

Scene of the Crime training

Rod Potter

Ezemvelo-KZN Wildlife, PO Box 243, Merrivale
3291, South Africa

The year 2003 has been a busy one for Rod Potter and Wayne Evans, presenters of the Scene of the Crime training course, which has been developed and presented with the help of funding from the Italian-funded SADC Regional Programme for Rhino Conservation.

This intensive course has so far been presented in three rhino range states, with another four courses envisaged over the next year. The first course was held in Etosha National Park, Namibia, with the 19 participants attending being drawn from both the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET) and the Protected Resources Unit of the Namibian Police. Follow-up training courses have been held by Namibian MET staff who attended the initial course. In Kenya, WWF sponsored 19 participants from the investigations and intelligence branches of the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) together with staff from the KWS rhino programme. Tremendous camaraderie was achieved among members of that group during the 10-day course. The Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Department sent 19 people on a course, which was held in Hwange National Park. Despite severe fuel shortages, participants came from all over Zimbabwe, using whatever transport means available, to be part of an interesting hands-on course.

The course is designed to take participants through a process of preferred actions before, during and after visiting a rhino-related crime scene. The courses are



A participant in the Zimbabwe Scene of the Crime training course recovers a rifle cartridge case as part of a practical exercise.

adapted to take the legislation applicable to the host country into account. Although geared towards rhinos, the principles of the course can be easily applied to crime scenes relating to elephants or any other wildlife.

The course has received accolades from all the departments that have supported the training of their staff. Course participants have commented on the functional value of the course content and have found the training valuable in their work. Together we all win—except the poachers!

AfRSG Tanzanian representative killed

Martin Mulama

With utmost shock we have just learned of the death of Mr Matthew Maige, the Tanzanian representative to AfRSG. On 1 December, he was shot by armed bandits at his home in Dar es Salaam. Thugs burst into his home at 7:30 p.m. and demanded his gun. During the following commotion, they shot him twice in the head. He was rushed to Muhimbili Hospital but died at around 1:00 a.m.

AfRSG is investigating the possibility of setting up a Matthew Maige fund for purposes such as helping sponsor an up-and-coming young African rhino conservationist to attend AfRSG meetings.

May Matthew's soul rest in eternal peace.