

# Vusi's amazing dream...

Vusi Tshabalala

Using horses to empower the local community has always been a dream for Vusi Tshabalala. And his dream is currently becoming a reality.

I grew up loving horses, the most beautiful animals ever. But I'd never known a horse, and all the pictures and films I'd ever seen only showed white people with horses, never anyone like me. It has always been my dream to have horses, and for kids from the local communities to be able to spend time with horses.

I grew up in a rural community in Tzaneen, Limpopo. My grandfather had donkeys, cows, chickens, and goats in his backyard, and I used to love spending time with them – I felt at peace. My mum caught me sneaking puppies into my bed. I was known as the crazy boy who loved animals by my community.

Three years ago I was fortunate enough to go to a conference in Kenya, through my work. I am the Manager of the Environmental Monitors Programme, for the Kruger 2 Canyon Biosphere Reserve, based outside Hoedspruit in Limpopo.

Next to my conference hotel in Nairobi was a racing stable, and this was the first time I ever saw black people riding! I used to get up especially early and go jogging just so I could watch these



**Vusi Tshabalala with two horses. Nyeleti on the left and Queen on the right. Image credit Warren Ngobeni, Wild Shots Outreach**

black guys on horses.

I returned home to South Africa determined to make my dream happen and build stables. As a conservationist specializing in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) I have always struggled for ways in which our learners can interact with wildlife, and only a lucky few get the opportunity to go on a trip to Kruger National Park. But now my dream and passion could be combined – open a stable where

young black kids can be with horses and learn to ride and to they can develop a special bond, even with a big scary animal like a horse which might bite, buck, or kick.

It is so important that young people have access to animals, that they learn to care for them and get to know their different personalities. How will we save Africa's wildlife, if young people have no connection or empathy with animals?

*" They became famous in my community - as no one had ever seen horses before "*

I started my journey by visiting four different stables in Hoedspruit, to learn more about keeping horses. I kept being told that horses are too expensive, they get sick, people in your community will steal them or even eat them. The more I was discouraged – the more de-

termined I became.

So I saved up and managed to buy a hectare of land on the edge of my community and with the help of my community leaders, I managed to secure 4 hectares in total. I had very little money to buy any horses – they are so expensive. I was then told about some semi-wild horses that might be cheaper to buy. So I borrowed a trailer and bought two mares Queen and Nyeleti (Star), both unbroken, with their yearlings,

Prince and N'weti (Moon).

As the stables were not yet built, I kept them in my yard for the first few weeks, much to the amusement of my neighbours. The horses were much wilder than I'd realized and it took me 5 weeks to tame them. Every day before and after work I'd spend time with them, talking to them. Then I learned the magic password – pony nuts! As soon as I started rattling pony nuts in a bucket, they came to me, and gradually they let me put a halter on and groom them.

They became famous in my community – as no one had ever seen horses before. I walked them on a lead rope and the traffic stopped in amazement. When they accidentally got out of my yard – everyone ran after them, to make sure they got back home safely.

I have been fortunate to win some development support in India through the Active Change Drivers – Switch Social Entrepreneurship programme (which identifies young leaders in South Africa) – where I pitched my proposal titled "Idling Minds of Young People". So now I can continue building my dream. The stables will become part of my bigger vision, the Octopus Entertainment Centre. I plan to build swimming pools, a computer centre ...cont on Page 3

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# Take me to your reader

David Batzofin - Editor

This is my first official printed edition as editor and I have to thank those members of the community that I interacted with recently for their warm welcome. That is one aspect that I enjoy about 'small-town-South-Africa', the sense of community and the interest in newbies in town. While sitting at a local coffee shop I was greeted by at least 6 people who had no idea who I was or why I was in town.

Kruger2Canyon is a community paper that has been around for almost two decades, so stepping into the well-worn shoes of the previous editor has been a daunting prospect for me. And this is where I require

YOUR help. Seeing that K2C is a community paper I would like your input as to content and pictures.

Everyone has a story or perhaps knows someone with a story. And in the current pandemic economy and the fallout, I am looking for uplifting and positive stories that will make the readers realize that they are not alone in these pandemic days.

How can you help? Submit your stories to [tanyapeter@mweb.co.za](mailto:tanyapeter@mweb.co.za) and I will make the magic happen...Each story that you submit needs to be accompanied by at least one high-resolution image that enhances that story that you have submitted. If possible, try not to have a specific time on your story,



just in case we have to save it for a future edition.

I look forward to getting to read your stories and at the same time coming to know the community and all of you that live in the area covered by the newspaper. Till our next edition, stay safe and stay healthy...



# A view from the top

Mark Bishop - Publisher

What are we going to bring to the party?

So we've done it! After some deliberation and plenty of discussions, and a small element of trepidation, I finally decided to take over the helm of the beloved Kruger2Canyon newspaper. We clearly have a long history to uphold but we as the team are all excited at the prospect and look forward to adding an alternative breath of fresh air to the publication.

It is difficult stepping into someone else's shoes - it takes time for the shoe to fit snugly. Whilst I am very wary of changing too much too soon, I do believe that the publication needs a revamp and a structure that will make it more enticing for you, our reader.

Of course, we as the team, must not forget that we are in Hoedspruit, for Hoedspruit, about Hoedspruit and largely by Hoedspruit. The communal glue is something that we want to nurture and develop going forward. We must never lose sight of the fact that it is for the community that we publish our paper, to challenge, to excite, to reveal, to promote, to enjoy, to help, and most of all to have fun. We will do our best to be impartial, accurate, and have a level of journalism that will make you all proud.

In this light, I am very happy and thankful to have David Batzofin on board to join the team as the Editor. He brings with him a wealth of journalistic knowledge and experience on which, I have no doubt, we will lean heavily.

What was surprising in our research within the



community is the fact that most people enjoy a printed copy - it's my personal preference too. With that in mind, what I want to ask of you, the community is to please tell us what you want to hear. It would be remiss of anyone venturing forth on this road to not ask our readership what they want. And we certainly don't want to focus on the bad news, there's enough of that going around. We want to celebrate the good news - the personalities, the companies, the newbies, the achievements, the good stuff! Stories that gives you the warm fuzzy feelings - and we all know that's in short supply right now.

The other part of what we are going to do is concentrate on local - 'local is lekker' - and with this mouthpiece, we hope to promote and support 'local' as the prime focus in our intent to produce a wonderful publication for all to read.

Besides bringing a new structure to the publication, a cornerstone that will allow us to build what we want to achieve is the biosphere - who knew that the Kruger to Canyons Biosphere was voted the eleventh best biosphere in the world!? I believe that this should be the foundation on which we build - with the people, by the peo-

ple, for the people whilst conserving our beautiful natural resources and environments that we are so privileged to be part of. We are blessed to live in this paradise, so let's ensure that we support it and nurture it to the very best of our abilities.

Besides local contributors (which we would like to encourage) we will tap into other experienced and respected sources, that can give us insight and comment from an outside perspective, that may ignite a spark to make us look at ourselves to see how we can improve, develop, initiate and prosper.

Our structure will target the community, the biosphere, nature, and wildlife, personalities, businesses, agriculture, lifestyle and leisure, things to do and see, places to go, achievements of individuals and companies and organizations, always promoting 'local first'. As a team, we want to be proud of what we do, what we can do, and what we will do, to make our piece on this rock hurtling around the sun, the paradise we all want and strive for.

We look forward to your ongoing support, as we will support you. Please tell us if we are delivering the goods, tell us what you want, and we will strive to deliver.

Here's to a fantastic journey ahead. Thank you for your support and for welcoming us into the community. May all South Africans return to a semblance of normality in our day-to-day life soon and we here at Kruger2Canyon are filled with excitement for the adventures that lie ahead.

# Our first month at the helm

Mark Bishop - Publisher

It's been exciting, but no doubt about it, this is not for the faint-hearted...

We are republishing the articles that the Publisher and Editor wrote for the first digital publication on the 16<sup>th</sup> of April. We are doing this to make sure that everyone knows what we are about, what we are doing, and why we are doing it.

I have been amazed at the overwhelmingly positive response we have received to date. It really warms one's heart when the effort is appreciated. I hope that the reinstatement of the printed version of the paper will

be well received. My feeling is that this is what the community has been waiting for. You will all notice that the layout has been updated and we trust that this will be well accepted by all our readers.

Thanks for the letters of encouragement that we have received, some of which have been published. I would still like to stress to all our readers that we would like feedback as to what YOU want to hear. We are always open to stories and articles that locals may wish to contribute - send them to us and if deemed newsworthy we will print them. There is so much that we wanted

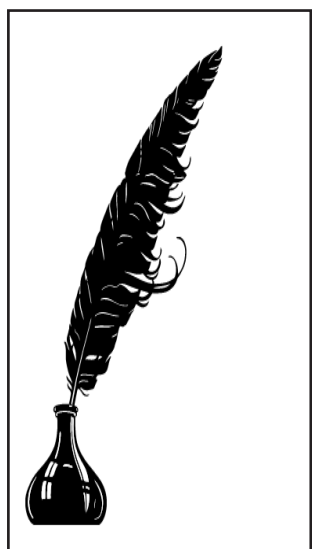
to do with the publication but we need to forge ahead small chunks at a time.

It's been an exciting month and I want to thank everyone involved for their time and effort in making this all possible. I also want to thank the public for reading our paper, and the advertisers for supporting us and especially the back-office staff, without whom none of this would have been possible.

I wish all of you a great month ahead, stay safe and stay healthy. Support local and here's to the next edition of Kruger2Canyon.

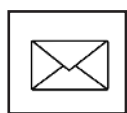
# Letter's to the editor

Letters to the editor - April



Dear Newbies,

Congratulations on taking on the mantle of ensuring our small town paper endures! I like what we see - fresh ideas and a new look at our world. Here's to you and your team- good luck and I am sure you will have the support of Hoedspruit. Mike



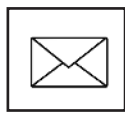
David,

We look forward to the printed paper again. Long live print, long live the Kruger2Canyon. Good luck to all of you. Anne

To the Editor

Please know that we as a town are behind you, and will support you as best we can. We all look forward to reading what you have to say and maybe even sending in some news ourselves! Thank you and good luck

Anon



Dear Ed

Sad to see Heidi go but always excited to see what a new broom sweeps up. Good luck. Sarah & Frank Houston

To the editing team

As readers (my Wife and I) from afar ... we're in Houston, USA, I want to say how pleased I am that there is a fresh look to the publication of one of my favourite towns on earth - Hoedspruit. We have been coming through Hoedspruit for many years, spent many a wonderful time in the bush on safari and just love it. Keep up the good work and we love catching up on the news. Upwards and onwards as they say. Love from Houston,

Larry and Kate

Contribute to Farm Watch  
Hoedspruit Farm Watch  
FNB 622 869 50954

# The show must go on...



*“The workshop will be the first leg of our initiative to spread the love for arts education by introducing our internationally accredited digital arts examinations to Hoedspruit and using our resources to build the artistic community and industry in Hoedspruit”.*

two hours, but we are offering all participating schools 2 x free scholarship placements for star students of their choice, as well as an extra scholarship for every 5 places booked.

There are two workshops, the first being our SHINE! workshop (an interactive workshop with singing and dancing on our original song SHINE!) and for the Greatest Showman fans, A Greatest Showman Workshop.

**So how do you participate?** Share the information and booking link below with your students.

<https://www.stageworx.co.za/online-classes-and-courses>

Ask them to sign up on the site and complete all the required information. Part of the booking requirement is the name of the school. We will then be in contact with you when we see we have students from your school participating to arrange your scholarship coupons. All social distancing and COVID-19 protocols will be followed and there is a strict No Mask No Entry requirement.

A professional montage video will be sent to all participants so they have a great memory of the experience! We hope to see your talented students there!

## Correspondant

**Stageworx is excited to announce that it will be traveling to Hoedspruit to offer an exciting 2-hour workshop in Singing, Dancing, and Acting at the local Rhino Hall on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> of May.**

Stageworx is beginning the rollout of their digital schools, in Hoedspruit - Stageworx is a community of like-minded educators, performers, and creative individuals that express themselves through the medium of the arts. The company is at the forefront of youth development in arts educa-

tion, online in the live classrooms and on stage. Providing opportunities to build a creative career as well as using the arts as a tool for self-discovery. Stageworx is excited to be expanding our digital training opportunities to one of the most beautiful parts of South Africa.



Gemma Marinus - Stageworx Principal & Director explains. “The workshop will be the first leg of our initiative to spread the love for arts education by introducing our internationally

accredited digital arts examinations to Hoedspruit and using our resources to build the artistic community and industry in Hoedspruit”. The cost of the workshop per student is R200 for the

# Vusi's amazing dream...

Cont. from Page 1...

I plan to build swimming pools, a computer centre ... an obstacle course and a centre for music and art. An octopus has one head and many arms – and so this centre will have a central hub, with many activities.

The stables are the start. I have been overwhelmed and amazed at the children's excitement at coming here. Every day after school, hordes of children rush here. They just want to spend time with the horses, stroking and brushing them and taking it in turns to lead them around the ring. They really love the horses, with all their hearts.

In fact, I've had to establish opening hours - otherwise, the children are here all day. I want to create somewhere safe and welcoming for them, outside

of school – where they can spend time with the horses and other animals. I still need to raise the funds for proper tack and for farrier and veterinary costs. This is just the start of my vision – watch this space!

Lastly, I would like to thank K2C for supporting me with 3 EMs positions, and the following stables for training the EMs - African Horse Dream Safaris, The Equine House, Rhino Revolution, Equi-Africa Adventures, Pfunanane Academy, and Protrack anti-poaching.

For more information, or if you'd like to get involved or can help support the equestrian costs, please contact me. Vusi Tshabalala, +27 73 845 3526 / job.tshabalala@gmail.com or follow us on Facebook “Octopus Horse Riding Center”.



**From left to right, the guys in green shirts: Sfiso Lubisi, Moses Ngomane, Vusi Tshabalala (kneeling), Tshepo Ngobeni, Tlangelani Mathebula. The horses in the picture are Queen,**

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# Jurie and Pippa Moolman contemplate the future at Djuma

Michel Giradin

Djuma Game Reserve has established and evolved a unique safari and eco-tourism model whereby our focus has been on providing affordable safari lodge experiences to the tourism market as a whole (and the South African market in particular). Over these same decades, we also shared Djuma with the world virtually, with millions of people across the world watching the daily drama of the African savanna on WildEarth.

Djuma is about conservation, about looking after this incredible part of the earth, a refuge where all of the iconic, big and small, African animals roam, since time immemorial. Djuma is also about our neighbouring communities who are crucial for the long-term prospects of conservation of the greater Kruger National Park we are part of. We play a leading role in the socioeconomic development of the surrounding communities of Dixie, Utah, and further afield. Through

employment, SMME support, education sponsorship through bursaries as well as direct financial donation support to many initiatives Djuma continues to play a very important role in the communities adjoining the Sabi Sand Wildtuin. Djuma has always focused on sound environmental management through constant habitat management programmes thereby ensuring, in our role as the custodians of the Game reserve, the sustainability of Djuma for future generations.

“ Djuma is about conservation, about looking after this incredible part of the earth, a refuge where all of the iconic, big and small, African animals roam, since time immemorial ”

Over the past 13 months we, as have all of you and the world at large, endured difficult challenges under the ongoing effects of covid 19. We have taken this

time to carefully reflect and re-calibrate the future as to where Djuma is heading. After careful deliberation, we have decided to do the following:

1. Close Tumbeta House with immediate effect. The few remaining reservations we have in Tumbeta will be honoured.
2. As of 2022 we have decided to introduce a seasonal-based safari product. Seasonal lodges are the norm in most other safari destinations in Africa, from Botswana to Kenya. Djuma will thus operate Vuyatela and Galago for the 6 months from 01st April through to 30th September.
3. With regards to Vuyatela and Galago we have, furthermore, decided on the following:

Vuyatela will become an 8-bed lodge. Galago will become a 6-bed camp.

4. Reservations for next year – 2022 – will open on 1 May 2021. A second communicate will follow with the rate sheet and booking policy.

Thus, from next year 2022, the Djuma lodges will be seasonal and will have a reduced number of beds, Vuyatela will become an eight-bed lodge (four chalets) and Galago a six-bed lodge (three chalets). These decisions will see Djuma, once again, being innovative in the SA safari industry and we believe we will continue to offer our Djuma guests the same exceptional safari experiences at value for money.



## The old lady of Hoedspruit

David Batzofin

The stunning garden of the Loerie Guest House in Hoedspruit is an oasis for both business and leisure travellers alike. It was here where old meets new... the new editor of this newspaper would be staying at the oldest guest house in Hoedspruit. “When we started this 27 years ago, we were the only guest house in Hoedspruit,” Ouma Scheepers told me. “There were only 3 rooms and a few outbuildings”, she continued. But all that has certainly changed in the intervening years. The house now boasts 14 rooms that come in a variety of configurations, all set in stunning gar-

dens and with access to the communal swimming pool and braai area. Set in a leafy suburb, this was to be my lodging during my visit if I could only find it! Google maps had brought me to Hoedspruit without incident, but it decided to first take me to the Airforce base where a staff member laughingly gave me the correct directions. (I can assume from his demeanour that I was not the first guest to arrive on the “wrong side of a dividing wall) But aside from that glitch my check-in, once confirmed, went off without a hitch. Hidden behind a featureless front wall, which belies the beauty of the gardens, filled to capacity with a sea of green tropical plants and

huge palm trees rising high into the azure sky. “Loerie Guest House is an ideal starting point to explore the famous Kruger National Park ”. My room for the evening was in the main house and even though several of the exterior rooms were occupied, no noise emanated from the guests enjoying a braai and a drink in a designated area near the pool. It was larger than I expected, with a comfortable bed and a view into the garden through windows in both the bedroom and the bathroom. And speaking of the bath-

room, it was hidden behind what looked like one of the cupboard doors. Spacious and complete with both a bath, a shower, and a toilet, it was an ideal place to soak off my 5-hour drive from Johannesburg. Breakfast is not included in the room rate, but the room did have a fridge and a kettle, so it was self-service for me in the morning before I left. Dinner can be ordered and consists as you would expect, of a hearty home-made dinner complete with dessert and coffee. Although I was going to be working in the nearby Kamogela Tourism Centre, this guesthouse is the ideal base for those wishing to visit nearby tourist destinations, like the Kruger National Park and The Panorama Route.

Seeing that I had chosen this on a whim while scrolling through accommodation in Hoedspruit, I was really glad that they were able to accommodate me. Contact details: Contact person/owner: Anélle Scheepers: 071 362 6307 24 Hour Mobile Number: 081 449 1140



# The full moon shines on this lodge



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Set within the Hoedspruit Wildlife Estate this is a lodge with a difference. Safari Moon Luxury Bush Lodge is the latest venture of esteemed designer and decorator, Nicola Leitch: an avid collector of art and all things interesting.

Driving up to the lodge, you are enticed to enter and see for yourself the splendor of the interior. Stepping into the lodge is much like entering an eclectic art exhibition; its inspiration stemming from around the globe. The attention to detail filters into every aspect of this brand new boutique B&B. From the choice of trinkets on the bedside tables, the choice of towels in the bathrooms, the lighting, the fabrics, and oh, so much more. The lodge and living spaces are draped in luxurious finishes and fine art, from a 55-piece collection of renowned Ardmore ceramics to an array of Lionel Smit and Donald Greig sculptures - Safari Moon

provides a cultured

*“Safari Moon provides a cultured and contemporary setting for the discerning traveller”.*

and contemporary setting for the discerning traveller. Luxury it is, but tastefully executed and not overdone in any way. It feels like a home away from home, and as you bask in the sun on the pool deck savoring the African bush, you really feel that you are in paradise.

Guests can look forward to a personalised and exceptional service during their stay. The culinary experience is served with Crystal and Christoffel silver cutlery and has an array of international elements to it, and it is always comprised of top-quality ingredients that are both locally sourced and seasonal in nature. Meals can be ordered in advance, from delicious tapas-style gourmet platters enjoyed by the pool, to a lavish, intimate three-course lavish meal, served with a roaring fire in the



background or on your private deck.

Located in South Africa's Safari hub of Hoedspruit, Safari Moon is a boutique base from which to discover the wonders of South Africa's Lowveld region.

Explore a range of nearby attractions from the famed Kruger National Park to the scenic Panorama Route, experience the big 5 with a qualified guide, do a walking safari or enjoy the adventure of a hot air balloon ride. For those wanting to be pampered have a massage in the privacy of your own suite or simply chose to relax and unwind in nature, making the most of your private piece of Wildlife Estate wilderness.

Safari Moon is a superb destination for stylish relaxation or to be utilized as a base to explore the variety of adventure destinations in the surrounding area.

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# Celebrating 50 years of Man and the Biosphere Programme



United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



Man and the Biosphere Programme



culture.

One of UNESCO's key programs is the Man and the Biosphere Programme which was created in 1971 with a vision to promote a sustainable connection between people and nature.

The original idea evolved into the designation of 'biosphere reserves' living laboratories that boost nature-based solutions for sustainable development.

There are currently 714 biosphere reserves in 129 countries, including 21 transboundary sites belonging to the World Network of Biosphere Re-



serves.

As 2021 marks 50 years of the Man and Biosphere Programme, UNESCO is planning a variety of events across the globe in celebration. Dr. Jane Goodall has been elected as the official spokesperson for the occasion together with five young spokespersons from each region of the world.

Romy Antrobus-Wuth

The United Nations Ed-

ucational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialized

agency of the United Nations aimed at promoting world peace and security

through international cooperation in education, the sciences, and

## From the Region for the Region Project - fRfR

Mark Bishop

The Kruger to Canyons Biosphere nodal centre has embarked on a rural project called 'From the Region for the Region'. (fRfR) The challenge is to grow climate-resilient communities and strive to teach and mentor them to become self-sufficient and environmentally sustainable.

This inspirational project is designed to support SMME's in the Kruger2Canyons Biosphere Region to undertake sustainable business practices in return for assistance with access to a market. This will

involve both informal markets in towns and villages as well as the more formal markets, supplying lodges, restaurants, and fresh produce supply stores. The support includes training, management help, and mentoring to create an all-inclusive green circular economy in the Kruger 2 Canyon Biosphere Region.

The main challenge for most of the farmers is water shortage and the lack of a market. The farmers are currently harvesting butter-nuts, chilies, spinach, tomatoes, and watermelons. Although lockdown delayed the progress, the



project is now back up and running. The first mentoring group started in the Phiring community in August 2020. The group consisting of 13 smallholder farmers based in the Phiring and Maleaneng communities. These farmers have all completed the Agroecology training provided by Hoedspruit Hub. Farmers have the opportunity to share with the group the produce they planted, the challenges they encountered, and how they maintain their farm. There

is also advice and support given on overcoming the challenges. This exercise promotes unity and trust amongst the group members.

The projected outcome is to prepare the farmers for the markets that they will be linked with in the future.

The partners are the Hoedspruit Hub and Conservation South Africa and this project component was funded by the Government of Flanders as part of the Dinkwanyane Water Smart Project.

One of the community farmers

## RUGGEDWEAR in support of Safari Guide of the Year

David Batzofin

K2C spoke to local retailer Brian De Paiva about his retail clothing store and his newly launched online e-commerce platform.

"I am a proud Hoedspruit and have lived here since

1989" De Paiva told K2C. "I opened the shop in 2016 and have been changing, adapting, and adjusting the store step by step to improve the store and the experience.

We cover the Greater Kruger, and from Limpopo to

Mpumalanga, and with our new e-commerce website, we hope to go expand our customer range even more.

Ruggedwear clothing is so popular that we carry 90% of their range in store but we try to accommodate as far as possible. Seeing

that their head office is in Nelspruit, we can source out-of-stock items with relative ease. Large embroidery orders can be done via an embroidery company in Nelspruit that offers the best quality at the most affordable price while small orders are sourced locally.

Brian ended off with this story that is indicative of the type of service that he, his staff, and the store offer.

"We have clients walk into the store after just landing from overseas, who we assist in finding the perfect bush outfit. As a result, we

are asked to remove the tags and bag their previous clothing because they would like to leave the store wearing the new outfit they just purchased".

COUNTDOWN TO



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## Success for Southern Ground-hornbills in Balule



Adult birds feeding their chick in the man made nest

Carrie Hickman and  
Kyle-Mark Middleton

The Southern Ground Hornbill is the world's largest cooperatively breeding bird and is unfortunately listed as endangered within South Africa.

Groups usually consist of an alpha pair, with "helpers" consisting of male offspring from previous years, as well as occasional birds who have dispersed from other groups. These helpers all contribute to the raising of a single offspring and so reproduction is slow. Eggs are laid in large tree cavities; however, these are in short supply in this area.

The APNR Ground-Hornbill Research and Conservation Project was established in 2000, where the short supply was identified early.

In 2002, the first artificial nests were installed in Klaserie PNR and Timbavati PNR, where birds readily took to them. Since then, artificial nests have been used as a conservation tool to bolster the breeding success of the species in the area and allow for research to be conducted on their reproductive processes. This massively successful tool has seen the ground-hornbill population more than double over the past 20 years within the Associated Private Nature Reserves (APNR) which forms part of the Greater Kruger.

In 2019, an artificial nest was installed on York in Balule PNR. York had a pair of ground-hornbills on the reserve, and we decided to install the nest to try and expand the population from

neighboring Klaserie PNR who do have successful breeding groups. Birds will likely disperse from their natal groups and try to join other groups or move to areas away from another group's territory. Having access to a nest is a vital factor in anchoring a group down so that territories may be formed and range expansion can occur.

We were incredibly surprised to find that birds moved in very quickly to York's nest and they began lining the nest in October 2020 in preparation for breeding.

As a result, we installed a camera trap near to the nest to find out more about who was showing this interest and we were amazed to find that it was solely the two

*"We were incredibly surprised to find that birds moved in very quickly to York's nest and they began lining the nest in October 2020 in preparation for breeding".*

birds without the presence of any helpers. We were even more surprised that this pair of birds went on to lay, and subsequently, rear a healthy chick that fledged in March 2021. Breeding usually takes an incredibly large toll on the breeder's condition, bearing in mind that the chicks grow from a mere 70-80g when they hatch, to 2-3kgs in just 70 days.

So, the fact that this pair successfully raised and

fledged a healthy chick on their own was truly a massive feat and a first for the project to witness.

Sharon Hausmann (Balule Chairperson) and Rian Ahlers (York Reserve Warden) have provided incredible support and enthusiasm with this first attempt of ground-hornbills breeding on York and we would like to thank them as well as the field rangers who assisted in the installation of the nest.

If you have seen any ground hornbills in the Greater Kruger, please email us with any details of the sighting. We are currently reaching out for photographs of the birds to supplement our research. We require the time and date the photograph was

taken as well as location (It can be from anywhere in South Africa, as long as they are wild birds!)

**APNR Southern-Ground Hornbill Research and Conservation Project**  
Run by the FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology

Researchers Kyle-Mark Middleton and Carrie Hickman Find out more about the project on our website: [apnrgroundhornbillproject.com](http://apnrgroundhornbillproject.com)

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### HAVE YOU SEEN A GROUND-HORNBILL?



The **APNR Ground-Hornbill Project** require any **photos** and **videos** of **wild birds** for their current research  
**Also required: Date, Time and Location**

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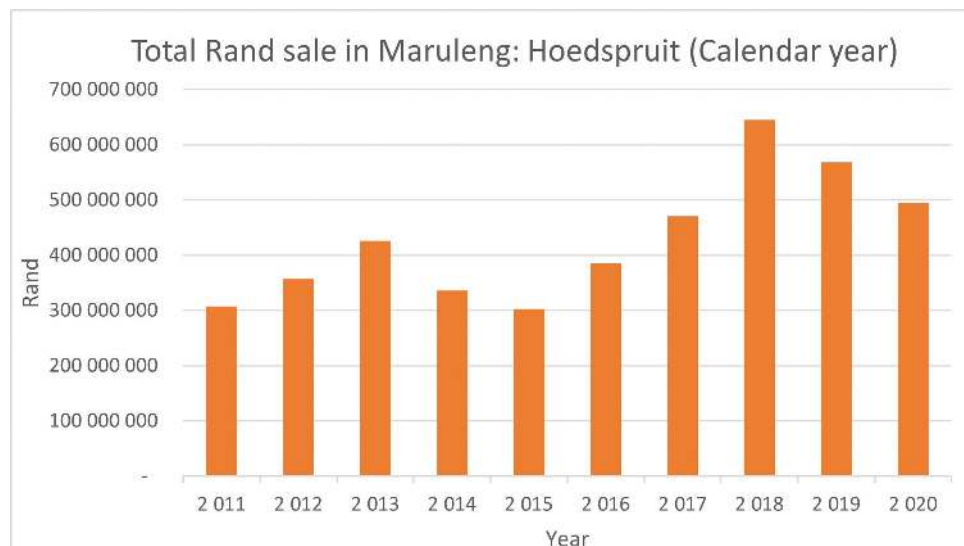


# What does the property market hold in store for 2021?

Rob Severin, Principal Agent for Century 21 Wildlife Properties

It is strange that in April 2021 we are reviewing the property sales for 2020 but that is due to Covid and the updating of the statistics being delayed. Property transfers have been affected, and we will look at full property transfers for the Maruleng Municipality that has passed through the Limpopo Deeds Office as this covers all houses, stands and farm sales. Known shareblock sales and sale of shares are also added where we have managed to gather the data.

No property sales could take place from the 26<sup>th</sup> March 2020 – the start of the lockdown – until the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 when lockdown was lowered to Level 3, and real estate businesses could start to operate. By the end of June 2020, the



midyear transfer numbers were down 45%, but by the second half of the year figures were up year on year by 30%! This meant that by the end of the sales year 2020, there was slight recovery with total property sales down by only 13% on the previous

year at R 494 million. What then are the evident trends? While sales may be down last year, less people have also been looking to sell. As a result, stock levels are at an all time low and prices have been increasing

1. There have been more farm sales in 2020 that previous years, with higher demand and prices for the Greater Kruger Park

2. 82% of all transfers are under the value of R3 million, 94% are under the R5 million mark and 5.8% are above R5 Million

- 3. Due to Covid there is a growing trend for buyers to work from home and more people are looking to relocate to Hoedspruit
- 4. There have been less foreign buyers due to travel restrictions
- 5. Due to travel restrictions, people who spent money on international travel and holidays have now shifted to purchasing property

the demand for Hoedspruit properties will remain strong. Stock levels are at an all time low, and as a result of high demand, property prices have been increasing. However, there is always a point where buyers stop seeing value and sales slow down.

What does the year ahead (2021) hold for us?

It has been a strong start to the year. Although many sales are still in process, there is a strong demand that may be exceeding that of previous years. We expect that with the COVID pandemic continuing, people will be allowed to work remotely. Coupled with the restrictions on international travel, we believe that

What I expect to see is that buyers will start to look for value and consider properties that are less obvious. Consideration of value in properties further from town will be an issue, perhaps less brand names attached to them or they may be properties that need additional work or alteration. From this point of view I expect more interest in places like Lissataba, Canyon Game Reserve, Khaya Ngwenya, Mahlathini Private Nature Reserve. The trend started last year on Ndlovumzi and Kampresus and we expect this to continue.

Rob Severin | 083 469 3820 | rob@century21wildlife.co.za | WEB REF: 1424111



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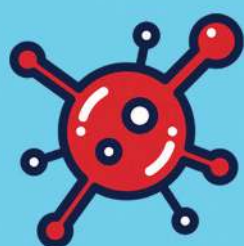
- The home is 265 m<sup>2</sup> in size and comprises:
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- 3 en-suite bedrooms
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- braai area and pock pool
- storeroom for tools
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The reserve has game drive roads, hides, view points, dams and braai areas, as well as a good network of hiking, running and cycling trails.

Contact Rob for more information or view the listing on our website: [www.century21wildlife.co.za](http://www.century21wildlife.co.za)



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## Sophia's delectable recipe



### Nammoura (semolina lemon cake)

Lebanese sweets are not overbearingly sweet – that's what I like most about them. This cake is baked in a baking tray and cut into diamond shapes before serving. It has a lovely lemony flavour.

Serves 12

#### Ingredients

##### Syrup

350 ml water  
225g caster sugar  
60 ml freshly squeezed lemon juice  
2 tsp rose water

##### Cake

225 g caster sugar  
225 g semolina  
½ tsp bicarbonate of soda  
350 ml Greek style yoghurt  
4 tbsp butter, melted  
24 whole blanched almonds

### Method

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Prepare the syrup by placing the water, sugar and lemon juice in a heavy-bottomed saucepan over a medium heat, stirring continuously until the sugar has dissolved. Turn the heat up to high and cook vigorously until it begins to turn a light caramel colour. Add the rose water and set aside.

Mix the caster sugar, semolina and bicarb together in a bowl. Using a wooden spoon, beat the yoghurt in a separate bowl and then

add the butter and mix well.

Mix the yoghurt mixture into the dry ingredients and scrape the batter into a well-greased baking tray of 20 x 30 cm in size and about 5 cm deep. Bake for 15 minutes.

Remove from the oven and top with the almonds, spacing them about 4 across and 6 down. Place the cake back into the oven for a further 15 minutes until golden brown.

Cool the cake in the tray for 10 minutes and then cut into square or diamond shapes, with an almond in the centre of each. Pour

the cooled syrup over the cake slowly, allowing it to soak in – use enough to just soak into the cake as it should not be soggy.

Serve at room temperature with a blob of thick yoghurt. Note: This cake will keep in an airtight container for up to a week.

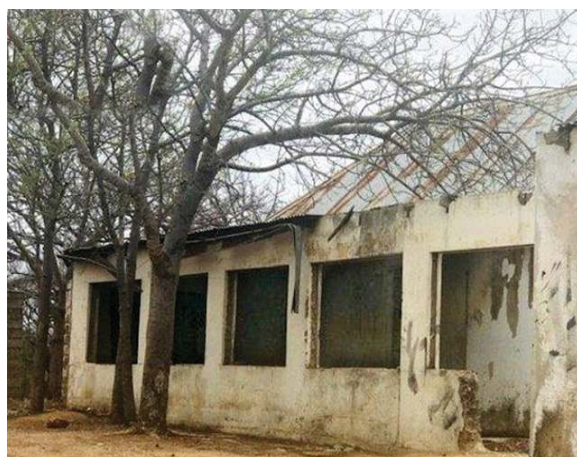
This recipe comes from renowned chef Sophia Lindop and can be found in her recently published book *Going Home*. Readers can purchase off Sophia's website [www.sophialindop.com](http://www.sophialindop.com). There is also an ebook of this title available for immediate download.

## The Farmhouse ...

Mark Bishop

In the last edition of *Kruger2Canyon* we featured the story on The Farm House – one of the oldest buildings still standing in Hoedspruit and being renovated by the dynamic couple, Jake and Antonia Hoddinott.

Our follow up on this exciting project is that Phase A is almost complete, Phase B is starting development and it appears that due to demand Phase C will be started before the expected date – good news for all those renting in the development. There



**The Farmhouse then ...**

is much anticipation and excitement about this development. The opening of the devel-

opment (Phase A) to the public will be on the 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021. Get social with the development @farm-



**The Farmhouse now after some needed TLC**

househoedspruit For information contact [admin@thefarmhouse.africa](mailto:admin@thefarmhouse.africa). Come and visit at

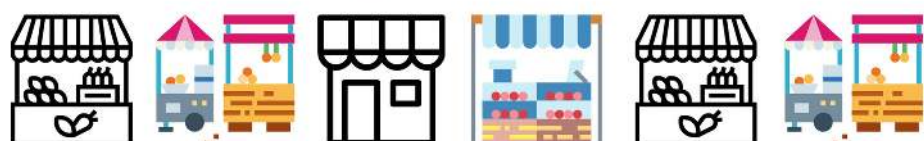
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town next to Campfire Properties See you there!



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**Hi**  
**Hoedspruit Info**

# On the road again ...

Travel correspondent

**Sometimes it is better to take the road less traveled.**

It has been more than a year since my last drive to this area and certain roads seem to have deteriorated badly as a result of the large, heavily laden trucks that use roads that are clearly not designed to carry the constant flow of heavy traffic. It was for research purposes that I tried two routes and despite the cost of the tolls on the Tzaneen route, the lack of potholes and the potential damage and expense make it the better option in the future.

This is the direct route but the POTHOLEs on are legendary and dangerous...especially if you are traveling in the dark. The 58km stretch from Dullstroom to Lydenburg has become almost a guaranteed graveyard for tires and rims. Add this section numerous large trucks and you have a recipe for accidents just waiting to happen.

Only one toll plaza (at the time of writing the cost was R66.00) Johannesburg to Belfast: 224km. On a major route that is in good condition Belfast to Dullstroom: 35km (this is an 80km zone and when there is dense fog on this section it is a VERY scary drive). You can reward yourself with a pan-

cake at Harries Pancakes, or the best coffee in the area at Beans about Coffee. If you have time, a visit to the largest clock shop in the world is well worth breaking your journey for.

Dullstroom to Lydenburg: 58km. The potholes on this section of the route are legendary and can and have swallowed cars. This is where concentration is required and trying to spot the potholes before falling in was a challenge, to say the least.

*“The potholes on the Dullstroom to Lydenburg road are legendary and dangerous...especially if you are traveling in the dark or at speed”.*

Lydenburg to Hoedspruit: 137km. Leaving Lydenburg can be a nightmare as the roads are not in the best condition and the stream of trucks can be a daunting experience.

**The total distance is approximately 454km**

For the return journey, I chose the alternative route: (There were 4 toll plazas with a combined cost, at the time of writing, of R184.00)

Hoedspruit to Tzaneen: 120km. Tzaneen to Polokwane: 95km. Polokwane to Johannesburg: 322

**Total distance approximately 537km (83km longer, but not a single pot-**



Is this what it's going to get to ? ... Any other way but the highway !



Commonplace signs on our roads today, indicative of total lack of wualified maitenance and repair. Makes road travel in many instances very hazadardous and sometimes life threathening.



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# A worthwhile wait ?

Field Guide Dave

Many decades of searching finally pay off for this field guide as he finally gets to see a pangolin in the wild.

Which one of the following is real? Big Foot, the Loch Ness Monster, Unicorns, or Pangolins? One of them has been on top of my WLWL (Wild Life Wish List) since my 13<sup>th</sup> birthday when my present was a trip to the Kruger National Park. In the intervening years, it seems that all the Pangolins at the lodges I have worked have conspired against me and although I have been close, an actual sighting always eluded me. That changed on a recent trip while on leave with a friend at another lodge.

A morning drive started with a garbled call came over the radio. My friend, the tracker, and I all thought we had heard the word "Penguin". But how would

you spot an Antarctic creature in the middle of the South African bush? "Repeat please"? "PANGOLIN" was the response. **STOP THE VEHICLE!** Was my dream finally about to become reality? Nothing ventured, nothing gained as the game vehicle was turned around and we set off in the direction of the sighting. Finally, we arrived and the guide who had called in the sighting, pointing excitedly to a spot under some branches...I held my breath as I peered into the undergrowth.

Decades of waiting finally came to an end! There it was! Curled up and trying to make itself as inconspicuous as possible. The most trafficked animal on the planet lay (almost) at my feet. This animal had been on top of my list for so long that there is not even a number two to take its place. I was also concerned that it would stay in this position indefinitely and a small portion



of the pangolin was all that I would see. However, once all the vehicles and their guests had left the area, a tiny face slowly peered out of the undergrowth.

Finally, a snout emerged from the undergrowth, followed by the rest of the animal that had been so elusive for so long. Although the front feet have several huge claws, those are used

for digging and not as a defense. Their major form of self-protection, rolling into a tight ball, is also their biggest weakness. When they are in this position, they can be picked up and placed in a container without any resistance. Their name, **Pangolin**, is derived from the Malay word 'pengguling', which means 'rolling up' Still uncertain of the threat

posed by those still at the sighting, it rolled into a partial ball and ended up looking like a giant artichoke.

Our vehicle took off, leaving me and the tracker to spend time with this elusive and endangered animal that was still hiding under the bush. Finally, it crept out of the safety of the branches and proceeded to scuttle across in front of me. I could

" Still uncertain of the threat posed by those still at the sighting, it rolled into a partial ball and ended up looking like a giant artichoke "

have wept. As we were not perceived as a threat, it snuffled around in the bushes, no doubt looking for something to eat while we watched in amazement. After what seemed like a moment, but was in fact 90 minutes, it vanished down a nearby termite mound leaving both the tracker and me in stunned silence while contemplating the sighting that we had just experienced.

I am both grateful and blessed to have had this opportunity to finally get to see my 'unicorn' and to share the experience with like-minded people.

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HLOKOMELA

# The Kruger2Canyon Trail Run Challenge is back



We're excited to announce that this year's Kruger 2 Canyon Challenge is a GO! The usual two day stage trail running race near Kampersrus, Hoedspruit, will be held on the 3rd and 4th July 2021. This year shorter 5km and 10km routes have also been added - so there'll be something for everybody. The route offers an incredible opportunity to explore the most northern reaches of the Drakensberg, in and around the Blyde River Canyon, as well as the bushveld adjacent to the Kruger National Park. All conservation fees go towards supporting the Kruger to Canyons Biosphere Region's conservation and community projects in the region. For more information on the route options and to book your place go to [www.kruger2canyonchallenge.co.za](http://www.kruger2canyonchallenge.co.za)



**Wildlife Estate Series - Hoedspruit - 20km Results**  
17 April 2021

Race #	Race Time	Name	Gender	Overall Position	Gender Position	Cat. Position
228	1:34:58	SIBONELELWE MVANE	Open M	1	1	1
223	1:35:13	DANIEL STILL	Open M	2	2	2
204	1:41:03	CAMERON JACOBS	Open M	3	3	3
214	1:43:38	JAMES WILSON	Open M	4	4	4
294	1:43:41	CARL DU TOIT	Veteran M	5	5	1
232	1:44:34	COLLIN RUDMAN	Open M	6	6	5
233	1:44:36	TYRONNE WINTER	Open M	7	7	6
229	1:45:20	ELZANNE KUUN	Open F	8	1	1
226	1:48:02	GEORGINA MUIRHEAD	Open F	9	2	2
235	1:51:02	DENISE CLOETE	Open F	10	3	3
236	1:56:24	THINA WOLMARANS	Open F	11	4	4
288	1:56:26	TIM MATTHIS	Veteran M	12	8	2
202	1:57:20	REBECCA DRU	Open F	13	5	5
296	1:57:23	JOE MEYER	Veteran M	14	9	3
218	1:59:38	ALOISE	Open M	15	10	7
298	2:03:44	NEILL KELDER	Veteran M	16	11	4
201	2:04:33	ISAIH MALATJI	Open M	17	12	8
231	2:04:37	JOHN DAVIES	Open M	18	13	9
227	2:04:56	JEANNE MATTHIS	Veteran F	19	6	1
208	2:14:04	RICHARD MATHEBULA	Veteran M	20	14	5
286	2:15:29	CARRIE HICKMAN	Open F	21	7	6
213	2:15:30	KYLE-MARK MIDDLETON	Open M	22	15	10
211	2:22:13	TEBOGO MATHEBULA	Open M	23	16	11
295	2:24:10	JULIA WILLIAMS	Veteran F	24	8	2
297	2:25:24	DAVID HENDRICKS	Veteran M	25	17	6
206	2:33:51	MELANI HOFFMAN	Veteran F	26	9	3
291	2:34:02	CORLIA STEYN	Veteran F	27	10	4
230	2:37:03	YOLANDA BLIGNAUT	Veteran F	28	11	5
292	2:45:12	MARY PIETERSE	Veteran F	29	12	6
293	2:45:22	CHRISTINE SCHEEPERS	Veteran F	30	13	7
495	2:48:31	BIANCA D VD WESTHUIZEN	Veteran F	31	14	8
494	2:48:34	MARIO J VD WESTHUIZEN	Veteran M	32	18	7

## Wildlife Estate Series



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