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Vol 19 Issue 19, 26 November 2021, Kruger2Canyon News, Shop 12, Kamogelo Centre, Hoedspruit. Tel 078 979 6486 email: editor@kruger2canyon.co.za

MoveMe steps up in Hoedspruit



Brian Evigan

Briana Evigan

People often ask how and why I landed in South Africa. The first thing I answer with is that I have a deep love and connection with animals, so what better place to start?

After all my travels around the world, I found my purpose in life and it is to protect wildlife while I am here on earth. After years of going back and forth from Los Angeles to different areas of Africa, I started to meet so many

beautiful humans and realized if we don't protect and heal the people, we won't be able to protect the animals or the land that we get to live on.

I've been here for 4 months and I've got a lot to learn. I believe that

moving out of my house in Los Angeles, getting rid of everything and finding my new home in South Africa was the greatest way for me to completely immerse myself in all the wonders that South Africa has to offer.

My business partner, Stuart Newton, and I decided to launch our own company called MoveMe. Our business is a home for visionary entities where ideas, solutions and insights can flourish to drive impact and last-

ing change. As a global company, we are driven by our commitment to serving people, animals and the planet. We put love in motion and do business with soul.

Cont. on page 3

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Jason Jones - 083 267 4794

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In my opinion...



Are those sleigh bells I hear already? Is the fact that South Africa has been in lockdown for more than 600 days significant?

The wearing of masks and sanitizing of hands have

become so ingrained that I think we will continue to look for sanitizing stations long after we have no more need for them. Many of us will not be sad to see the mask requirement lifted and that we no longer have to turn back because we have "forgotten my mask".

Every year the festive season begins earlier and earlier. The elections are over but the dust has not settled within many municipalities where political parties are still struggling to form coalitions.

Load shedding or what ever ESKOM wishes to

call it is STILL with us and promises to be that way for some time, despite the press releases and the excuses of their spokesman who is blaming everyone other than those responsible. As an aside, I write this while running on solar power as Stage 2 has just been re-instituted as a result of 5 power stations being under pressure. Ho hum, just another day in South Africa? Throwing more money at the problem seems to be the general response, but I am afraid that the bank account is empty.

However, if we put all that aside, I am certain that there is a lot that we can all be grateful for. The rains that have fallen in the Lowveld recently, and the trickle of international tourists who have started to make their way back to the various reserves and lodges in the area. Hospitals and clinics are on standby to continue to deliver the various vaccine dosages, and the fact that some of the potholes in the area have been repaired, and then it dawns on me that there are only 30 shopping days left to

Christmas!

I wonder if the pandemic will 'allow' us to celebrate the traditional family Christmas the way we did pre March 2020. I am certain that are many families in and around Hoedspruit who would like nothing more than to sit down at a table with their families who have travelled from near and far without having to quarantine for weeks on end.

It seems that even my cat (Executive Assistant to give him his correct title) is getting ready to travel. I discovered him already 'packed' in my suitcase while I was preparing for a recent trip.

As we move into the final month of 2021, I hope that we will continue to be kind to ourselves, be respectful to others and most importantly...stay safe and stay healthy.

David Batzofin

Letters to the editor

Letters to the editor – November 26th 2021

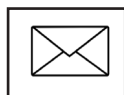


Dear Editor

I have been so impressed by the communication, the way vaccinations have been made so easily available and the community engagement with the rollout. It's a great example of working together which the rest of the country could learn

from when you look at the vax stats. Well done!

Bronwyn

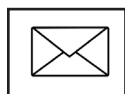


Dear Editor

Shout out to Reece's Transport Services for excellent service. I had a couple of items that needed to be delivered to the East Rand. Within 24 hours Reece gave me a quote, collected and delivered. He kept me informed and response time was amazing.

Thank you once again for a great job done!

Wilma



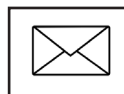
Dear Editor

Please can I take this opportunity to ask for all those who have NOT yet been vaccinated to get the jab as soon as possible?

The Authorities have warned of a hard lockdown

from an expected 4th wave of the Coronavirus from Dec to Jan. Even though South Africa is still in Level, 1 it can easily revert to hard lockdown should that become a reality.

Jannie



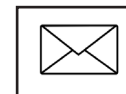
Dear Editor

Is there nothing that the authorities can do about overloaded vehicles that travel up and down the highways in and around our town? I am amazed that

these vehicles can actually move as they are loaded way over their capacity. They also brake down on the side of the road, causing congestion and a danger to other traffic.

It seems that the traffic departments are more focused on ticketing for speeding offences instead of trying to clear the roads of these death traps.

Rose



Dear Editor

What was the outcome of the truck issue? Is there going to be any answers to the curse of these beasts on our roads? We need to stand up as a community to fight this scourge.

Pieter



Be aware - malaria cases on the up in Limpopo

Thilivhali Muavha

Limpopo Health MEC Dr Phophi Ramathuba has called upon Limpopo residents to remain alert as the province experiences a resurgence of malaria cases. Since the beginning of the malaria season, the province has so far recorded 406 malaria cases with 2 unfortunate deaths. This is a clear indication that Limpopo has not yet achieved its target of zero malaria infections.

Some parts of Limpopo Province are known as malaria endemic



Image: Google images

areas. 42 malaria teams have been dispatched to strategic places throughout the province to control the disease.

The Department of Health has launched and actioned the malaria control team to do a door to door campaign to test

and treat residents. They will also distribute flyers on malaria as a way to step up the fight against the disease. Vhembe and Mopani District are the most affected districts with Sekhukhune District a close third.

The Department has over the past 15 years made considerable progress in reducing malaria in the province. In 2020/21, 3461 malaria cases and 19 deaths were recorded. The District breakdown of malaria cases and deaths are as follows: Vhembe District 196 cases and 1 death case, Mopani District

184 cases and 1 death case, Waterberg District 10 cases no deaths, Capricorn District 10 cases no deaths, and Sekhukhune District, 6 cases no deaths. These deaths are primarily as a result of a delay in patients seeking health care.

«As we approach the rainy season, we continue to urge all malaria-prone communities to stay vigilant and immediately report any malaria-related case to the nearest clinic or Primary Health Centre. We have so far trained surveillance teams consisting of

Environmental Health Practitioners (EHS) and spray operators who will be on the ground testing and treating malaria. This will increase the malaria programmers ability to reach most malaria-infected individuals and significantly decrease the malaria parasite reservoir in Limpopo. While the incidence of malaria has declined to lower levels, malaria remains a fatal disease if remained undiagnosed and untreated. Malaria is preventable, malaria is curable but malaria does kill," said MEC Ramathuba.

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Twist in Mozambican wildlife trade case

Obos

Arrests made along an East Rand highway has lead to recent court appearances in the Delmas Magistrate's Court.

Was Rogerio Domingos Moiane arrested while carrying a rhino horn in a plastic bag along an East Rand highway, or did corrupt police apprehend him, while travelling with his co-accused to Mozambique?

More twists in this case are likely to emerge in the Delmas Magistrate's Court next week.

Illegal Wildlife Trade is very relevant to the Greater Kruger area. It's a hot, complicated subject.

Cont. on page 5

Kruger2Canyon News partners with the Khetha Journalism Project

Fred Kockott

The Kruger2Canyon is excited to announce the partnering with the environmental journalism training agency, Roving Reporters, in publishing stories arising from the Khetha Journalism Project. This joint WWF-SA and WESSA initiative assists journalists and media practitioners in reporting on illegal wildlife trade and its broader context in and around the Greater Kruger area.

"Major national parks in Southern Africa remain under pressure from wildlife trafficking, most notably in rhino horn, yet all too often invaluable role-players that could help address

the situation are side-lined in the public conversation alongside others living in communities adjacent to protected areas," said Vincent Shacks, WESSA's General Manager, sustainable tourism.

"A special interest, is supporting journalists to explore community-related aspects of human-wildlife interaction, that go unnoticed by mainstream media but shed new light on the region's challenges and its potential for charting a sustainable way forward," added Shacks.

Read more at www.rovingreporters.co.za

VLU hou Meksikaanse-fiesta !



Chantelle Redelinghuys

Die Vroue Landbou Unie (VLU) vier vanjaar ordentlik fees, want dit is hul 90ste bestaansjaar!

Die organisasie is een van die grootste vroue-organisasies in Suid-Afrika en is 'n multi-kulturele organisasie wat mense verbind deur opleiding te verskaf.

Die Blyde-Klaserie-tak het vanjaar die 26ste konferensie suksesvol aangebied. Die streek strek vanaf Mussina verby Polokwane tot by Hoedspruit en al die takke tussen-in. Mussina is die verste Noord, Polokwane die verste Suid en Hoedspruit die verste Oos.

Die konferensie was in Meksikaanse-styl aangebied. Met kleurvolle blomme, gepaste dekor en Meksikaanse kosse. Alle versierings, kosse, verversings ensovoorts was handgemaak deur die knap dames van die Blyde-Klaserie-tak. Hierdie tak bestaan slegs uit twaalf lede.

Die dag se verloop het bestaan uit 'n Dot-Art werkswinkel deur Riana Jooste en 'n Himalayan sout demonstrasie aangebied deur Liezel Maree van Salty Sisters. Die grootste toekenning van die dag het aan die Blyde-Klaserie-tak gegaan vir die beste takalbum. Die erkenning was 'n jarelange doelwit vir die dames. Die Blyde-Klaserie-tak bedank graag alle borge, insluitend die Rhino Convention centre se personeel, wat gehelp het om van die konferensie 'n reuse sukses te maak.

Die knap VLU-dames van die Blyde-Klaserie-tak (voor vlnr) Lauri-Anne Harding, Santie van Eysen, Janeli Burger, Stephanie Scholtz, Annamie Redelinghuys, Annie Scholtz, (agter) Retha Redelinghuys, Daleen Oosthuizen en Erica Oosthuizen.

MoveMe steps up in Hoedspruit



The gorgeous Briana, lapping up the sunshine and tranquility of the bushveld

Cont. from page 1

Through MoveMe we have created MoveMe Studios, a production company for film, television and inspiring media that creates a lasting impact and compels people into action. For the last 6 years, I have been developing a film that is dear to my heart. I can't speak much about the topic just yet but I will say I am beyond excited about playing the role and story has come and am counting down the days until we start filming in early 2022. The role I will be taking on as an actor is a challenge that I am ready to conquer.

We wanted to build an impact campaign to uplift the film, when this idea evolved we thought our first production should be MoveMe South Africa, a docuseries.

We have just completed our first episode where we dived back into the relationships we have built over the years with rural communities and saw a diverse set of perspectives covering environmental issues, poaching, food, water, and energy security. I was blown away by

the vulnerability shared and how open each human heart was to sharing the depths of their lives. Our hopes for this series is to show audiences the real, raw beauty of South Africa, allow them to connect with the people living here that have stories to tell, and above all inspire many.

Another one of our projects that lies under MoveMe is called Abundant Village. We are building our first pilot village and if this works, which I believe it will, we can scale and repeat this concept around the world. The broad spectrum of solutions we are bringing together can help with food, water, and energy security while ensuring sustainable living and job opportunities to many in the surrounding areas.

MoveMe stands by 5 principles: Love in Motion and Business with Soul - Act Local Engage Global - Ignite Regenerative Impact - Forever Learn Together.

We are looking for people to come on board and join us because we know we can't do this alone. I am a firm believer that we need to show up as the humans

that we are, period. That being said, I believe the lack of opportunity in South Africa is mostly due to the lack of a 'platform' type infrastructure that can help showcase and expose the many talents and capabilities we all have - I hope to be a part of that process.

The talent I have already witnessed in such a short period has completely blown my mind. Uplifting those around you, leading by example and being of service to bring new opportunities to others is a must for us to open doors.

We must find the courage to be our authentic selves. Being a part of the human race, I believe we need to shed our fears and egos, reach out to each other for help and come together. Humanity is in the middle of a great shift - yet, in ways, we are all standing by and watching. I believe we all need to be a part of the outcome.

I am looking forward to watching, and being a part of the human transformation while connecting to others. MoveMe aspires to set into motion a seismic shift in the world where equitability and abundance are commonplace.

For further information, to share ideas or a little bit of love you can email us: connect@moveme.studio or via our website: www.moveme.studio

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Learning from our farmers in the Kruger2Canyons biosphere

Romy Antrobus Wuth

The K2C Biosphere Region hosts quarterly learning exchange sessions for its staff where the team can learn from others conducting work in our shared landscape. Agriculture in the Hoedspruit area has a huge economic impact on our Socio-Ecological System. The true extent of this was learnt by the K2C Biosphere Team at a learning Colloquium on Agriculture on Friday 12 November 2021.

Jaco Fivaz, a well-known commercial farmer in the Blyde Irrigation District, shared the numbers with the Team:

Citrus	8117 ha
Mangoes	2400 ha
Blueberries	86 ha
Grapes	13,5 ha
Maize/ Sweetcorn	140 ha
Vegetables	20 ha
Macadamias	70 has
Avocados	56 ha

He also shared the fact that this year the Lower Blyde Irrigation District produced 93500 tons of Grapefruit (valued R580m); 106875 tons of oranges (valued at R670m); 46154 tons of lemons (valued R440m) and soft citrus to the order of 11143 tons (valued at R158m). This collective contribution to our local GDP for this harvest is estimated



Photo: Wynand Uys



Photos supplied

at R1,85 billion, which represents 8,5% of the total South African crop.

Mr Fivaz also detailed for the fascinated group the jobs being created by the local Agricultural Industry. Just over 10 000 people are employed annually and that excludes the extensive value chain of the agricultural production (transportation, distribution, IT support, security etc.).

The second speaker was Mr Manase Modipa, from the Bapedi Dinkwayane, who is a farmer farming on 226ha in the Blyde Catchment area. He shared with the team a Small-Scale Farmer's perspective. Mr Modipa

outlined their customers as vendors, general community members, social grant pay points and local supermarkets. He described small scale farmers' challenges as market access (transportation and logistics), access to capital funds and climate change. The audience found resonance in his description of the small-scale farmers ambition to perform, create jobs and ensure skills transfer to the youth.

Lastly Ms Shelly Fuller, from WW-SA, shared case studies of how WWF-SA is supporting the agricultural sector in the Western Cape to become nature positive in their production.

"The potential for conservation projects in partnership with farmers is endless and the K2C Team is excited to explore the possibilities going forward"

She explained the Conservation Champion initiative in the wine industry, which is a land stewardship programme, where demonstrated biodiversity responsible and nature positive farming is linked to improved market access. Wine farms that qualify as Conservation Champions get to place a specific logo on their bottles, allowing conscious consumers to easily identify buy wines that are farmed sustainably and support conservation actions.

She also shared insights into successful CATCHMENT SCALE COLLECTIVE ACTION in the Western Cape. In this model the international buyer and retailers support conservation actions, such as alien invasive clearing and land restoration, on the farms they purchase fresh produce from, creating more conscious consumerism.

Agriculture in its many forms is a major industry, land use, water user and livelihood supporter within



the K2C Biosphere and it is key, if we hope to integrate conservation with sustainable development in the region, that the agricultural industry is brought on board and supported to encourage more sustainable and environmentally friendly practices.

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Globetrotting Mozambican national claims extortion in rhino horn case

Tulani Ngwenya – Roving Reporters

A globetrotting Mozambican national, who Police say was arrested with a rhino horn in a plastic bag while walking along an East Rand highway last month, will be back in court on Monday 29 November.

Given his recent claim that the arresting officers tried to extort a R30 000 bribe, senior National Prosecuting Authority (NPA) officials are keeping a watchful eye over the case.

On the day of the arrest, October 14, the Police issued this statement: "A SAPS patrol noticed two men walking along the roadside with a large plastic container, wrapped with plastic bags and brown tape. On searching the plastic container, the police were surprised to find a large rhino horn. The two men were arrested."

That's according to the SAPS statement, but accused 51-year-old, Rogerio Domingos Moiane had a different story. He says that he and his co-accused, 55-year-old Clifford Mashego, were travelling in a white Isuzu bakkie to Mozambique. They were apprehended by a policewoman and three officers who tried to extort large amounts of cash from them.

Testifying in an on-going bail application in Delmas Magistrate's Court, Moiane said the police drove them about, stopping at the "Pre-

toria four-ways" intersection near the Delmas Golf Course, and then at a local KFC, demanding various amounts of money.

"The police stopped us at the off ramp and came to the vehicle. They wanted R30 000" Moiane told the court. "The police demanded that I call a colleague to bring the money."

He told the court that when he refused, "...the female police officer then removed the bucket with the (rhino) horn from the bakkie and put it in the police car."

In terms of the National Environment Management Biodiversity Act it is illegal to possess a rhino horn without a permit issued by conservation authorities. People convicted of contravening these biodiversity regulations can face up to five years in jail and also a fine of up to R5 million. Second offenders are liable for fines up to R10 million and 10 years imprisonment.

Moiane and Mashego are from the township of Ivory Park, near Tembisa in Gauteng. It is a densely populated area of more than 180,000 residents, covering little more than nine square kilometres. Moiane said he had lived in Ivory Park since 1997 on a property he now owned.

He told the court he had a passport and a permit to work in South Africa. He said he worked for a metrics company with offices in China and earned about R7 500 per month, and does a

lot of travelling across Africa and Asia.

Under cross-examination, State Prosecutor Gustav Schultz grilled Moiane about his account of the alleged attempt at bribery, challenging various aspects of his testimony. Moiane also conceded that he has a pending case in Nelspruit for possession of a firearm. He was arrested in 2017 and is currently out on R5 000 bail.

Schultz told the court that automatic vehicle locating (AVL) reports would prove that Moiane was lying about the sequence of events on the day of his arrest. AVL systems are designed for surveillance operations that enable law enforcement to track and monitor the movement of vehicles, including location, speed and stops, by obtaining data from global positioning system satellites.

Schultz also questioned Moiane about his travels to China, Australia, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, eSwatini, Mauritius, Uganda and Zambia, and produced a picture of a rhino horn obtained from Moiane's phone.

NPA spokeswoman, Mon-

ica Nyuswa, said the prosecuting authority was aware of Moiane's extortion claim and was keeping a close eye on the court case. Delmas SAPS spokesperson Captain Carla Hartley said the bribery allegation surfaced when investigating officers interviewed Moiane and Mashego in custody, soon after their arrest. "We are treating it very seriously. A case has already been opened," she added.

The bail hearing resumes on Monday, November 29,

Tulani Ngwenya is the Editor of Highveld Chronicle in Delmas. He is enrolled on the Khetha Journalism Project – an initiative that assists journalists in reporting on the complexities of illegal wildlife trade in and around the Greater Kruger area.

Comment:

Whilst this case is being heard in Delmas, the act of poaching and the destruction of our natural environment and resources have an impact on everyone. It is very relevant to those of us that are privileged to live within the heart of the Kruger to Canyons Bio-

The rhino horn that Rogerio Domingos Moiane and Clifford Mashego were allegedly carrying while walking alongside an East Rand highway (below)

Photo: supplied, SAPS



A police officer escorts co-accused, Clifford Mashego, to holding cells at the Delmas Magistrates' Court where he faces charges of illegal possession of a rhino horn.

Photo: Samora Mzizi

sphere and part of the Greater Kruger area. We need to take cognisance of this and be aware of what is happening to our wildlife.

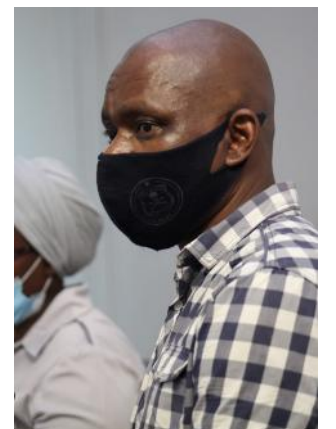
Roving Reporters have investigated the stats and report that during the first six months of this year (2021), 249 rhinos were poached in South Africa, according to the Department of Forestry, Fisheries and the Environment. More

than half of these rhinos were in the Kruger National Park.

One hundred and twenty-five people have been arrested for rhino poaching and rhino horn trafficking across the country. 40 alleged poachers were arrested within the Park over the same period.

Numerous confiscations of rhino horn have also taken place since January within the country, including at OR Tambo International Airport.

A total of 14 cases have reached verdict since the start of the year, representing a 93% conviction rate. Twenty poachers were convicted, the Department said in a statement to mark the World Ranger Day earlier this year (July 31).



Allegedly found in possession of a rhino horn, globe trotter Rogerio Domingos Moiane, faces Delmas prosecutor, Gustav Schultz. He disclosed that he has travelled to China, Australia, Kenya, Tanzania, Malawi, eSwatini, Mauritius, Uganda and Zambia.

Photo: Samora Mzizi

14-year sentence handed down to traffickers

Roving Reporters

In a media statement issued by the Directorate for Priority Crime Investigation (HAWKS) on 20 November 2021 the Directorate stated that the Middelburg Regional Court had sentenced a father (48) and son (27) to a total of 14 years imprisonment. The sentence was related to National Environmental Management Biodiversity Act (NEMBA)-related charges on 19 November 2021.

According to the statement, on 20 April 2019, two Mozambicans, both named as Alberto Ernesto Nharreluga, were travelling on the N4 highway in Nelspruit when members of the Middelburg Flying Squad stopped them.

The Police searched their

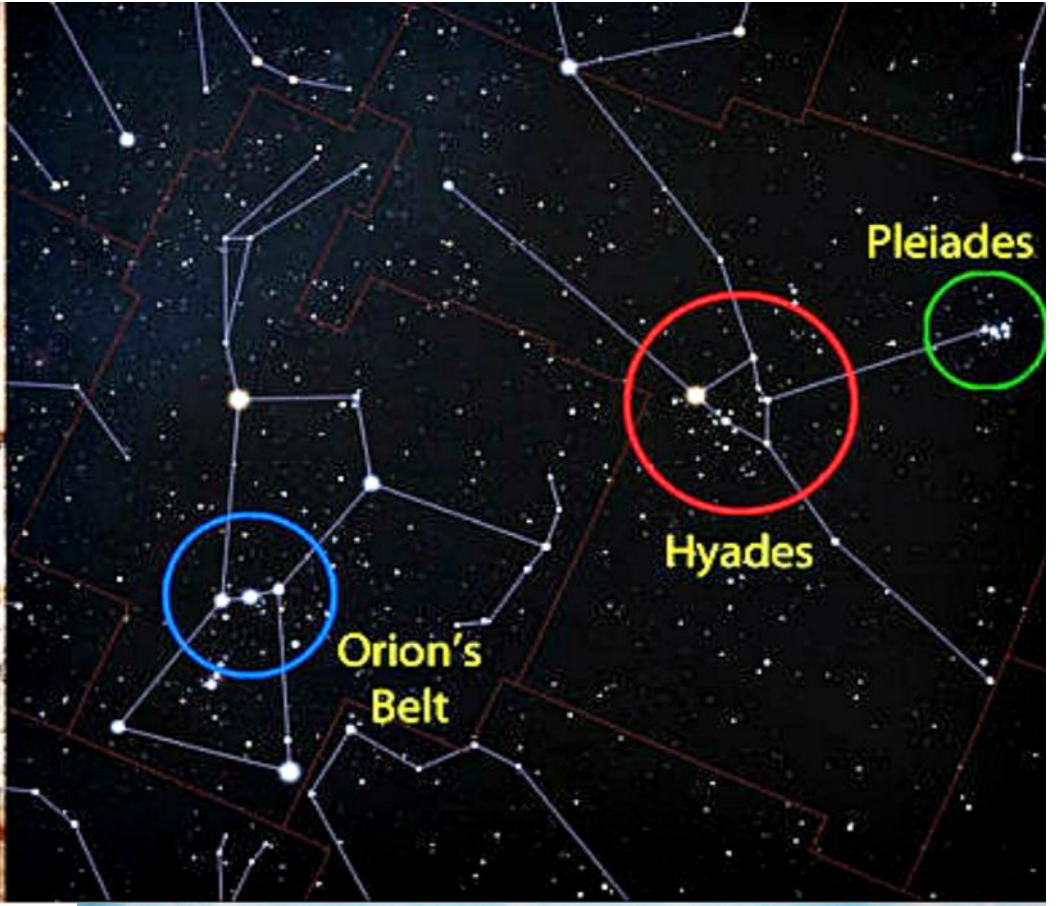
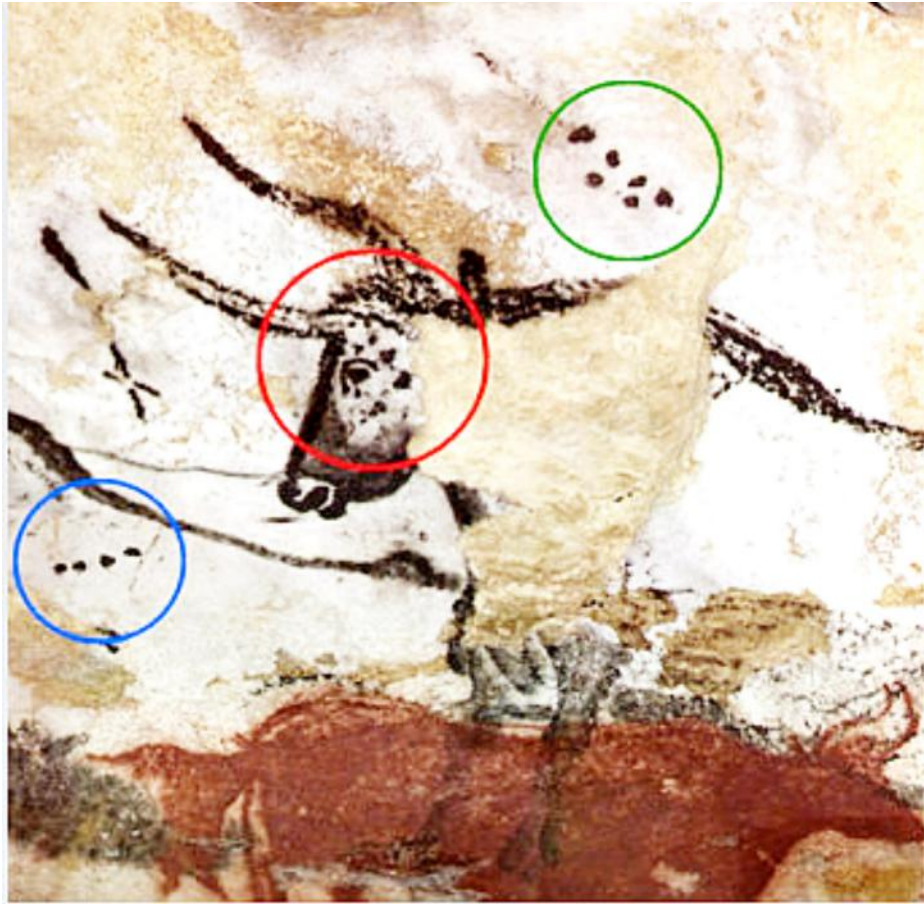
vehicle and recovered two rhino horns as well as shark fin. They were immediately arrested, but they offered Police Officers R20 000 to turn a blind eye to their criminal act.

They two men were charged and the docket was assigned to the Middelburg-based Hawks team for investigation. The accused were kept in custody throughout the trial.

The accused were both sentenced on Friday, 19 November 2021, to 6 years imprisonment for possession of rhino horns, five years imprisonment for corruption and three years imprisonment for possession of shark fin.

Any enquiries regarding this case can be directed to Captain Dineo Sekgotodi on 0714813493

Starry starry night - Constellation of the month - Taurus, The Bull



Ben Coley

Taurus is one of the twelve signs of the Zodiac and has been recognized as a constellation for thousands of years. One of the oldest references comes from cave paintings in the Dordogne region of France, known as the Lascaux Caves. One, in particular, seems to show Taurus, Pleiades and the neighbouring constellation of Orion. These paintings have been dated to over fifteen thousand years old, suggesting that mankind has been looking at the heavens since ancient times!

The most famous version of mythology stems from the story of Zeus and his courting of Europa. Zeus disguised himself as a handsome white bull that attracted Europa's attention. She adorned the bull with flowers and was

amazed by its placid nature. When the bull lay down, she climbed upon its back, at which point Zeus waded out into the water and swam to Crete with Europa still on his back.

Once in Crete, Europa realized that this was no ordinary bull, and when Zeus revealed himself to her, she gave herself to him. One of their offspring included Minos, King of Crete, who would go on to build the Labyrinth that housed the famous Minotaur. Zeus later immortalized his disguise by placing the bull in the sky as Taurus.

The most famous star in Taurus is the Red Giant, Aldebaran. To find Taurus and Aldebaran, one can draw a line through Orion's belt. Aldebaran marks the tip of one of the bull's horns and shines orange to the naked

Lascaux Caves (above)

Europa 300 (right)

Pleiades 300 (below)

Images supplied by Celestial Events

eye. The name stems from the Greek meaning 'The Follower', as the star seems to follow Pleiades, or Seven Sisters, across the sky.

The star is in the latter stages of its life and has cooled and swelled to mammoth proportions, estimated to be fifty times the radius of our Sun and over four hundred times brighter!

Taurus is home to the most famous open cluster of stars in the night sky. The Pleiades, or Seven Sisters, represent the seven daughters of Atlas in Greek Mythology. Although only six or seven stars are visible to the naked eyes, the



cluster contains more than thousand associated baby stars, all created from the same gas cloud, that is moving through space together, as they embark on their stellar adventures.

Pleiades was known in ancient times, and its heliacal rising (when it was visible just before sunrise) marked the time of year to begin planting crops, as this signified the start of summer and its associated rains.



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The spectacular vistas from Mariepскоп
Images supplied

Tom Vorster

On 4th November 2021, Kruger to Canyons Biosphere Region convened a meeting with private sector tourism stakeholders from the Hoedspruit area, to explain the process relating to the incorporation of the Lowveld plantations including Mariepскоп, into the Blyde River Canyon Nature Reserve.

Mariepскоп (or Maripe's Mountain, named after 19th-century MaPulana chief Maripe Mashile who used the mountain as a stronghold), is currently managed by the National Department of Forestry, Fisheries & Environment (DFFE). However, following its official incorporation into the Blyde Canyon Nature Reserve, management of the area will eventually fall to Mpumalanga Tourism & Parks Agency (MTPA). The transfer process also needs

to take the land claims over the area by four Communal Property Associations (CPAs) into consideration. Being a proclaimed nature reserve, the CPAs will not be occupying the area, however, they will need to benefit from any commercial activity which takes place there.

The mountain, at 1947 meters above sea level, is one of the highest peaks in the northern Drakensberg and the highest point of the Blyde River Canyon. The upper reaches of the mountain comprise large swathes of indigenous Afromontane Forest, while the relatively flat top is dominated by unique fynbos with spectacular views of the Lowveld to the east and the Blyderivierspoort Dam deep in the canyon to the west. Where the sheer slopes to the east give way to slightly less steep geography, the landscape is dominated by timber plantations of pine and eucalyptus,

no longer actively managed by DFFE.

In the late 1950s, the military built a radar station on top of Mariepскоп with an adjoining base to house staff. A road was engineered through the forest to the top, to give access to the military installation. Today, the radar antenna has been replaced with more modern equipment and connected directly to the Hoedspruit Air Force base, so no staff live up the mountain. The base (now managed by the Department of Public Works) has been abandoned and has fallen into disrepair and is slowly being engulfed by the forest.

The public can access Mariepскоп and some nearby picnic sites and waterfalls up a winding gravel road. DFFE currently manages a control gate close to where the Afromontane Forest starts. The original steep concrete road to the top

starts near the abandoned base and is still in good condition.

The Kruger to Canyons Biosphere Region has been involved in the process of incorporating the area into the Blyde River Canyon Nature Reserve and has been engaging with all the parties involved in the process. A major milestone was achieved in August 2021 when the area was officially gazetted as part of the Blyde River Canyon Nature Reserve, which almost doubles the size of this iconic reserve. It is however anticipated that the final incorporation and transfer may only take place within the next 18 months to two years. At the meeting briefed several local private sector tourism stakeholders were briefed on the current status, potential threats to the area in the interim, as well motivating local interest groups to raise awareness of this

iconic natural and cultural attraction on Hoedspruit's doorstep.

Currently, DFFE has not been allocated any budget to manage the reserve until its transfer to MTPA, and there is a threat of uncontrolled, illegal timber harvesting. This is already taking place on an industrial scale in the abandoned commercial plantations on the lower reaches of the mountain and could spread into the threatened Afromontane Forests at the higher altitudes.

It is believed that parts of the abandoned military base are being used by illegal occupants which could pose a threat to the natural fauna and flora on the mountain unless urgent action is taken. With little capacity and budget available to the DFFE, and the MTPA not yet appointed as managers, no foreseeable enforcement is likely.

In addition to the military installation on the peak, several government and private telecommunications installations have been placed on the mountain. It is understood that there is no control over these installations, no leases have been concluded with the existing managing agency, and as a result no rental is being paid. Rental income from these installations could go some way in funding conservation efforts on the mountain.

The mountain still holds cultural significance to the MaPulana community that live beneath it, as well as on the western side of the Canyon. It was agreed that awareness of the threats to the mountain as well as its potential as a tourism destination, needs to be highlighted in the local communities to ensure they actively get involved in its protection.

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The amazing world of animal sight - myths, facts and getting it right

Leoni Joubert and Prof. Wayne Gillan

Have you ever wondered how animals see the world? We always tend to see things from a human perspective and often incorrectly assume how animals see. This very brief foray into the world of animal vision will attempt to shed some light (pardon the pun) on this profoundly complex and interesting topic.

Let us assume that most people know the basic structure of the human eye and how it works. Most mammal eyes have a similar structure to a human eye but with very different abilities.

Our world is a colourful one and humans (having three colour vision receptors in their retinas just like other primates) can perceive an amazing variety of colours. But we pale in comparison to the range of colour that birds can see. Even a lowly dove can see more than a million hues of colour, thanks to their retinas containing not three but four colour vision receptors! Some birds can also see in Ultra-Violet (UV), an ability that makes their world much more vibrant than we can ever imagine.

We've all heard of having "Eagle Vision", but do we know what that means? Raptors, like eagles, have amazing vision. They have an area on their retinas (the nerve layer at the back of the eye) that can magnify their vision, giving them the ability to see things much further than we can (like having a built-in telescope!).

Owls can see well at night and have huge eyes in relation to their heads. In fact they are so huge that there is no room for eye muscles to move the eye and therefore owls eyes do not move at all. This is why owls can turn their heads almost completely around, thereby compensating for their inability to move their

eyes.

Birds and some other animals have a third eyelid (nictitating membrane) that helps to moisten and protect the eye. Imagine trying to keep your eyes open while sticking your head out of a vehicle travelling at high speed. Now you can comprehend how this membrane would work, almost like a pair of goggles to protect the eye from watering too much, as well as from airborne particles (for example, a falcon that can fly up to 300km/h when diving for prey!). An ostrich has the largest eye of any land animal, even bigger than an elephant's eye, with each of its eyes bigger than its brain.

Speaking of elephants, did you know that an elephant's eye is the same size as a humans? The visual system of an elephant is very similar to ours, they see almost the same as we do in terms of colour and have similar night vision ability. The other interesting fact about elephants, is that they have no tear glands (so they cannot cry). Instead, elephants possess a Harderian gland that secretes a lubricating substance that is smeared across the eye using their nictitating membrane (which we do not have). This leads to them often having a white frothy substance in the corner of their eyes. If you see this it is completely normal so don't think the poor ellie has an eye infection. Elephants also have very long eyelashes to protect their eyes from both the sun and dust.

Unlike birds or primates (including humans), most other mammals do not have such good colour vision. Animals like cats, dogs, lions, leopards, antelope and giraffe all only have two colour vision receptors and see the world in hues of green and blue because they are missing a red colour receptor in their retinas. They cannot perceive red at all.



This is why hunters can wear a bright red/orange jacket and be less visible to deer. We can see the bright warning red colour but to an antelope (or dog or cat or lion) it will just appear as a muted shade of greenish-blue. To us, a tiger is visible but to the prey that it is stalking, it easily blends into the dappled background of a forest and is almost invisible (unless it moves). Of course, animals that hunt at night can see much better than we can in the dark.

Lions have terrific night vision to assist them when hunting at night. The retina of a lion has many more rods (used for seeing at night and for detecting movement) than cones (used for colour vision and fine detail). It is much more important for a lion to be able to see well in low light than to see in colour, so this adaptation makes perfect sense. They also have a special coating at the back of the eye called a tapetum lucidum, which can even reflect moonlight, making their eyes appear to glow in the dark. The tapetum lucidum (it translates as "light carpet") intensifies objects and makes their eyes more light-sensitive under low light conditions. This coating gives lions eight times better sight than a human at night. Lions also have a second eyelid, which can be drawn over to clean and protect the eye. Lions have round

pupils instead of vertical slits, as are found in domestic cats. Lion cubs are born with blue eyes that change to amber or brown when aged two to three months.

People often say that they can tell whether an animal is a predator or prey by looking at the colour of the reflection of light from their eyes at night, and that predators have a red reflection and antelope for example, have a green eye reflection. The colour of the reflection has nothing to do with whether they are a predator or not! The colour that is seen is dependent on the angle of the eye when the light is reflected, as well as the type of light entering the eyes. So you can see a lion's eyes reflecting green or red depending on the eye position.

A much better method to determine whether an animal is a predator or not is to look at the position of their eyes. Predators have eyes that both point forward and give them improved binocular vision. This enables them to accurately judge the position and distance of their prey. Animals that are preyed upon (such as zebra for example), have eyes that are positioned on the side of their heads and that give them a bigger field of view which enables them to see a potential threat, especially from behind.

The pupil is the small black opening in the eye that lets light through

to the retina. It can be widened or narrowed to let in more or less light as needed. Our pupils are round but many animals have different pupil shapes. Cats have vertical slit-like pupils that can dramatically open and close to allow much more light to enter during low light conditions. Antelopes and the like have horizontal pupils that enable them to allow more light to enter on a horizontal plane which together with their side-mounted eyes, assist them in seeing more acutely horizontally. Geckos have an array of pupils that are positioned vertically and they can open them the widest of any animal. This gives the gecko exceptional night vision. A gecko's eyes also have many more light-sensitive cells than human eyes, giving the animal the ability to detect objects, and even to see colours at night.

To give you an idea of the gecko's amazing night vision, let us just say that, while cats and sharks can see six and ten times better than humans at night, respectively, the Leaf Tailed Gecko and other nocturnal gecko species can see up to 350 times better than we can in dim light! Geckos and lizards don't have eyelids. Their eyes are protected by a transparent membrane and geckos are often seen cleaning this membrane with their tongue.

Some animals have unique adaptations to their eyes. The dassie for example can look directly into the sun without damaging their eyes. Humans would blind themselves if we did that, but the dassie uses this to help them look for eagles that prey on them.

Invertebrates (insects, spiders and others) have very different eyes from humans. They have compound eyes of many different types. There are 10 different types of eyes of which simple eyes (like

humans and other mammals possess) are just one. Some invertebrate animals like scorpions can even see in UV. The carapace of a scorpion glows under UV light and since they can see UV, it allows them to find each other for mating purposes. Other invertebrates, for example dung beetles, can perceive polarized light which is important for them in terms of navigation.

Dragonflies eyes are so big that they cover almost the entire head, giving it a helmeted appearance. These eyes can have up to 30,000 small ommatidia, each one containing a lens and a series of light-sensitive cells. Their eyesight is superb; they can detect colours and polarized light, and are particularly sensitive to movement, allowing them to quickly discover any potential prey or enemy. They have a horizontal array of super sensitive photoreceptors that form a "horizon view". Males often have a "love spot" in their eyes for viewing upwards that helps them find a mate.

Spiders are popularly known for having many eyes, although this varies greatly among the different species, with some having two, four, six or eight eyes. Some eyes are used for detecting movement while others are used for seeing detail.

What about the animal with the most complex eyes on earth? As you've probably guessed by now it is not humans. That honour belongs to the Mantis Shrimp that has eyes that have 12 colour receptors (compared to our paltry 3!), can also see in UV and polarized light, can move its eyes independently and perceive depth in one eye only.

Although this brief article has barely scratched the surface of the fascinating world of animal vision we hope you are as amazed as we are!

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Twitching for vagrants

Mike Meidlinger

Despite their relative lack of common species, as well as the fact that the tropics and even their subtropics hold a much wider variety of species, South African birding has certainly adapted to the twitching bug that can be found in more temperate climates.

Twitching refers to the specific form of birding whereby "twitchers", birders who pursue rarities, spend most of their souls and beings in the pursuit of individual birds. These individuals are of species that are not normally found in that country or continent, and are known as rarities or vagrants.

The excitement lies in the fact that that one bird might fly at any time and never be seen again. Not only this, but the question which then pervades is, when will another one be found? It could be months, years or decades later.

In extreme cases the challenge of twitching can lead to birders investing almost all of their time, money and attention in this endeavour.

South Africa, despite its large size has a busy and growing twitching community with a variety of annual local and national rarities, plus vagrants. The country receives its scarcities from a number of sources. Most are in fact oddly American or Nearctic in origin. Others



Golden pipit

Photo supplied

herald from easterly Asian realms, while the fewest, but not the least special, are birds from further north in Africa.

American birds are usually waders such as sandpipers, stints and plovers. These get blown across the North Atlantic Ocean to north-

west Europe during autumn storms, especially hurricanes. These storms occur as large numbers of birds are migrating south from arctic breeding grounds. They get shunted across the ocean and then simply continue their migration south, to reach the tip of Africa! An annual example is the Pectoral Sandpiper of which multiple birds are found each summer.

Asian vagrants like Asiatic Dowitcher and Lesser Cuckoo are birds that have simply started off their normal migration in the wrong direction! This can be caused by inexperience or even a genetic malfunction, and when it occurs these reverse migrants end up really

well out of their range.

African rarities, like Golden Pipit, turn up in one or two places almost every year now but they stay for only a few days. With very few exceptions, birders have to be on their toes to get this beauty as well as other African short-stayers, like White-throated Bee-eaters and Grasshopper Buzzards.

What is clear is that with the increase in the number of people birding in South Africa, and due to the dedication of those that spread bird news through online resources and groups, more and more vagrants are found each year. Keep your eyes and mind open while out in the field this summer. Merry "twitching".

Drakie leaders of the future

Carina Scheepers

The hard-working learners of Drakensig Primary School were recently rewarded during the school's prize-giving ceremony. The school is extremely proud of all our learners who were determined to keep working hard and do their best despite the challenging 2021 school year. Congratulations to all the newly appointed leaders and scholar patrol for next year that were announced at the ceremony. Carpe Diem!



Leaders 2022:

Ntsakelo Nkwini (head girl), Ekene Arukwe (head boy), Simoné Bronkhorst (deputy head girl), Rianco Haggard (deputy head boy), Marko Bredenkamp, Conrad Claassens, Laricka Hattingh, Franco Landsberg, Johan Liebenberg, Kian Lötter, Tammy MacGregor, Mikateko Mafuyeka, Kamogelo Makweng, Junior Manavhela, Jessica Mashego, Violet Moatlhudi, Blessing Mohlala, Tshogo Mojapelo, Nondumiso Ndlovu, Justin Relling, Monene Sekgobela, Ninicke van der Merwe, Zehan Wolmarans, and Luyanda Zwane.



Scholar Patrol 2022

Ricardo Coertzen, Leanné Gerber, Koketso Lewele, Kaylin Julies, Mogau Malatji, Rianah Mashile, Hlulani Mazibane, Tamasha Mukansi, Jean-Pierre Müller, Tiaan Müller, Gugulethu Nkosi, Nerise Raath, Phomolo Shubane and Kurhula Sibuyi.

TRIVIA QUESTIONS

- On which Hawaiian island is the capital Honolulu?
- 'Winning by a canvas' is sometimes used to describe a close victory in which sport?
- The flag of which Southeast Asian country is red with a five-pointed yellow star in the centre?
- The fingerprints of humans have many characteristics shared with which marsupial?
- Which poisonous plant, often connected with magical rituals, was in the Middle Ages thought to utter a shriek when pulled from the ground?
- What term is used for a fruit with a thin skin, fleshy interior, and a hard, stony inner layer?
- In 1877, Spencer Gore became the first winner of which sporting championship?
- Which city is shown as the centre of the world on the medieval 'Mappa Mundi'?
- Which relative of the giraffe is found only in the deep forests of Africa, and was unknown to Europeans until about 1900?
- The Parthenon was the chief temple of which Greek goddess?
- Who played Idi Amin in The Last King of Scotland?
- If you're unfortunate to have a furuncle, what do you have?
- The Rapa Nui are specifically inhabitants of which part of the world?
- How many vertebrae or bones are there in a giraffe's neck?
- Which leader established The Yuan dynasty?



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Celbux presented their cashless payment system to 65 citrus farmers at the Hoedspruit Citrus Study Group meeting at Francine's on 29 September 2021. It was the end of season meeting and the information shared during the day was looking and planning forward to 2022.

Celbux took this opportunity

to present its wage pay out product for farmers. Farmers should consider changing how they will be paying their workers, specifically their temporary workers. While the Celbux wage pay-out product is already used in a variety of different sectors like packaging, government, tourism, restaurants, construction and maintenance, it has an active and growing base of farmers doing regular wage pay-outs.

Paying out wages through conventional solutions such as cash, bank accounts and cards has many inherent

problems. It is expensive for both the employers and the workers, processes are rigid and require quite a bit of administration, not to mention the constraints around foreign workers.

Celbux offers a convenient and risk-free cashless payment solution through which employers can pay out wages directly to worker's cell phones. The worker does not need to preregister and no paperwork is required to open an account. Employers simply transfer the total amount they wish to pay out to workers to the Celbux ac-

count, and then upload a file with the workers cell numbers and the amount payable. Payments can be set for a specific date and time.

Anyone can be a merchant of Celbux. The benefit of this is that workers are not limited to spending their wages at the major retailers, but any local shop or farm store can also become a merchant and benefit from the workers spending with them. Celbux can be used at Shoprite, Pick 'n Pay, Boxer and Spar, as well as at Clicks, Dischem and fast food outlets like KFC, Nando's and

Steers. There are hundreds of informal merchants using the Celbux system!

A great benefit of the Celbux wage pay out product is that it is free for both the employer and the worker, for as long as the worker spends using the wallet on their phone. The workers can also buy airtime directly from their phone and send money to any family member or friend with a cell phone. The system works on a smart phone or the oldest of feature phones. Many farmers (and others) across South Africa have started us-

ing Celbux and love it! I have personally tried it out and it was simple and amazing.

With over R10 billion disbursed, more than 10 000 merchants and over 40 million transactions to date, this is a Company and service to take notice of. Celbux offers an alternative, secure, cost-effective solution to employers and employees. This is not a system to be ignored and needs to be seriously considered.

For more information, go to <https://celbuxwallet.co.za/>.

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Tickle Tubs to tickle your fancy, available in many beautiful colours

Photos supplied

Liezel Maree

The sun has set and the stars are out. The quiet tranquility of the bush is enhanced as you gently slip into your wood-fired Tickle Tub ... ah, paradise found!

Does this tickle your fancy? You are in luck! Tickle Tubs will be here in the Lowveld in December!

These fire-driven hot tubs are perfect for remote loca-

tions in the African bush, under the stars, where only the sound of a roaring fire is allowed to accompany the sounds of nature. This certainly reduces the costs of using a hot tub as it uses no electricity. There is no forced circulation system (found in other jetted hot tubs), instead the natural principal of thermosiphoning is used.

Thermosiphoning employs the principal that hot water

rises. The fire heats the water inside the stainless steel coils, which slowly rises to the top, pushing out into the hot tub. At the same time cold water is drawn into the bottom opening of the pipe providing a natural convection "current" that requires no pump.

No electricity usage also means no noisy bubbles allowing the Tickle Tubs to offer a classic experience

in a modern design. Once a wood or charcoal fire is made inside the fire chamber the water will heat up to 40 degrees Celsius within 60-90 minutes.

Tickle Tubs weigh 75kg when empty, are fully portable and require no installation. They are free standing and can accommodate up to 4 adults. Suggested filling capacity is 700 liters with a tap on the outside that connects

to a garden hose. The water is not wasted because you can water your garden once all the fun is over.

Customers are allowed to order any colour their heart desires from the RAL-colour chart, allowing clients to opt for the more traditional colours, or to truly express their character by choosing a bright and funky colour.

Tickle Tubs are manufactured out of marine grade fi-

berglass, with a gel coat top layer and marine grade stainless steel coils. The outer rim diameter is 1800cm and the height is 880cm. They are 100% hand crafted in South Africa!

Details can be found on Facebook at @tickletub and Instagram: @tickle_tub. For orders and enquiries you can email aroundmyfire@gmail.com or call 082 852 5925.

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We are the Ocean Queens



The "Woman that fish" team with their support team, proudly Hoedspruit



The Ocean queens with their catch



Photos supplied

Marna Meintjes

Hoedspruit, landlocked safari capital of South Africa is synonymous with safari, bush, wild animals and biltong. Deep sea fishing is a far cry from Hoedspruit. But out of that, along comes the "Woman that Fish" team – a team of adventurous ladies taking on the ocean and competing in the Ladies Deep Sea

Angling Tournament 2021. This intrepid group of women took up the challenge, packed up their tackle and headed off to the ocean. St Lucia Ski-Boat Club hosted the Ladies Deep Sea Angling-Tournament from 5 to 7 November. Team "Woman that Fish" took part in this tournament and showed their determination and true grit, walking away with many

prizes and, best of all, an amazing experience. Team "Woman that Fish" are all ladies from Hoedspruit. Lise Smit, Marna Meintjes, Liezl Schwartz and Nita Scholtz were part of the team on the boat, Maverick. In total 16 boats took part in this tournament. Marna Meintjes and Nita Scholtz had the privilege to release their first sailfish. In

total 4 sailfish were released by this team. The team also brought the following prizes back to Hoedspruit: 4th place out of 16 boats; Nita Scholtz – Best Ladies Angler for the competition as well as Swindle Winner for Day 1; and Best Dressed Vikings! Well done ladies, you have done both yourselves and Hoedspruit proud.

TRIVIA ANSWERS

- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Oahu | 8. Jerusalem |
| 2. Rowing | 9. Okapi |
| 3. Vietnam | 10. Athena |
| 4. Koala bear | 11. Forest Whitaker |
| 5. Mandrake | 12. A boil |
| 6. Drupe | 13. Easter Island |
| 7. Wimbledon - Men's Singles | 14. Seven |
| | 15. Kublai Khan |

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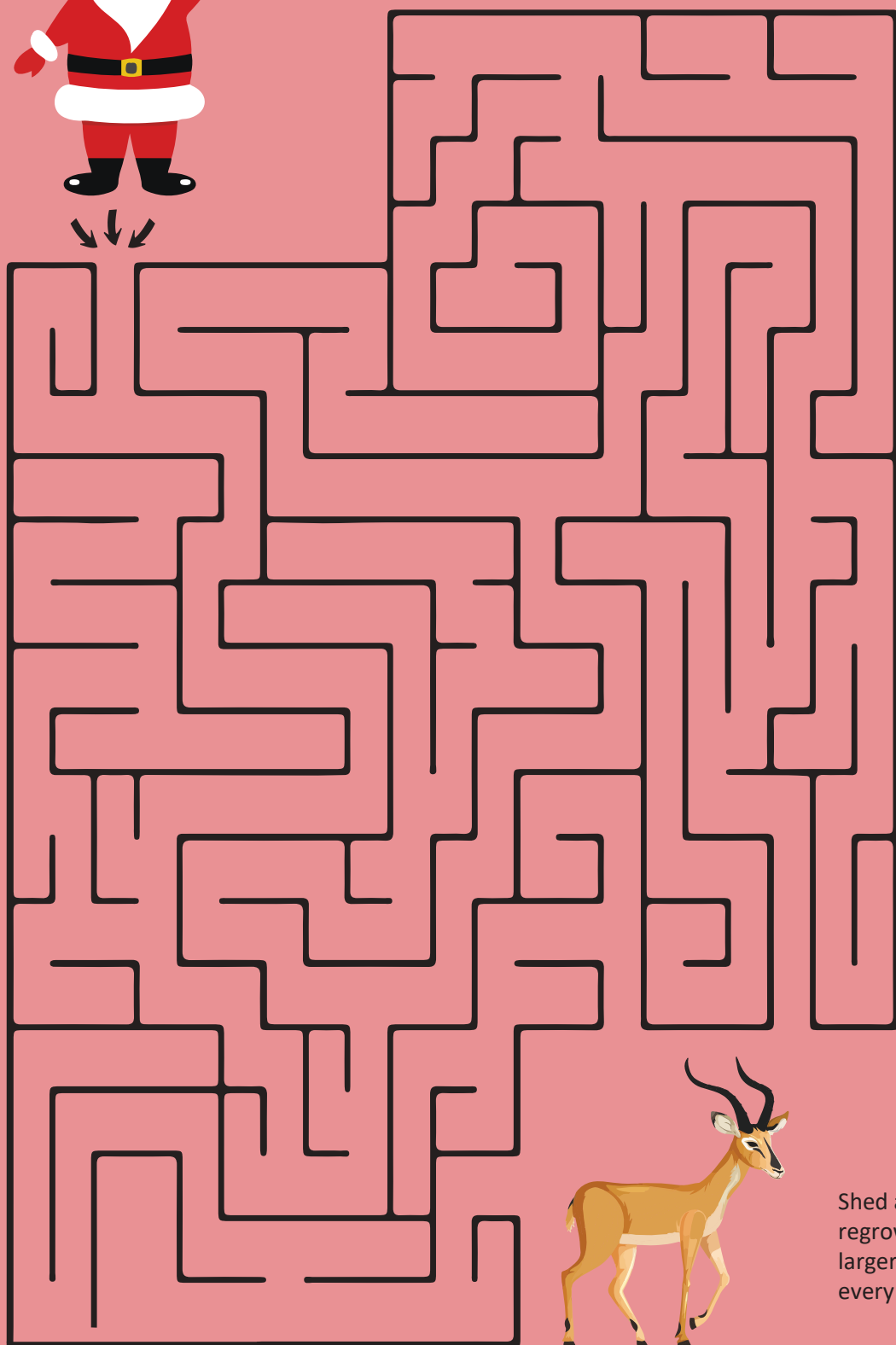
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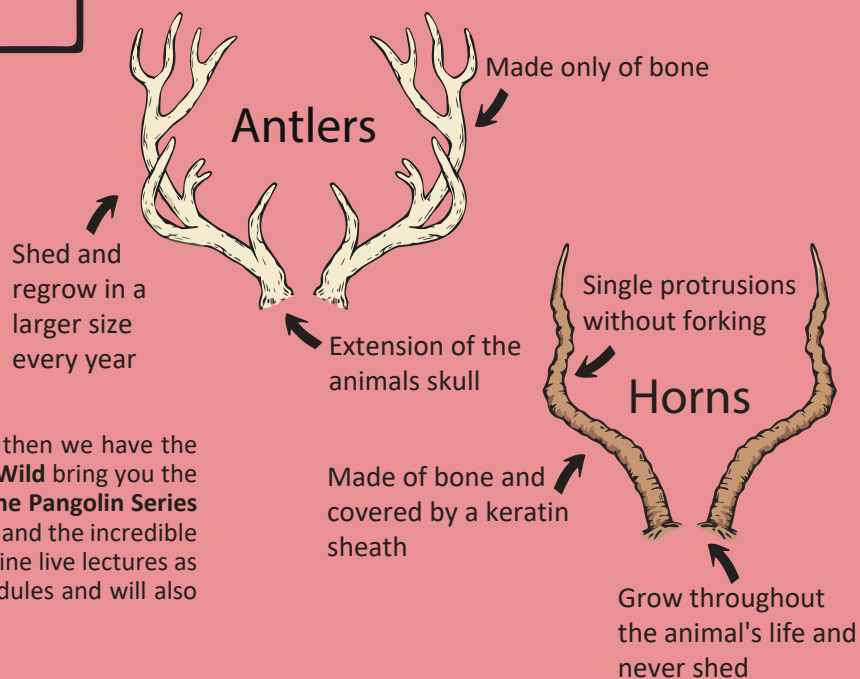


Did you know that there is a difference between Antelope and Deer?

The most important difference between antelope and deer is that male deer have antlers, which are shed and grow back every year. Antelopes however have horns that are permanent and they keep for their whole life.

So, what is the difference between antlers & horns?

Horns are hollow and pointed. They are attached to the bone of an animal's head. Horns are made of keratin. Keratin is the same material that makes up hooves, hair, and fingernails. Whereas, Antlers, are large, branching structures, made of bone, which grow on the heads of animals like deer. Only male deer will have antlers, where both male and female antelope can have horns.



If you love the wilderness, and are passionate about conservation, then we have the perfect thing for you. **FGASA Junior** in partnership with **Kids In The Wild** bring you the new and improved Pangolin Series that will be launching in 2022. **The Pangolin Series** will include an interactive platform for kids to reconnect with nature and the incredible wilderness that surrounds us on a daily basis. We will be offering online live lectures as well as on-demand courses that will encompass many different modules and will also include games, quizzes, homework and so much more.



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