



**FEBRUARY 2017**



**CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT by Mike Joseph**

**UNDER THE LEADWOOD:**

Dear all

**CAPs:**

Recently we sent out a communication detailing the situation regarding CAPs (Commercial Authorisation Permit/s). I kindly request that this info be read again. We have in recent times received an unusually high number of requests from both buyers and sellers about whether they can sell/buy a property to run a lodge or guest house. The issue of a guest house is defined in the constitution on the basis of OCCASIONAL guests.

## **BUILDING GUIDELINES:**

In the same vein, by willingness of 2 gentlemen of the association, building guidelines are in the process of being drawn up and will be presented to the AGM for approval as well. The purpose of this is to provide the authorities with guidelines of our requirements as a reserve, especially in the light of our move towards declaration of Grietjie as a Protected Area(PA). With these guidelines, new developments have some basis upon which to be assessed as being in keeping with the reserve requirements, and we hope that these guidelines will form the base for the authorities to make decisions. This request was indeed made by the authorities for such guidelines a while back, so as to assist them in their deliberations.

## **MASEKE:**

The inclusion of Maseke into Balule is reaching the final stages. As mentioned in the letter sent to members in good standing recently, Balule had, at their last meeting unanimously agreed to the inclusion of Maseke into Balule provided certain conditions were met. These conditions have been met and the only outstanding issue is the precise mechanism for Balule to compensate Maseke for the upkeep of approximately 40km of fence along the R40.

There is a proposed Balule meeting on 21 March to finalise (or not ) the inclusion of Maseke into Balule.

On the basis of the feedback we received from our members, 26 votes were in favour of this inclusion with 3 against. (Although only 2 of those against are members in good standing and thus with a vote that counts). Bear in mind that the committee can only represent the association and on the basis of this feedback, we advised Balule we would support this inclusion.

It must be noted that this is a BALULE decision and not a Grietjie one, and Grietjie has made its input into the Balule discussion. Final discussions will take place soon.

We acknowledge that we were remiss in missing out sending the info to one individual (not a member in good standing) who lives along the Maseke fence, and this has been remedied by the time this goes to print). The other property owners along the fence, to whom no communication was sent represent a property that has just been sold and we do not know who the new owners are yet (previous owner not a member).

The rationale about this situation is contained in the communication, as well as delivered in 2 verbal feedback sessions in January and February.

This is probably the biggest strategic move being considered by Balule in terms of broadening the community base of the APNR, the benefits of which should be obvious. We also understand that not everything is perfect in this world, but on balance the deal is a very good deal for Grietjie.

## **PROPERTIES SOLD:**

Plots 12 and 49 (Mr Martin-Lie Staudenmaier) have been sold. We understand from agents that plot 111 has also been sold, but have no finality on this. I have briefly met the new owners of plots 12, Mr Ian Nowak . I am advised that transfer of #12 is imminent. I will be meeting the new owners of # 49, Mr Martin-Lie Staudenmaier, soon. My understanding is that transfer of #49 has already been done. At this stage have no information on the new owners of plot 111.

It appears that interest in property on Grietjie is picking up according to one agent.

Until next time from

Under the Leadwood.

## **RESERVE MANAGER'S REPORT by Gerrie van Zyl**

### **SECURITY AND ACCESS CONTROL / FENCE**

- Fences repairs has reduced.
- Replant gate posts and about 70 m Doreen fence repaired.

### **GAME MANAGEMENT:**

- All animals in good condition.
- A few Kudu, waterbuck, and buffalo calves and a couple zebra foals spotted.
- Lions still very active all over Grietjie.
- Young bushbuck ram found dead, cause of death, fighting (horn stab from behind)
- No fresh snares found in areas where we patrolled.

### **VEGETATION:**

- All trees green and lush.
- Good grass in places, weeds have taken over on overgrazed areas.
- Removed some alien plants from Swartspruit.

### **CLIMATE / RAINFALL:**

- Weather in the mid-30<sup>s</sup> with good rains and a few cool days.
- 80 mm for February measured at the gate.

### **ROADS:**

- Lots of storm damage on gravel roads.
- Repaired damage and graded Darisandi, Waterbuck, Doreen, and Bridelia roads.
- Build the first gully on Darisandi road – Please be aware.

- Clean and do general maintenance of signage boards.



#### **OTHER MATTERS:**

Build two more concrete/rock signs at Modjadji and junction of Zebra/Grysbok/Scorpion rd.

#### Other Projects:

Installed new outside lights/floodlights at the Gate.

(A huge thank you to the Shines for their donation towards upgrading the gate.)

#### Tractor:

Fuel line on Tractor keeps on blocking, we discovered algae building up in tank, I ordered an additive to put in tank to eliminate the algal growth, and hopefully this will sort out the problem.

## **AROUND THE CAMPFIRE**

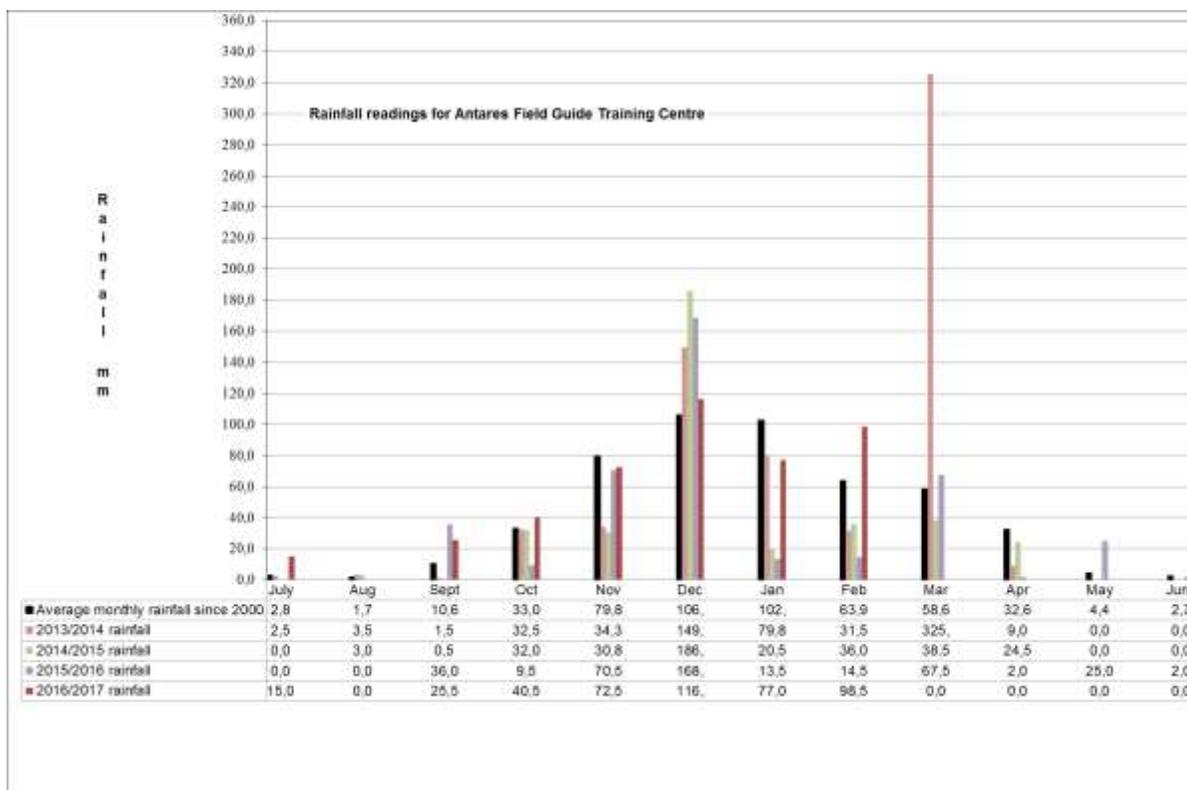
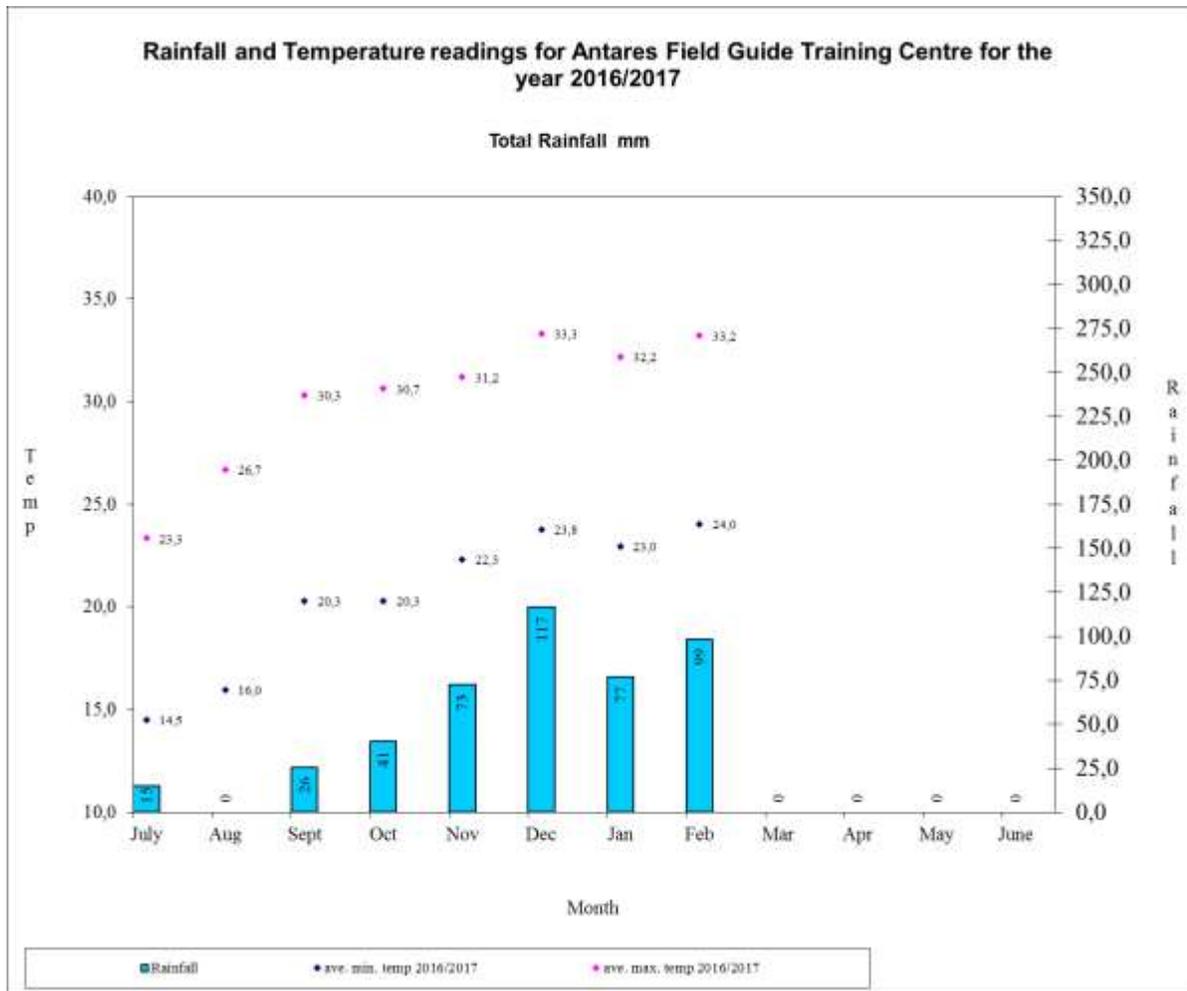
I had a meeting with the Bacon family residing in the storm water pipe at 101 on the Doreen rd.

Good morning to the Bacon family and what can I do for you. *Morning Mr. Warden sorry for bothering you but we have a serious problem. I am listening. We as Warthogs certainly have the same rights as anyone else on Grietjie, you see Mr. Warden we feel that we also deserve a good night's sleep. I agree everyone deserves a good night's sleep, but what is the problem. Well sir our problem is all the cars and noise when they drive over our house. I am sorry but people have the right to drive to their houses. We understand that and we knew there will be some noise when we chose to stay there but the main problem is the Land Rovers and Land Cruisers. You lost me please explain. We learned to distinguish between Land Rovers, Land Cruiser's and other cars. If you hear a rumble and noise from far off you know it is a Landy because of the toolbox and spare engine in at the back and then they have the audacity to shine there spotlight's into our house ,show no respect. After that the whole family will be awake. And what about the Cruisers. You see sir that is also a problem the Cruisers are so quiet you don't expect anything and the next moment you only hear WOESH when they drive over our house, your hart skip a beat, but the worst is when you hear a rumble and the next moment you hear WOESH, which is when a Cruiser is towing a Landy. And then there is this guy with a brown Cruiser station wagon day and night up and down. O that is Johan with "THE BRUIN GEVAAR" he does a good job doing anti-poaching, you should appreciate what he is doing to keep you guys safe. We as the Bacon family request that you put up sings to please slow down and be quiet before and after our house. I will see what I can do but these Landy guys are tough buggers I mean they can overall a engine under a Marula tree. No problem.*

(This is the story told by the Bacon family and not necessarily the view of the Warden)

"SORRY BOSS"

# RAINFALL AND TEMPERATURE STATS by Ian Owtram



## INTERESTING ARTICLES

### CO-EXISTING WITH NATURE IN A SUSTAINABLE AND BUSH-FRIENDLY MANNER

#### *A GPNR forum on guidelines relating to the interaction between humans and the natural environment*

This month's guideline deals with a topic that is really 'close to home', namely how to build and/or maintain our homes in a responsible and environmentally sustainable manner.

#### GUIDELINE 5

##### *1. I own my property – can I build anything I want?*

Based on the information below, the short answer is 'No'.

- The relatively new **Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act 16 of 2013** (SPLUMA) will in future be the most important Act to regulate all urban and rural land. We hope to bring you more detailed information about how it will potentially affect GPNR in the next Newsletter.
- At this stage, the properties comprising GPNR are zoned as agricultural land. As such, another Act, the **Conservation of Agricultural Resources Act 43 of 1983**, and a number of local and provincial regulations, apply (subject to SPLUMA), which may limit what we can and cannot do or build on our properties.
- In addition, there is environmental legislation that must be adhered to, notably the **National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998**. This Act lists certain activities that call for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out, especially for example, building on properties in sensitive areas close to the river. The Act also places certain restrictions on the building of lodges and the expansion of existing buildings for purposes of running a lodge.
- Our **GPNR Constitution** contains provisions, which echo those found in similar constitutions. They bind Members contractually. These rules were included for very good reason, namely to preserve the natural environment. See for example clause 18.2.5. Note also the duties imposed on Members in clause 11.

Therefore, before starting any building project or any commercial project on your property, make sure that you know which rules apply. Non-compliance with legislation or the Constitution could lead to many unwanted consequences.

If you are unsure about the legality of a building project, an expert in the field is the principal planner Jacques du Toit at Jacques du Toit and Associates. Phone: 015 307 3710; Email: [dutoitfj@mweb.co.za](mailto:dutoitfj@mweb.co.za).

## ***II. I have adhered to all the local, provincial and national laws, and the GPNR Constitution – now can I build whatever I want?***

Here the answer is, 'not really'. There are many other 'rules' that are in some ways even more important than legislation and contractual obligations, although they are not strictly enforceable. They encompass sensitivity toward, and respect for, this beautiful place we call Grietjie and for all our neighbours, the two-legged, four-legged, multi-legged, no-legged and winged.

Once more, our Constitution offers invaluable guidance. Note especially the 'Objectives' in clause 7.

Below are some of these important 'rules' aimed at living in harmony with nature (and all our neighbours):

### **• Respect for the bush**

Do we love Grietjie and the bush because of the beautiful houses and gardens? Or, because of the lovely roads, lapas, braai areas and swimming pools? The answer is, of course, that we love the bush for the sake of the bush, the birds, animals, vegetation and landscape.

But unfortunately, sometimes our actions belie our words. What do we say when we build bigger houses and more garages, guest accommodation and entertainment areas than we really need? Why do we have so many roads zig-zagging through our properties? What do we say with our fences, which interfere with the movement of animals and keep out nature, the very thing we say we love?

Clearly, the bigger our footprint, the less space remains for natural vegetation and animals. Creating a large footprint not only has a (disruptive) visual impact, it also shrinks the larder that the animals depend on for their survival. Moreover, apart from the final footprint that interferes with the natural environment, the entire building process places great strain on the environment and the food sources of animals.

### **• Bush atmosphere**

We love Grietjie, specifically because it is the bush, and because of its 'bush atmosphere' as the GPNR Constitution describes it. But, what is this elusive bush atmosphere? By definition, it must be something very different to a city atmosphere, and the most outstanding differences between the two is that in cities we find:

- Light pollution
- Noise pollution
- Manmade structures dominating the landscape
- Colours and textures clashing with the natural environment

Therefore, to create a bush atmosphere we need to minimise the abovementioned elements as much as possible.

We can think too of other reserves that have a wonderful bush atmosphere and learn from them. Many of our successful sister reserves have very strict rules, for example, about which colours and materials to use in building, the sizes of buildings, and about how to shield lights and contain noise levels.

Think too, that often the reserves with the best bush atmosphere are the ones with the best reputation – they are also the most desirable and hence the ones where properties fetch the best prices.

## **3. Adhere to the bush 'rules'**

In the long run, the more we leave of the natural environment, the better for us, for the next generations, and of course for the bush itself.

The real value of our properties lies therein that they are situated in a nature reserve – therefore, the more nature we leave, the more we enhance the potential value of our properties.

- **Carefully consider the impact of any building or renovation project and minimise our footprint if possible.**
- **Carefully consider the consequences of making more roads.**
- **Build with sensitivity and respect for the natural environment.**
- **Build green and live green!**

Compiled by Liz Lewis

We wish to thank Glenda Watson, Jacques du Toit and Mike Joseph for the useful information supplied.

## **ANIMAL FACTS**

# **Zebra**

## ***Hippotigris and Dolichohippus***

Closely related to horses and donkeys, the zebra is best known for its black and white striped body. In fact, zebra stripe patterns are unique to each individual. These stripes are believed to be camouflage devices that help zebras hide well in the grass.



## Diet

Zebras are herbivorous and primarily eat a variety of grasses. They are also known to eat shrubs, herbs, twigs, leaves and bark.

## Population

Overall, plains zebras number at around 750,000. Historically, there were over 15,000 Grevy's zebras. However, there are only about 2,500 remaining today. There are 600-700 cape mountain zebras and around 800-1300 Hartmann's mountain zebras in the wild.

## Range

Plains zebra are found on the **savannas** from Sudan to northern Zimbabwe in eastern Africa. Grevy's zebras are now mostly restricted to parts of northern Kenya. Mountain zebras occur in southwestern Africa with cape mountain zebras in South Africa and Hartmann's mountain zebras in Namibia and Angola.

## Behavior

Zebras are very social animals and live in large groups called 'harems.' Plains and mountain zebras live in harems that are made up of one stallion and up to six mares and their young, while Grevy's zebras come together as groups for short periods of time. Sometimes herds come together to form temporary groups of up to 30 members. Zebras sleep standing up, and only when they are in groups that can warn them of danger. If they spot a predator, they will bark or whinny loudly to warn the others in the group.

## Reproduction

**Mating Season:** Year round and based on species.

**Gestation:** 12-13 months.

**Litter size:** 1 foal.

Zebra foals are born with brown and white stripes as opposed to black and white stripes. Mares generally keep all other zebras away for 2-3 days until her foal recognizes her by sight, voice and smell.

## Threats

The zebra's biggest threats are habitat loss due to ranching and farming and competition for water with livestock. They are also hunted for their skins.

In the range of the Grevy's zebra, where survival of young is linked to the availability of forage, climate change is exacerbating droughts on already-degraded rangeland. Droughts also force the animals to congregate at remaining water sources, increasing the incidence of disease transmission.

Source: <http://www.defenders.org/zebra/basic-facts>

## **CLASSIFIEDS**

Please submit any small classified adverts that you want published every month to [grietjecomms@gmail.com](mailto:grietjecomms@gmail.com) and we will gladly provide free publication thereof.

**If you are interested in purchasing property within Grietjie please contact the committee as we have a good selection of properties for sale by their owners.**



Shuttle transfers from Hoedspruit's Eastgate airport to your doorstep at Grietjie. From as little as R350, contact Hennie on 072 640 8033

Greyhound now provide a daily return bus service between Phalaborwa via Nelspruit to Johannesburg.

Contact [www.citiliner.co.za](http://www.citiliner.co.za) or Krish on 071 000 7727