



Under the Baobab

Editor: Michel Zwaan

Chairman's report by Ian Nowak

ON THE BANKS OF THE OLIFANTS:

Greetings from Grietjie. I am enjoying the start of the 3 months that you can actually be outside for most of the day! It is also great to still have so much vegetation at this time of year.

Protected Area Application: We are still waiting for our intention to declare to be published. We have been advised that LEDET (Limpopo Economic Development Environment Tourism - a government department) is busy with property validation. For those few properties that had Title Deed issues it is imperative that these be sorted out soon. We have also received a draft of SANPARKS endorsement of Grietjie's application. These are all good signs; however no one can give a definitive answer as to how long LEDET will take. We will hold thumbs and keep you informed.

General Meeting: Thank you to everyone that attended the general meeting on the 28th of April. It was a very productive meeting. By now you should have received the minutes and the 2 motions resulting from the meeting. Should the motions be carried, I believe both will benefit Grietjie's future. Thank again to Mr Dex Kotze for the use of the venue, and to everyone else that assisted with the organising and refreshments.

Balule: The farms next door are now ready to be officially incorporated into Balule. The mandatory vegetation studies, inclusion into aerial census and the like have been commissioned. The farms are awaiting the outcome of our vote, before signing up. Our vote will determine if they join with us or not. The vote closes on the 18th of May, after which we will be clear on the way forward, and can hopefully begin with the transfer of the Doreen fence material to the R40. The Morelag fence (section from the gate to 107 corner - Maseke) should come down at the same time.

Balule is really the only Reserve in the APNR that has the ability to grow without crossing a major tar road; I find it extremely gratifying and exciting to see more areas come into and participate in the open conservation area. It is my hope that all these efforts achieve the main overall objective which is to protect our animals and the space they live in.

Community Projects: The start of this initiative has proven to be very successful. Thank you once again to all those that helped in various ways. I look forward to the next one.

Grietjie Clothing: Khaki fever clothing shop in Hoedspruit has the following offer for Grietjie residents: Whatever khaki fever items you select to purchase and have embroidered with the Grietjie logo, you will receive a 10% discount and Khaki Fever will give 20% of the proceeds to our reserve. Please go and have a look if you are in the market for some new "bush clothes".

Until next time,

From the banks of the Olifants.



Choose any Khaki Fever Brand item and receive a 10% discount. We will donate 20% of the proceeds to Grietjie Reserve

(for items to be embroidered with the Grietjie logo)

Find us at: Rockfig Lifestyle Centre, Wildlife estate, Hoedspruit



From the vice chair

After all the holidays over the past month, it is time to get back to work for the unfortunate ones like myself!

Welcome to the following new owners to the Grietjie Community:

116 Andrew and Arti Sutcliffe

During April we completed the community project on property 89. Thank you, to all the owners who came to help paint, as well as sending staff to assist. I would also like to thank Wynand Marx of Property 101 for his generous financial contribution towards the community projects. In May, we envisage to do a community project near ONGR gate. I will advise the date for this, closer to the time, via WhatsApp.

Thank you to Patrick van Tour of property 48 for his generous financial contribution for equipment towards the Grietjie and Balule Anti-poaching unit. I am sure that this will be put to good use and ensure that the anti-poaching unit can carry on with their work without delays. Should anybody like to make additional donations, please contact Jan Caspers.

During the past month I noticed a lot of owners and visitors enjoying our lovely reserve and the wildlife. I am, however, sad to report that we have had a few transgressions of the game drive guidelines we have published in the last couple of month's newsletters. I urge all owners to make sure that their visitors get insight into these guidelines at the start of their stay. The game drive guidelines are available on our web site: www.grietjiepnr.co.za. Trespassing on private property, misbehaving at sightings, hogging sightings etc., is just not in the spirit of how things should be done. Please show a mutual respect for our wildlife and fellow owners.

Thank you to all the owners attending the information sharing meeting. I trust that it was informative and that you had a chance to catch up with your neighbours and fellow Grietjies. Thank you to Mhangela, Maxine, Mariska, Penny, Cherelle and Adrian for providing the lovely sandwiches.

On behalf of the Grietjie Community, I wish Gert Lubbe #75 a speedy recovery after the car accident he was involved in just recently. Get well soon!

Keep well

Antoinette



Penga n'Dlovu Customs



- **For all your handmade knives.**
- **For all your sharpening of your kitchen knives**

**Come to plot 77 or dial
071- 9033270**

Wayne's World



1) SECURITY AND ACCESS CONTROL/FENCE:

Doreen & Morelag fence in bad shape, Elephants removed gates and destroy sections of fence

New Fence on R40 almost finish from Maseke corner towards Paul gate.

Rhino was killed across the river, we lay ambush where they sometimes come through on Doreen side, they unfortunately used another exit route across the river.

2) GAME MANAGEMENT:

All animals in good condition.

Good Lion, Elephant and Buffalo sightings on Grietjie.

Good Buffalo, Lion and leopard sightings on Doreen/Paul.

3) VEGETATION:

Bush green and lush with a few turning yellow.

No grass along the river. Good grass cover further up towards our border.

4) CLIMATE AND RAINFAL

80mm rain at the Grietjie gate for April 2018. 378mm for the season.

Temperatures in high 20 to 30, evenings pleasant and mornings become chilly.

5) ROADS:

Grade Euphorbia roads

210 bags of cold mix (5250Kg) used to fix potholes on Darisandi rd.

Remove sand and rocks from tar roads.

Hired TLB from Olifants north to fix Marble hill and parts of Doreen rd. unfortunately the tractor broke down before we could finish.

I spend a substantial amount of time and money to fix the tractor.

6) GENERAL.

I urge landowners to inform me and the gate guards when they have new tenants, It save me time and effort to try and find out who is this new vehicle driving around on Grietjie.



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- As a Grietjie Owner we understand and appreciate the intricacies of building in this beautiful place.
- Whether its contemporary or traditional bush style we can help you with your medium to large scale building project every step of the way.
- We offer full turnkey solutions to our clients – from the conceptual stage to the completion of your project.
- We are registered with the National Home Builders Registration Council.

Game drive Guidelines

GAME DRIVE GUIDELINES Explanation by Marius Swart

If someone is viewing game, and you do not wish to stop, **PROCEED SLOWLY**. Do not spoil the other party's viewing and do not frighten the game. Especially if the animal is close to the road, **crawl past in 1st gear** so as not to scare them. Keep an eye on the animal as you approach to gauge your level of intrusion. If the animal lifts its head to look at you, it means they are considering you as a potential threat. **Slow down and move much slower**. If the situation requires you to stop, then do so and afford them the time to move away on own volition. Usually it doesn't take too long.

Use common sense when viewing game at close distances. **IF ANY DOUBT a safe distance of 15-20 meters is recommended**; this can increase depending on circumstances. **DO NOT APPROACH TOO CLOSE TO DANGEROUS GAME, UNLESS YOU HAVE THE EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE ANIMAL, AND THE ABILITY TO DEAL WITH THE CONSEQUENCES IF THINGS GO AWRY**. Apart from the logical safety concern, habituating the wildlife to the point where we park virtually on top of them also detracts from the sense of wildness. The essence of wildlife is that they are **NOT domesticated or tame**. Let's habituate the wildlife to the non-threatening presence of vehicles **BUT let us keep our respectful distance so as not to turn them into perceived pets**.

The following maximum numbers of vehicles per sighting are to be adhered to: **Unless there is radio contact between vehicles it'll be difficult to control this**.

Lion, Elephant, Buffalo and all general wildlife: 3 Vehicles

Leopard, Cheetah, Wild dog and Rhinoceros: 2 Vehicles

If this number of vehicles is already at the sighting **PLEASE wait your turn (just out of sight of the sighting)** until a vehicle departs and then take your turn.

Be courteous to other drivers and greet them as they pass you and if you have any information about interesting sightings pass this on so they too can enjoy a possible sighting. **Just like in the old days in Kruger**.

If a sighting is being mismanaged, the Reserve Manager has the right to take control of a sighting permanently and his authority should be respected. **His concern is with the wellbeing of the wildlife and reserve as a whole, so know that he will only intervene if activities jeopardise this**.

If you are using a spotlight after dark, **NEVER shine across or into a homestead or camp**. Do not shine into oncoming vehicles. Do not shine directly into the eyes of the animals. If you have a spot that has lower settings of brightness, drop to this at closer ranges **or shine on the ground just in front of the animal to utilise peripheral and reflected light**. Also never shine on diurnal animals as you will affect their ability to see at night for a good measure of time. **This will render them more vulnerable to injuries running into trees/stumps or to predation**

When driving at dark dip your lights to oncoming vehicles; if possible ride on park lights until you have passed. Remember your lights blind the driver and if he is viewing e.g. Elephants, he is unable to see what they are doing or where they move to whilst your lights are blinding him. You put him and his guests at risk.

Open vehicles/bakkies must be properly equipped for game drives. Passengers sitting on unsecured chairs or in the load bay of a bakkie is unacceptable for game drives. (Contractors who are not game viewing will travel like this)

Be considerate of other people if they have stopped to enjoy sundowners somewhere. Afford them their privacy and allow them to enjoy their little piece of Africa.

"Capture of the moment" competition

Photo 2: Saved by water

Photo 4: Ubushle!

