



KRUGER2CANYON

NEWS

June 2023

The Farm House, R527, Zandspruit, Hoedspruit, Limpopo email: editor@kruger2canyon.co.za

The 'Hoedspruit Private Hospital' - a vision takes shape



Locality of new the Hoedspruit Private Hospital

Image: Supplied

Mark Bishop

For years there has been a glaring need for a medical facility in Hoedspruit. Numerous rumours regarding a hospital in Hoedspruit did their rounds – it should, could, was, was not happening, no money was available, land couldn't be secured, and so it went on. Well now we have it – the hospital vision is taking shape. It's coming to town, and this is the developing story!

About six years ago, Pieter Scholtz, Jaco Leicester and Carien Taute, got together to conjure up plans for the building a hospital in Hoedspruit. The magnitude of this undertaking could have eluded them at the time, nonetheless, true grit prevailed and today we have a story to tell.

A substantial investment (on risk) was put into the deal by Pieter and Jacko, and Carien was duly appointed as the local Project Manager.

The first step of the development was to identify land that was zoned for a hospital (hospitals cannot be built anywhere). That land was identified between the Lowveld Academy, the gym and storage. A total of 2ha was bought consisting of eight stands, these obviously had to be consolidated into one.

How big was the hospital going to be?

Urban Econ was contracted to do market research for the hospital, to determine how many medical aid clients there were in a 50km radius around Hoedspruit. The logic in that research, was that 50km was about the extrem-

ity of 'reach' for a local hospital. Beyond that, the probability was that any person requiring treatment may opt to go elsewhere, like Nelspruit or Tzaneen.

At that stage, around five to six years ago, the results showed that there were approximately 90 000 people on medical aids within a 50km radius of Hoedspruit! That included members and dependents.

Factoring that number in, the equation indicated that a hospital of 170 beds would be viable. But that was clearly too big for the undertaking to start with. After due consideration, it was decided to submit an application to the Department of Health for a 50-bed hospital with two operating theatres.

Another consultant was brought on board to help with the submission of the

application for the operating licence. That application was finally submitted in September 2018, but unfortunately a week after submission, the Department of Health in Limpopo put a moratorium on all new private hospitals, because they wanted to do a survey and see what is available in the province.

The department finally lifted the moratorium a year later, and very soon after that the license for the Hoedspruit Private Hospital was granted. To the surprise of many, the department authorised 50 beds and four theatres, as a result a further application has been submitted to increase the bed count to 62. This was considered a reasonable and logical expansion figure.

Cont. on page 3

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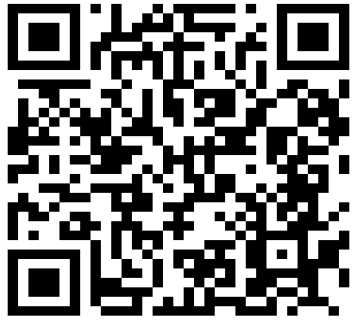
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From the editors desk...



Hello all. This month's edition is really a bumper one. Thank you to all who submitted their articles – it's so fantastic to have such an unbelievable bunch of 'jorno's' doing their thing, and something that they love to do, just for us.

I was watching a program (a terrifying one at that) on Artificial Intelligence, and it dawned on me that few people actually know what it is – so here's the best definition that I could find, and hopefully it will clear up some misinterpretations as to what AI is:

Artificial intelligence is the simulation of human intelligence processes by machines, especially computer systems.

Here are some days this month that may be of interest to some:

- July 11 – World population day – we need to think about this big time!
- July 14 – Bastille day – for our French friends.
- July 16 – World snake day – something I try and steer clear of.
- July 26 - International Day for the Conservation of the Mangrove Ecosystem (UNESCO) – important.

- July 28 – World Nature Conservation Day – very important, some interesting facts below.
- July 30 – International Day of Friendship – everyone needs a friend!

The World Nature Conservation Day is an annual event held on July 28. It brings to light the need to try as best we can, to preserve a healthy environment and natural resources, to maintain a stable and healthy world and a healthy society. Attention should be focussed on the momentous task of trying to save plants and animals that face the threat of extinction.

Here are some facts about conservation that many people do not know:

Extinction is happening on a massive scale. About one million species of plants and animals are nearly extinct. More reserves are needed. Only 12,5% of the landmass on earth is dedicated to natural reserves. Expensive invasive species are costing a fortune. The United Kingdom, the United States, India, South Africa, Brazil, and Australia suffer an annual combined loss of \$ 316 billion due to invasive species. Wildlife population sizes have greatly declined. The WWF's Living Planet Report of 2020, states that there has been an average 68% drop in the global population sizes of birds, amphibians, fish, mammals, and reptiles between the years 1970 to 2016. Freshwater species are declining the fastest. Freshwater wildlife species populations are declining disproportionately faster than others, having decreased by an average of 84% between 1970 and 2018.

This is a matter of great concern for ev-

ery single one of us. I know it's a continual 'same old, same old' banter, but we have to keep plugging away at it until the realisation dawns on world leaders, and the populations around the world as a whole, that something has to be done because if the animals (and plants) go, then we go too!

What is fantastic, is that we have managed to cut through the miasma surrounding the hospital and that is very exciting – a huge game changer. We can also rejoice for a time, because 'Big Joe' sits in Thoyondou prison rather than being out on bail until his hearing on the 6/7th July.

The fact that we have not really experienced winter, is fabulous, but we have been plagued by little fly-type pests, aka 'miggies'! Not only in the 100's but in the 100 000's! They are all about town, and solutions to eradicate this plague of pests vary from a good spray of Doom to glasses of red wine covered by perforated clingwrap, to mixtures of vinegar and washing liquid covered the same way, to ultraviolet lights and more. The problem is that for every one taken care of, another million are waiting in the wings! One thing for sure is they have a penchant for wine and make a b-line to commit 'harakiri' in one's glass, en masse! I was too late for this edition to do a little research on these fellas – but I will find out what they are and why they are pestering us all!

I do hope you enjoy the read; it's been fun putting this edition together. Until next time, be safe and be true.

Post script: Veggie Diva is on holiday, so there is no recipe this month.



Mark Bishop - Editor

Disclaimer:

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How long will it take for animals to be extinct? An AI comment

Predicting the exact timeline for animal extinctions is challenging and depends on various factors such as habitat loss, climate change, human activities, conservation efforts, and ecological dynamics. While some animal species have already gone extinct and others are critically endangered, it is difficult to provide a definitive timeline for the extinction of all animals.

It's worth noting that the rate of species extinction has been accelerating in

recent decades due to human-induced factors, such as deforestation, pollution, overexploitation, and climate change. The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) maintains a Red List that assesses the conservation status of species, and according to their data, thousands of animal species are currently at risk of extinction.

However, there are ongoing efforts to protect and conserve endangered species, including habitat preserva-

tion, captive breeding programs, and international agreements such as the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). These initiatives aim to prevent extinction and promote sustainable conservation practices.

Ultimately, the fate of animal species depends on global conservation efforts and our ability to address the underlying causes of extinction threats. With increased awareness, conservation

measures, and collective action, it is possible to mitigate the risk of extinctions and protect the Earth's biodiversity.

Credit: ChatGPT, chat.openai.com
ChatGPT is an artificial intelligence chatbot developed by OpenAI based on the company's Generative Pre-trained Transformer series of large language models.

Quiz questions

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Hypermetropic people are what? | first film, what was it called? |
| 2. Which leader would have lived in the Potola Palace? | 12. Stan Laurel, Mickey Rooney, Lana Turner have what in common? |
| 3. What woods were Jesus's cross supposed to be made of? | 13. What real person has been played most often in films? |
| 4. Joseph Levitch became famous as who? | 14. Scotopic people can do what? |
| 5. If you planted a banderilla what are you doing? | 15. What is the most critical thing to keep bananas fresh in transport? |
| 6. What was the first Pink Floyd album? | 16. What is the French word for stock exchange? |
| 7. In which city was the first public opera house opened? | 17. Whose classical music featured in The Clockwork Orange? |
| 8. In what Elvis film did he play a double role? | 18. What was the Troggs most famous hit? |
| 9. The Aphrodite of Melos has a more famous name for what? | 19. In Japan what colour car is reserved for the royal family only? |
| 10. Which country invented the concentration camp? | 20. What was gangster George Nelson's nickname? |
| 11. John Huston scored a hit with his | 21. What do you give on the third wedding anniversary? |

Love the Hoed goes golfing



Martin den Dunnen

Deon Van der Ploeg

Andre Nel

The 'Hoedspruit Private Hospital' - a vision takes shape



Locality of new the Hoedspruit Private Hospital (above left) and the architects impression of the hospital foyer (above right) Images supplied

Cont. from page 1.

Licensing and COVID

After the license was granted, the architectural plans had to be submitted, approved, and signed off. That was a six-month process. Running parallel to that process, many locals were approached to find out who might be interested in investing in the hospital. R 100 million was raised in equity and the balance of the funds to complete this project still had to be sourced!

Just as this project was gaining traction COVID 19 reared its ugly head! All applications and processes came to a grinding halt, and although some may have regarded this as a major setback, the investors had faith in the project, and sat tight, waiting for the pandemic to end. That day arrived and save for the licensing the process, everything had to restarted from the very beginning.

It became glaringly obvious that there was a need for a big investor, because apart from the approximately 30 people in and around Hoedspruit that had invested in the project, there was a blatant deficit in the accounts and subsequently the budget. Thankfully Investec Bank saw the potential and came up with the approval of the loan for the major debt on the project.

The project now had financial closure, and an AGM was held on the 27 May 2023, where a Board of Directors were appointed. Earthworks were started on the 7 of June 2023, to flatten and level the site. The project will be managed in a joint venture by Predevcon and Buzz Projects.

The company structure

The hospital structure consists of two companies – a property company (PropCo) and an operational company (OpCo). The property company owns the buildings and the land, and the operational company owns the business, operational license and the equipment in the hospital. Within the operational company, doctors, specialists, and medical personnel hold between 50 and 60

percent of the shareholding. It was always within the vision and an important part of the plan, to ringfence a percentage holding for the medical staff involved. The idea being that the hospital will be a doctor/specialist driven project, although there will be a hospital manager appointed. The 'medical shareholders' will always have a say in the medical, and care aspects of the operation.

For a doctor/specialist to 'qualify' to hold shares in the hospital, they will have to work in, or for, the hospital. This is a hospital for the community, the idea being that no one should 'own' the hospital. Should a doctor/specialist wish to leave then, those shares that are held by him/her, will have to be sold back into the medical shareholding group. It is good to know that quite a few local doctors have already bought shares in the project.

The balance of the shareholding will be taken up by a group (not any one of the bigger ones e.g.: Netcare or Mediclinic) – discussions are still underway to iron out some minor matters before signature, but for all intents and purposes agreement has been reached.

An operational management team will be appointed, and together with the hospital manager will perform the day to day running of the establishment. Effectively the Board of Directors from each of the PropCo and OpCo will oversee everything.

The full facilities

The hospital will be a fully fledged hospital, with four theatres, ICU (4 beds), neonatal ICU (4 beds), dialysis facilities, delivery wards, an Ampath laboratory and a 24/7 emergency unit. There will also be doctor's rooms and rehabilitation facilities included in the medical precinct.

There will not be a helipad at this stage because of the proximity to Hoedspruit Civil Airfield and the consideration is to secure a helicopter in time, rather than wasting money on a helipad. That may be considered in a phase to follow. The hospital still

must become viable before any of these 'extra' items are considered.

Agreements have already been concluded with a general surgeon, orthopaedic surgeon, gynaecologist, two paediatricians, an ophthalmologist (to be confirmed), and four anaesthetists to come and be resident in Hoedspruit. Local general practitioners are also able to access the facility to do small procedures (should they want).

There are agreements in place for visiting specialists that will come to the hospital on designated days (e.g.: cardiologist, urologist, ear nose and throat specialist) – they will take up shares but be involved in the 'visiting program' available to interested out of town doctors.

Many of the doctors and anaesthetists will be relocating from other areas to be in Hoedspruit – several of whom already have homes here! Ambulance services will more than likely be offered to current organisations operating in Hoedspruit.

This certainly is a fantastic development welcomed by the town, as Hoedspruit has in the past lost many residents (especially the elderly) because of the lack of medical facilities.

Tendering

Every service required for the completion of the project will be out for tender, and a due diligence will be done on all the 'finalists' of those tenders, to ensure reputability and proficient service level delivery. Currently all local service providers have the potential to be listed on the sub-tender lists.

Companies and individuals can send through their company profiles to the email listed below, and in the subject line they must insert what they want to tender for, even if they are applying for job (a description is required). All submissions will then be put into a data base, and when the relevant tender or position comes up for award, the required names will be put forward for evaluation.

If the local tenders are accepted, then they will get the job - the property company would like, as best as they can, to keep as much money as possible within Hoedspruit - but it is quite clear that with critical budget adherence, the operation will not pay a 30% premium just to keep such work in the town.

Municipal efforts

It must be mentioned that the project management team are very thankful to the Mayor, Municipal Manager Nanki Hoaeane, Town Planner Gabriel Mailula, and Building Inspector Dudu Mametja, and all others involved from Maruleng Municipality, for their belief in the project, opening doors, and helping push this development to its current point. They have all genuinely tried to assist to combat any potential delays.

Status and timelines

The current status is that the building plans have been approved, now the fire department has to approve their side of the project. The project management team are awaiting final 'fire plans' – these will most probably will have to go to Mopani for approval because of the size of the project. Usually this takes about 60 days (but this can take longer).

If everything moves according to plan, the bulk earth works will be completed in August 2023, building will start the end of August early September 2023. This will take about twelve months (excluding December), and hopefully it will be completed by the end of September beginning October 2024.

Once the building is complete there is the commissioning and installation of all equipment, etc., appointment of a hospital manager mid 2024, and the start of recruitment for the hospital.

The municipality must also issue an operational certificate, after which the operational team must have a series of dry runs, that incorporate training, testing, etc. These tests will be done for some time, to ensure operational capabilities are sound (2 – 3 months).

Once done, the Department of Health will have to come and inspect the installation. Once that is completed to their satisfaction, they will approve the license and only thereafter can the hospital be opened.

Currently the timeline for opening stands anytime between November 2024 to January 2025. The hospital is to be known as the Hoedspruit Private Hospital, and this is the story. It's been some time coming, but definitely a worthwhile wait. Well done to all involved – the community waits in anticipation.

All emails can be addressed to Carien Taute at carien@hph-sa.co.za

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Spotlight time - Town Watch

Mark Bishop

This month I felt it only right to spotlight in an organisation, rather than a person, that ensures that all of us here in Hoedspruit are looked after and live in safety. I was very privileged to be able to secure an interview with Thierry Boulanger, Chairperson of Town Watch in Hoedspruit.

Thierry was born in the Congo and brought up in South Africa. He and his wife have finally found themselves retired and living in Hoedspruit. This after having had an in-nings at the coast near Kenton-on-sea in the eastern Cape. It was here that Thierry got involved in security, and an organised neighbourhood watch. He stresses 'organised', because "it is not a matter of just setting up CCTV cameras, but it's a matter of becoming the ears and eyes of the police (and the other authorities) whilst helping them ensure the safety of the community", he said.

It has always been the intent that the Town Watch had to be a community project with involvement from the community. "We want Hoedspruit to be the safest town to live in, and we want our properties to appreciate, whether a house or business. The only way that will be achieved is if we have a safe town," said Thierry.

We have a very close collaboration (we do not overlap) with Farm Watch – our responsibility is the town itself. We observe and report, and with our collaboration of our partners around town like Farm Watch and others, if we see that we need a reaction, we will then call upon those partners to action accordingly.

Very recently we have concluded an agreement with all the major security companies in Hoedspruit who work with us on a pro bono basis. So, our relationship with our partners around town is very strong and as a result is very fruitful in terms of what we do, and how we do it, and the successes achieved.

The network of cameras that we have in the town are monitored 24 hours a day, of which a certain amount is done by the community. Anything that is monitored has a response procedure to accommodate the required reaction. This is exciting because not only do we have the tools, but we have the back-end reaction that is so important in a successful community operation like this.

All work done for Town Watch is on a voluntary basis, and even when people consider themselves too old to contribute, there are places, for example monitoring CCTV cameras, where all and sundry can be put to work. There is no need to come into a control room, if you have a computer, you can monitor the CCTV cameras from the comfort of your own home. Many of the older generation are now part of the

Town Watch. Even some of the foreigners that have residences in town have put up their hands to help monitor cameras. The result is that we now have people monitoring from New York and Amsterdam, that actively monitor cameras! Younger volunteers also drive patrols around town which is an important part of having a physical presence in town.

Town Watch has now launched a 'radio programme' designed specifically for the residents of Hoedspruit, where they can purchase a radio which mitigates the effect of loadshedding. The radio is programmed onto the Farm Watch emergency channel. This would be used in emergencies only, or to report suspicious activity. The radios cover an area of up to 20 km from Hoedspruit.

Part of the ethos of Town Watch is to look at the small infringements in town, based on the world-renowned success achieved in New York. The then Mayor of New York, Rudy Giuliani, ran a very successful crime fighting campaign, and he said that if crime is to be stamped out, you must first concentrate on the little things that are happening in the town, because those little things eventually grow into big things.

"We have adopted a similar view. We cannot let people get away with the little things – that's where we start our work. So, it is critical that we fret the small stuff as well," stated Thierry.

Thierry could not talk about Town Watch's successes too much (for obvious security reasons) suffice to say that with the camera network and patrols, Town Watch have apprehended or brought to book, many instances of 'misbehaviour', and with the absolute cooperation of the authorities, evidence with visual proof (through the cameras), they have managed to close numerous cases on these matters with great effect.

Town Watch has also been a strong driver of speed bumps because they see what is happening on the roads. Month end is 'road anarchy'! Basically, if the traffic situation can be brought under full control, then as a community we would have gone a huge way into making the town even safer.

When the building of the interchange, the mall, and hospital get started, Town Watch and the community must be ready for the influx of thousands of workers. This will affect us all in Hoedspruit, and together with Town Watch and the other partners, we must be cognisant of the need for more vigilance.

Part of the ethos of Town Watch is to ensure that their statutory documentation is very important and in order. Their codes of conduct, asset registers, memorandums of understanding with organisations in and around town, their constitution – all of that must be in place. As a resident, one can walk in anytime to view these books,

and Town Watch must be able to be transparent and effective.

They are pedantic about their general code of conduct if you join Town Watch. This dictates exactly how you behave and your physical appearance. That discipline is non-negotiable. Before every patrol one must log in with SAPS and get an authorisation number. This non-negotiable discipline is critical in making the organisation successful. Town Watch meet with SAPS once a month to share information, and they find that SAPS does a lot, and as such they work very closely with each other. The negative noise about SAPS not doing much is a factor of limited manpower and prioritisation of incidents – they have to manage their response very carefully with the restraints that they have. There is also good cooperation from Maruleng Traffic, and Maruleng themselves, including the mayor.

Town Watch are very proud of the fact that all participants are volunteers, using their own time, financing themselves in whatever aspect of the Town Watch web they participate. One can feel the enthusiasm and at the end of the day they, the volunteers, have the satisfaction that they are doing something for their community. "We do want the whole community to be vigilant, so that if there is anything that they consider untoward, that there is an open channel to report it, with the reassurance of knowing that something will be done about it", says Thierry.

Joining Town Watch costs R50 per month – and this allows one to be on the WhatsApp group, and you need not participate any further. If you want to contribute to Town Watch (Patrol or camera monitoring) you do not have to pay your annual fee (but you can if you want). If you want to be a participant in the radio network, you need to be a member of either Town Watch or Farm Watch and you will have access to the channels – you still have to purchase the radio. This will allow you access to the emergency services that they offer (they do NOT replace SAPS) – the service is there to cover the lack of connectivity that may happen from time to time, and of course to report.

Contact Helen Cary who will send you an application form for Town Watch, pay up and you will be put on the groups. If you want any operational involvement, this will be preceded by training before going operational.

The radios are obtainable (fully programmed) from Geraldine at Vector Fencing and Communication, in Hoedspruit for R 3 152.00 all inclusive. Any radios that are lost, stolen, or abused can and will be disabled remotely.

Many estates already pay a membership fee to Farm Watch on behalf of their residents, so no additional membership fee is necessary, and this does entitle a resident

on those estates to obtain a radio (at their cost).

"We would love to become the model for other towns to follow", says Thierry. If one looks at the progress and successes that have been achieved, I will say that we are well on the way to achieving that goal.

Helen Cary – Town Watch – 083 336 0577
Geraldine – Vector Fencing and Communication 071 893 9366

HOEDSPRUIT TOWN WATCH



Quiz answers

- 1 Long Sighted
- 2 Dalai Lama
- 3 Cypress palm, cedar and olive
- 4 Jerry Lewis
- 5 Bullfighting
- 6 Piper at the gates of dawn
- 7 Venice
- 8 Kissing Cousins
- 9 Venus de Milo
- 10 Britain in the Boer war
- 11 Maltese falcon
- 12 Eight marriages
- 13 Napoleon Bonaparte
- 14 See in the dark
- 15 Temperature not below 13°C
- 16 Bourse
- 17 Beethoven
- 18 Wild Thing
- 19 Maroon
- 20 Baby Face
- 21 Leather



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Contact Information:

Business : +27 15 793 1534
E-Mail : hoedspruit@century21.co.za
Web Site : www.century21wildlife.co.za



SOLE MANDATE

INGWELALA, GREATER KRUGER R 5 950 000
Beds 6 | Baths 3.5 | Floor size: 450m²

50 % Share - There is no better investment than Big 5, Greater Kruger properties. This is one of the largest homes at Ingwelala which can accommodate up to 12 people. The house comes furnished and equipped and includes a 50% share in the Land Rover game-viewer.

Yvette Thompson - 083 655 7176 Ref: 2102135

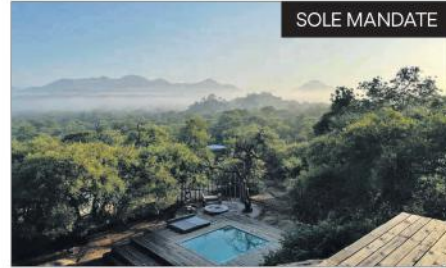


SOLE MANDATE

APARTMENT IN HOEDSPRUIT R 670 000
Bedrooms 1 | Bathrooms 1 | Floor: 69 m²

This apartment is a great investment property, with a reliable tenant in place. It has an open plan living area and kitchen, as well as bathroom on the lower level and an upstairs bedroom. Municipal water supply and pre-paid electricity. Communal pool and braai facilities.

Michelle Severin - 083 469 3821 Ref: 2156206



SOLE MANDATE

LEOPARD ROCK R 4 380 000
Bedrooms 4 | Bathrooms 4 | Floor size: 210 m²

Spacious and inviting, this lodge style home really does have so much to offer the bush enthusiast. Enjoy everything from the granite boulders that surround the main living space and swimming pool deck, to the elevation of the master bedroom with its birds eye view that is just sublime.

Michelle Severin - 083 469 3821 Ref: 2136341



SOLE MANDATE

BLYDE BOTANICAL RESERVE R 3 750 000
Bedrooms 3 | Bathrooms 2 | Floor size: 373 m²

The location is serene and peaceful; magnificent botanical gardens, large trees and the ever-impressive Drakensberg Mountains surround this home. This home has a free flow layout for comfortable living, lots of windows, and inviting views of the outside wherever you are in the home.

Jason Jones - 083 267 4794 Ref: 2140767



SOLE MANDATE

GUERNSEY, HOEDSPRUIT R 18 000 000
Bedrooms 18 | Bathrooms 15 | Floor size: 1235 m²

This property is home to a well-known restaurant and pub, guest accommodation, as well as several home rentals and accommodation rentals. It is ± 4 hectares in size and borders the Timbavati and is 500 meters from the gate and 11 km from the Eastgate Airport. Income via various rental options.

Rob Severin - 083 469 3820 Ref: 2149661



SOLE MANDATE

KARONGWE - BIG 5 R 11 950 000
Bedrooms 7 | Bathrooms 6 | Traverse: 8,000 ha

This stunning private lodge with two homes, is nestled under large riverine trees and overlooks the river. One house has three bedrooms and the other four bedrooms. Entertainment area with pool, bar and braai area. The purchase includes furnishings, Land Cruiser game viewer and staff.

Rob Severin - 083 469 3820 Ref: 2154120



SOLE MANDATE

BLYDE WILDLIFE ESTATE R 4 324 000
Bedrooms 3 | Bathrooms 3 | Floor size: 360 m²

This home is privately situated and overlooks the wilderness area. The layout includes open plan kitchen, living and dining room as well as a separate scullery and a separate laundry. The living area and bedrooms all lead out to the large, covered patio with pool and elevated views.

Jason Jones - 083 267 4794 Ref: 2143428



SOLE MANDATE

NOT LIMITED BY RESERVE RULES R 3 200 000
Beds 2 | Baths 2 | Stand size: 21 ha

Each room has spectacular views of the mountain range and leads out onto the covered pool deck. A spacious open plan living, dining, and kitchen compliment this home and there is a separate scullery and guest toilet. This property could be considered as a commercial tourism option.

Jason Jones - 083 267 4794 Ref: 2145090



SOLE MANDATE

HOEDSPRUIT WILDLIFE ESTATE R 3 700 000
Beds 3 | Baths 3 | Floor size: 160 m²

This beautiful home has it all! The lounge opens up onto the patio and entertainment area with pool and well-maintained garden. Upstairs is a study and a second lounge. The immediate area around the house is enclosed by a latte fence. There is a double carport plus a garden shed.

Yvette Thompson - 083 655 7176 Ref: 2143619

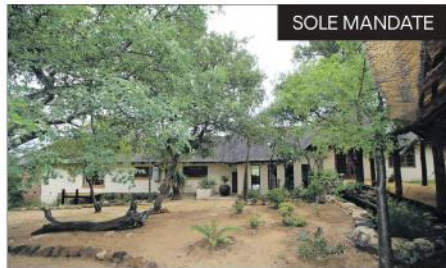


SOLE MANDATE

GREATER MAKALALI R 20 000 000
Bedrooms 5 | Bathrooms 5 | Farm size: 640 ha

This farm is within Greater Makalali Nature Reserve, which has the Big 5 and 20,000 ha of traverse. Approvals in place for 10 commercial beds. There is a main 2-bedroom home and 3 guest chalets. Ideal for syndication, families, or convert to boutique commercial lodge.

Jason Jones - 083 267 4794 Ref: 1459112



SOLE MANDATE

NDLOVUMZI R 4 950 000
Bedrooms 9 | Bathroom 5 | Stand size: 21 ha

This bespoke tented camp is perfectly nestled on an elevated ridge within a 1,000 ha nature reserve. The property consists of two luxury tents with commercial licences, a 4-bedroom owner's house and a 2-bedroom manager's cottage. The commercial aspect will be sold fully furnished.

Jason Jones - 083 267 4794 Ref: 2079842

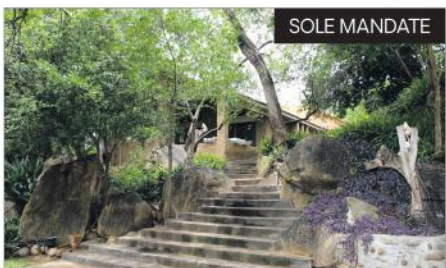


SOLE MANDATE

MAHLATHINI PRIVATE GAME RESERVE R 4 500 000
Beds 3 | Baths 3 | Floor size: 479 m²

This stunning home with its quality features is situated on a 21-hectare freehold stand in a secure estate bordering the Kruger National Park. It is ideal to be used as a holiday home or even permanent living. The 21-hectares offer a lot of privacy and no one else may traverse onto your property.

Mike Dodds - 082 906 7004 Ref: 2143562



SOLE MANDATE

NDLOVUMZI R 4 458 000
Bedrooms 4 | Bathrooms 4 | Floor size: 300 m²

This tranquil home's is situated overlooking the Olifants River and is surrounded by large riverine trees and rocky outcrops. The open plan living, dining and newly fitted kitchen are all under high vaulted ceilings that make this home light and bright and there is also a separate scullery.

Jason Jones - 083 267 4794 Ref: 2152063



SOLE MANDATE

RAPTOR'S VIEW WILDLIFE ESTATE R 4 500 000
Beds 4 | Baths 3 | Floor size: 312 m²

This immaculate property is privately located in the third phase of this sought after estate. It has a comfortable living area with lounge, dining room and large kitchen. A separate en-suite bedroom is found outside, set to the side of the patio and pool; it is ideal for visiting family and friends.

Michelle Severin - 083 469 3821 Ref: 2155933



SOLE MANDATE

MAFUNYANE, KARONGWE R 14 000 000
Bedrooms 4 | Bathrooms 4 | Traverse: 8,000 ha

This property is stunning and has a wow factor that will take your breath away! Very exclusive, modern bush home, overlooking a seasonal river bed, located in a Big 5 reserve with 8,000 ha traverse. Sold furnished & including game viewer.

Rob Severin - 083 469 3820 Ref: 2107650



SOLE MANDATE

NDLOVUMZI R 5 200 000
Bedrooms 8 | Bathrooms 8 | Floor size: 480 m²

Set on 21 hectares and overlooking the Olifants River, this property offers four separate residential dwellings, the main unit has two downstairs bedrooms and three on the upper landing. There are three additional chalets, each of these overlooking the Olifants River

Jason Jones - 083 267 4794 Ref: 2151582

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Warming winter cuppas to ease cold and flu symptoms

Rooibos Association

Rooibos is one cuppa you need to stock up on this winter to help boost your immunity as the temperature drops.

The homegrown tisane (herbal tea) has been used to help ease and provide protection against colds and flu for generations. Its ability to support the immune system in fighting viruses, enhances the body's natural defence system, which will give you a leg up this winter.

Adele du Toit, spokesperson for the SA Rooibos Council (SARC) says Rooibos' warm liquid will not only alleviate a sore throat and ease congestion, but its antibacterial properties could aid in preventing and easing colds and flu symptoms.

"The tisane is packed with polyphenols that help to remove free radicals from the body, which are detrimental by-products of cell metabolism that cause inflammation and disease. Researchers attribute Rooibos' healing effects to the unique combination of antioxidants in the tisane that helps to boost immunity, whilst also protecting the body against cardiovascular disease, diabetes and other metabolic conditions.

"Ancient cultures have long claimed the use of food as medicine. Spices and herbs, like Rooibos, can help protect us from many common ailments and their use is becoming more popular among nutritionists and alternative healers. Every day new research confirms much of the ancient wisdom surrounding spices and herbs."

She says adding honey and warm spices to Rooibos will further bolster the immune system. Here are some spices, also purported to have healing properties, that can be steeped with Rooibos to make a healthy, warming winter brew:

Cardamom: both green and black cardamom help to boost immunity, but research suggests that the black pods are especially effective at alleviating colds, dry coughs and other respiratory issues.

Cinnamon: Chinese and Indian medicine has used cinnamon to treat a variety of conditions. It's known for its ability to help relieve colds and flu symptoms and soothe sore throats. It is rich in polyphenols that boost the body's natural immunity, is antiviral, antibacterial and antifungal. Soak a cinnamon stick in Rooibos with a few drops of honey two to three times a day to clear a sore throat.

Black pepper: many traditional Indian drinks contain black pepper, because of its expectorant properties and soothing effects on stubborn coughs and colds. It contains vitamin C, antioxidants and is antibacterial. It's also said to keep the winter chills at bay and will help strengthen your immunity and guard against respiratory infections and chest congestion.

Cloves: this spice is a potent anti-inflammatory, which is often used to help soothe coughs, sore throats, sinusitis and other common cold and flu symptoms. It's also an expectorant, which will help to loosen mucus in the throat and oesophagus making it easier to cough up.

Ginger: known and used around the world as a herbal cold treatment, this root is sure to warm you up. Antioxidants and other nutrients in ginger, combined with its antiviral, antibacterial and anti-

inflammatory properties will help ease a sore throat and other cold symptoms.

Turmeric: this powerful all-in-one spice is anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, antifungal, antiviral and antiseptic and is a trusted colds and flu fighter among traditional healers. It's also known for bolstering the immune system and supports healthy joint function.

Du Toit says that with more viruses in circulation during winter, it's important to make the right additions to your diet.

"Combining these spices with Rooibos will help boost immunity and is far tastier than conventional colds and flu medicine. For convenience, shoppers can also find most of these spiced-Rooibos blends in supermarkets or retail pharmacies."

For more insights into Rooibos' health benefits go to www.sarooibos.co.za



Cardamom



Cinnamon



Black pepper



Cloves



Ginger



Tumeric

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Picky view - Kalimambo



As winter is here, and the nights are wonderfully crispy, I thought that a good spot to try out would be Kalimambo in the Kamagelo Centre.

A decent curry would go down well, washed with a robust glass of red or a fruity white – what better way to spend an evening with friends. So off we went to the new, silver service offering in Hoedspruit – the full name Kalimambo Pub, Indian Restaurant and Grill - ‘fine dining section’. The name would suggest trying to be a little of something to many, BUT we were there ONLY for the curry – so let’s leave that thought pattern aside. Curry it was!

It was well appointed, but we did ask for the heater to be turned off and the lights dimmed – that gave it a little more ambience. Sadly, the serviettes are paper – I thought that fabric serviettes for silver service was more the norm. Added to that, in my excitement of the moment, a serviette caught alight, and I suppose I nearly burnt the place down, but that was averted and the fire extinguished by a very attentive waitron.

The waitrons were very attentive from

the start, which is always a good thing. The starters were presented on time – we did not have to wait long. The wine selection was sufficient, and we ended up choosing a delightful Chenin Blanc which complemented the dishes well. We started with spring rolls and samosas. Crispy on the outside and juicy on the inside. Full of taste and just the right amount of chilli – they were soon consumed by the merry band of culinary aficionados.

This we followed with a variety of main courses of beef bunny chow, butter chicken, vegetable korma, paneer palak, aloo gobi, and dahl makhni. This was accompanied by some garlic and plain naan bread. Some condiments were supplied but the feeling was that we could have had more.

All the meals were delightful and were more than enough. We even ended taking some home with us. The beef was tender and tasty, the bunny chow was more than a meal on its own! The butter chicken was served ‘mild’ as requested and was a delicious dish. Fragrant and tasty, juicy and ‘mild’, it was a perfect dish.

The remaining dishes were shared amongst

the friends, and we all had our favourites – but all in all the vegetables in the korma were firm, tasty, with layers of flavours. The paneer was an instant favourite (as were the others!) – for a dish that can be tasteless, this one was very tasty, and the paneer was firm. A good choice. The aloo gobi was my personal favourite, once again fresh and superbly tasty, with a great sauce. The dahl was the favourite of all the dishes, tender lentils, spicy and delicious. Happily, there were plenty options for vegetarians and vegans on the menu – a pleasant change in Hoedspruit.

Deserts were rice pudding and ice cream. These could not be faulted, the rice pudding, which I had was scrumptious. The ice cream was good too.

What a good fine dining experience – somewhat of a surprise, but a pleasant one at that! Reasonably priced, good clean surrounds (my favourite - crisp white tablecloths) and pleasant ambience.

I think this is a must visit when in Hoedspruit. Well done to management and staff on a fantastic evening out.

AE

Kimberlee Le Hanie makes history

Louise Pavid
Marketing and Communications FGASA

Powered by the Field Guides Association of southern Africa (FGASA) and hosted by Kapama Private Game Reserve, Kimberlee Le Hanie became the first woman to win the prestigious Safari Guide of the Year competition.

Kimberlee’s exceptional knowledge, unwavering dedication, and remarkable expertise have captivated both guests and industry professionals, solidifying her place among the very best in the field of safari guiding.

The Safari Guide of the Year award recognises individuals who exemplify outstanding leadership, professionalism, career commitment, and passion in the safari industry. Kimberlee’s extraordinary commitment to delivering an unforgettable safari experience, combined with her deep understanding and respect for the African wilderness, has earned her this well-deserved accolade.

Kimberlee’s journey to becoming the Safari Guide of the Year began at the MORE Field Guide College and has been marked by her exceptional career at Marataba Safari Lodge and Lion Sands Game Reserve.

Over the years, Kimberlee’s commitment to her craft has been unwavering. Her genuine passion for the environment has propelled her to go above and beyond, continuously seeking to develop her career through FGASA and enhance her guiding skills. Her dedication to her profession has made her a role model for aspiring guides.

“We are incredibly proud of Kim and all that she has achieved on her journey since she was a student in 2017 at MORE Field Guide College. Field guides play such an important educational aspect on a safari and

Kim is an excellent ambassador for the natural world leading with passion and always growing in knowledge. She is well liked by all our guests, a true asset at Lion Sands.”

– Robert More, CEO and Custodian, MORE Family Collection.

As the first woman to win Safari Guide of the Year, Kimberlee has shattered glass ceilings and broken stereotypes in the industry. Her accomplishment serves as an inspiration to aspiring female guides. Kimberlee’s achievement demonstrates that attitude, passion, and expertise know no boundaries, and that women can excel in traditionally male-dominated fields.

There are, however, outstanding men, that have done amazing things for wildlife, conservation, and tourism in southern Africa. Many of these men have spent hours pouring their knowledge, time, and effort into countless others, both male and female, who too have a shared passion for wildlife. It is important to thank them for their mentorship, knowledge, skills, and dedication to always making this industry better, and for taking it to new heights.

Kimberlee’s achievement, however, serves as more than a glistening trophy and the title of Safari Guide of the Year. Her accomplishments during the week of the competition are already having a seismic impact the guiding industry and for women. Kimberlee will be a shining light, setting the example of guiding excellence and serving as a beacon of inspiration, not only to young females beginning their journeys in the industry, and the women that have already excelled in their careers as guides, but for all who have the commitment and passion for Africa’s wild places, and who are dedicated to fostering education and connection to the natural world.



Cameron Pearce, 2022 winner (eft) and Kimberlee Le Hanie (right), the winner of the Safari Guide of the Year 2023
Image: Armadillo Media

Kimberlee is to be admired. She is the epitome of excellence, and as a person it speaks volumes to this achievement. The guiding world are all incredibly proud of her and look forward to watching her grow and develop further in an already stellar career.

“I’m feeling more inspired to keep the momentum going. Winning has confirmed that I can do anything I put my heart and mind too, I’ve been very humbled by the whole experience and I’m feeling incredibly honoured. My heart is so full, and I can’t wait to get back out there and just continue to do

what I absolutely love to do!” - Kimberlee Le Hanie, Field Guide, and Safari Guide of the Year winner 2023.

Kimberlee’s win is a testament to her exceptional skill, dedication to conservation, and ground-breaking achievements in the field. FGASA, Lion Sands Game Reserve and the MORE Family Collection congratulate Kimberlee on this momentous accomplishment and look forward to her continued success as an ambassador for the safari industry.

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Kapama Private Game Reserve ...



Travel correspondent

Imagine a place where the majesty of the African wilderness unfolds before your eyes, where luxury and untamed beauty coexist in perfect harmony.

Nestled within the pristine landscapes of the Limpopo province is a sanctuary of unrivalled beauty and luxury. In the heart of the renowned Greater Kruger, Kapama Private Game Reserve beckons discerning travellers seeking a truly exceptional safari experience. Spanning over 15 000 hectares, this remarkable reserve offers an exclusive and unforgettable safari experience. With its rich biodiversity, world-class accommodations, exceptional wildlife encounters and commitment to conservation, Kapama Private Game Reserve stands as a testament to the harmonious coexistence of luxury and nature.

A Tapestry of Natural Diversity

Kapama Private Game Reserve is a tapestry of diverse ecosystems, teeming with a spectacular array of flora and fauna. The reserve's pristine bushveld encompasses verdant grasslands, winding riverine forests, and rugged hills, creating an idyllic habitat for a remarkable range of wildlife. Amidst this untouched wilderness, guests can witness the iconic big five - elephants, lions, leopards, buffalo, and rhinos - as well as a myriad of other enchanting creatures including giraffe, zebra, hippo, and an abundance of bird species. Kapama is home to over 40 species of mammals and over 350 species of birds.

Unveiling the essence of Kapama's exquisite accommodation, the reserve prides itself on its commitment to providing guests with a truly luxurious and immersive experience. The reserve offers a selection of exquisite lodges and camps, each blending seamlessly into its natural surroundings while exuding opulence and comfort. Each lodge boasts its own unique charm and exceptional amenities, ensuring an unforgettable stay for the guest.

Kapama River Lodge - serenity and wild-life encounters

The largest of the four Kapama lodges, Kapama River Lodge offers a serene haven in the heart of the reserve. The lodge's contemporary array of suites, from the spa and deluxe suites to the royal and family suites, are all thoughtfully designed to provide uninterrupted views of the surrounding bushveld ensuring that the guests are immersed in nature's grandeur. Here, guests can relax in the solitude of their suites or venture out to the swimming pools and lounge areas, to revel in the serenity of the African bush. Xitsumbeni, the new dining area at River Lodge overlooks a dam where buffalo, elephants and nyala are often spotted. All this while enjoying a steaming morning coffee or lunch time glass of wine.

Kapama River Lodge boasts an on-site award-winning spa and wellness centre, that provides a tranquil escape from the exhilarating game drives. Highly skilled therapists pamper guests with a range of treatments that incorporate natural African ingredients, leaving them refreshed and rejuvenated.

Spectacular Drakensberg view from Kapama (above), Kapama Karula Superior Villa bedroom view and the exterior deck view (below) Images: Armadillo Media



Kapama Buffalo Camp - a Journey to African grandeur

For those seeking a more intimate and authentic safari experience, Kapama Buffalo Camp offers a unique blend of colonial charm and African elegance. Tucked away beneath ancient trees, the

camp's tented suites evoke a sense of nostalgia. With only ten luxury canvas tents adorned with African artefacts and fine fabrics, this intimate camp offers a unique safari experience. Guests can relax on private decks, savour sundowners, and immerse themselves in the

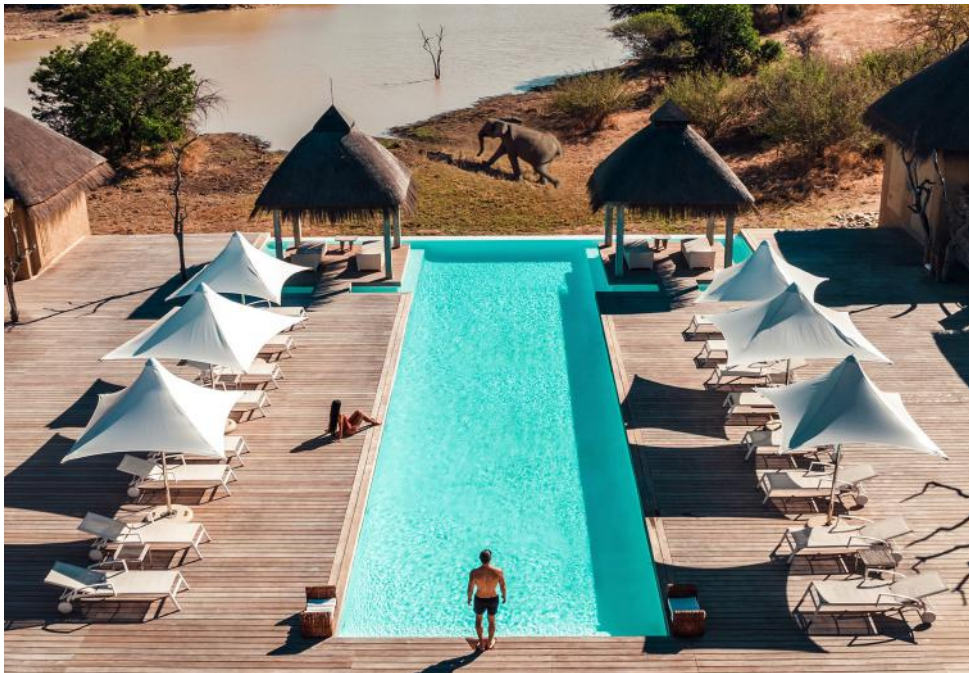
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Kitsumbeni restaurant (top) and Kapama River Lodge Spa (above)
Images: Armadillo Media

tranquil beauty of the untamed wilderness.

Kapama Southern Camp - timeless elegance in the wild

Kapama Southern Camp is synonymous with capturing the essence of safari elegance with its traditional safari-style architecture and 25 beautifully appointed suites and villas. This family-friendly camp treats guests to a seamless blend of comfort and authenticity. From the moment of arrival until departure, guests are made to feel like part of the Kapama family, with genuine care and attention lavished upon them. The camp's luxurious amenities include private patios and lavish en-suite bathrooms. With thoughtful touches and attention to detail, every aspect of the suites and villas is designed to provide the utmost comfort and relaxation. Kapama Southern Camp provides the perfect sanctuary for detaching and immersing yourself in the beauty of the surrounding nature while savouring the enchanting ambience of the bush. With three designated family villas, each with its own private pool, this camp makes for the ideal family getaway.

Kapama Karula - contemporary opulence in pristine surroundings

At Kapama Karula, the flagship lodge of Kapama Private Game Reserve, the pinnacle of sophistication awaits. Kapama Karula is a true architectural marvel, seamlessly blending modern aesthetics with the natural beauty of the African bushveld. Designed to harmonize with its surroundings, the lodge showcases sleek lines, open spaces, and expansive glass walls that invite breath-taking landscapes indoors. The result is an intimate connection between guests and nature, with

each element meticulously crafted to create a serene and luxurious retreat. The elegant villas feature contemporary designs and private heated pools, inviting guests to indulge in sheer comfort and seclusion. The attention to detail and the seamless blend of comfort and luxury makes every moment spent in these opulent villas a truly indulgent experience. Every aspect of Kapama Karula is designed to provide an extraordinary and unforgettable escape into the heart of the African wilderness. With its dedicated spa, gourmet dining, and personalized service, guests must prepare to be enchanted by the magic of Kapama Karula, where luxury and serenity, converge in perfect harmony.

Culinary delights

Indulgence knows no bounds at Kapama Private Game Reserve. With an emphasis on farm-to-table cuisine, the reserve's expert chefs curate menus and craft delectable dishes using the finest local ingredients, creating a fusion of flavours that tantalize the taste buds. Each of the four distinct lodges and camps offers a unique culinary experience.

From elegant fine dining at the lodges to bush picnics and sundowner drinks in the wilderness, every meal is a sensory delight that showcases the region's rich gastronomic heritage. Savour the tantalizing flavours of traditional South African dishes while surrounded by the sights and sounds of the untamed bush. The attentive staff ensure that every dining experience is a celebration of both culinary artistry and the natural wonders that surround you.

Wellness and serenity

Kapama Private Game Reserve offers a sanctuary for guests seeking relaxation

and rejuvenation amidst nature's embrace. After experiencing thrilling game drives, guests can unwind and pamper themselves at the reserve's two world-class wellness centres. Highly skilled therapists offer a range of indulgent treatments, from soothing massages to holistic spa rituals, all tailored to enhance well-being and rejuvenate the body and soul.

Conservation Commitment

Endowed with diverse ecosystems ranging from open savannahs to lush riverine forests, this pristine sanctuary showcases the rich biodiversity that makes South Africa's flora and fauna so captivating. Kapama Private Game Reserve is deeply committed to conserving and preserving the natural heritage it holds. Through sustainable practices, community engagement, and anti-poaching efforts, the reserve strives to protect the delicate balance of ecosystems and ensure the preservation of this remarkable ecosystem for generations to come.

Guests at Kapama have the opportunity to engage in these conservation initiatives and learn about the efforts undertaken to safeguard wildlife and their habitats. By choosing to visit Kapama, guests actively contribute to the ongoing conservation of South Africa's natural treasures.

Kapama Air: a seamless luxury journey to adventure

To ensure a seamless and unforgettable travel experience, Kapama's private Pilatus PC-12 plane offers an exclusive air transfer service. The Pilatus PC-12 is renowned for its exceptional comfort and luxurious amenities, making every flight a pleasurable and indulgent experience. The spacious cabin offers ample legroom, plush seats, and large windows, ensuring that guests can relax and enjoy the breath-taking vistas that unfold beneath them. With its ability to land on shorter airstrips and its range of capabilities, this aircraft ensures efficient and convenient access to the reserve. With direct private flights connecting major cities like Johannesburg and Cape Town to the reserve, guests can maximize their time in this captivating sanctuary and alleviate the need for additional ground transfers. Guests will be greeted by their dedicated guide and whisked off on a short game ride to their designated lodge for their safari adventure to begin.

Unforgettable Safari Experiences

A safari at Kapama Private Game Reserve is an adventure like no other. Expert guides and assistant guides accompany guests on exhilarating game drives and bush walks, sharing their extensive knowledge of wildlife and ecosystems. The thrill of encountering majestic creatures in their natural habitat is unparalleled, as guests bear witness to the untamed drama of predator-prey interactions, the grace of herds of elephants gracefully moving through the bush, and the profound beauty of the African wilderness. Beyond the iconic big five, Kapama is home to a remarkable variety of wildlife. With each safari experience, guests gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of the delicate balance of nature, thanks to their expert guiding team.

Expect guiding: a connection with nature with the best in the industry

The passion of Kapama Private Game Reserve not only lies with wildlife conservation and the love of South Africa, but also

in helping the communities living in the vicinity of the Private Reserve. Kapama believes that assisting these communities to build economically sustainable livelihoods, can equip them to empower future generations.

Over the years, a large number of trackers have come from the areas surrounding Kapama. A big focus regarding the guiding team has been to assist Kapama's guides and more importantly, trackers, to move through the different field guiding levels to acquire their necessary qualifications.

Kapama's Safari Manager has over the past few years passionately assisted Kapama trackers in learning the required information to gain the necessary qualifications offered by FGASA – The Fields Guides Association of Southern Africa - to move through the ranks. Numerous training sessions are implemented, and lecturers are brought in to ensure the trackers are prepared for their exams and practicals. This qualification and upskilling has resulted in trackers moving to a new level created by Kapama to give them the necessary recognition. This new level is, assistant guide. All assistant guides on the reserve have completed their NQF 2. The majority have completed their practical exam. This means guests will have two qualified guides on each safari, thereby ensuring that the guiding team at Kapama is of the highest quality, has undergone rigorous training, and that they have a wealth of practical experience in conducting game drives, nature walks, and other safari activities.

Commitment to the industry - leaving our mark

As a commitment to the tourism industry of South Africa, Kapama Private Game Reserve recently hosted the Safari Guide of the Year 2023, a prestigious event that shines a spotlight on the role guides play in tourism for South Africa - not to mention the incredible knowledge and experience they need to acquire to be a field guide. Being part of this event was an opportunity to expose Kapama guides, especially assistant guides, to the career path that lies ahead for a field guide. It was also confirmation that guiding is a profession where one is continually learning, developing and growing.

In conclusion...

Kapama Private Game Reserve is a testament to the perfect blend of luxury and wilderness. With its breath-taking landscapes, world-class accommodation, extraordinary wildlife encounters, and its commitment to conservation, this exceptional reserve offers an unforgettable safari experience. Kapama is a testament to the allure and magnificence of Africa's wilderness. Further, its commitment to luxury, and sustainable tourism and expert guiding teams, Kapama offers a haven where discerning travellers can melt away their stresses.

Immerse yourself in the untamed splendour of Kapama. It will allow you to leave inspired with a changed travel expectation through emotional experiences, extraordinary luxury and exceptional service while creating memories that will last a lifetime.

For more about this luxurious African safari retreat, visit the Kapama website at www.kapama.com. or contact reservations at res@kapama.com, alternatively call +27 12 368 0800

Winter butterfly wonders

Steve Woodhall

This winter I'm getting a lot of people asking why there are so many butterflies still around. Well, the answer is, it's not unusual in a warm place like South Africa. In the Lowveld and on the east coast people often say there are two summers – a hot one and a cool one.

There may be a few reasons why there seems to be more of them around this year. Climate change? Maybe it makes sense that if the warm weather lasts for longer, the flight periods are extended. But it's not as simple as that. Changes in rainfall patterns are probably a more likely cause. Southern Africa has had several wetter years now - part of the 'La Nina' cycle of wet and dry decades thought to be driven by oscillations of warm water sloshing about side to side in the Pacific Ocean.

In wet years plants get a boost. And plants being the primary producers in our ecosystem, it makes sense that more plants equals more primary consumers. Butterfly larvae (their caterpillars, as well as moths) are major small herbivores. More rainfall equals more butterflies, particularly if a wet year is followed by a slightly drier one when the adults are more likely to be visible to us humans. And that's what's happening now.

In the subtropical areas of Africa there are two main peaks of butterfly (and moth) activity - (together they are known as Lepidoptera – the difference is a matter of opinion, but that's a story for another day). Each peak occurs towards the end of a rainy season and extends into the dry season. Here in the southern hemisphere the May to September dry season is longer and cooler than the December to February one. Vegetation becomes dry and sere (withered and sparse), and the colour palette moves from the green to the brown. Butterflies that have multiple broods in a year can adapt to that. Down here on the edges of the subtropical zone it can get decidedly wintery on high ground. Some species adapt to that as well. Let's look at some examples.

There are many examples of 'dry season forms' in the bushveld and they can pose a real challenge to butterfly watchers!

Orange tips

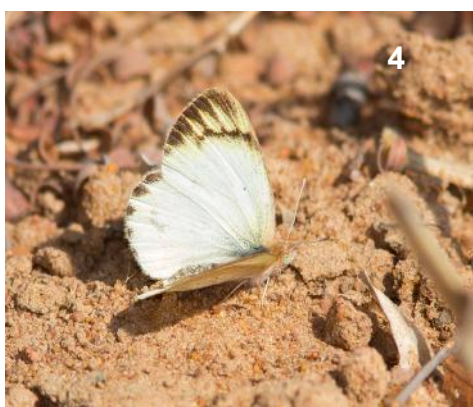
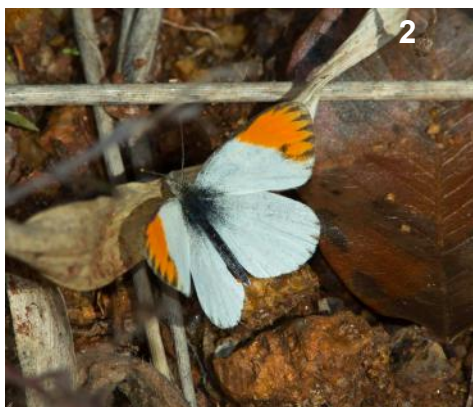
Africa has many of these; they can be very conspicuous when 'nectaring' on the low growing flowers that often grow along roadsides. Although they are brightly coloured, they can be as difficult as the 'LBJ's' that give birders such a hard time. The wet season forms are usually darker with more extensive markings than the dry season forms; there is an infinite variety of forms between the two extremes. Fortunately, the butterfly experts were very OCD and tried to give each form its own name! Unfortunately, they're all in latin...

Southern small orange tip

An example of a typical 'orange tip', this is a dry country butterfly with a huge range, from the eastern Cape right up into north Africa, Arabia, and Spain. The black spot in the male's orange tip makes him easy to tell apart from the numerous other 'orange tips'. The females however can be much more variable.

The wet season male emini form, has a lot of black on the upper side – to the extent that the most extreme examples could be seen as black-and-orange butterflies with white patches! The extreme dry season delphine form, has hardly any black on the upper side at all.

Female wet season forms vary in the amount of upper side black; the phlegetonia form has more than most. The most extreme dry season forms, like xanthotes, like the males have little black – and the wingtip orange is a faded-looking yellow.



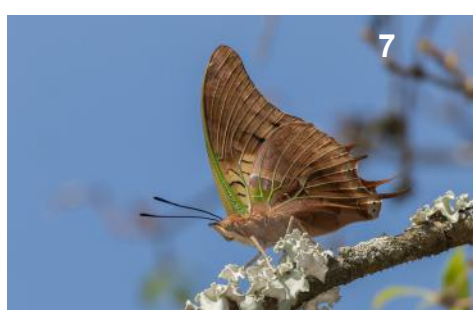
From top to bottom
1 Southern small orange tip male emini form
2 Southern small orange tip male delphine form
3 Southern small orange tip female phlegetonia form
4 Southern small orange tip female xanthotes form

Photos: Supplied

Bigger butterflies – the charaxes

Charaxes butterflies, sometimes known as emperors, are well known forest and savannah species. They rely on their cryptic undersides for camouflage, like this example, the widespread green-veined charaxes.

The green-veined charaxes is often seen sucking at sap weeping from injured trees, fallen fruit rotting on the ground, or animal faeces. The upper side is usually picked out in shades of orange and brown with yellow wing bases. The sexes are similar – the main difference being that females are bigger and have two tails of equal length on each hindwing, compared to one long and one short on a male. In the wet season the undersides are mottled in shades of grey, off-white, and brown. In the dry season they are more of a monochromatic reddish brown – offering camouflage amongst dry, dead leaves.



Images (left) top to bottom

- 5 Green-veined charaxes male upper side form
- 6 Green-veined charaxes male under side wet season form
- 7 Green-veined charaxes male under side dry season form

Photos: supplied

The extreme – complete seasonal dimorphism – the gaudy commodore

The gaudy commodore is a butterfly of higher altitude grasslands and forest edges. The summer form is bright red-orange and frequents hilltops and prominent bushes.

The winter form looks completely different – so much so that for a long time they were thought to be separate species! It's a beautiful blue insect with conspicuous red dots. Because of its skulking habits, this is only seen on warmer winter days. It prefers to hole up under stream banks and rocks, only emerging to feed on nectar when the sun is out.

Enjoy the dry season butterflies whilst they are around. The numbers fall off drastically during the frequent droughts we have to endure.

Steve Woodhall is a butterfly enthusiast, photographer, and author. Ex-President of the Lepidopterists Society of Africa. Check out his latest book and app on the following link:

<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.co.za/book/field-guide-butterflies-south-africa/9781775845874>

or get the App at:

<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.co.za/app/woodhall%E2%80%99s-butterflies-south-africa>



Gaudy commodore wet season natalensis form

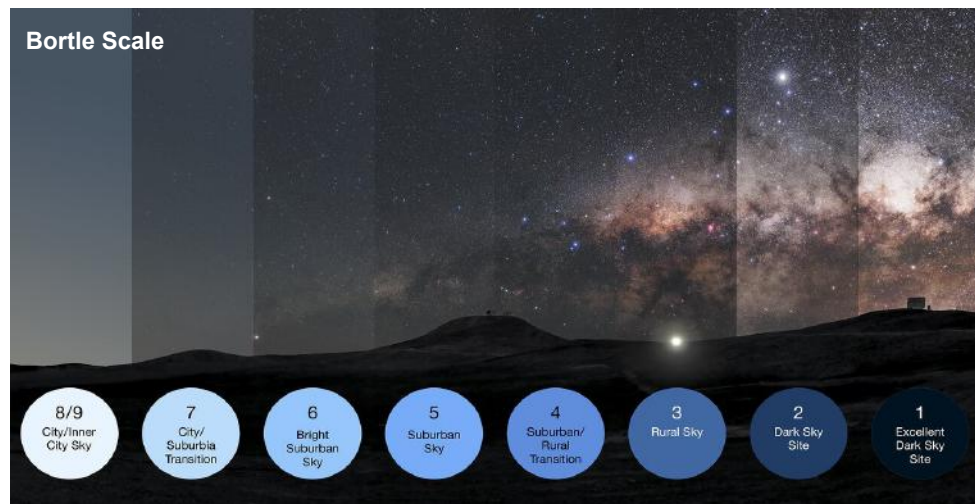
Photo: Supplied



Gaudy commodore dry season sesamus form

Photo: Supplied

The heart of darkness



Ben Coley

The scourge of industry pollution and its effect on global warming, the raping of our natural resources, and the threat of urbanisation and poaching on our dwindling species diversity are hugely topical in today's age.

However, one form of pollution is often overlooked and its influence is slowly spreading across the globe, causing havoc within ecosystems for wildlife and people alike. For millennia, humankind as found ways to cast light into the shadows, and illuminate the world. But we have come a long way from our ancestors huddling around campfire. With 8 billion people in the world, the majority of whom live squashed together in population centres, it is no wonder that the sanctity of darkness is now under real threat.

Light pollution is measured on the Bortle Scale from 1 to 9. 1 denotes an area completely devoid of artificial light such as deserts, while 9 is excessively polluted and synonymous with population centres like cities. Eighty percent of the population live under light polluted skies, including a staggering ninety-nine percent of all Americans and Europeans.

Light pollution includes the following categories: **Glare** – excessive lighting that can cause visual discomfort. Light is scattered in the eyes which can reduce contrast and be dangerous, especially when driving. **Light Trespass** – light falling where it is not needed or intended. Artificial light from street lights for example can illuminate bedroom windows, causing annoyance and sleep difficulties. **Light Clutter** – bright, confusing, and excessive grouping of light sources. These are typically found in areas like malls and entertainment venues.

All three of these forms contribute to **Sky Glow**, an inherent brightening of the night sky. Just 100 years ago, people living in cities could walk outside and view the magnificence of the Milky Way arcing over their heads. In today's world, anyone living in a major population centre is lucky to see the Moon, a couple of planets and only the brightest of stars.

So why is this an issue you might ask? Well, for one, there is the aesthetics. As anyone living in a rural area will know, there is inherent joy to be heralded from sitting under a clear night sky. Losing oneself in the vastness of the celestial realm is one of the best forms of escapism on this planet. In a world where chaos reigns and life moves at a break-neck pace, a starry sky is the perfect way to relax and gain perspective. We do not use our brains anymore. We google the answer to everything and our lives have lost the sense of wonder they once had. We do not imagine. But staring into the endless abyss allows our brain to wander, to recharge, and to imagine. Without imagination, what are we but robots fulfilling mundane tasks until the day we die?

Many studies have shown that dark skies are synonymous with health. Our bodies, just like all organisms, have adapted to a world with periodic phases of light and dark. This is known as a 'circadian rhythm', and

it governs both physical and mental cycles. The Earth has been spinning since its conception, our parent star rising and setting with every turn. For 4,5 billion years this cycle has dominated, and every life form on this planet, from single celled organisms to dinosaurs and humans have evolved in parallel. Our technological success, and subsequent reliance, has rendered this ancient pattern defunct, and the disruption can be seen in all life, manifesting itself both physically and psychologically.

The circadian rhythm in humans is governed by the hormone, melatonin, which is created in response to darkness. It triggers the body to sleep and enter a resting phase which comes with a whole host of beneficial, and necessary, effects. With excessive lighting and the artificial light from screens such as phones, tablets, TV's and computers, melatonin creation is stunted and can lead to a variety of health issues such as insomnia, depression, stress, anxiety, and weight gain. Some studies have even suggested a link between melatonin deficiency and cancer.

But it is not just humans that suffer at the hands of light pollution. Nocturnal predators rely on the anonymity afforded by the cover of darkness. Many animals navigate by the stars. Various marine mammals use the stars to help them traverse the vast oceans, as they provide the only reference point from which to take a bearing. Every year thousands of sea turtle hatchlings perish, heading inland instead of towards the water, mistaking skyglow from human habitation for the ocean's vast horizon.

Experiments have shown that migratory birds use the motion of the night sky to guide themselves on their great, cross-continental journeys, and the innumerable swaths of insects rely on moonlight to orientate their flight. Let us not forget the lovable dung beetle who relies on the Milky Way to plot its course during moonless nights!

Insects make up the bulk of food for countless other animals, and the disruption of artificial light has a major effect on this food source, including driving their predators towards lit areas. Why insects are so attracted to outside lights is not fully understood, but many species have what is known as a 'dorsal light response', meaning that they fly orthogonally to the light (at 90°), keeping the Moon and stars above them. This is why they tend to spiral towards outside lights as opposed to simply landing on them.

Without action, this scourge will get worse, especially as the population and its reliance on technology increases. So, what can be done? As with most issues like this, the answer starts at home. Turning off unnecessary lights, ensuring lights are appropriately shielded and pointed downwards, and using 'warm' coloured lights are very simple fixes. This also helps with saving money and reducing the carbon footprint. If everyone adopted this approach, particularly commercial outfits, the improvement would be monumental.

There are many organisations in place that advocate for the protection of the night, including the International Dark Sky Association. Established in 1988, the IDA spans 52



countries and aims to increase awareness of the light pollution pandemic. In 2001, they began their award-winning International Dark Sky Places Program; an initiative to encourage communities, parks and protected areas around the world, to preserve and protect dark sky sites through responsible lighting policies and public education. They offer 5 classification tiers, and to date have awarded over 200 sites with these prestigious honours.

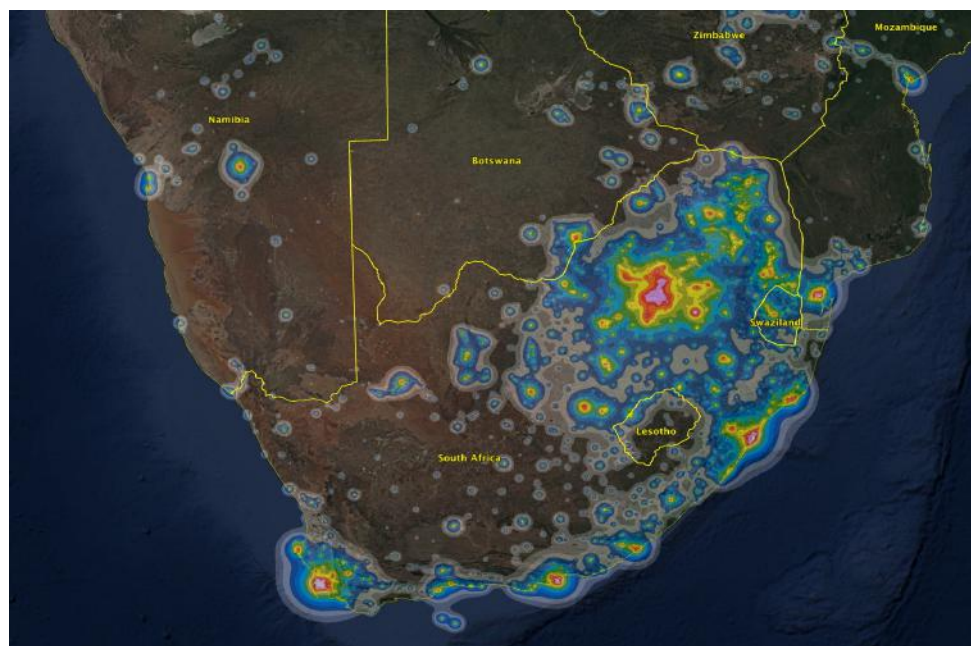
In South Africa, the !Ae!Hai Kalahari Heritage Park is recognised as an International Dark Sky Sanctuary, and next door in Namibia, the Namib Rand Nature Reserve is proclaimed an International Dark Sky Reserve. These areas attract a great deal of tourism on the back of these accolades, with people from all over the world flocking to the area to take advantage of the dark skies for both recreational and research purposes.

Here in Hoedspruit, with the Kruger Na-

tional Park on our doorstep, we should be aiming for similar standards. Safari lodges and surrounding areas should lead by example and can very simply improve the standard of lighting. In addition to a greatly enhanced natural experience, it will ultimately save money in terms of wasted electricity (particularly important in these load-shedding afflicted times!), not to mention the benefits to the wildlife these areas seek to preserve. People visit these areas to enjoy the natural beauty and rich species diversity, and to be immersed in the natural world. After all, what is more immersive than sitting under a starry African night sky, listening to the haunting whoop of distant hyena or the 'bass baritone' roar of a patrolling lion.

Anyone wishing for more information should have a look at the IDA website at www.darksky.org.

See Celestial Events SA advert for contact details



Light pollution in South Africa (above)

Image:Supplied

NIGHT SKY BLOTTED OUT BY LIGHT POLLUTION

VERY BAD **BAD** **BETTER** **BEST**

VISIBLE NIGHT SKY

Bad, better, best

Use outdoor lighting responsibly by only using it where it's needed, when it's needed, and in the amount required. Use the lowest light level required, limit blue-violet light, utilize timers or motion sensors, and use shielding.

INTERNATIONAL DARK SKY WEEK
APR 5 to 12 2021

And now for something completely different – a birding safari from Cape to Karoo

Mike Meidinger

As the winter enters its phase of chilled mornings and warm afternoons, many of us in the Lowveld appreciate the higher temperatures that rise through the middle of most June or July days. For us, it is a season of starkness and strife, as the bush and its component inhabitants make the most of late rains, a good food reserve, and for now, water sources that seem like they might last. For those in the highveld there is often a biting wind and nights are genuinely frigid, with nipping frost and clear blue skies.

None, however, have it worse at this time of year, than those who dwell in the mother city. With squalls, depressions, coastal lows and drenching fog, interspersed by gaps of several tempting 'good days' as the norm, time spent outdoors can be intermittent.

Despite this seemingly glum nature, this is a good time to be out and about in this region. Summer is also an excellent time to visit, as many resident species are still possible, the chance of a vagrant or scarcity exists, and the weather is much more stable.

A quick flip to Cape Town is often on the cards for many South African's, many of whom either originate from the realm or who have family unduly caught in the vortex of 'the Cape', its sodium-rich air, and it's aquarian allure.

The first thing to hit home, for those of us that live back east, is the late arrival of dawn. Hypothetically in a different time zone, the nature of the sun is definitely different to the one in the subtropical lowveld. During winter it only crests the horizon at a punishing 07h30 and sets below the opposite one at 17h30 sharp.

This naturally means the days are short, and oddly, distances between sites can be surprisingly long, so time available must be planned to some degree. If based in the urban hub itself, it is worth considering a night or two away and then back, therefore catching a few sites each day and making the most of each. Thus is it best, if thinking to explore the area properly for its top quality, world famous specials, to try stretch out from Cape Town itself in one of two loops, each of which lasting two to three days.

Birding in the city itself can be excellent with Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens offering beauties like orange-breasted sunbird, Cape sugarbird, Cape spurfowl, bokmakerie, Cape bulbul, Karoo prinia and more. Rondebosch Common is a great spot for the scarce rufous-breasted sparrowhawk with locals and even gate guards keeping tabs on the birds' movements. Simonstown has the infamous African penguin colony, but it is also one of two starting points for the famous Cape birding pelagics. These pelagic trips run from 07h00 to 14h00 on one day of several weekends a month, and are weather dependant.

They are not very expensive for what they offer, which is one of the greatest spectacles in the natural world. If lucky enough to find an active trawler pulling in nets, there can be tens of thousands of birds behind a single vessel. A visual smorgasbord that doesn't need to be all-identified to be appreciated. The money made from these Simonstown ventures goes directly back into seabird conservation and these boats are run as a non-profit exercise.

The boats that leave from Hout Bay are run by a private company which has more flexibility in terms of time out on the water. Both options offer a wealth of species and experience, each one is its own unique blend of variety and expanse. Species on offer include five or more species of albatross that can include the scarce wandering albatross and other rarities alongside the more common white-capped (shy), black-

browed, Indian and Atlantic yellow-nosed albatross. Common 'smaller' birds include white-chinned petrel, northern and southern giant petrel, large numbers of Cape petrel in winter, and steady numbers of great-winged petrel, plus several shearwaters in summer. Wilson's storm petrel and more, can all regularly be seen on these day trips.

These boat trips are often laden with cetacean sightings, it is not uncommon to see common Atlantic dolphin, southern right whale (in winter) and Bryde's whale, while the fortunate catch a glimpse of the rare killer whale or orca.

Back on land a venture just west of town towards the hub of Sir Lowry's Pass, Rooi Els and Betty's Bay, with an experienced local bird guide, can offer Victorin's warbler, Cape rockjumper, Cape siskin, forest canary, fynbos buttonquail and Cape eagle owl. A night at one of the many guest houses here offers a welcome respite from the hustle and bustle, transporting travellers into the quaint and refreshing ambiance of a small seaside town.

Moving further and further east, within a half a days drive of Muizenberg lies the De Hoop and De Mond Nature Reserves, as well as the Agulhas farmlands that lie between them and Betty's Bay. The farmland routes can yield wonderful quiet roadside birding with white-throated canary, Cape clapper lark, Cape long-billed lark, black harrier, blue crane, Denham's bustard, grey-winged francolin and more.

At De Hoop, time spent in its car park flanked by tall alien trees and in particular, its scramble-patch vegetated thickets, is often rewarded with the scarce Knysna woodpecker, here at the westerly fringe of its range, as well as the sometimes-tricky southern tchagra. From here, in summer, De Mond holds the world's most southern breeding Damara terns as well as the chance of a vagrant or two, while in winter Antarctic terns can be found. All of this amidst fantastic scenery, whales in the right season and excellent easy birding. From here it is a days drive past Hermanus to get back to the home-base of the city.

Another option is to venture swiftly and arduous northwards. Away from the relative succulence of the fynbos and into the aridity, solitude, tranquillity, and relative isolation that one finds within the succulent Karoo.

First port of call is the Langebaan area ranging from its small but significant neighbouring West Coast National Park which holds great birds like southern black korhaan, black harrier, grey-backed cisticola, Eurasian curlew and others. Southern grey tit is locally common in scrublands around Langebaan itself, especially the last rocky outcrop towards the national park gate. Out of town, farmlands offer the unique Cape long-billed lark as well as other regular Cape species like capped wheatear, blue crane, bokmakerie and thick-billed lark.

The salt pans at Kliphoek Salt Works offer the delightful chestnut-banded plover as well as Cape teal, great white pelican, lesser flamingo, Caspian tern (the world's largest of its kind), pied avocet and many other waders which are joined in summer by the Scandinavian breeding red-necked phalarope. From here the rest of the day can be spent in the shaded, semi-lush gullies and brittle rocky ridges that surround the Clanwilliam area to the north, which offers another chance at Cape siskin and Cape sugarbird as well as the top prize of the rare protea seedeater (canary).

From Clanwilliam or Garies, there is always the option of heading back for the city and its creature comforts. If the adventure lends towards a second, third or fourth night, then simply pushing on from Clanwilliam, on a two-hour highway journey, sets one nicely in Garies for the evening, amidst its

undulating boulder-dashed hillsides. The trees, having turned to scrub kilometres ago, are a distant memory in this Martian landscape, an evening spent in these areas offers the slim chance at the rare and secretive Cape eagle owl. A dawn scramble in the jumble of rocks, before a hearty farmers breakfast, might yield dusky sunbird, jackal buzzard, cinnamon-breasted and Layard's warblers and Karoo prinia amongst others.

After breakfast, a mid-morning digestive drive towards Springbok will take a couple of hours, where legs can be stretched and supplies for lunch acquired. Moving from here takes an hour and a half to the remote village of Alexander Bay and the chance to find the highly restricted Barlow's lark.

This isolated 'LBJ' is a pilgrimage bird for many South African birders, and is remarkably easy to get to, the good road conditions and open terrain offer pleasant driving as kilometres drift past at a good steady pace. Potholed sections are not very common while the Anenous Pass offers challenging but beautiful corners for the few minutes it takes to descend, as it winds to the desert-like and coastal plain below. A picnic lunch along the coast and a search along the roadsides near the town for the lark can also yield other great birds like chat flycatcher, yellow canary, Cape long-billed lark, tractrac chat, Karoo chat, pale chanting goshawk and black-chested prinia to mention a few species found in the white sand, knee high vegetation.

Many of these that are individuals of more widespread species, curiously have adapted paler plumage than many of their more easterly living brethren. This is most likely to match the terrain assisting in camouflage when out in exposed areas, while possibly also assisting with thermal regulation during the blisteringly hot days this area receives; being firmly within South Africa's tiny sliver of the true desert biome. Returning after lunch to Springbok, an early night is a good idea in order to make the most of tomorrow.

If on a significant venture, and hoping to see and do it all, in terms of the Karoo and its birding, then a long loop of driving and one more night away from the big city is needed. Despite the distance, the entire route is very achievable due to the excellent tarred roads along, pretty much, the entire route.

First stop from Springbok lies an hour and a half away at the mirage-like Koa Dune Field which lies 12km or so south of the highway and offers the best chance at birds like red lark, Stark's lark, Ludwig's bustard, the black-eared sparrow-lark (keep an eye out for small flocks of this scarce nomad as they float past), sociable weaver and more. A rough introduction to the grass-tufted red sands that inhabit this part of the Nama karoo yields yet another arid, but unique, landscape through which the N14 dutifully cuts.

Continuing eastwards you arrive at the one-horse cliché that is Pofadder, a conurbation of little consequence but the bustling metropolis of the region, and a great place to fill up on fuel and some of the country's best homemade, farm-raised and expertly cooked roadside pies.

From here straight east for another few hours, through Kakamas and Keimoes to the equally sprawling ville-de-jour, Kenhardt. Here some roadside birding offers gems like the shrike-like, canary-sized African pygmy falcon, Namaqua sandgrouse, Karoo korhaan, Ludwig's bustard, Karoo lark and others. Sociable weaver nests perch atop telegraph poles, that baffle the brain and defy all manner of engineering or logic, some even seem to break nature's physical laws concerning gravity and density.

From Kenhardt towards the central-to-nowhere hamlet that is Brandvlei, there are

fair chances of the rare Sclater's lark and Burchell's courser, both of which inhabit stony plains, and with the seed-eating lark, drinking often during the midday at metal farm tanks that have some water in their overflow systems. These are very difficult birds indeed, but the entire drive is filled with epic scenery, a feeling of open remoteness and once again surprisingly good roads and travel conditions.

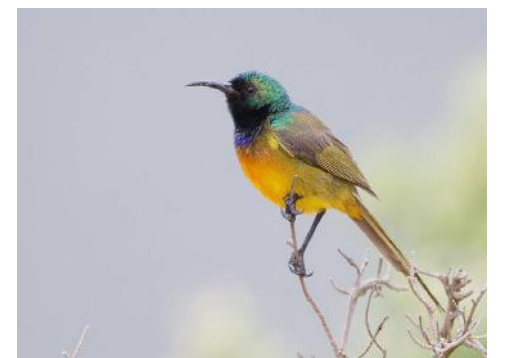
From Kenhardt to Brandvlei the journey is a mere couple of hours and a night here offers much in terms of spotlighting along the same road at night, or any of the side roads of the area. During nocturnal forays, sightings of aardvaark, caracal, striped polecat, aardwolf and other nocturnal mammals are all possible in this fantastically dry, and accessible wonderland - as well as both spotted and the rare mountain-loving, Cape eagle owl.

As dawn breaks over the vast cool plains, the drive back to the lush green fields of the Western Cape would take most of the day, if taken slowly and stopping here and there along the way. It runs through Calvinia and on to the N7 highway running between Cape Town and Namibia. From here it is on to familiar ground with the next stop south being Clanwilliam and back to the Cape several hours later.

All in all, Cape Town and its greater surroundings offer much in terms of birding, diversity, adventure and comfort. When next in the region, it is worth considering dedicating a day or two to birding. Whether following the nose to some of the most well-known sites, or under the expert hand of some of the local areas bird guides, it is worthwhile unlocking some of the fantastic avian and other treasures on offer.



Cape Eagle Owl, a rare resident of rocky areas, away from people. Mostly in the Karoo biome, never in the suburbs
Image: eBird



Orange-breasted Sunbird, a common endemic to the wilder areas of the city

Image: BirdGuides



Cape Pelagic Birding, one of nature's true spectacles if you're lucky enough to witness this

Image: Mostly Birding

Antivenom crisis



Johan Marais
African Snakebite Institute

About eight months back we started running out of antivenom for snakebite and the situation has become worse. While hospitals will have access to antivenom for serious snakebites, veterinarians have largely run out of stock, and pets are dying.

Antivenom is produced by the South African Vaccine Producers (SAVP), part of our National Health Laboratories. Two antivenoms are produced for snakebite in South Africa – a monovalent Boomslang antivenom that costs around R7,500 per vial, and a polyvalent antivenom that is made using the venom of ten snake species including the mambas, most cobras, rinkhals, puff adder and gaboon adder. It costs around R2,300 per vial.

Making antivenom is a slow process in which horses are injected with small quantities of snake venom to trigger their immune system. More and more venom is injected from time to time, and after about nine months the horses are immune – the venom then has no effect on them. Around ten liters of blood is drawn at two-month intervals, the serum removed, and the blood put back into the horse. The serum is purified and bottled in 10 ml glass vials and needs to be refrigerated. It lasts three years.

Antivenom is the only and correct treatment for serious snakebites. Boomslang bites are very rare as they live in trees and shrubs and have a pleasant disposition.

They rarely bite and usually only if grabbed or stood on. Two or three bites are treated annually in South Africa, and patients usually receive two vials of monovalent boomslang antivenom. The venom of the boomslang is haemotoxic and compromises the blood clotting mechanism. It is slow-acting and can take anything from 5-30 hours before the first symptoms appear – bleeding from the site of the bite, bleeding from the nose, mucous membranes, and eventually uncontrolled bleeding from various organs. If treated with antivenom timeously, the recovery rate is excellent.

The dominant neurotoxic venoms, specifically from black mamba and Cape cobra bites, are the most dangerous, and these two snakes account for most fatal snake bites. Their venom affects breathing, and untreated cases may result in fatalities in anything from 1-7 hours, or even a shorter period of time. Patients need to be hospitalized urgently, they may have to be ventilated and often need around 10 - 15 vials of polyvalent antivenom.

Most bites are from snakes with cytotoxic venom – the puff adder and most cobras, especially the spitting cobras. Cytotoxic venom causes pain, swelling and blistering that may result in severe tissue damage. In serious cases it is vitally important to administer sufficient antivenom sooner rather than later.

While antivenom is life and limb-saving it also has its limitations. About four out of every ten patients that are treated with antivenom have a severe allergic reaction and

go into anaphylaxis. Doctors immediately stop administering antivenom, treat the patient with adrenaline, and once stabilized, may continue with antivenom. For these reasons antivenom is only administered in a hospital environment.

Many pets survive bites from highly venomous snakes purely because they receive little venom, but in the case of serious bites, they need antivenom – nothing else works.

The situation seems to be improving slowly, and antivenom production is improving, but at this stage there still is a severe shortage and veterinarians do not have access to stock. Major hospitals usually have stock and also have the ability to move stock around when needed.

In the event of any snakebite, it is important to get the victim to the nearest hospital as soon as possible.

Johan Marais is one of Africa's leading herpetologists and is CEO of the African Snakebite Institute. He is a best-selling author, a compulsive photographer, and a travel addict. Check out the website on www.africansnakebiteinstitute.com – get your FREE App on the link <http://bit.ly/snakebiteapp>



Extracting venom (above left) Vial of Polyvalent antivenom produced by the South African Vaccine Producers (above) South African Vaccine Producers Polyvalent antivenom (left) Images supplied

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Philenoptera violacea – the apple leaf or appelblaar

Brett Heasman

It's crunch time, this month we talk about the apple leaf. To many, this name is not familiar, but there are hundreds of roads named appelblaar throughout the country, and it is also often referred to as the rain tree.

The apple leaf gets its name from the sound of its dry leaves been crunched, much like the sound of one biting into an apple, and apparently a new leaf has an apple scent. Unfortunately, my carnivorous appetite-like nose does not smell this, but some of my veggie friends can confirm the link.

The scientific name *Philenoptera violacea* is derived from the Greek word "philenos" meaning manageable, and "pteros" meaning wing. In late spring the apple leaf flowers briefly, becoming laden with bunches of light purple, mauve flowers, hence the species name "violacea", the Latin word for violet. The flowers are sweet-scented, and full of nectar which attracts an abundance of bees, butterflies, insects, and birds.

This is a protected tree in South Africa. The wood of the apple leaf varies in colour, is hard and heavy, and is used for carving ornaments, tool handles, maize stampers, and more. In traditionally it is believed that the tree will bring bad luck and will cause family feuds if chopped down. However, I recently was given a leaf from the tree as a symbol of friendship. Traditionally the twig of the tree is placed into another person's pocket as a symbol of friendship, and by exchanging twigs with others, it is believed to ensure a long-lasting friendship.

This impressive tree can grow 18 to 20 metres tall, and usually occurs along water courses and drainage lines. Its unmistakably twisting trunk makes for a good rubbing post for elephants. The stunning, meandering overall impression, puts this beauty in a class of its own.

The leaves are compound with one or two leaflet pairs and ending with a terminal leaflet. The leaves are fairly large, and are eaten by most browsers, especially by elephants and giraffes. Although they are generally very tough and leathery, the leaves look like it has many holes in them. These are caused or due to our little friend known as a spittle bug (*Ptyelus grossus*), who inhabits the tree, and feeds on the sap. These little critters obtain their food from the leaves and excrete the fluid at the same rate as they ingest it, creating an impression that there is a light drizzle falling from the heavens. This is simply this little insect's waste product. This is believed to be why this tree is also called the rain tree.

Medicinally, this is another fascinating tree with multiple traditional uses. If you were to dig deep and find the root, this could solve many problems. Inhalation of the smoke from the burning roots is used to cure the common cold; the roots are also used as a fish poison, and to cure snakebites. Other uses include a cure for diarrhoea and gastro problems, which may help prevent you from another shitty day in Africa.

So next time tread lightly as the crunching of the fallen leaves may give your presence away, and don't gaze too long above into the tree as it may rain down on you.



Apple leaf

Image: Canva

How do animals hide?

Most animals avoid detection by a type of deception called camouflage (also called disguise). This strategy is not only used by prey in defence, but many predators also use it in order to hunt effectively. Four basic types of camouflage are generally recognised, and each has a slightly different function, although they all disguise the presence of the animal.

Concealing colouration - this is when the body colour of the animal is the same as the vegetation or ground colour on which it finds itself. Most of our local species that blend into soil, grass, etc., use this camouflage technique. It is the most common form of camouflage, for example in lion.

Counter shading - this refers to concealing colouration where the back and belly colours of the animal are different - each colour being used for concealment when viewed from above or below. The dark ground matches the back when seen from above, while the light sky matches the belly when seen from below. This shading also tends to 'flatten' the animal against the ground when seen in black and white (eyesight of most mammals) making it more difficult to see. Examples are lion and impala.

Disruptive colouration - mammals use spots, stripes or other patterns on the coat to 'break up' their body outline so that it blends into the background. Its overall shape is disguised to be all but invisible. Because most mammals have only black and white vision, relying on movement and shape, this can be a very successful strategy for prey and predator alike. Kudu, leopard, bushbuck, zebra and serval, among others, are classic examples of this camouflage.

Disguise - this can easily be confused with concealing colouration, but it is when the animal physically (its shape) looks like something non-living in its environment as well as being the same colour. A grasshopper looking like a leaf or a stone is an example of this.



Serval, an example of disruptive colouration

Both these conditions (dark and light animals) are caused by a pigment called melanin. Melanin is, in fact, just a generalisation for a number of different 'dark' body pigments.

Different types of melanins occur naturally in the bodies of mammals at various locations, such as eumelanin and pheomelanin in hair, skin and fur. Melanins are also found in the inner ear and retina of the eye. Melanin is produced in special cells called melanocytes that then create small melanin-filled vesicles called melanosomes that work their way into ordinary skin cells in the epidermis, collecting around the cell nucleus. Melanin is a natural filter for ultraviolet (UV) radiation - in other words it's a natural sunscreen - so the cell is protected from injury or destruction by the harmful ionising effect of UV radiation. Melanin, therefore, helps animals that are exposed to prolonged bouts of sunlight to survive its harmful effects. The genes that control melanin production are, however, occasionally faulty and can produce the following extremes:

Melanism - this is the result of too much melanin being produced. Not only do the

What causes dark and light animals?



White lion, an example of albinism
Images :Canva pro

animals become darker (which can negatively affect their reproduction and survival chances) but areas of the body that normally lack (or have very little) melanin become saturated with the pigment giving a very different overall external appearance. The most notable melanistic mammals locally are the black impala and black springbok (small captive herds of each). Outside of southern Africa we also have the so-called black panther (a melanistic jaguar from South America and a melanistic leopard from India). There have apparently been recent sightings of melanistic leopard in South Africa. It must be noted that these are not different species or even subspecies, but are merely genetic mutations (also called aberrant forms) of the same species as a result of recessive genes. There is a possible negative health risk of melanism - besides the possible problems of camouflage. Because melanin naturally acts as a sunscreen by effectively absorbing and diffusing UV radiation, inadequate amounts of sunlight filter through the skin. This means that the body cannot produce enough vitamin D - a necessity to prevent bone disorders.

Albinism - this is the opposite of melanism and describes the unusual condition of not enough (or no) melanin and being produced. Again this is caused by a recessive gene, these animals are therefore only variations of the same species. True albinism involves virtually no pigments whatsoever (although pigments can be present). The condition is more correctly defined by poorly developed retinas and abnormal nerve connections between the eyes and brain, as well as involuntary shaking of the eyes. Partial albinism is, however, far more common. Although there are many different types, the most common is **leucism**.

There are a number of different species that exhibit this phenomenon, with the most common 'white' or 'leucistic' mammals being kudu, impala, bushbuck, buffalo, lion and giraffe. Although at first appearing pure white, they all tend to have limited melanin production on some parts of the body, and the iris generally has pigmentation. The biggest problem with albinism is the lack of protection against UV radiation, and many suffer photosensitivity. Another problem of course is the fact that they are incredibly conspicuous, making long-term survival in natural habitats not only difficult but highly unlikely. Interestingly, it has been noted that in these mammals, the lack of melanin in the inner ear - through unknown mechanisms - results in hearing impairment or even total deafness. Lack of dark pigment in the eyes (blue pigment is usually present) also makes the iris more opaque and lets light through to the retina (adding to that from the pupil) causing eye damage. Leucism can occur because of genetic inheritance, nutritional stress or as a result of externally influenced mutation during juvenile development.

Excerpts from 'Beat about the Bush - Mammals and Birds' by Trevor Carnaby, Jacana Media, 2nd Edition reprint 2018.

NOTICE OF WATER USE LICENSE APPLICATION AT MAHALE- THABA CHUEU MINING IN PHALABORWA WITHIN BE-PHALABORWA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY OF THE LIMPOPO PROVINCE

Notice is hereby given in terms of Chapter 5; of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Regulations of 2014 promulgated under the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107/1998) (NEMA) and Section 21 of the National Water Act of 1998 (NWA) that Mahale – Thaba Chueu Mining has appointed Naledzi Environmental Consultants (Pty) Ltd to apply for a Water Use Licence application from the Department of Water and Sanitation for the existing mining activities in Mahale- Thaba Chueu Mine.

Locality: Mahale- Thaba Chueu Mine is locate on the RE of the Farm Mahale 718LT, RE of the Farm Wildebeest 745LT and RE of the Farm Silwana’s location 719LT located in Phalaborwa within Ba-Phalaborwa Local municipality.

Project Description: The water uses applied for in this WULA are associated with activities related to the mining activities onsite.

TRIGGERED ACTIVITIES

WULA activities in terms of the National Water Act (Act 36 of 1998):

Section 21a: Abstraction of water from a borehole

Section 21b: storing of water in jojo tanks

Section 21 c&i: access road stream crossing

Section 21g: PCD

Section 21g: Washer plant

Section 21g: Dust suppression with dirty treated water

Section 21g: septic tank

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS (11 May 2023- 11 July 2023)

The public participation process is being undertaken to inform Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) regarding the Water Use Licence Application process.

Parties wishing to formally register as I&AP and offer comment on the project are requested to submit their name, contact details and interest in the project to Naledzi at the below contact details on or before 11 July 2023.

The contact details of the EAP are:

Naledzi Environmental Consultants Pty Ltd: 141 Thabo Mbeki Street Polokwane;

Postnet Suite Library Gardens, Suite 320, Private Bag X 9307, Polokwane. 0700.

Contact persons: DESMOND MUSESHO & SITHABISIWE NCUBE.

Email: info@naledzi.co.za/ sncube@naledzi.co.za, Tel: 087 550 1529, Fax: 087 550 1537 Cell: 060 550 9311

NOTICE OF BASIC ASSESSMENT PROCESSES

Notice is hereby given of the intent to carry out the following activities:

The submission of an application to Limpopo Department of Economic Development, Environment and Tourism in terms of section 24 (2) of the National Environmental Management Act number 107 of 1998, and Regulation 41 of the EIA Regulations published in Government Notice 326 of 7 April 2017, for:

THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF 4 PRIVATE HOUSES AND A CULTIVATED AREA FOR VEGETABLE PRODUCTION.

LISTED ACTIVITIES POTENTIALLY TRIGGERED:

Activities 27 and 28 of Listing Notice 1, Published in Notice 983 of 4 December 2014, as amended on 7 April 2017.

Activities 12, and 18 of Listing Notice 3, published in Notice 985 of 4 December 2014, as amended on 7 April 2017.

SITE LOCATION: Portion 23 (a portion of Portion 19) of the farm Paris 206 KT in the Maruleng Local Municipality, Mopani District, Limpopo Province.

APPLICANT: Farm Paris 23 Bushveld Estate. Mr. D. Hancock.

Project EAP: Elize Osmer; Tel: 074 834 1977; Fax: 011 604 0533; E-mail: projects@eszro.com.

Date of publication of this advertisement is Friday 30 June 2023. If you wish to be identified as an interested and/or affected party, please submit, in writing, your name, contact information and interest in the above-mentioned project to the contact person given above on or before 2 August 2023.

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BUSINESS / SHOPS / SERVICES

Armadillo Media	082 410 3582
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Chic Shack	084 381 7071
FGASA	011 886 8245
FreeGo Outdoor & Canvas	064 532 2057
Fruitful Living	015 793 3703
Kruger2Canyon News	078 979 6486
Kuku Interiors	079 503 0151
Love the Hoed	082 330 6060
Niche Cleaning Service	083 233 9852
Ruggedwear	013 755 4627
SPAR Hoedspruit	015 793 2305
Tops @ SPAR	015 793 2069
Vehicle License Department	015 793 0838

CONSTRUCTION & INDUSTRIAL

BUCO	015 793 0560
Build It	015 793 0116
Creek Plumbing	078 870 7993
Coastal Hire	015 793 0971
Mopane Group	015 781 1571
Phillip Brink Architects	083 288 2425

SCHOOLS & EDUCATION

Drakensig Laerskool	015 793 3756
Drakensig Pre-primer	015 793 2401
Hoedspruit Christian School	015 793 2067
Lowveld Academy	015 793 3750
Mariepskop Laerskool	079 529 6071
Mariepskop Pre-primer	082 880 7069
Perspective Training College	082 787 4471
Southern Cross Schools	015 793 0590

EMERGENCY – HELP LINES

After Hours Emergency Doctors	084 770 1741
Air Force Base Hoedspruit	015 799 2911
Africa Safe -T	010 590 6313
Ambulance AFB	015 799 2065
Alcoholics Narcotics Anonymous	082 258 4602
Ambulance Airforce Base	015 799 2065
Ambulance Services Limpopo	015 793 1581
Ambulance Tintswalo	101 77
Ambulance Services Swift	060 528 2784
Farm watch/ Plaaswag	072 310 0032
Fire Brigade AFB	015 799 2172
Fire Brigade Maruleng	015 793 0536
Fire Dpt Hoedspruit	015 793 0728
GKEPF Greater Kruger Enviro Protection Foundation	065 743 2224

Hoedspruit Clinic	015 793 2342
Hoedspruit Medical Rescue	072 170 0864
Hoedspruit Paws	078 431 3161
Hoedspruit Town Watch	072 812 2172
	082 683 2835
	072 310 0032
Hoedspruit Farm Watch	015 799 2065
Hospital AFB Drakensig	013 759 0645
Hospital Nelspruit Mediclinic	013 795 5000
Hospital Tintswalo	015 383 9400
Hospital Sekororo Gvt-The Oaks	015 305 8536
Hospital Tzaneen Mediclinic	015 793 2409
Maruleng Municipality Medical Rescue	072 170 0864
Med Centre Emergency No Protrack	084 770 1743
SAPS Station Commander	015 793 2585
SAPS General	082 565 8253
SAPS	101 111
SPCA Phalaborwa	015 799 4000
Victim Support Unit	071 519 7044
	082 940 0651

MEDICAL & VETERINARY SERVICES

Counselling Ronelle Joubert	082 787 4471
DR Van Eeden (Dentist)	015 793 1876
DR D Verhagen	015 793 0606
DR A Polley	015 793 0606
DR Shivambu	087 260 1537
DR Werner Muller (Dentist)	015 793 1894
Hlokomela	072 698 6538
Hoedspruit Clinic	015 793 2342
Hoeds Wildlife Est Pharmacy	015 793 1427
J Coetzee (Clinical Psychologist)	015 781 0012
Marlie Landman (Eye Clinic)	082 803 0369
Med Centre (Dentists)	015 793 0845
ProVet Veterinary Hospital	015 793 0797

REAL ESTATE & PROPERTY

Century 21	015 793 1534
Engel & Volkers	082 415 9912

TOURISM & THINGS TO DO

Eastgate Airport	015 793 3681
Hds Endangered Species Centre	015 793 1633
Jabulani Elephant Interaction	015 793 1265
K2C Biosphere Region	015 817 1838
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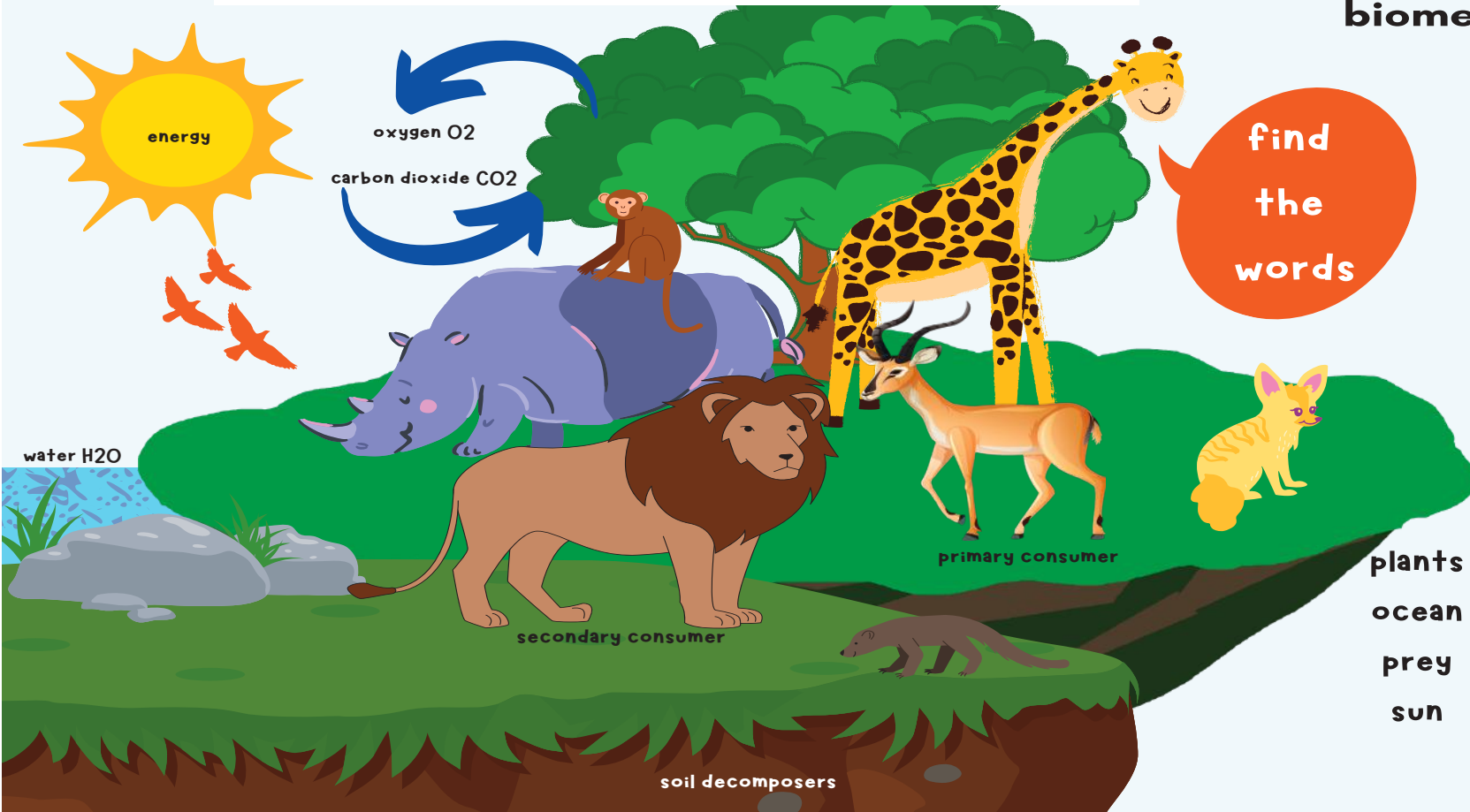
See you at the market
LOVE THE HOED GEAR

WHAT IS AN ECOSYSTEM?



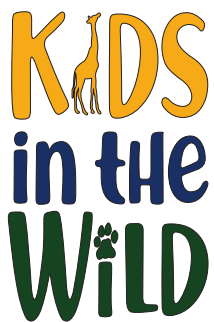
This is where all flora and fauna living in a small area within a biome depend on each for their survival and make up communities of life within that area. An ecosystem also includes non-living materials, such as water, rocks, soil, and sand. Many combined ecosystems make up a biome.

WORD SEARCH



find the words

- extinct
- consumer
- predator
- animals
- mimicry
- migrate
- desert
- decomposers
- adaptations
- camouflage
- ecosystem
- reproduce
- grassland
- hibernate
- producers



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