



## Mother dead, calf wounded

Desiré Wright

**HOEDSPRUIT** – Late Saturday night Hoedspruit lost its fifth rhino to poaching for the year. On Sunday the owners of Elandela Private Game Reserve received a report that a very small rhino calf was walking along Argyle road,

the tar road that passes Eastgate airport, leading to Elandela on the right and the control gate to Timbavati and Klaserie Private Nature Reserves further on. This immediately raised suspicions as the calf, approximately two and a half to three months old, was still much too young to survive

without its mother.

On Monday, June 20 workers were sent out to look for the calf and they found the carcass of its mother, killed with multiple shots from a rifle, both horns brutally hacked off and deep gashes in its back. The workers also found spoor of another ...cont on pg3...

As the world wakes up to the ongoing slaughter of rhino, The Rights for Rhino Walk from Musina to Cape Town target the youth of South Africa to protect their natural heritage.

Top right: Yet another rhino carcass rots away. This mother of a 2 and 1/2 month old calf was poached this week on a reserve in Hoedspruit, Limpopo.

## WARNING

Picture on Page3 could offend sensitive readers

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# Rights for Rhino Walk reach the Cape

Desiré Wright

**JUST NORTH OF COLESBERG** – On Wednesday, June 22 the Rights for Rhino Walk consisting of Paul Jennings and Hoedspruit Sboniso Spoon Phakathi crossed the Orange River, the border between the Free State and Northern Cape provinces. They are well on their way to finish their walk between

Musina and Cape Town in their mission to create a wave of awareness of the plight of the rhino.

Paul and Spoon have addressed a total of 10 400 children at the 19 schools they have visited so far and will at last be given the opportunity to speak on SABC TV on Monday, June 27 in the conservation programme, 50/50.

Bloemfontein was their last

major stop over and they visited two primary schools there. Grey College, one of the top schools in the country, however did not want Rights for Rhino to visit the school as they had already listened to enough talks on rhino poaching, said Paul.

The road has had its ups and downs and both Paul and Spoon were off to see a physiotherapist in Colesberg on June 23. Paul is experiencing some trouble with a ligament in his one foot and Spoon has some trouble with his Achilles tendon.

'The money we raised at Bloemfontein Laerskool was stolen out of the bakkie. That was junior school kids' money!' says Paul.

A major highlight during their stay in Bloemfontein however was an invitation from the Bloemfontein Zoo's curator, Darryl Barnes, to the zoo's game farm. 'We went for sundowners and the guys at the Stuck in the Mud pub raised R1300 amongst themselves for the Rights for Rhino Walk' says Paul.

Paul and Spoon have also been offered accommodation at B&B's all along the N1 up to Beaufort West by bedstop.co.za. 'This has been an absolute life saver for us! We walk in and there's a hot meal ready for us'.

Paul and Spoon plan to be in Cape Town on July 16 and will celebrate the successful end of the long walk on July 23. 'We hope to get some celebs here. At this stage it's just Spoon and I' ends Paul.



**Save our Rhinos. Hunt a Poacher!**

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## Mother dead, calf wounded cont...

...from pg1...rhino dragging its right hind leg.

Within a very short space of time all relevant parties, including Protrack Anti Poaching Unit ground crew, a South African Air Force helicopter and a South African Police Service helicopter were mobilised to search the area for signs of the poachers as well as the wandering little calf and the presumably shot larger calf.

During the search a two and a half year old calf was spotted limping. It was darted and treated for a gunshot wound to the right hind quarter by Dr Peter Rogers from Provet Wildlife Services.

'I expect the calf to make a full recovery as long as no bones were broken. There is only a slight chance of infection at this stage' says Dr Rogers.

The other calf was spotted from the ground and taken to Moholoholo Wildlife

Rehabilitation Centre.

'The calf is very dehydrated and blind in both eyes, but the blindness is probably due to something quite different' says Brian Jones from Moholoholo where the calf is cared for day and night. K2C confirmed from Moholoholo on Wednesday that the calf was showing signs of improvement.

Vincent Barkas, owner of Protrack said that their suspicions of an increase in rhino poaching in the private protected areas adjacent to Kruger National Park (KNP) are now being confirmed with every new carcass found. This increase is possibly due to the increased activity of the South African National Defence Force in KNP.

'We are finding that unguarded farms are increasingly being hit' says Vincent. 'Rhino owners either need to step up and protect

their animals and dehorn or sell them off'.

'An armed presence on the ground is an absolute necessity and in the game farm and reserve community rhino owners need to play all in or nothing. People need to trust their neighbours because a sharp neighbour is the best defence' says Vincent.

Vincent also said that people can get actively involved in doing something to curb rhino poaching by joining the Hoedspruit Rhino Watch or even the Hoedspruit Farm Watch.

Amidst all the 'doom and gloom' as Vincent puts it, he says that there is a small ray of hope because over the last two to three months there has been a slight decline in rhino poaching.

'Although we are still heading for 450 rhino poached this year, a lot of progress is being made' he ends.



## Potholes repaired ahead of the holidays

**HOEDSPRUIT** – This week workers from Maruleng Municipality teamed up with Zandspruit Construction to fix the potholes in Hoedspruit town. Although it is an ongoing process, one can already drive straight over the bridge in stead of swerving this way and that to avoid numerous craters.

Zandspruit Construction kindly helped out by providing some workers and road works

machinery while Maruleng also provided labour and the materials used as well as a tar cutter.

According to Hoedspruit's ward councillor, Christine du Preez, there is a budget to fix all the roads in Maruleng. Without

complaints about the potholes in writing however, the town's roads will not receive the attention they require.

Please note that Hoedspruit's ward councillor is currently on leave and will be back on duty on July 12.



Yet another rhino carcass lies rotting as this mother of a two and a half month old calf was shot and her horns brutally hacked off, some of the blows possibly falling before she died! According to TIME magazine we are at the 'tipping point' of losing the battle against the ongoing slaughter of rhino for (supposed) medicinal uses of its horn in the East. All efforts possible need to be made to make sure that we don't end up with only a Big4 in South Africa!



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