THE BARKING GECKO

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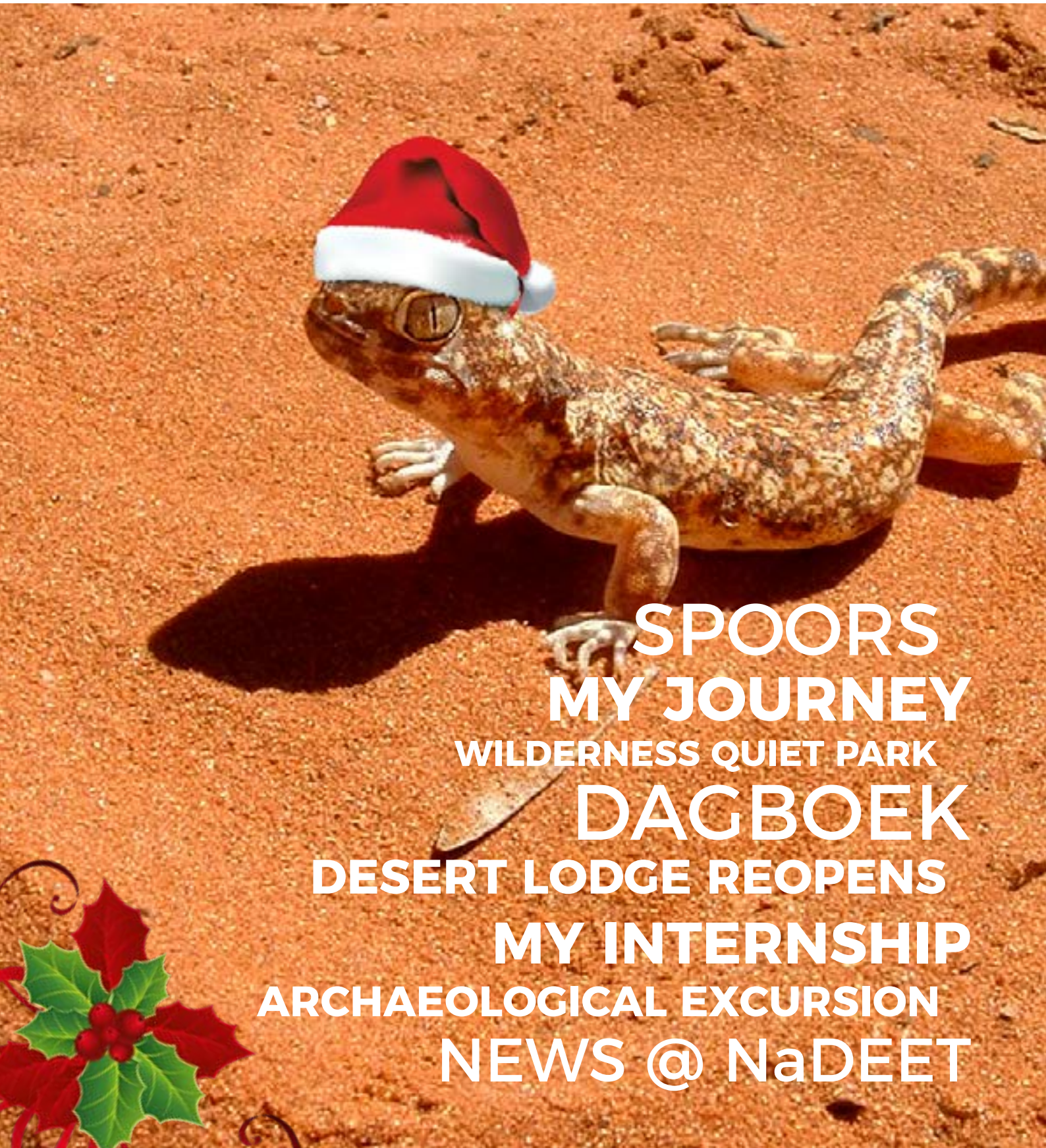

SPOORS
MY JOURNEY
WILDERNESS QUIET PARK
DAGBOEK
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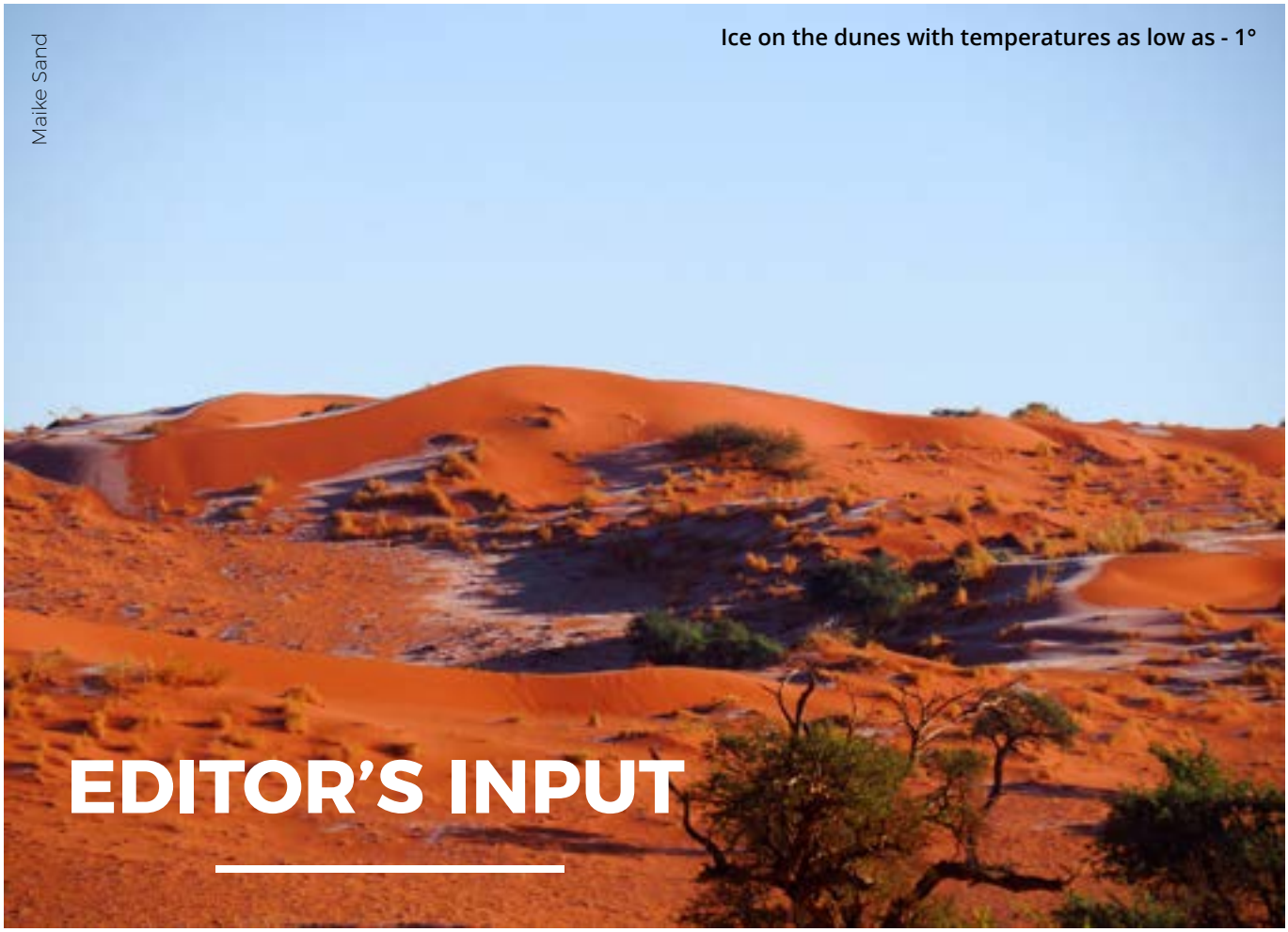
"Heaven is under our feet as well as over our heads."

- Henry David Thoreau,

Jessica Steyn

Sand storm in the evening



Maike Sand

Ice on the dunes with temperatures as low as - 1°

EDITOR'S INPUT

I don't know where 2024 went, but in the blink of an eye we are at the end of the year. Dominic is already a year old and keeps us busy, especially since he started walking at nine months old.

Jessica Steyn

Dominic celebrating in the dunes

Since our last edition, things on the Reserve have been busy. There was a visit from the Maltahöhe Farmers Association to see conservation in action. Many learners and students visited NaDEET, while Wolwedans hosted an artist who created a stunning piece of art during his visit. Important infrastructure was re-vamped and there were some strange weather pheonomena, including frost in the dunes. The annual Game Count was a successful Reserve-wide event with participation from the entire NamibRand family. To top it all off, NamibRand received Africa's first Wilderness Quiet Park award.

We are excited about all these activities and their successes. This issue of the Barking Gecko contains more detailed stories on all the above topics. We look forward to more opportunities to interact with stakeholders, international researchers, important conservation partners and Reserve residents.

We wish everyone a fantastic Christmas with their family and friends, and an excellent start to 2025.

Jessica Steyn

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

It is hard to believe that 2024 has almost come to an end. It has been a busy year on NamibRand and our team has a lot of stories to share.

We are proud to announce that the NamibRand Nature Reserve was awarded as Africa's First Wilderness Quiet Park. This prestigious recognition was bestowed on us by Quiet Parks International in June 2024. Embracing quiet spaces is part of a comprehensive approach to conservation. Noise is a form of pollution that, if left unaddressed, can have detrimental effects on the environment. Often, issues like noise and light pollution are overlooked in favour of focusing on more iconic topics, such as large wildlife species (rhinos and lions). However, to be truly effective, conservation must take a holistic approach that addresses all aspects of the ecosystem. More details about this award are included in this edition of the Barking Gecko.

Our staff have been hard at work mitigating some of the impacts of the ongoing drought. A particular challenge has been the increasing occurrence of animals at tourism facilities. Lodges, with their abundance of greenery and water, are like an oasis to wildlife in a landscape where natural food is now almost non-existent. The chance for an herbivore to nibble on the green leaves of a watered tree or a carnivore to chance upon a human that throws a bite of food towards them is tempting. These small things present a lifeline to animals that would otherwise not be able to sustain themselves in this drought-stricken environment. Unfortunately, animals that find food or get fed become habituated and unafraid of people, which in turn, can result in problems where both people and animals can get hurt. Fortunately, carnivores on the Reserve are not used to being persecuted and unlike their relatives on commercial farm land, our staff have been successful in humanly capturing some of the animals to relocate them to safer places. It is simply not practical or viable for us to feed wildlife in this time of crisis.

The Namibian delegation at the 2024 IUCN Africa Conservation Forum in Nairobi, Kenya from 25 to 29 June

As discussed in my message in the last issue of our newsletter, life in the Namib has evolved with these extreme drought cycles and animals cope by being able to migrate across vast distances to access the few places where it did rain and grass managed to grow. Nature can be cruel, and in these trying times many animals do succumb to the drought, with only the fittest animals surviving. We can only hope that the predictions of above-average rains in this upcoming rainy season materialise and we have the opportunity to see grazing and wildlife return to NamibRand.

I was fortunate to be able to attend the IUCN Africa Conservation Forum in Nairobi, Kenya from 25 to 29 June. This is the first time that all African IUCN sub-regions joined together for one conservation congress. Held every four years, this conference is one of the leading platforms for sharing knowledge, building partnerships and connecting key stakeholders in nature and biodiversity conservation from different regions. At the forum, conservation progress according to the IUCN 4-year work plan was evaluated, priority goals were revisited and strategic directions were proposed for Africa's key stakeholders to best address challenges concerning the environment and biodiversity over the next 20 years.

We would like to thank everyone for their ongoing support to the NamibRand Nature Reserve during 2024. We wish you, your family and friends a Merry Christmas and a Happy New year!

Kindest regards,

Nils Odendaal
Chief Executive Officer

GREETINGS FROM THE NORTH

Les Films du Vivant filming at NaDEET

Les Films du Vivant filming in the Jagkop area

Jessica Steyn

Over the past several months, the research and filming front has been quiet. Only one film crew from Les Films du Vivant visited NamibRand for two days to film desert ecology. They also took the opportunity to film a group of learners at NaDEET.

Andre supporting the zebra foal during transport

Frost on the dunes near NaDEET

On 14 June, Wolwedans informed Keerweder that a zebra foal was found at the Village and did not want to leave. As a first attempt to help the foal, it was given it water and lucerne, and then taken a short distance away from the Village in the hope that its mother would collect it again. Two teams of staff members were also sent out to try and locate any herds of zebra in the vicinity, which might include the foal's mother. The plan was that if a group of zebras could be found nearby, the teams could attempt to herd them towards the Village with the hope of reuniting the foal with its mother. These efforts failed as there were no zebras in the area. After waiting a few hours and realising that the foal was only a few days old, the decision was made to take the foal to our neighbour, Jabus du Toit, who has successfully nursed young abandoned wildlife in the past. Unfortunately, although all efforts were made and the foal was given milk, it did not survive the night. We can only speculate that the mother zebra abandoned her newborn due to a lack of food in the area.

The annual game count took place on 25 May, with full participation from concessionaires, landowners and NamibRand staff. It was a low rainfall season, and for that reason and the continued drought, very few animals were counted in comparison to previous years. More details on the game count and results can be found on page 20.

Mist in the dunes near Die Duine

On 2 June, frost occurred in the Erioloba Forest area and fog hung over the dunes. Some winter rainfall occurred, but the precipitation was not enough to measure.

Keerweder staff installed a fence and gates around the Kwessi Dunes Lodge staff village to prevent animals from moving between the staff houses and reduce the chance of wildlife encounters.

Various *Euphorbia namibensis* plants have recently been identified. There seems to be some inaccuracies with Reserve plant records, as previous samples and collections of *Euphorbia namibensis* were identified as *Euphorbia rudis* or *Euphorbia friedrichiae*. An expert from South Africa has helped us to identify the species as *Euphorbia namibensis*, a Namibian endemic species. An endemic species is a plant or organism that is native to a specific region and is not found anywhere else in the world. The Dune Lark that occurs on NamibRand is another Namibian endemic.

Euphorbia namibensis

Clouds over the Horseshoe area

Winter rainfall on Verweg

***Euphorbia namibensis* flowers and seeds**

A cold morning for the game count at Gondwana Canyon Park

As part of an exchange visit, Jessica and Andre were invited to join the annual game count at Gondwana Canyon Park held on 6 July. The day before, a briefing was given to all invited guests and staff on game count procedures. The area had a good amount of rain this year and as a result many animals were counted. After the count, staff analysed the data and presented preliminary results in the evening. Jessica and Andre visited until 10 July and learned more about Gondwana Canyon Park's work. The Park Manager, Michelle Rodgers, will visit NamibRand next year to complete the exchange.

On 27 August, Area Warden Jessica Steyn, was interviewed by Kletskompas, an Afrikaans channel in Namibia. She was interviewed specifically about our new Wilderness Quite Park status, but also discussed many other things about NamibRand. Click on the link to watch: https://oneuptwo.com//show?azdv3c6zljyrzyy4sy0o (the interview starts at minute 13:33).

On 29 June, Jessica held a macramé workshop for the kids at NamibSky who were there during the holidays. Everyone had fun learning the intricate knotting technique.

Macramé workshop at NamibSky

Retriving the vulture chick from its nest

Presentation of the game count results

Interview on Kletskompas

Check up and ringing of the vulture chick

On 18 October, the annual vulture survey on NamibRand was conducted in low fying aircraft. Only two nests were sighted on NamibRand. However, over 60 nests were identified in the neighbouring Namib-Naukluft Park, which had higher rainfall than NamibRand. As most of our wildlife migrated out of the Reserve to these areas in search of grazing, it makes sense that the vultures would have followed the migrating game.

On 23 October, the team from Vultures Namibia returned to tag the vultures on the Reserve. Only one of the two vulture chicks was tagged, as the other nest was situated in an inaccessible dune field.

There have been significant winds on the Reserve. Some were very unpleasant and caused sand storms, but that's how it is in the desert this time of year.

Some small, scattered showers occurred during October and November on the Reserve.

Property	Rain gauge	October	November
Keerweder	Keerweder House	0	1.5
Die Duine	Chateau	0	0
	Schafsberg	0	0
	DDR	0	0
	NaDEET Centre	0	1.5
	Die Duine House	0.5	0
Stellarine	Horseshoe Water	1	0
	Hideout House	0	2.5
	Straussenwasser	2	0
	Swartkoppie	1	0
	Vista	2	0
	Twee Pompe	2	0
	Aandstêr House	2	2
	Prosopis	1	0
	Grootpomp	1	0
Dina	Dina House	3	0
	Dina Border	1	0

A rainbow at Die Duine

Rain over Wolwedans

Sand storm

GREETINGS FROM THE SOUTH

Martin Verwey

Sundowner on the dunes

Martin Verwey

With only 1.5 mm of rain recorded at Aandstêr during the last rainy season, there is a shortage of grazing in the south of NamibRand. Due to the lack of grazing, oryx are moving away. On the other hand, the zebra have remained and are now the majority species in the area. The young animals struggle to survive, but the predators seem to have enough food. Despite the drought, we can celebrate that a giraffe calf was born this year.

Although the veld is dry, our day-to-day tasks remain the same. We are busy repairing border fences and infrastructure. We are seeing more tourists and researchers, so we are happy for this increase in visitors to NamibRand.

After several years of NamibRand being a Maltahöhe Farmers Association (MFA) member, a group of MFA farmers visited NamibRand Nature Reserve from 24 to 26 August. It was a privilege to show them what we are doing at NamibRand. They visited Aandstêr, Wolwedans Village, Jagkop, Wolwedans Dune Retreat and had lunch at Wolwedans Dunes Camp. The scenery stunned them all. After experiencing firsthand what we are doing here, they better understood our mission at NamibRand. In addition, Wolwedans' work interested them and they appreciated learning more about all the activities on the Reserve. After all, farmers and nature conservationists have the same goal of protecting our nature.

Our team recently conducted a helicopter-assisted maintenance check up on the Satanskop radio tower. The old battery was successfully replaced with a new one. Unfortunately, we discovered that the solar panel was broken and needs to be replaced. We are now waiting for the next helicopter visit to complete the final repairs. However, it was still worth it as the views from the top were spectacular!

After nearly five years working for NamibRand Nature Reserve and living in the desert so close to nature continues to be a huge privilege.

With the red sand in our shoes, the Namib Desert will stay in our hearts forever.

Chantell Verwey

MFA visiting NamibRand

Stephan explaining Wolwedans

Wolwedans vehicles guiding the MFA group

Group photo of the MFA group

Lunch at Dunes Camp

Cape fox *(Vulpes chama)* **at Dunes Camp**

Cape hare *(Lepus capensis)* **near Wolwedans Basecamp**

DaLuSi Pass

Giraffe at the Aandstêr homestead

Aerial view of the radio repeater from the helicopter

View of Aandster homestead from the helicopter

View of NamibRand Nature Reserve to the east of the repeater

Boulders Camp from Satanskop

Installation of the new battery

Working on the repeater

Helicopter landing spot, looking towards the southwest

View to the southwest of the Awaseb Mountains

View to the west into the Namib-Naukluft Park

AFRICA'S FIRST
WILDERNESS QUIET PARK

Quiet Parks International (QPI) has awarded the NamibRand Nature Reserve the accolade of Africa's First Wilderness Quiet Park.

"This award reinforces NamibRand's commitment to preserving its natural soundscape and wilderness character. By promoting awareness of natural sounds, NamibRand encourages reverence for its ecosystems and fosters a deeper connection to nature."
Matt Mikkelsen, Executive Director of Wilderness Quiet Parks

The NamibRand Nature Reserve is Africa's First Wilderness Quiet Park awarded by Quiet Parks International (QPI) in June 2024. This prestigious recognition underscores NamibRand's dedication to preserving the tranquillity of NamibRand, conserving nature and promoting responsible tourism practices. NamibRand is only the fourth public space awarded Wilderness Quiet Park status in the world. NamibRand hopes this designation will inspire others to appreciate and conserve our natural world, and to promote quiet places.

Quiet Parks International is a non-profit organisation and social movement committed to its mission of saving quiet for the benefit of all life. Its Wilderness Quiet Park award recognises large pristine areas offering exceptional sonic beauty and opportunities for extended periods of pure natural quiet.

The promotion of quiet places protects human health, both physical and psychological, and the environment, including wildlife, from noise pollution in myriad ways. QPI's Vision is "a world that offers quiet within and without. A world where everyone has daily access to quiet and opportunities to listen to the sounds of nature. A world where the experience of quiet nature is directly linked to inner quiet, peace and joy of being."

QPI's award provides recognition of the following benefits of NamibRand's quiet:

- Improves physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing of visitors;
- Enables people to listen to nature;
- Increases awareness of the benefit of quiet for people and wildlife;
- Conserves wildlife; and
- Preserves habitat.

At NamibRand we are proud of our achievements in conservation and the acknowledgement we have received for our dark skies. This has now been expanded to encompass our quiet places and all they have to offer the human and natural worlds. We extend our appreciation to all those who have contributed to its conservation efforts, and to our dedicated management team and board of directors.

To read more, please visit: https://www.quietparks.org/the-namibrand-nature-reserve-namibia-africas-first-wilderness-quiet-park

Location chosen for the recorder

Setting up the recorder

A RETURN TO TRANQUILITY ON NAMIBRAND: DESERT LODGE REOPENS

Annely Ickua

Nestled in one of the most sought-after locations on the NamibRand Nature Reserve, Desert Lodge has reopened its doors after a period of renovation, once again offering guests an immersive experience in one of the world's most serene landscapes. Set against a backdrop of vast orange-hued dunes, rugged mountains and endless skies, the lodge is designed to fully embrace the profound stillness that has earned NamibRand the prestigious title of Africa's First Wilderness Quiet Park.

Reopened on 1 June, Desert Lodge continues to captivate visitors with its breathtaking views and unparalleled sense of tranquillity that defines the NamibRand experience. The renovation has brought new life to the lodge, with each of the ten tented rooms now featuring a private Wolwedans chiller — a small pool perfectly positioned to overlook the stunning landscape. The updated tent layouts and newly designed interiors ensure that guests can fully appreciate the surrounding natural beauty from every corner of their accommodations.

The lodge's main area has also been thoughtfully updated to enhance the guest experience. It now includes two lounges, multiple sundowner decks, a tea deck, a library and two dining rooms, all designed to provide spaces for relaxation and reflection amidst the awe-inspiring scenery.

As Desert Lodge welcomes back its guests, the team extends heartfelt gratitude for the continued support that has made these improvements possible. The steady stream of bookings has not only ensured the lodge's ongoing success, but has also enabled significant investments in the future of Wolwedans to continually elevate the guest experience.

Whether you enjoy the expansive views from a spacious veranda or taking a refreshing dip in a private chiller, Desert Lodge offers an unmatched opportunity to connect with the raw, untouched beauty of NamibRand. We look forward to sharing this renewed and reinvigorated space with you on your next visit.

Rooms nestled in the dunes

New lounge interior

New outdoor showers

View of the rooms

The chiller (plunge pool)

NEWS @NADEET

Christa D'Alton and Viktoria Keding

We are proud to announce that NaDEET was awarded the prestigious UNESCO Sultan Qaboos Prize for Environmental Conservation 2024 in November. This award reflects the tremendous dedication and on-going commitment NaDEET has towards advancing environmental education in Namibia and globally. 2024 was another year of quality education that has reached so many!

NaDEET Centre
We had a record-breaking year with 38 groups visiting NaDEET on the NamibRand Nature Reserve. We reached just over 1,200 people through our programmes, including Namibians from all 14 regions and visitors from three other countries.

School Groups
The schools visiting NaDEET Centre participate in the NaDEET programme for primary or secondary school learners. The weeklong programmes aim to introduce learners to sustainable living and cultivate an appreciation for nature, while exploring the magnificent desert environment. The programmes are designed to provide experiential learning by using our hands-on environmental activities.

NaDEET welcomed schools from Khomas, Hardap, Erongo and the //Kharas region. We had many schools attending for the first time including the Oranjemund Primary School and Lüderitz Blue School. We are privileged to be part of the Manica Namibia one hundredth year anniversary celebrations through which they have sponsored 100 school children to visit NaDEET Centre. The chosen secondary school learners come from various schools in Lüderitz, Walvis Bay and Windhoek. What a great investment in Namibia's young generation to learn the importance of sustainability. Thank you Manica Namibia!

University and Youth Groups
NaDEET Centre also offers programmes for young adults, specifically for university students and youth. In June, two youth groups took part in our programme as part of a larger conservancy empowerment programme managed by WWF Namibia and the Namibian Association for Community Based Natural Resource Management Support Organisations (NACSO). Both groups consisted of youth leaders from conservancies throughout the country

One of four groups sponsored by Rotary Windhoek. The learners are preparing pizza to bake in the solar oven.

AA Denk Memorial school enjoyed their stay and are exited on how to implement sustainable initiatives into their lives.

Groot Aub Primary school during their visit in April. Learning how to save energy and make sustainable choices.

that were all visiting the Namib Desert for the first time. It was rewarding to witness the young people making connections between the issues found in their own conservancies and possible sustainability solutions experienced at NaDEET. The groups felt empowered to bring about positive change in their conservancies and to utilize sustainable practices such as solar cooking and environmental auditing.

The Nature Conservation department from the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) is a regular visitor. The Natural Resource Management students focused on sustainable living and Namibia's environmental problems, and solutions linked to their university subjects. They left NamibRand inspired with ideas on sustainable living and are currently planning their on-campus event.

The Natural Resource Department from the University of Nebraska, USA, is also a regular visitor on a bi-yearly basis as part of their educational tour of Namibia.

Educator Group

A Namibian-German Educator Exchange Group visited NaDEET as part of their training programme and focussed on sustainability and the Sustainable Development Goals. The teachers experienced the programme positively and left with a better understanding of ESD in practice. The exchange programme aims to foster cultural understanding through collaboration on ESD.

Teach for ESD

Our two-year Teach for ESD programme is advancing. During August, all teachers met for their second contact session (the first having been at NaDEET Centre earlier this year). The workshop took place at the Okatjikona Environmental Education Centre at the Waterberg Plateau Park. We are excited to see what activities these teachers will be implementing at schools across the country.

Urban Sustainability Centre

The Urban Sustainability Centre had a soft opening in September just in time for the mid-term school break. In a short period, we welcomed just over 200 visitors. In November the Centre closed as we finally received permission to build a classroom and the necessary ablution facilities. The Centre is now under renovation and we are looking forward to reopening for all our programmes in early 2025.

University of Nebraska enjoyed their time in the desert and left inspired by solar cooking and other sustainable practices from NaDEET.

Learners from the second group sponsored by Manica is recycling rubbish into the correct categories. They are learning how to check their environmental footprint and how to reduce their impact on the environment.

The youth group from the conservancies was inspired by the environmental audit and solar cooking. They want to implement these activities in their respective communities.

Students from NUST discussing real live problems and possible solutions to Nambia's environmental problems.

Teachers deep in discussion during T4ESD workshop.

The Namibia German educator exchange group learned more about SDG's and sustainability.

2024 GAME COUNT RESULTS

The 2024 NamibRand Game Count took place on 25 May. The day before the game count Jessica Steyn visited several concessionaires to brief participants and explain the count methodology. Participants were also divided into different game count routes.

Animals counted per route ranged from 32 to 254 individual animals, including birds. The actual number of wildlife counted in May 2024 include 557 oryx and 119 springbok. In the previous year, the numbers counted were 1,439 oryx and 316 springbok. This year's results show that the estimated oryx population decreased by 65.94%, while springbok numbers decreased by 59.64%. The overall population estimate indicates that numbers have dropped by 49.03%.

The long-term average rainfall for NamibRand is 70 mm per year. This year, an average of only 4.3 mm of rain was received across the Reserve. In 2023, the average rainfall received was 18.8 mm. The Family Hideout area had a total of 23.3 mm, which drew a lot of wildlife to the south. Drought conditions resulted in very poor or no grazing for wildlife on NamibRand. Significant rainfall was received in the neighbouring Namib-Naukluft National Park to the west and as a result, many animals including oryx, moved into the Park in search of better pasture. This migration, in combination with the prevailing drought conditions on NamibRand, is the main cause of the almost 50% decrease in the wildlife population observed this year.

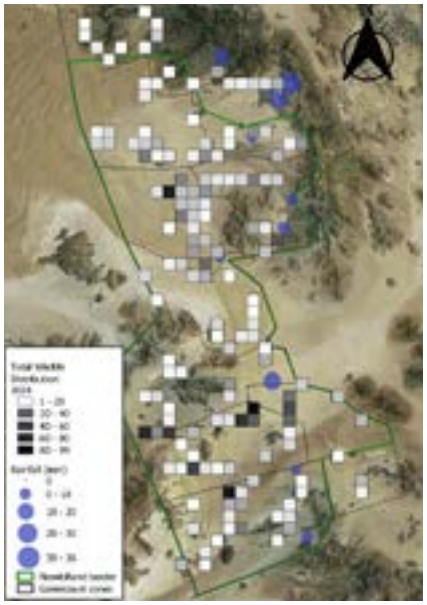
It is important to reiterate that this census method best suits large plains game such as oryx, springbok and Burchell's zebra. The methodology is less suited for counting smaller species, such as steenbok, or species with different habitat requirements, such as kudu or mountain zebra. Carnivores for example, are best counted using camera traps and the mark and recapture population estimate method. Population figures provided are intended to indicate population estimates on the Reserve. Wildlife management decisions are not based on population estimates but rather on animal distribution (i.e., where the animals are (distribution) and the trend (change) in animal numbers (are there are more or fewer individuals)). Distribution and trend are calculated based on the actual number of sightings and not on the population estimate.

Although less than half of the wildlife counted in 2023 was counted this year, this is not cause for concern. Yes, animals are suffering, and the old and the weak may succumb to the drought. Most wildlife that can, has migrated off NamibRand in search of better grazing. In order to accommodate this need for migration, NamibRand has spent many decades removing fences that impede movement to create a large and open landscape that is necessary for a robust and healthy ecosystem. The desert is a boom-and-bust ecosystem and we are confident that wildlife numbers will recover once the drought has broken.

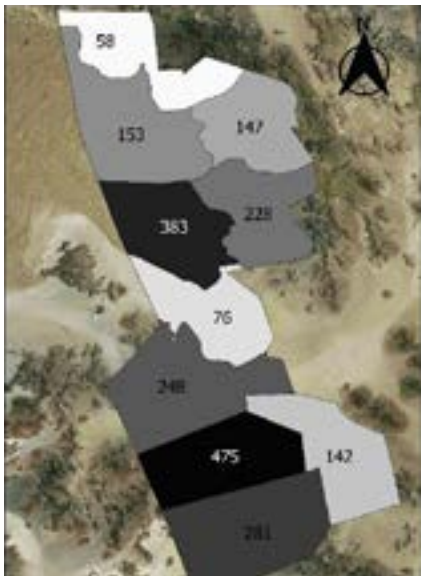
Table 1: The overall population difference between 2023 and 2024

Total estimated numbers of game (Zone 1-10; May 2023 - May 2024)					
Species	May-23		May-24		Percentage change
	No. Counted	Total estimated number	No. Counted	Total estimated number	
Oryx	1439	14090	557	4799	-65.94%
Springbok	316	4289	119	1731	-59.64%
Kudu	0	0	0	0	0%
Steenbok	3	594	0	0	-100.00%
B. zebra	304	2967	273	4424	49.11%
Hartebeest	5	13	0	0	-100.00%
Total	**2067**	**21954**	**949**	**10954**	-50.10%
Giraffe*	15	15	16	16	6.67%
** Total numbers known*					

The ten game count routes



Total wildlife distribution



Total wildlife density

Group of Burchell's Zebra sighted on Route 8

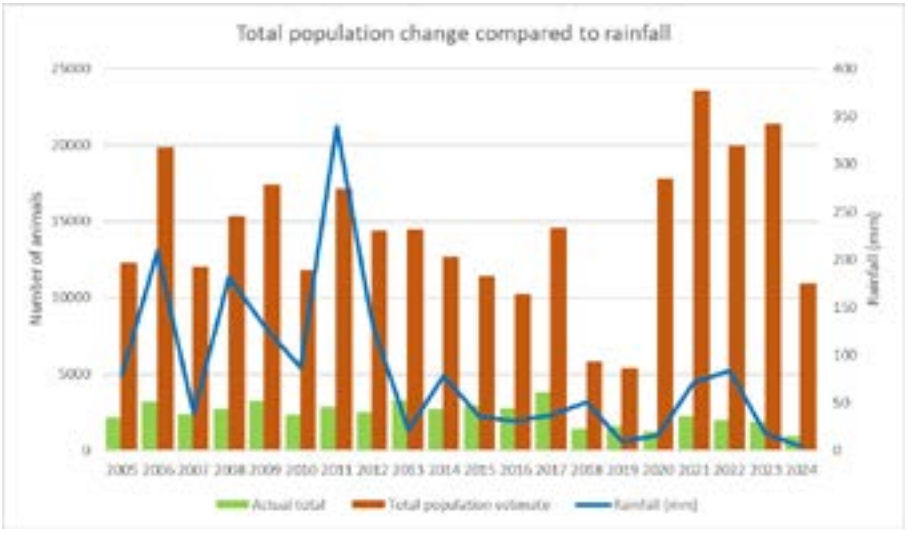
For the game count report, wildlife distribution is based on the number of animals seen in each 2 km grid square on the map (monad). Each sighting is marked in the corresponding monad. This data is then used to map the distribution of the animals.

Please note that all game species counted (actual numbers) were used in the calculation for the total wildlife distribution. The maps show the total wildlife species distribution and density distribution. These densities were calculated using the formula described above.

Please note that the data is indicated on a gradient from light (low values) to dark (high values).

The rain values were added to the total wildlife distribution map to indicate where and how much rain was recorded – the bigger the circle, the more rain occurred there.

The long-term total population estimates for oryx, springbok and Burchell's zebra for all routes are presented below. The chart shows the long-term actual population and total population estimate change compared to the average annual rainfall received for the same period. Please note that as with the previous graphs, the data for this graph was taken from the total population estimates and from the maximum number of routes counted in each year.



Total population change from 2005 to 2024 compared to average rainfall for oryx, springbok and Burchell's zebra

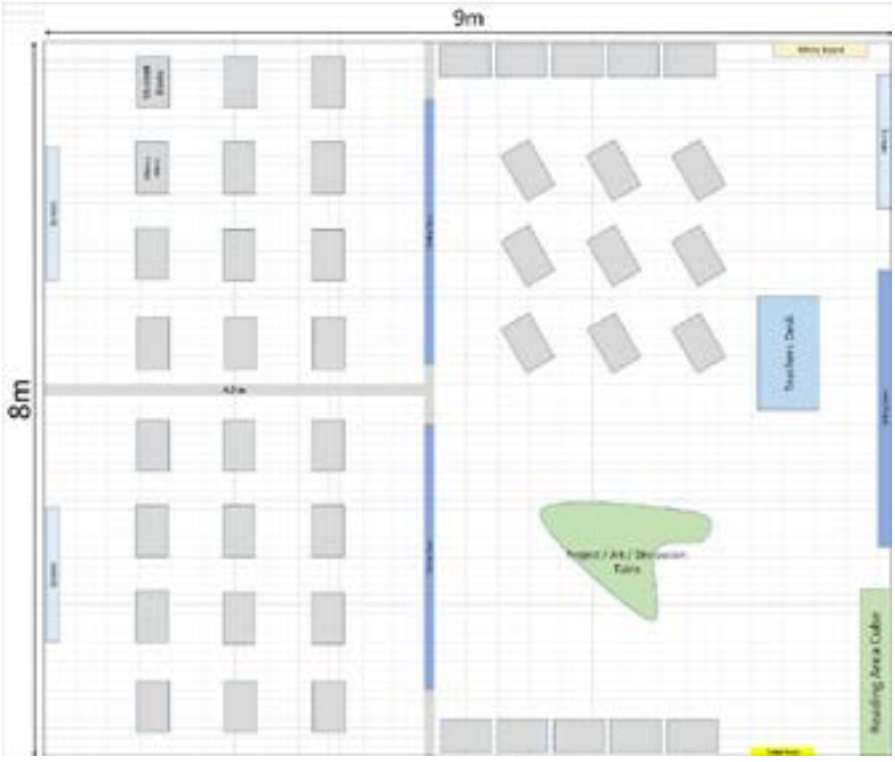
NAMIB SKY COMMUNITY

Mariette Mukamana

We are thrilled to give a wonderful update from Namib Sky Community School – we have written a new chapter in our story. The construction of a long hoped for upper primary section is finally underway, marking a significant milestone Namib Sky Community Trust's journey towards providing free quality education in the area.

Additionally, after extensive hours of paperwork, two applications and numerous meetings, we have achieved a significant milestone. Our school has now been officially registered as a hybrid centre – the first of its kind at this level. This hybrid model, which combines face-to-face and remote teaching, marks a major step forward for Namib Sky Community School. It allows us to provide subject-specific teaching for upper primary learners in a more flexible and cost-effective manner.

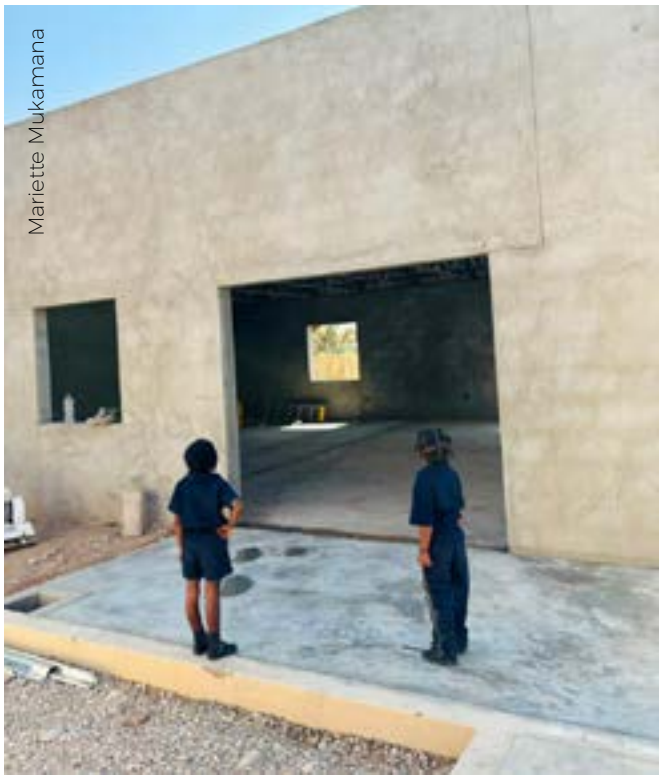
In the traditional approach, upper primary education would require hiring six additional staff members, significantly increasing salary costs and creating housing challenges in the Sossusvlei area, where rental options are scarce. By registering as a hybrid centre, we can purchase the necessary programs and use them for some of the instruction while still conducting our own internal assessments, dramatically reducing costs. This creative approach required many conversations with the Ministry of Education, Arts and Culture to demonstrate its viability, but our compelling case was accepted.



Plans and layout for the new upper primary centre

We are not yet completely there, as we still need to raise funds for the accommodation for two new teachers. While there are still financial challenges ahead, the support of our generous donors has played a crucial role in driving the school forward. Through donations, the Namib Sky Community Trust has been able to cover costs for scholarships, manage budgets, provide necessary equipment and fund operations.

If you would like to get involved in this beautiful new venture, please contact us at info@namibskycommunity.org or visit www.namibskycommunity.org . Together, we can continue to build a sustainable and empowering educational environment for our learners and a brighter tomorrow for our country.



Children peeking into their future classrooms

The walls up and waiting for the floors

The newly completed floors


John Kinahan

Excursion group on Namib Rand

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCURSION TO NAMIBRAND

John & Jill Kinahan

A field excursion to Namib Rand Nature Reserve made a fitting and very stimulating conclusion to the 6th Southern Deserts Conference held in Walvis Bay during the last week of August 2024. More than 65 archaeologists from sixteen countries attended the meeting, the first international archaeological conference held in Namibia. A smaller group of 20 archeologists spent three days visiting Aandstêr and Gorrasis, which is a focal study area in the Namib Desert Archaeological Survey Project in collaboration with NamibRand Nature Reserve and ProNamib Reserve.

Australian archaeologists on the excursion found many close parallels with the archaeology of their own country, including the use of wild grass seed as an important food source by desert hunter-gatherers. There were animated discussions with archaeologists from Spain who have found similar evidence in the northern Sahara Desert. Advancements in laboratory techniques were discussed over lunch under the shady boulders while watching lines of mountain zebra making their way to the water. Archaeologists from Chile proposed collaborative work on ancient desert environments.

One of the most rewarding outcomes of the NamibRand excursion was a proposal by the University of Western Australia's Desert Peoples Project to invite early-career Namibian archaeologists to participate in joint research and field school opportunities. NamibRand certainly provided a good setting in which to discuss and explore the great range of collaborative possibilities that the archaeology of the Namib Desert can offer. We look forward to similar excursions and other visiting scientists in the future.

Suro Ganuses demonstrates grinding grass seeds or berries: while kneeling, with weight on both hands gripping the upper grindstone, she moves forwards and presses down to crush the seeds. A sloping grindstone allows the ground material to slip downwards over the edge of the grindstone onto a small hide.

Excursion group at the Tropic of Capricorn

Excursion group at the Stellarine hunting blind sites on NamibRand

Jessica Steyn

Oryx in the dunes

DESERT POEM

Papa-G,
Guide at
Kwessi Dune Lodge

The NamibRand Nature Reserve is in the heart of the Namib desert,

where rock and sand speak to you,

the noise of silence is too loud, and

the sound of winds is the only music to listen to.

Only those who carry the spirit of the Namib will survive here,

and it's a place where only the longhorn can negotiate with heat and dust,

where trees and the oryx pull tower tall by their mirage,

it is a no man's land.

Jessica Steyn

Oryx in the morning sunlight

MY JOURNEY WITH NAMIBRAND

Elizabeth Johannes

It is a honour and blessing to be a staff worker at NamibRand Nature Reserve and based at Aandstêr. I would like to express my profound gratitude and appreciation for the incredible support and opportunities I have received since joining NamibRand in February 2012.

When I first started with the company, I entered with a Matrix certificate and no prior experience. However, through the company's unwavering support and encouragement, I have gained extensive experience in gardening, maintainance and protecting natural resources in the desert. My professional journey has been significantly enriched.

Moreover, the opportunity to further my education while working here has been transformative. With the company's backing, I pursued and successfully completed a Diploma in Human Resource Management. This achievement has expanded my knowledge and skills and enhanced my ability to contribute more effectively to the team and the organisation.

I am deeply grateful for the encouragement that NamibRand has given me in my professional growth and personal development. The support provided, from practical experience to educational advancement, has been instrumental in shaping my career.

Ruben Bonificious

Elizabeth in her graduation gown

FLIGHTLESS IN THE NAMIB

Christa D'Alton

Brush-like hairs on the hindlegs and tarsi

Most of us living and working in Namibia know those shiny black insects, some have an iridescent green or orange colour, that roll balls of dung. They then bury the ball and lay their eggs in it. They are, of course, the infamous dung beetle. Without them we will have serious health problems as they perform an important cleaning job in nature.

Cow dung in the Namib is in short supply and the dung beetles in the area have to make use of the very dry dung pellets of oryx, rodents and springbuck, or detritus – a mixture of dead plant and insect material – or both. The Namib dung beetles are flightless and smaller than their much bigger ball rolling cousins. This raises several questions, such as are they still considered dung beetles, why are they flightless and how they manage to roll a ball with dry oryx dung?

The flightless dung beetles of the Namib belong to the *Coleoptera* family: *Scarabaeidae*: *Scarabeainea*: *Scarabaeini*. There are 13 species in the genus *Pachysoma* to which they belong. They are about 13 to 35 mm long and occur along the West Coast from Cape Town in the south to the Kuiseb River in the north. As the climate changed from semi-arid to hyper arid conditions, selection pressure was increased and forced dung beetle species, utilising both wet and dry dung, to adapt to utilising dry dung or face extinction. According to phylogenetic studies by Cathrine Sole the most primitive speciation occurs in the south, while the most advanced species occur in the Namib Desert to the north. Population isolation occurred about 3 million years ago as species were able to move northwards and this led to speciation.

The beetles had to improve their foraging efficiency by foraging faster, flying less (to save energy), reducing body size and feeding on both dung, detritus and carrion. For example, one species feeds exclusively on dead millipedes. Being wingless is probably a physiological advantage to prevent water loss and save energy.

Dry dung is more readily available from desert-adapted antelope which extract moisture from their own dung before excretion. The dung beetles use both wet and dry dung, with a preference for wet dung, as the adults feed on the juices and many nutrients and bacteria that lives in the mix, while the larvae consume the whole ball they hatch from.

Some species shifted from feeding during the day to feeding during nighttime or early evening, reducing competition and water loss. Others feed on dry dung and avoid flying, again reducing energy use and water loss. The hypothesis is that *Pachysoma's* ancestor had both rolling and dragging tendencies and for that reason it could cope with the increasing arid environment, leading to it dragging dung and detritus.

Feeding on detritus is thought to be a secondary adaptation to dry dung feeding. Detritus was an underutilised food source and there was minimal competition from other insect species. Being small in body size also means less energy is needed to forage for food. Although these small dung beetles drag dry dung and detritus, they still belong to the ball rolling group of dung beetles.

The Namib dung beetles drag dung or detritus by using specialised hairs on their back legs and tarsi. These hairs act like brushes and they are used to collect the detritus or dung together. They then lift their hindlegs and push the material to their pre-excavated burrow.

Dung beetle dragging detritus into its burrow

They must take this trip numerous times to gather enough food for themselves and the larvae that will feed on it. Once enough food is gathered, the beetle will then continue to excavate the burrow to make a second chamber. The beetle will move the food to this chamber which is the feeding or nesting chamber. It will then close the burrow entrance and feed on the gathered food.

Once the male beetle is ready to breed, he positions himself in front of his burrow after gathering enough dead material. He excretes pheromones to entice a female to his burrow. Once she arrives and they are both inside, he closes the burrow's opening. They then mate, and he leaves the burrow a few days later, while the female remains behind to lay her eggs on the detritus and dry dung. Once the eggs are laid, she leaves the burrow as well.

Although flightless and small, these dung beetles are important to the ecology of the Namib. The next time you see one, remember their three-million-year long journey of adaptations it has taken them to live and thrive in the Namib.

References: Harrison, J.du.G., Philips†, T.K. 2003: Phylogeny of Scarabaeus (Pachysoma MacLeay) stat. nov., and related flightless Scarabaeini (Scarabaedae: Scarabaeinae)

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Newly excavated burrow

Draglines from the dung heap to the burrow

DAGBOEK 24-26 AUGUSTUS 2024

MALTAHÖHE BOEREVERENIGING
BESOEK NAMIBRAND NATUURRESERVAAT

Hendry van Wyk

Saterdag, 24 Augustus 2024, op pad na Aandster, diep in die hart van die Namib, ontmoet die eerste uitbundige klompie op Betta. Die padkosblikke is milddadig gepak: skaapnekskywe en mosterdsous, frikkadelle, pasteitjies, pizza-blokkies, droëwors en kabanossies word in die dansende skaduspikkels van die reuse prosopisboom op die sementtafel uitgepak. Een ding is seker – hier kry 'n vegetariër swaar!

Magies vol en alle draaie geloop, word daar eers brandstof getap voordat ons neuse verder weswaarts staan. Die wind roer liggies en maak die stofwolke op die grondpad kort. Daar is iets groots en mooi aan 'n gevolg motors op 'n stofpad wat saam êrens heen op pad is.

By Aandster se ingang heet NamibRand Natuurreservaat se naambord ons welkom. Dié private bewaringsinisiatief word reeds beklemtoon in die ongerepte, uitgestrekte landskap met slegs 'n tweespoorpad wat toegang tot die reservaat verleen. Ons bestemming doem sommer vinnig voor ons op. Kampopslaan... uitpak en dan kan ons vir 'n heerlike oomblik saam met ons gasheer en -vrou, natuurbewaarder Martin en Chantell Verwey, onder die groot kameeldoringboom kuier voordat ons die duinestrate aandurf.

Die landskap vanaf die sandstoep

GORRASIS – terug na die begin
Stiptelik twee-uur begin ons sloertoer in NamibRand. Ons volg die natuurbewaarder nougeset en versigtig binne die lyne van die tweespoorpad, want die besem is ingepak – vir die belhamel wat dálk dink aan 'n wilde, ondeurdagte draai in die woestynsand. Dit ís immers bewaringsgebied dié.

Gorrasis se beskeie huisie verskyn nes ons om die klipkoppie beweeg. Ons besigtig die huisie reg rondom, staan op die sandstoep wat oor die wydste van vlakte sien en bespeur iets van jare toet se skaapboerdery wat saggies swaarkry in die ligte bries sug.
Dit is hier, op Gorrasis, waar die idee van 'n uitgestrekte bewaringsgebied gebore is toe J.A. Brückner, 'n besigheidsman van Windhoek, die plaas in 1984 aangekoop het. Bekoor deur die lieflike en weergalose landskap, was hy diep getref deur die uitgedunde toestand en wildheid van die wild. Die visie van 'n private bewaringsgebied wat wild en habitatte bewaar, het vorm begin aanneem.

Brückner en vennote koop nog verskeie omringde plase aan. Oor 'n tydperk van 33 jaar vergroot die gebied en op hede beslaan die reservaat 188,98016 ha oor 13 plase. NamibRand Natuurreservaat is vandag ryk aan verskeie diersoorte wat vrylik rondloop sonder die inperkings van grensdrade. Wildspore versier die sand-aarde met hul eiesoortige afdrukke en oral op die duine staan Gemsbokke rustig en herkou.
Mens kan nie anders nie as om dankbaarheid te koester vir een man se visie wat as't ware die grense van natuurbewaring verskuif het. So het hy 'n nalatenskap in ons mooiste land, Namibië, verseker – vir óns kinders en besoekers van dwarsoor die wêreld om ook in die oorvloedige skoonheid daarvan te kan deel.

BOULDERS LODGE
'n Besoek aan Boulders Lodge laat mens sprakeloos en skep 'n innige begeerte om daar te kan vertoef en bederf te word. Dit is 'n tentekamp, maar nie sommer net 'n gewone tentekamp nie. Reeds met die eerste aanskouing word jy oorweldig deur luukse tente wat al langs die voet van reusagtige rotse van die klipkoppie soom. Bloulders Lodge is pragtig. Dekke verbind tente en vorm paadjies na uitkykhoogtes tussen die rotse wat 'n asemrowende uitsig oor die vlaktes toeken.

Plonspoele is ingesoom soos die dekpaadjie al verder teen die rant se voet na die slaaptente toe strek. Reuse klipsirkels, wat vermoedelik feetjie-sirkels naboots, verleen 'n skilderagtige vertoning aan dié tentekamp.

Hiervandaan ry ons tot teen die spergebied. 'n Geroeste bord en slot op die skewe hek waarsku: GEEN TOEGANG nie. Ook maar net mens, loer ons met wye oë oor die draad opsoek na verdagte blinkigheid tussen die gruisklippies. Kyk is mos verniet én drome daarby!

Bo-op Wandelduin

Op pad terug stop ons by Wandelduin (benaming: skrywer). Dis een van vele duine wat soos 'n groottoon die vlaktes in boog. Hiervandaan sien mens ver. Rooi duine ontmoet geel vlaktes wat tot teen die berge strek en tussenin spits klipkoppies. Die Namib is waarlik 'n voltooiing van natuur-kontraste.

Sewe-uur is ons terug by die kamp. Dis tyd vir vuur aansteek. Vanaand bestaan die spyskaart uit braaivleis en wors, aartappelslaai, knoffelbrood en pampoentert.

ALLE PAAIE LEI NA WOLWEDANS

Sondagoggend agtuur is ons getooi, geëet en gekoffie – reg vir die wiele om te rol. Vandag is ons Wolwedans se genooide gaste. Met aankoms word ons groep vriendelik met koffie en koue turksvysap ontvang. Wolwedans vorm die hart en siel van die natuurreservaat. Hier gebeur sommer baie dinge op 'n slag en dit is duidelik dat daar geen eindes aan visie en inisiatief is nie.

Bewaring, volhoubaarheid en bewustheid van die mens se koolstofsvoetspoor geniet baie aandag hier, terwyl verskeie leidinggewings rondom dit geïmplementeer word. Herwinning vorm deel van die daaglikse bestaan. Kombuisafval word hoender- en varkkos; bottels word herwin, gesteriliseer en aangewend vir gebottelde water en of sap; tuinmateriaal en perdemis word kompos wat weer as bemesting vir die uitgebreide kruie- en groentetuin gebruik word; produkverpakkings word kreatief aangewend en watermeters monitor verder elke kampplek se waterverbruik afsonderlik. Uit die aard van die saak dien Wolwedans dan ook as 'n opleidingsentrum wat verskeie inisiatiewe loods, soos byvoorbeeld die Desert Academy wat op gasvryheid en toerisme fokus.

'n Treffende uitbeelding van Wolwedans se bestuurskonsep word in die vorm van inwaartse kringe uitgebeeld. Die belangrikheid van toerisme vorm die kern gevolg deur die personeel wat toeriste akkommodeer en klok verder uitwaarts tot uiteindelik die bestuur en aandeelhouers wat oorhoofs optree. In 'n onderneming om 'n inklusiewe, holistiese paradigma van bewaring, volhoubare, veerkragtige en inklusiewe toerisme te bevorder, word Wolwedans se besigheidsfilosofie gedefinieer deur hul 5C's-benadering: Commerce, Community, Conciousness, Conservation en Culture. Hierdie volhoubaarheidsverbintenis het ten doel om mens, planeet en wins te balanseer.

Hierna word ons op 'n besigtigingsrit trakteer. Bennie en Hendrik is ons toergidse vir die dag en bestuur die toervoertuie behendig oor die duine. Wolwedans se rooi duine strek van suid-oos na noord-wes en vorm ekosisteme wat voordurend verskuif. Die rooi kleur van die duine onstaan as gevolg van 'n laag ysteroksied op kwartssandkorrels. Die sandvlaktes na die ooste en weste is egter ouer, laer in hoogte en bestaan uit witterige tot lig-oranje sand. Vlaktes, soos die Chateau Vlakte vanuit die hoogte gesien, het 'n anderwêreldse bekoring getooi in 'n ouwêreldse vaal goudglans wat lyk asof dit die ewigheid in strek en oerou geheimenisse van vergange eras bewaar. Die stilte van hierdie natuurskoon week mens se sintuie en resoneer tot diep binne jou siel.

'n Unieke natuurwonder wat wyd verspreid in die Namib se duine voorkom, is die geheimsinnige feetjie-sirkels – ronde kringe, effe ingeplof en kaal, behalwe vir etlike grasspriete om die rand. Ten spyte van ekstensiewe navorsing, is dié fenomeen steeds 'n raaisel waarvan Moeder Natuur die geheim vir eers dig bewaar. Vanselfsprekend beskik elke voertuig oor 'n boom vol uile wat die misterie met leke-oorspronklikheid wil oplos. Sommige redenasies klink heel logies en mag straks stof tot nadenke aan navorsers verskaf. Ander redenasies is so vergesog dat die dispuut oor fairy circles eerder "fairy tales" geword het!

Enige belangstellende mag een van hierdie misterieuse sirkels vir 'n vasgestelde donasie aanneem. Die voorreg daarvan is dat jy jou eie, unieke, feetjie-sirkel mag uitkies, waarna 'n genommerde kleiplaatjie die sirkel as jóú aangenome sirkel merk. Jy ontvang ook 'n sertifikaat met die GPS-koördinate van die spesifieke feetjie-sirkel daarop. Befondsing gaan aan die NamibRand Bewaringsorganisasie.

Vir middagete word ons by Wolwedans se Dunes Camp onthaal. Met al die tentdeure oop, word elke opening 'n geraamde landskap. Die personeel is vriendelik en die diens flink. Die spyskaart bestaan uit 'n heerlike groenslaai met gemarineerde wildsrepies en klapper panna cotta afgerond met 'n mango-reduksie vir nagereg. Gekombineer met die huiswyn, is die ete voortreflik en die smaakkliere op ons tong klap applous.

Terug op Wolwedans, word ons deur ons gasheer afgesien. Woorde is te gering om ons dank vir 'n besonderse dag woordryk uit te spreek, maar waardering lê diep in ons groep-hart.

Dan vat ons die om en by 38 kilometer duinepad terug na Aandster toe. Die voertuie sloer oor die duine, raak draai-draai die voet van 'n klipperige heuwel baas en sewe-uur is ons terug by die kamp. Dit was 'n lang dag. Ons is moeg, maar vergenoegd en so bevoorreg.

Vanaand smul ons aan 'n room-hoenderpot, rys, beetslaai en bakpoeding as nagereg. Die dag word afgesluit met 'n verrassing. Martin oorhandig namens NamibRand 'n pragtige NamibRand Nature Reserve koffietafelboek (foto's deur Antonio Vizcaíno) asook 'n volledige veldgids aan elke gesin.

MAANDAGOGGEND – terug huis toe

Vandag is dit oppak, inpak en ons voetspore optel terug huis toe, maar eers kuier ons vir oulaas onder die groot kameeldoringboom. Die vuur knetter vroeg gesellig en oranje vlamme lek gulsig rondom die koffiewaterketel.

Ontbyt bestaan uit braaiwors en vrygewige braaibroodjies. Ernst Erni vertel ons meer oor die inskripsie uit Oskar von Riesenthal se gedig Weidmannsheil wat op Jägermeister se bottels verskyn:

"Das ist des Jägers Ehrenschild, dass er beschützt und hegt sein Wild, weidmännisch jagt, wie sich's gehört, den Schöpfer im Geschöpfe ehrt."

Rofweg vertaal, beteken dit: Dit is die jagter se skild van eer, dat hy sy wild beskerm en koester, jag soos dit betaam, eer die Skepper in die skepsel. Heel gepas in die omgewing en ervaring waarin ons, ons bevind. Dit is daarom ons plig om vir laas 'n Jagermeistertjie op 'n heerlike ervaring te klink!

Drie dae en bykans 200 kilometer in die NamibRand Natuurreservaat het verby gevlieg. Die slotsom is gewis: Tyd raak nietig in die Namib-landskap se mooiigheid.

**Martin Verwey is natuurbewaarder oor die suidelike deel van die NamibRand Natuurreservaat.*

UIT ONS FOTO-ALBUM:


Farewell from
NamibRand
Nature Reserve


NO ENTRY
MGMT ROAD

Possibly a legless skink grabbed by a bird

SPOOR IN THE SAND

Other spoor in the dunes

Maria Wilen

During the fantastic years when we stayed at Kwessiegat before it became Kwessi Dunes Lodge, I took many photos of spoor I saw in the sand. Every morning, I went out for a walk in the dunes, either to the big dunes in the west, or just on the small dunes close to the house. Studying the different tracks and figuring out what animal had made them was interesting.

Some of the tracks commonly found were those from the male white lady spider (*Leucorchestris arenicola*). The male bounces his body on the sand to mark his territory, leaving impressions behind on the sand. I find it remarkable that the spoor make such a perfect square shape.

Sometimes, I could follow the tok-tokkie beetle for several meters in the dunes. One time, the spoor changed from pulling or dragging its dung pellet, probably to find the easiest way to move it.

One time, we found some spoor we couldn't understand. Then, when we followed the track for at least two meters, we found the poor beetle upside down. We helped it back onto its feet and it continued on its way.

Upside-down tok-tokkie

White lady spider impressions

Tok-tokkie spoor – both pushing and dragging its dung pellet

Christa D'Alton

View in the dunes towards Schafsberg

Christa D'Alton

View in the dunes towards Chateau

MY INTERNSHIP AT THE RESERVE

Wantherley Bulelo Richter

I am a student at Agra Provision, studying animal production in agriculture and specialising in Game and Wildlife management. During my time at NamibRand, I learned from exceptional people all about how nature conservation works in partnership with tourism to ensure the preservation of the Reserve.

I learned so much while here about how humans and animals can coexist, as long as there is respect from humans towards nature. Self-sustainability is the most essential form of living here. Growing your own food, recycling materials to create something you or the Reserve might need and finding ways to make your stay worthwhile. As Andre said, "If you can imagine it, you can achieve it." Those words changed my viewpoint on living on a reserve and this way of life.

Learning about how the animals live, think and interact with each other is fascinating. A jackal will not make the same mistake twice and will pass that knowledge to its offspring. Leopards will seek help from humans in dire situations. A calm animal can sometimes be more dangerous than a scared one. Every animal is unique in its own capacity, not just within its own species, but each animal is individual. For example, here at the farmstead, there is an oryx who has learned it can get different vegetation for food within the homestead. It often hovers around looking for an opportunity to get in through the gate. It chooses to come back again and again.

I've had the privilege of working with great people, both colleagues and mentors. Elton, a master craftsman, can build anything that Reserve needs with instructions. Abraham, who has been living on this Reserve for three decades, can walk from Wolwedans to the farmstead in complete darkness and find home, with only his two legs and experience to help him. Jessica can determine whether an animal might be sick by looking at how it walks and she knows which plants occur in certain areas. Andre, who manages day-to-day operations, taught me practical skills like how to use a shovel so that you don't strain your back in the process, how to use power tools safely, what goes into maintaining solar power and boreholes, and why daily record keeping of these things is essential. Anna taught me the importance of doing your daily tasks and doing them correctly.

Finding a place where I could undertake my internship was a big concern, however, the moment I found out about Namibrand and reached out, I got a swift reply and was welcomed as part of the team. I was also introduced to various tourism operations, notably Wolwedans, whose employees treated me with kindness and respect. I enjoyed a tour of the village guided by Cecilia, who has a brilliant mind.

Living and working at Namibrand has been a life-altering experience for me. I learned so much, from day-to-day maintenance to office work to being self-reliant, and overall knowledge of what it takes to live on the Reserve. I look forward to applying these skills as I go forward and continue to grow my field experience.

Wantherley in action

Sunset from Keerweder

Exploring the koppies at Bosicia

Working on the fenceline with Abraham

INTERSECTION OF
ART AND SUSTAINABILITY
HAGE MUKWENDJE'S RESIDENCY AT WOLWEDANS

Wolwedans Foundation

Hage Nasheotwalwa Mukwendje is a painter, illustrator and graphic designer based in Windhoek. Born in 1990 in Okalongo, in northern Namibia near the Angolan border, he stands out as one of the country's most innovative artists. Hage skillfully blends various art forms to create a distinctive artistic style that reflects his unique perspective.

His work is deeply inspired by people – their emotions, reactions and everyday lives. One of the most captivating elements of Hage's art is his use of newspaper collages. Initially a practical solution to his colour blindness, this technique has evolved into an essential storytelling device that adds layers of depth to his creations.

Hage was selected for the Wolwedans Foundation Artist Residency in the heart of the Namib Desert, where he contributed to this year's theme: People, Planet and Plastic. At Wolwedans, sustainability is not merely an initiative; it is the very essence of who we are.

Recognized by The Long Run as a Global Ecosphere Retreat, Wolwedans is dedicated to promoting an inclusive and holistic approach to conservation that enhances

The final artwork

Visitors watching Hage at work

livelihoods and fosters intercultural dialogue.

During his residency at Wolwedans, Hage experimented with various materials found in the desert to create a unique art piece composed of items salvaged from the lodges' scrap yard and natural Namibian sand. This artwork will serve as a cornerstone for the Heart and Home tour at Wolwedans, which offers guests an opportunity to glimpse behind the scenes of a purpose-driven hospitality business designed to help them reconnect with themselves, nature and humanity.

Hage Mukwendje's work has been showcased at various prestigious venues, including the Bank Windhoek Triennale, the National Art Gallery of Namibia in Windhoek (2014), the Sound of Origin Festival at Universitätsklinikum Jena in Germany (2018), and the Semperoper Dresden in Germany (2018). He has also exhibited at the Franco Namibian Cultural Centre (FNCC) in Windhoek (2019) and at the UN House as part of an exhibition program organized by the World Health Organization in Windhoek (2022).

In October 2020, Hage was a member of the artistic team for the Games for our Common Future project held at Wolwedans. This initiative was launched by Urban Dialogues and funded by the Goethe Institut Namibia and the Wolwedans Foundation.

In 2021, he received an invitation to participate in the Namibia Fellowship Program at Akademie Schloss Solitude in Stuttgart, which is part of the Namibia Initiative organized by the state of Baden-Württemberg in collaboration with the National Art Gallery of Namibia and Goethe Institut Namibia.

Hage taking a break

Hage continuously works with different tools

Ludwig's bustard walking on the plain

The editors would like to thank all the contributors to this edition of the Barking Gecko. Many thanks to Vicky Human for her support and layout skills.

This newsletter is for our readers, friends and colleagues of NamibRand. We welcome any ideas, input and feedback you may have.

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