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PO Box 73528, Lynnwood Ridge, 0040 SA
Tel: (012) 991-3083 Fax: (012) 991-3851
basecamp@wildnetafrika.com
www.wildnetafrika.com

Green Snippets

South Africa donates black rhino pair to Malawi

Liwonde National Park in Malawi is boasting a brand-new black rhino pair, a joint donation from South African National Parks (SANP) and North West Parks and Tourism Board. The donation is part of a joint project between North West Parks and SANP to establish satellite populations of the endangered black rhino in southern Africa.

New head for Peace Parks Foundation

Dr John Hanks has resigned as executive director of the Peace Parks Foundation. His post has been filled by Dr Willem van Riet, who has long been associated with the World Wide Fund For Nature-South Africa and the Peace Parks Foundation. Dr Van Riet was involved in the planning of both the Pilanesberg Nature Reserve and the Kruger-Banhine-cross-border area.

Go on a wild adventure with Deepgreen Safaris

The Pretoria-based company Deepgreen Safaris is promoting environmental education by encouraging people from all walks of life to actively participate in research and conservation projects. The company's mission is to establish and develop wildlife projects and structures in which the public can take part.

One of the action adventures offered by Deepgreen involves firsthand experience of game darting. One such opportunity arose in July this year, when a group of people was invited to take part in the darting of a giraffe cow at Naka Safari Lodge near Pretoria's Roodeplaat Dam. The animal had to be darted to receive treatment for an abscess on its hind leg.

The group actively participated in the operation, which was overseen by an experienced game capture and veterinary team. Deepgreen's policy stipulates that no ani-

mal is to be captured or darted for the sole benefit of a safari client. Only animals that have to be immobilised for scientific, research, wildlife management or conservation reasons are used for safaris.

For more information contact Petronel Nieuwoudt, 082 825 8735. Deepgreen and other conservation related excursions are found at: gowild.wildnetafrika.com

ESPU's new system bad news for illegal animal dealers

The Endangered Species Protection Unit (ESPU) of the South African Police Service now has an even more effective way of bringing illegal animal dealers to book. A computerised criminal database has been established recently, enabling the ESPU to trace the paper trail left behind by animal dealers. The new system also helps to link dealers with one another by tracing phone records. Most important, however, is that the system enables the Unit to call up any import or export permits issued for animals. This makes it possible to check whether there are any discrepancies regarding these documents. The new system has already led to the arrest of several animal dealers involved in illegal activities.

BTB containment strategy for the Kruger National Park

In 1998, South African National Parks (SANP) conducted a survey to determine the prevalence of bovine tuberculosis (BTB) within the buffalo population in the Kruger National Park. The results indicated that BTB occurs at high prevalence in the southern region of the Park, at moderate prevalence in the central region and at very low prevalence north of the Olifants River. After numerous workshops last year, a BTB containment strategy was put in place. Earlier this year, the strategy was approved by the Directorate of Veterinary Services and is now ready for implementation.

The strategy is aimed at keeping the northern half of the Kruger free of BTB until more is known about the impact of the

disease on biodiversity, or until suitable vaccines become available. At present it is not considered feasible to eradicate the disease due to the large area infected ($\pm 10,000$ km²) and the large number of potential host animals occurring there. The strategy entails the systematic testing of every buffalo herd in the northern Kruger Park and the removal of all BTB positive animals.

This containment exercise will be very expensive, and donor funding is sought to help sponsor the project. Interested persons can donate funds into the following account: KNP Animal Tuberculosis Project, ABSA Bank, Sunnyside, Account # 40-4973-3185.

For more information, contact William Mabasa of South African National Parks at 013 735-5611.

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