back to their rooms and then later for a

sundowner at Chateau, I rushed down to base to cool some beers. Obviously as the Lodge was gone, there was no cold beer, no glasses, no kitchen!

Having organized the sundowners, we started getting our base camp ready to cater for 20 guests that evening. We set up a pleasant dining area on our old veranda where we usually receive our guests. We had to get glasses, plates, cutlery and all that was needed to serve a good dinner, from one of our other camps as nothing was left at the Lodge.

In the end everything went well and we served our guests a lovely dinner at base camp (our village) and it seemed by then that the guests had relaxed a little and calmed down.

At about 23h00 all the guests were back at the Lodge in their chalets, having a peaceful sleep, the last dishes were washed in our base kitchen and everyone needed some good sleep after that long and exciting day.

However, at all times our spirits were high, we don't give up, this is our place and you can see that:

### "We shall overcome"

Ralf Herrgott

## Landowner Profile

It all started in 1984 when Albi Brückner (also referred to as JAB), a farmer's boy and "hungry for land", purchased the farm Gorrasis without a vision of what to do with his newly acquired land. That vision came much later. Initially he leased the land to his later good friend Jakob van Lill, but later started commercial farming with Nguni cattle and Damara sheep after he had extended his property to include the farms Stellarine and Die Duine. After two years of severe drought, he ceased farming operations in the late 1980's, when he realized that farms on the edge of the desert were unsuitable for commercial farming. Some of his neighbours had reached the same conclusion and had diverted to biltong hunting on a large scale, depleting the large herds of wildlife, mainly oryx, which frequented their farms and the bordering Namib-Naukluft Park. It was then, that the idea was born in JAB's mind to protect and conserve the wildlife in the area through the acquisition of a number of bordering farms with the financial support of similar minded people and to restore the area to what it once was – a "wilderness", where man dared to tread.

Hence, the concept of the NamibRand Nature Reserve was born, where the costs of conservation are met by levies raised from ecotourism into the Reserve, conducted by so-called "Concessionaires" on behalf of their clients in accordance with strictly enforced "Rules & Guidelines" to conserve the habitat with its biodiversity.

With this secure income, NamibRand Nature Reserve is today self-sustainable – an achievement, JAB is justifiably proud of.

JAB is married to Antje and the couple has four children, all living in or near Windhoek. Two sons are managing the NEC group of engineering companies, which JAB founded in 1958, while their youngest son, Stephan, is the owner and manager of the "Wolwedans Collection", one of presently five concessionaires operating on NamibRand Nature Reserve.

### "A vision came true"

J.A. (Albi) Brückner



Chameleon  
Photo: Marc Dürr

## What a Surprise — The Chameleon

In nature, which is wonderful, small, living creatures adapt to various ecosystems. Observing how they live, find food and manage to survive is special.

However, some are even more extraordinary. The chameleon cannot run to catch its prey, it can only move very slowly. To enable it to get close enough while stalking, it changes colour to fit its background. With this remarkable adaptation, it can continue to exist in the harsh desert environment where even water is scarce.

The desert never ceases to amaze and I could carry on writing forever. Enjoy your experience of the desert.

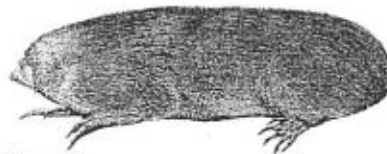
Dawid Brünzil

## Does the Namib Desert golden mole use microseismic cues for navigation during foraging?

In a previous study, carried out in 1993 near Gobabeb, we demonstrated that the Namib Desert golden mole (*Eremitalpa granti namibensis*) forages purposefully, not randomly (Narins et al., 1997). Its foraging therefore must involve sensory cues, even if the animal utilizes prelearned foraging routes. The animal's vestigial eyes eliminate vision as a source of such cues, and its massive malleus strongly suggests that it uses ground-borne acoustic (microseismic) cues (Cooper, 1928; Doran, 1978; Dubost, 1968; Findlay, 1944; Mayer et al., 1995; Nolte, 1968). This suggestion is supported by the fact that the animal often forages beneath the surface of the sand (sand-swimming), and that when it does forage on the surface, it frequently stops to dip its head into the sand—in a manner well suited to facilitate detection of ground-borne acoustic signals. During our study at Gobabeb, we also were able to show that the preferred microhabitats for feeding (dune grass hummocks) emit distinct microseismic signals whenever there is wind. These we recorded with geophones. We also recorded microseismic signals produced by each of several potential prey animals; and we examined the vibrational (microseismic) propagation properties of the Namib sand, which we found to be excellent.

We concluded that if the Namib Desert golden mole does use microseismic cues for navigation during foraging, then we should be able to attract it to artificial microseismic sources buried in the sand. Our current work in the NamibRand was designed to test this proposition. We selected our NamibRand study site for its high density of active moles—much higher than what we had observed at Gobabeb. With the approval of the Namibian Ministry of Environment and Tourism and the NamibRand Nature Reserve, and the gracious help of Marc and Elinor Dürr, we carried out our work on the Die Duine Farmstead. Our original plan was to distribute small microseismic sources in the vicinity of known mole foraging trails. These would emit prerecorded or synthesized vibrations from dune grass hummocks or from potential prey items. Success would depend on our ability to deploy the sources close enough to subsequent foraging routes to be detected by the passing moles. With this procedure, we knew that our chances of success might be low.

Our experimental approach changed radically after we arrived at Die Duine Farmstead and discovered that two of the local guides were able to capture small numbers of moles for us. On a local dune, we deployed eight microseismic sources uniformly around a ten-meter diameter circle. At the centre of the circle was a single bush of ostrich grass (*Cladoraphis spinosa*). For each experiment, three adjacent sources were selected to be driven, the other five were silent. The driven sources produced the same patterns of microseismic vibrations as the bushes of dune grass (*Stipagrostis*) in a gentle wind. A mole was released at a designated place (the same for each experiment) next to the grass bush. Typically, it would dive into the sand and rest for a period of four to twenty four hours. Once it emerged, it would begin to sand-swim or walk out of our circle. According to our hypothesis, the mole now should be attracted to the sources emitting the dune-grass signals. To determine whether or not this was true, we carefully mapped its tracks from the central bush of ostrich grass. Once the mole had left the circle, we attempted to recapture it for re-release at the site where it was originally captured. Another mole then was released in the circle. Altogether, twelve moles were released. Preliminary analysis of our tracking data shows that sand-swimming moles were attracted to our microseismic sources, surface-walking moles were not.



Golden mole  
From: Smithers

Edwin R. Lewis, Professor emeritus, University of California. Peter M. Narins, Professor, University of California. Jennifer J.U.M. Jarvis, Professor emeritus, University of Cape Town. Gary Bronner, Professor, University of Cape Town.

### Hermann

I'm sometimes too young and sometimes too old for myself ... !!

I'm chaotic in some ways and too organized in other ways.

I'm complicated for some to understand and easy for others to make a friend.

I'm an explorer of life and nature and people to fill my days.

I'm a loner and creativity explodes!

I'm Hermann that everyone knows and I like to be that for you ...

## Marc's mega Barking Gecko article

With all the excitement at Tok Tokkie Trails these past six months, I have not got around to writing much. The following is a consolidated "article" of all the bits and pieces I have been meaning to submit.

In September, Mike Griffin (Ministry of Environment and Tourism) came to visit us, one reason being to check up on some golden mole researchers, another being to look for fat mice (*Steatomys* species). Mike kindly offered me the use of his metal detector (White's Goldmeter), which is sensitive for many nonferrous materials, e.g. lead or brass. This was not because I had lost my car keys! Achim has a theory about the hunting circles on the west side of Schafsberg and at Gorrasis. This theory is that German soldiers possibly built the circles during the 1904 Nama campaign. The general theory about the circles is that stone-age hunter-gatherer groups that lived in this area in the past built them. One way of determining if modern people used the circles was to see if we could detect any metal at the sites. This would obviously not be conclusive, but would lead to further research. The easiest way to detect metals is with metal detectors, which are scarce to say the least. Mike owns his because of gold prospecting he was doing in California when he was younger. Achim was not able to join us on our expedition, but Mike and I headed out and searched the circles on the plain west of Schafsberg (not the ones going up the ridge), as well as the circles at Gorrasis. Our only find was one piece of lead from a bullet that had hit a rock at the Gorrasis site. Not one other find was made. This does not disprove the soldier theory as the circles may have been built but possibly were not used. A full report of the "search" was submitted to Achim with map. If anyone wants to look at the detail, contact Achim or Marc.

One lizard, *Pedioplanis lineocellata* was caught at the Schafsberg site. This was a new specimen for Mike for our area. Those guides going to the shelters keep a look out for this beauty, reddish with a line of yellow spots down either side.

## Bird sightings

Black Eagles (*Aquila verreauxii*) feeding on a Rüppell's Korhaan (*Eupodotis rüppellii*) in the Horseshoe area. This sighting got me so excited, that I slid down the mountain backwards (on my back) for 5 meters! Most embarrassing moment or what?

(Continued on page 4)



Spotted Eagle Owl (*Bubo africanus*) being eaten by Pale Chanting Goshawk (*Melierax canorus*) about 3 kms south west of Die Duine house.

Ludwig's Bustard (*Neotis ludwigii*) chick on 11 May 02 ..... -WHERE???

#### DHPS – klasse 8c

Last year, 2001, DHPS had asked us if one of their classes could come to Tok Tokkie Trails for their class excursion. We put together a price and programme which was clearly fine as class 8c (23 kids) with Mrs. Rust, the teacher and 5 accompanying adults, arrived *en masse* in October at Tok Tokkie. This was not part of the environmental education programme, but obviously, the idea was not only to show the kids the desert but also emphasise the importance of conservation.

NamibRand Nature Reserve is a great tool to do this with and we can all be proud of where we live. After the normal fears about spiders, scorpions, snakes, etc. (the girls) and the girls (the boys) had been relieved, the learners (ages 14 – 16) had a rip-roaring time. We dune boarded, we swam, we walked, we walked some more (in some learners' opinion too much) we worked on plays about Duwisib Castle, we swam. We (the Tok Tokkie Team) had a great time. The most important thing for me personally was the reaction of the learners to the desert, the life in it and the efforts being made to conserve it. Every minute that I spent with the learners was worth it and the "solitaire" essays, poems and pictures made me even more eager to see the NaDEET Centre on NamibRand Nature Reserve get started, as I am convinced that we will get the same enthusiastic reaction from most learners. To class 8c, I say come again but more importantly enjoy!!! Lots more.

What became clear to me is that EE (environmental education), like conservation, is not something one just does, but it needs to be a way of life if one wants to be successful.

Marc Dürr

#### Sossusvlei Mountain Lodge, Congratulations!

The birth of Kassie Junior is proudly announced.

Born in 2002 at home in a camel thorn tree on Vreemdelingspoort, in the vicinity of Sossusvlei Mountain Lodge, the happy parents are Mr. and Mrs. L-F Vulture. Kassie who works at the Lodge first saw Kassie Jnr in

#### Little Serengeti

On 1 December 2002, NamibRand was blessed with rain, but Keerweder, could boast of 52 mm within an hour. It started with a real thunderstorm and the water seemed to pour down in bucketfuls from heaven.

Within a couple of days, the first signs of green appeared on the plains. With each passing day, the patchy green turned into fields of green. What a treat for the eyes!

Animals are so much part of nature. They may be 30 km or more away, yet they sense where rain has fallen and then, nothing keeps them from migrating to the green pastures. Soon, game was seen all over the Keerweder plains not far from the house. Within no time, big herds of zebra, oryx, and springbok are busy, head down, enjoying this nourishing food. Ostrich, blesbok and hartebeest are demanding their share too.

Especially early mornings and late afternoons, hundreds of animals of various species, can be seen diligently grazing on the green plains. This I call the biggest and best Christmas gift one could wish for. Just imagine sitting or standing in the garden or on the veranda and being surrounded by so much wildlife. How very fortunate we are!

Ursi Lenssen



October. This happy occasion follows the birth of Albi Junior, born on Die Duine, in 2000.

On 3 November 2002 Kassie Jnr was visited by a contingent of ten NamibRanders. He was removed from his nest and fitted with three colour rings on his left leg and a numbered metal (G 20543) and two-coloured rings on his right leg. Kassie Jnr was seen several times after his rings were fitted and he suffered no ill effects from the handling and all the photographs taken of him.

Kassie Jnr is a Lappet-faced Vulture *Torgos tracheliotos*. It is the third vulture of this species to be ringed on NamibRand Nature Reserve. In 2001, a chick was found but when we went to ring it, it was found dead in the nest next to an adult bird. It is suspected that they died after ingesting poison.

Thank you to the staff of Sossusvlei Mountain Lodge for their enthusiasm and interest.

Peter Bridgeford



Lappet-faced Vulture, *Torgos tracheliotos*

#### From the guestbook of Hermann's Ruhe

This desert is stunningly beautiful to the eyes, but deafening to the soul. I think when people meet in the desert; they show a lot more of themselves since they only have each other in the barrenness. I think that you must have been completely mad to begin with in order not to go mad staying here so long.

Thanks for looking after us.

Don and Jory, December 1999



## On a granite hill at Draaihoek

On 1/12/2002 a family of Chacma baboons *Papio ursinus* were seen feeding on a very thorny, poisonous plant *Euphorbia avasmontana* on a granite hill behind the house at Draaihoek. The next morning they were still feeding on the same plant, but were joined by four klipspringer, *Oreotragus oreotragus*, small antelope associated with rocky habitats. As the euphorbia has a hard, thorny "bark" the klipspringer cannot get to the soft moist pith themselves, but fed on the pith exposed by the baboons stripping away the bark. Baboons fed on different plants, as they seem to prefer the centre portion of plants where new growth emerges and is thus softer and juicier than the dried outer stems. They were seen feeding on euphorbia for 3 days and nothing else, but regularly drank water. Some plants were totally destroyed, despite being very "hot" like pepper, not bitter, but juicy like watermelon. This last observation is from personal experience. I ate a small portion of the soft pith without any after effects. The poisonous milky latex is in the thorny bark and the pith is latex free.

Jurgen Klein, Draaihoek, NRNR.

(Chacma baboons are omnivorous and one reference says it is simpler to list the items not eaten than to list those that they do eat. In common with most euphorbia's, *E. avasmontana* has poisonous milky latex. No common English name could be found, but in Afrikaans it is known as "gifboom" - poison tree. In German it is called "wolfsmilch" - wolf's milk. Bushmen are said to use the latex to make poison arrows. The latex contains carcinogenic substances. It can form blisters on the skin and may lead to temporary blindness. It can be fatal if ingested.

However, some animals seem immune to the poison. Black rhino *Diceros bicornis* feed on these plants and ingest the whole thorny stem. Kudu *Tragelaphus strepsiceros* feed on the flowers without ill effect.)

## Vor 50 Jaren "Aus Stadt & Land". Swakopmund.

Für die besten Schützenleistungen der Kadetten hat Herr Lang (Bürgermeister) persönlich für die beiden Schulen in Swakopmund je einen Wanderpokal gestiftet.

Der für die Primary School bestimmte Pokal fiel dieses Jahr an Harry Cloot (Schießwert 90%), der der High School an Jürgen Klein (Schießwert 95%).

From: Dienstag A.Z. 17/12/2002

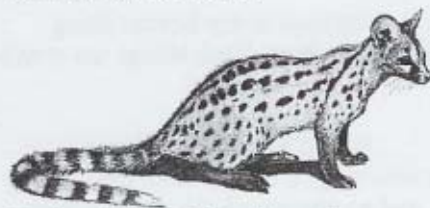
Sent in by Marc Dürr

## Small-spotted Genet at Keerweder

We do not know the distribution of small, secretive, nocturnal creatures that are on the reserve. We have received reports of sightings here and there of small-spotted genet *Genetta genetta*, but have not seen one at Keerweder during the last five years. The other night I was awakened by a commotion outside the bedroom window and strange sounds made me investigate. There, in the top branches of our citrus tree was a very frightened small-spotted genet. Our big tomcat had apparently chased him high into the tree. After a good look to identify it, I took our cat inside, so that the genet could continue his search for food.

Achim Lenssen

The NamibRand wildlife database of sightings has two other records of small-spotted genet. The first is from Die Duine, where one was seen for the first time around the house about two years ago. In September one was seen in the palm tree next to the Aandster house. On a later occasion, two were fighting? mating? very noisily as only cats can do, in the Jacaranda tree.



Small-spotted genet, *Genetta genetta*.  
From: Smithers

## Time

Time stands smiling at my door -  
I invite time to stay with me a while.  
Not always sure of time's mission -  
mostly excited, time blows through my house -  
not leaving much time, as it can depart  
as quickly as it arrives -  
then I need to be ready and know time  
also runs out.  
This, our mission every year to decide  
what am I doing the next twelve  
months,  
as the past twelve months have left us  
again wondering, where time has gone  
...!  
There is no recipe for the perfect year,  
we need to know that the ingredients  
for a good time are the colours and  
shapes we surround ourselves with  
during the twelve months of one year,  
that becomes part of our memories of  
a lifetime ... !!!

Hermann Cloete, Wolwedans

## NamibRand Nature Reserve supports vulture monitoring project

During October 2002, the annual monitoring of Lappet-faced vultures (LFV) *Torgos tracheliotos* in the Namib-Naukluft Park (N-NP) once again took place. This project, now in its twelfth year, records the breeding of LFV in the N-NP. It also attempts to ring as many chicks as possible while they are in the nest.

NamibRand Nature Reserve (NRNR) again assisted the Vulture Study Group (VSG) and the Ministry of Environment and Tourism with the project. First an aerial survey was done of all known breeding areas in the N-NP. Nesting birds, chicks and even eggs are visible from the low, slow flying Cessna 172. The position of occupied nests were plotted on a GPS. The next step was to inspect each of the plotted nests from the ground. Nests were reached using a long extension ladder. In the Ganab area, 27 chicks were ringed, a record number for this important breeding area.

The Tsondabvlei area was disappointing, as only 5 chicks were found, in comparison to 21 in 1992. The Saagberg/Kamberg area yielded 8 chicks, an increase on previous years. The most disturbing, but not unexpected result was from the Tsauchab River in the Sossusvlei area. In 1996, 10 chicks were ringed, but in 2002 not a single one was found. The large number of tourist vehicles to Sossusvlei and the increasing number of aircraft taking tourists on flips over Sossus is the likely cause of the abandoning of this previously fertile breeding area. In total 47 chicks were ringed, the largest number in the 12 years of the project.

NRNR is thanked for the use of a vehicle, fuel, and my time to do the aerial survey and the ringing. The Commercial Bank of Namibia sponsored the use of the aircraft. Warden Wessel Kotze of Ganab and pilot Warden Rod Braby, are both thanked for their assistance and enthusiasm for the project. Marek Hrywniak of Walvis Bay and Marc Dürr of Tok-Tokkie Trails who helped manhandle the heavy ladder and climb thorny trees are thanked for their support and company.

Peter Bridgeford





## What is it?

It's all around you  
It's everywhere  
You might not think it,  
But its there

You can't see all of it  
You might only see a part of it  
But you should know its there  
Because it's everywhere

It's beautiful, don't kill it  
It's wonderful, be kind to it  
It's everything, don't destroy it  
Its, it . . . . .be careful with it

Where is it?  
What is it?  
Who is it?  
It's the World!

By Caitlin Quinn, Grade 5 St Paul's  
A frequent visitor to Tok Tokkie Trails

## Sirkels

Simfonie van voëls in die laaste snikke van die dag  
En maar seker vind elkeen sy plekkie. Kom die donker, kom die nag  
"n Kwetter nog hier, 'n kwetter nog daar  
"n Roep van mamma en outjies wat spaander na haar.  
Binnekort sal die stilte oor Wolwedans vou  
So tasbaar dat jy die gemsbokke in die verte hoor kou.  
Koesterend in die laaste strale van die son gevou  
Lê die berge in grys, pers, pienk en blou.  
Die lewe op die duine kom oor tot rus  
Met die wind wat strelend oor hulle sus.  
Dit blyk dat almal het gaan slaap

### MAAR O NEE

Die feetjies in die Namib het so-pas ontwaak  
Hul vlerkies deurskynend en O so mooi  
Word sigbaar in die lig wat die maan oor hul gooi.  
Duisendes vorm dertig-dertig 'n kring  
Dan begin hul in sirkels beweeg en sing.

"Ring a Ring of Roses" ... Kan jy dit glo!  
Vir jare probeer geleerdes die "Fairy Circles" ontleed  
Maar ek weet  
Dit is die feetjies wat snags dans in 'n kring  
Wat die besondere sirkels na Wolwedans bring.

Alta Dormenl

(A poem on the formation of "Fairy Circles" by fairies singing and dancing in the night.)



## Thoughts on a walk

Look at the sands,  
formed by God's hands  
The pale sky defines  
curves of gentle red lines.

Look at the grass,  
a bush as you pass.  
But, from afar, behind  
a velvety sheet of gold.

Look at the sky  
clouds shift, dragged on by  
pink, purple, white, blue,  
every shade, every hue.

Look at the beasts  
sometimes thought of as least

diverse as every human being  
open your eyes, these things are worth  
seeing.

Watch a sunset fade away,  
a bird sings a song a flute cannot play  
and as you watch the moon at rise,  
close your eyes and visualize  
Thank God he sent peace and  
contentment.

Hold onto the desert all around  
try and capture every sound  
into the wind troubled thoughts may be  
cast  
but the beauty and stillness to your  
heart hold fast.

(By one of "Klasse 8c" learners on the  
hike at Die Duine)

## Right-handed – left-handed – one-handed

It is normal for people to have two hands  
– one right hand and one left hand.

Some though having two hands have two  
left hands.

Then there is one person who at le<sup>st</sup>  
has two right hands in his one and o<sup>ne</sup>  
left hand.

Most of us know him, as he lives in our  
midst – Achim.

I will always be amazed and intrigued,  
even after so many years, that nothing  
seems to be an obstacle for my one-  
handed husband.

Ursi Lenssen

## Newsletter of the Namib-Rand Nature Reserve

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*"The wildlife of  
today is not ours to  
dispose of as we  
please. We have it in  
trust and must  
account for it to those  
who come after us."*

Website  
[www.namibrand.com](http://www.namibrand.com)