



Under the Baobab

Editor: Michel Zwaan

Editorial

Our first newsletter in the new format has been received with an overwhelming response of ooh's and aah's, but also with a few well-meant advices and corrections. It seems that you all were in for a change and although there are still a few hiccups, they will soon will be worked on and we will have our own new Grietjie newspaper.

But this can only succeed with your help.

We need copy. It does not matter what the subject is. What your train of thought might be. It is all welcome.

It might not be in the next newsletter but somewhere it will appear. Just write it on a WORD document and send it to: michelzwaan1@hotmail.com before every 05th of the month.

One of the changes made was to start using a newer version of the program I use to make the newsletter as with the older version it was not possible to break it down into pages. The new version has been supplied by Martin Hefti, my thanks Martin, and now we have pages that are easy printable for the ones who want to save it as a hard copy.

As we go from strength to strength we shall try to make this a worthwhile endeavour and a fun monthly moment to enjoy the escapades of the people and animals of GNPR.

On the banks of the Olifants by Ian Novak

Greetings to all members from a lovely rain soaked Grietjie. I said in the last edition that we would "hit the ground running" and we surely have! It has been an extremely busy month, but more importantly it's been a productive one too. As the committee we have set the following goals for the year ahead:

- Increase the number of signed up members,
- Increase the number of paying members,
- Improve efficiencies within the budget,
- Allocate resources in a more effective way to benefit the members that do pay,
- Improve the distribution of information,
- Improve security,
- **Improve the "community" feeling here on Grietjie,**
- **And, do all that is required to meet our Balule requirements and work towards the "Protected Area Status" application in the future.**

The Vice Chair and I have been meeting with a range of owners to share information and discuss various issues. Thus far these meetings have resulted in some new signings and some "re-signings". What is clear to me is that a number of "issues" owners have had in the past are often not issues at all, but rather a misunderstanding of the actual facts.

We are happy to meet with any owner that has questions or wants some insight into the "bigger picture" going forward. You are welcome to contact us to arrange a meeting. Communication and understanding of common goals will help us all in the future. If you would like to meet with us please contact Antoinette at antoinette@malapo.co.za

GATE: Unfortunately the sub-committee appointed after the AGM has not yet convened a meeting, the chairman of the sub-committee has assured me that this will be done soon. In the meantime I have been investigating some of the legalities and have had a very productive meeting with Sean Nielson. We will continue to keep you informed as the process moves along.

SECURITY: With a few donations of equipment and expertise we are almost ready to install cameras at the gate. We will also be installing a scanning system that will store all entries and exits on a database. More on this in the next issue.

LEVIES: The Treasurer has sent out the new Levy invoices. If you have not received yours please contact him directly on gnrtreasurer@gmail.com Members who settle their invoice before the end of October can take a 5% discount. Pensioners can also qualify for a discount and that is why we added the "Date of birth" column in the register at the gate. Some people were offended by this and refused to fill it in. If you are a pensioner that requires some relief, again please contact the Treasurer directly.

BALULE: Pridelands has also now included into the Balule reserve. Therefore Balule is now up to 50 813ha.

We have had a number of members coming forward with great ideas on doing more community orientated projects, please keep these suggestions coming, and those that are feasible will be put into action.

Until next time,

From the banks of the Olifants.

The Warden's Indaba by Gerrie van Zyl

RESERVE MANAGERS REPORT 9 OCT 17

1) SECURITY AND ACCESS CONTROL

- Two cases of theft reported from Sep 17 to date.
- Doreen fence broken for about 50m due to Giraffes fighting.
- Dennis is now our new gate guard (Previously a Ranger)
- We want to welcome Mike our new Ranger.

2) GAME MANAGEMENT

- Animals still in fair condition except for a few Kudu bulls and Buffalo cows.
- New male Lions on Grietjie, mating with Lioness, Hopefully the old male is still around.
- Good sightings of Leopard.
- Good Elephant sightings, and fair share of damage (I know they pulled out my water pipes.)

3) VEGETATION

- New leaves already visible on Red Bushwillow
- Sjambok pod in full bloom.
- New grass shoots appear.

4) CLIMATE AND RAINFALL

- We were blessed with good rains this weekend 43mm measured at 95.
- General climate hot and humid in the mid 30's with a few cool days.

5) ROADS

- We used 40 bags of cold mix on our tar road = 1000kg for the month
- Busy grading all the roads after the rain.

- **Maggie's Hill keep up nicely after middle portion was filled with concrete, no maintenance needed after the rain**

6) OTHER MATTERS

- Fire restrictions in place
- Fence between Grietjie and Maseke from the gate towards Olifants north removed except for one small portion.



One of the beautiful Grietjie males as seen by Su Zan Li

Everything you never wanted to know about how ticks hunt you (and how to avoid them) Your complete guide to the horrifying reality of tick season.

You're probably already a little afraid of ticks. Sure, there are plenty of more existentially upsetting creatures dwelling deep in the ocean or lurking in dark caves. But you're unlikely to have to actually deal with any of them, and you're certainly not going to run into a deep sea nightmare monster while you're just strolling around minding your own business. Ticks, on the other hand, are everywhere. Ticks carry over a dozen diseases. Literally inflate with blood, drill tiny holes in your skin, and oh, did we mention that actually actively hunt for you? So there's that.

You probably thought that ticks were just kind of...there. Maybe they sometimes fall and land on your body, or you happen to brush by them on a tree. You assumed that the natural world didn't have it out for you. You were naive, you sweet summer child, and you were so very wrong. Ticks may be essentially blind, but they're not just idly waiting in the woods hoping to accidentally drink your blood. The moment you enter their territory, you become their prey. Ticks are obligate parasites-they can't survive long without your blood-and that's a powerful motivator to find a warm body to feed off.

Even up against a tiny, sightless foe, you don't stand much of a chance. They've been around since the Cretaceous period about 145 million years ago, and they have perfected their approach. Prevention only works to a limited extent. But at least in the aftermath of the Great Tick War, you and your opposable thumbs have the upper hand. Ticks aren't there by accident

It's true that you often get exposed to ticks by brushing up against them. But it's not like they're just hanging out on a leaf enjoying a sunny day when you happen to walk by. They're lying in wait.

At the end of a tick's front legs sits a tiny structure called Halle's organ. This little sensory pit detects chemicals and odours in the air. And while you can wear all the mosquito repellent and deodorant that you want, you can't hide the one signature scent that ticks use to hunt you: your breath.

With every exhalation, you release carbon dioxide into the air-and boy does that sweet CO2 get ticks going. Some of them will literally run towards the scent of a potential host. And yeah, ticks can't run very fast on a human scale, but the mental image of a little arthropod racing towards you on its clicking-clattering legs is still somehow upsetting. They can also pick up other scents like ammonia, so peeing in the woods only makes things worse. As soon as they smell you, they're coming for you.

Researchers actually use this to their advantage when they want to catch the little buggers. One entomologist told Radiolab, in one of the best grottos of all time, that "we often collect ticks by putting out blocks of dry ice on a white sheet. Come back in an hour or two, ticks are all gathered around the block waving their little front legs. Kind of like worshipping a deity." It would be funnier if it wasn't so alarming.

That arm-waving behaviour is called questing. The most any tick species can actually see is vague shapes, so they can't exactly run and jump at you. But they can position themselves on leaves and branches, extend their prickly legs out, and wait for you to walk by. And when you brush against them, they board the Human Train headed straight for Bloodtown.

Once they're on you, you're not likely to notice them. Some tick species will latch on wherever they've landed. Others will roam around your body looking for skin better suited to their needs.

They're especially fond of the area around your ears, where your epidermis is thin and easy to puncture. This is why you often find ticks on your dog's head-it's their favourite easy access point.

You're probably not going to see or feel those teeny-weensy bodies crawling up your arm. But you can make the task a little easier by wearing long-sleeved shirts and pants while outside, preferably in light colours, so any critters on their way to turn your head into an "all you can eat" buffet, will stand out. Ticks are usually a darkish brown colour, so they'll pop more against a light khaki. And a hat will help protect your scalp, where it's especially easy to lose a tick in your hair.

If a tick manages to attach itself to your skin, you won't notice-they inject you with anesthetic first. You'll remain blissfully unaware as they use their little mouths to drill into you and insert their hypostome, which is basically a tiny harpoon-straw they use to suck blood out of you. Ticks are everywhere

Not a single place in the S.A is safe from a ticks' tiny jaws. The brown dog tick lives in every state, and the other half dozen species have overlapping territories all over. The whole of SA they can be found, however, they need warm, humid climates of e.g. the north-east coast that help the little arachnids thrive.

Some species prefer woods. Others like tall grasses or shrubs. Still more prefer the dark, damp environs of a cave. The point is: they're all over the place. And they can spread easily, because they hitch rides on much larger creatures.

Increasing antelope and human populations have helped them expand their territory already, and the warming climate means they're able to thrive in more and more places. A single bite can carry multiple disease risks.

Each tick species tends to carry certain blood borne illnesses, but they don't just limit themselves to one. A tick can harbour multiple bacteria and viruses.

Here's a small sampling of the ailments you can catch and some of the symptoms you'll be treated to:
Tularemia: fever, painful lymph nodes, possibly life-threatening pneumonia.

Powassan virus: inflammation of the brain and membranes surrounding the central nervous system, fever, headache, vomiting, seizures.

Lyme disease: rash, headache, heart palpitations, severe joint pain, facial palsy (loss of muscle control on one side), inflammation of the brain and spinal cord.

Ehrlichiosis: fever, muscle pain, vomiting, confusion, headache.
African tick bite fever: rash, fever, vomiting, abdominal pain.
And that's not to mention alaphagal syndrome, which results in a lifelong allergy to red meat.
What to do if you find a tick.

If you find a tick: the first step is always to panic slightly at how gross they are. Step two is to frantically look around for something to GET IT OFF RIGHT NOW. The best tool in this case isorceps, which are kind of like tweezers with a locking mechanism- they stay tightly clenched once you pinch the tick. If you don't have forceps, go for a good set of tweezers. You want to grip the tick firmly, as close as you can to your skin. You're trying to remove a tiny mouthpiece that's currently embedded in your body after all.

Hopefully, the tick is still pretty small. The bigger it is, the longer it's been feeding and the greater the chances that it's already transmitted a disease to you.

Either way, you shouldn't squeeze the blood-thirsty bug. The best case scenario is popping it into a little blood explosion, which is harmless but thoroughly gross, and if you're unlucky you might actually end up squirting the blood back into your body.

So grip that tick by the head and pull firmly. It will probably hurt. If it doesn't hurt, you've likely done it wrong: go back and try to get the little mouthpiece out, because it's probably still in there. If you can't, don't worry too much about it-just leave it alone and let your skin heal over. Now comes the real fun.

Tick-borne diseases can take weeks to show symptoms, so be vigilant and is not the time to suffer heroically in silence. This is the time to take advantage of all modern medicine has to offer.



Simply breathtaking

Spiders

Did you know

that there are only 6, potentially, deadly spiders in South Africa.

- The Black Button spider (Neurotoxic venom)
- The Brown Button spider (Neurotoxic venom)
- The Sac spider (Cytotoxic venom)
- Violin spider (Cytotoxic venom)
- Six-eyed Crab spider (Cytotoxic venom)
- Small Baboon spider (Neurotoxic venom)

Breaking news!!!

Last year the first Impala Lamb spot was won by Cary Owtram.

This year the owners of plot nr 54, Manghela, Jens and Jaco are sponsoring it again with a price of R 1000.00 for the spot of the first baby Impala.

It is still quite a long way until they start to "drop" but that gives you all plenty of time to get your "spotting" eyes into gear.

Jens and Jaco we thank you for your generous prize.

Did you know?

The fruit of the Jackalberry tree can be used to make beer or Brandy. This is due to the high sugar content of the fruit



Date taken - 19 August 2017
Time taken - around 17:30
Place taken - picnic spot 1
Caption - A change in lion dynamics
Story- lioness and male lion were spotted at picnic spot 1 not long after lions started mating. As we haven't seen our old dominant male Harry in a while this is definitely a change in our lion dynamics here on Grietjie



Caption: Waiting for the rain
"Waiting for the rain" big group of male Elephants came at 82 just before the night. We went with all the staff to look at these friendly giants



Grietjie "CAPTURE THE MOMENT" photographic competition

We are excited to announce the winning entries for September in our Grietjie "CAPTURE THE MOMENT" competition.

Well done to the two photographers for capturing your moment and thank you for sharing it with the Grietjie Community.

Please remember that you don't have to own the most expensive camera or the biggest lens to take part! The photos will be judged on the special "bush moment" (not limited to animals only), as seen through the eyes of the photographer and NOT on the professionalism of the photographer.

- Please email your monthly entries to antoinette@malapo.co.za
- Please describe your special "bush moment"
 - Location of where the photo was taken (plot no.)
 - When the photo was taken (time and date)
 - A description of what happened
 - And last but not least, give us a caption to the photo that best describes the photo.

3. Thank you to the volunteer JUDGES:

Blackie, Sharon, Chris, Maxine and Wayne

4. October Entries

Starting date: 1 October 2017 and closing date : 31 October 2017

Now let the entries roll in!

Antoinette

From our residents

One morning whilst I was in Checkers, I saw the most beautiful chocolate cakes!

I had to buy one...

When arriving home I decided to host an impromptu tea party for the retired folks of Berg road. Invitations were sent and all were immediately accepted. Great fun was had by all

I feel that the retired folks of Grietjie are valued members of our community. Age should not be a constraint that prevents you from having fun.

I hope to meet more retirees here on Grietjie in the near future

I hope to have you join these energetic and active "grey beards" of Berg road for the next morning tea.

Antoinette #80



On 3 September Michel and Oscar from 82 invited some of the Berg road residents for a braai. Little did we know what was waiting for us. We were led from the gate by strategic lights along the path and arrive at the Bush dinner site that looked like a fairy-tale. Tables set out for us all and lanterns gently enhancing the area. On the top of the tower, had to wonder how many people in the world has had French Champagne and snacking on garlic Fire bread while looking up to the clear, starry sky. Antoinette had mentioned to Michel that Afrikaners liked meat and he took her seriously! A braai like none of us expected! Having a chance to catch up with our neighbours while being looked after by the efficient Mopaya team reminded all of us that this is something we should be doing more often. We are all different people but, at heart, we are all here because of the bush.

Thank you Michel and Oscar for giving us this opportunity to reconnect with each other. We all agreed that the lovely braai, the special champagne and the excellent company is something that can and should be repeated!

Marilda #85



The Small Spotted Genet

The small spotted genet is slightly smaller than the large spotted genet, and the markings are more black and white and without a rusty tinge. The tail has a white tip, as opposed to the black tip on the large spotted genet. Overall body colours are more dirty white cover with black spots, forming lines from the head to the tail. Along the spine there are erect black hairs. It has distinct white patches below the eyes, which is less prominent around the mouth and on the forehead. They have retractile claws. Tails are long and ringed black and white.

The small spotted genet mainly eat small mammals, insects, bats, birds, reptiles, amphibians, millipedes, centipedes and scorpions have been recorded as their food source. It eats less fruit than the large spotted genet.

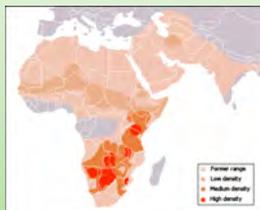


Two litters are produced per year, normally 2 to 3 babies. The gestation period is between 70-77 days. The ears and eyes only open after 5-18 days. Canines grow within the first month. Young take solid foods only after a few weeks, but continue to suckle for several months.



They are usually alone except for the mating seasons. They prefer drier woodlands, although it is also found in riverine habitat. It often lies up in the trees during the day, but is found more in holes in the ground and in rocky refuges. It is less arboreal than the large spotted genet.

This species has a wide range through most of Southern Africa, it prefers the drier areas of Southern Africa. It is not found in the west coast of Namibia and the west south coast of South Africa.



Lodge owners

Be aware these animals can become very tame around human settlements as in safari lodges where they are known to climb on tables during meal time and taking of food.

I have written this because we had a genet come and visit us on our roof.

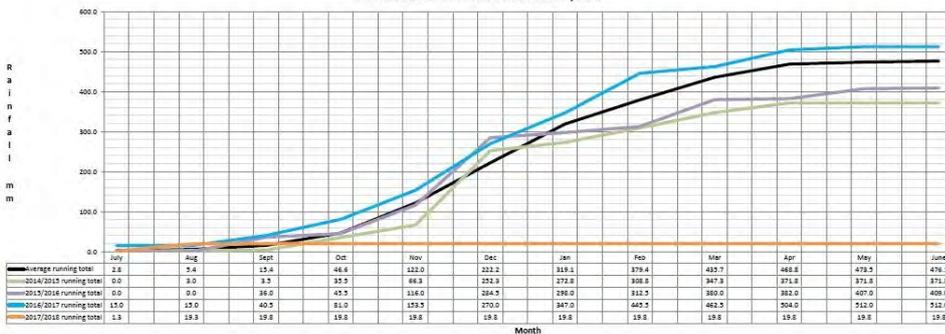
Written by Savanna Owtram age 9

Rules for the 2 Whatsapp groups

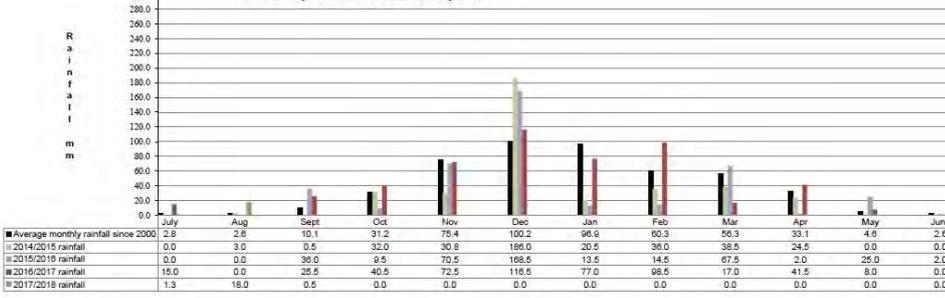
- Sightings group:** Only sightings please, absolutely no chit chat will be allowed. Rain is not a sighting but a necessity. Just owners and residents will be allowed on this group. **The biggest irk of most members is the constant chit chatting on the group of "ooohhsss and ahhhss" So let's please keep that down to the bare minimum.**
- Chatgroup:** All other subjects can be discussed here at length. Bantering is allowed. And also, if you wish, serious subjects are allowed.

Rainfall and temperature stats by Ian Owtram

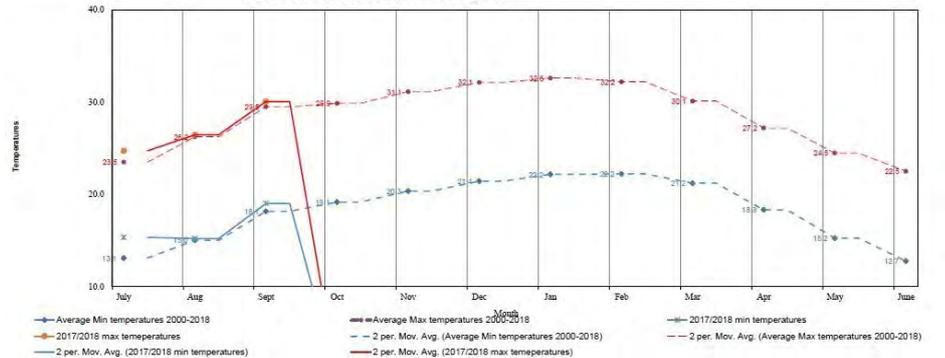
Cumulative rainfall totals over recent years



Rainfall readings for Antares Field Guide Training Centre



Temperature readings for Antares Field Guide Training Centre



GNPR Buy and sell

Please submit any small classified adverts that you want published every month to grietjiecomms@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.

FOR SALE

Plot 125 - Please contact Mrs Nellie Vosloo @ nellievosloo125@gmail.com

Plot #17 - vacant river front, 8.5 hectares.

Plot #18 - river front, 8.5 hectares, 4 bedroom, 3 bathroom, lounge, dining, kitchen, strong room, 2Xstaff quarters, carports, large deck, thatched house overlooking river. Furniture negotiable and Landrover included.

Please contact mr Colin Robertson if interested @ arobert@mweb.co.za



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 or Krish on 071 000 7727

