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EDITOR'S NOTE LAUREN LAING

"Do you guys really think everything you are doing is making a difference? The statistics around poaching incidents are just climbing? I don't think you're going to win this fight!" These are the sort of negative statements that I often have to deal with when I discuss the Wildland's Rhino Projects with the general public. It is not always the easiest conversation to have, but I am very confident in the fact that we ARE making a difference and I remind individuals that although seemingly small, we have had several victories.

The "Rhino Parade" has received a lot of attention from corporate companies, including First Car Rental and Life Residential, who launched their branded, corporate ¾ life size Rhino sculptures earlier this year. This is proving a significant attention drawer outside head offices or branch outlets, and is sometimes even used by these companies to get their networks and other business partners to contribute to the cause. Through the "Rhino Parade" Wildlands also secured an amazing ambassador in retired all-round cricketer, Shaun Pollock, who joined us, together with his beautiful wife and 2 daughters on a rhino experience in July. During this particular weekend 7 Rhino (Black and White) were darted and fitted with tracking devices, in order to monitor these animals more effectively. The weekend, and all the conservation activities that unfolded over that weekend, were made possible through a generous donation from another Wildlands ambassador, Filippo Faralla.

The Wildlands staff all had an "Awwwww" moment when we were contacted by a passionate individual, namely – 6 year old Lance Moor, who wanted to turn his Birthday Party into a Rhino fundraiser so he could do his part in helping us fight this fight...

Other victories include arresting 190 (25 in KZN and 165 nationally) suspected poachers and setting up an effective ZAP (Zululand Anti-poaching) Wing project. It is very sad to hear about the barbaric acts of poaching around the country, but we need to remember the positive outcomes and all the selfless people that give of their time each day to join this fight. I can also honestly say that there are too many people that LOVE the Rhino and will do whatever it takes to protect it, for the species to become extinct. Not on our watch!



RHINO PARADE

What is a rhino doing in the heart of Cape Town?

The 26th of July marked a day of history in the making as the first Rhino Parade rhino was unveiled at the offices of Life Residential, at Mandela Rhodes Place, Cape Town. This rhino was inspired by a partnership between Life Residential and the Wildlands Conservation Trust and is the 13th rhino in the Wildlands parade to be officially unveiled.

The Rhino Parade is an innovative rhino conservation fundraising campaign (pioneered by Wildlands) based on the internationally renowned 'Cow Parade' concept. It is aimed at profiling the plight of South Africa's rhino and creating public awareness around the crisis that we as a nation are facing, while raising funding to support rhino conservation efforts. Wildlands work closely with celebrities and rhino ambassadors who are tasked with decorating a ¾ life-size rhino sculpture to represent their personal message around poaching.

Richard Boxford, Managing Director of Life Residential, found Wildlands Conservation Trust through their Adopt-a-Rhino initiative in 2011, when he adopted a female white rhino, who he named Ubomi. Since then, Boxford has become progressively passionate about rhino and is what Wildlands refer to as a rhino ambassador. Boxford makes rhino a topic that is explored in every Life Residential Newsletter, whether it is actively recruiting new adoptees for rhino or simply spreading awareness around the poaching crisis, he is truly an ambassador for the cause. Boxford is currently also helping Wildlands in their search for an individual to adopt Ubomi's one and a half year old calf. "I am passionate about property and rhino conservation, and the Wildlands Rhino Conservation Projects have always been an awesome opportunity to combine these two passions. We're very proud of our commitment to Ubomi and the opportunity to launch the Rhino Parade in Cape Town," said a beaming Boxford who also surprised the Trust when he produced a cheque for R75 000 at the unveiling, which will bring the total amount raised and donated by Boxford and Life Residential to R100 000 within a 2 year period. "Funds from passionate individuals and corporate entities, such as Richard Boxford and Life Residential are key in ensuring our



(Photographer John Guest)

The back view of the Life Residential Rhino depicting a proudly South African (and proudly Capetonian) design, done by Graphic Designer, Craig Rafferty.



(L to R) Pinky Mathebula of Life Residential, Kevin McCann of Wildlands, Jermaine Everts, Kim Faclier and Richard Boxford of Life Residential stand proudly next to their Rhino Parade rhino at Mandela Rhodes Place.

projects are efficient and effective in fighting the rhino poaching crisis," said Wildlands Strategic Manager Kevin McCann.

"Wildlands is working closely with like-minded organisations to find a long term solution to curb this conservation crisis, and together with our partners, members of Project Rhino KZN, we have developed 3 projects that will provide a coordinated and effective response. Namely: Project Rhino Tracker, Project Rhino Aerial Support and Project Rhino Investigations & Prosecutions Support," said McCann. Wildlands Marketing Manager and the custodian of the Rhino Parade brand, Lauren Laing said, "This campaign would also not be possible without the talented individuals that sponsor their time for the cause. I would like to thank Graphic Designer, Craig Rafferty of Whalley & Associates and Artists Dane Knudsen and Karla Nixon, for making this rhino the bright orange beauty that it is. We must also mention Stuttaford Van Lines who made sure the rhino made it safely, and in one solid piece to Cape Town from KwaZulu-Natal," concluded Laing.



RHINO AMBASSADOR NEWS

One step closer to saving our rhino

On the weekend of the 13th of July a team of professionals descended on a gem of a Game Reserve in Zululand with a common purpose of saving rhino. The focus of the weekend was to dart several rhino within the reserve and fit them with both VHF (Very High Frequency) and UHF (Ultra High Frequency) real time tracking devices. This helps to ensure the animals can be monitored more effectively and ensures a decreased response time when reacting to any potential poaching threats.

This forms part of Project Rhino Tracker, a project of the Wildlands Conservation Trust which is only possible with funds donated by passionate individuals. In this case the conservation activities were made possible by a generous donation from Durban North resident Filippo Faralla. Shaun Pollock, a Wildlands ambassador, also joined the team, together with his wife, Tricia and their two beautiful little girls.

"The experience my family and I had this weekend was truly unforgettable. I am so glad we got to be a part of this amazing experience that will ultimately ensure my children's children get to see live rhino one day... truly priceless" commented Shaun Pollock. The day's activities involved a highly experienced team including a helicopter pilot and a vet, as well as a team from Wildlife ACT Fund, who specialise in the fitting (and monitoring) of endangered species with advanced technology.

"It is tough to see such a huge animal helpless as it is immobilised by a drug in order to be worked on," said Wildlands Marketing



Shaun Pollock chatting to some of the Wildlands team members about the process while assisting in holding up the animal so it could be fitted with an advanced tracking device.

Manager, Lauren Laing. "But you simply need to remind yourself how important this sort of work is in order to achieve the long term vision and to help save the species. We also must acknowledge ambassadors like Filippo Faralla and Shaun Pollock for their support, as without them this experience would not have been possible," said Laing.

"One must remember that the objective of projects such as this is not for the benefit of Wildlands but for the surrounding communities," said donor Filippo Faralla. "Wildlands are training community members involved in the running of the reserve and have a long term vision to build something substantial (an eco tourism destination) for them, and yes, we are saving rhino from an immediate threat in the process, but the vision Wildlands has goes beyond that," he said.

"The interesting fact is that this game reserve is the perfect sort of habitat for Black Rhino to live in, and it is ultimately the black rhino that has brought Wildlands and the community together, with sustainability as the driving force," said Filippo.

Although this work will make a significant difference in Wildlands ability to fight the rhino poaching crisis there is still more work that needs to be done.

If you would like to contribute to Wildlands Rhino Conservation Projects or explore the possibility of Adopting a Rhino please email MarkG@wildlands.co.za.



Fitting device to horn – The team from Wildlife ACT Fund, headed up by Simon Morgan and Chris Kelly, drill into the horn (which does not inflict any pain on the animal) to place a tracking device into the horn so the animal can be monitored more effectively in the hope of curbing the threat of poaching.



RHINO AMBASSADORS

We have been fortunate enough to have had several corporates and individuals raise their hands to partner with us and contribute to our Rhino Conservation Projects, and we refer to these individuals and entities as Rhino Ambassadors.

The Rhino Ambassador Campaign aims to secure annual financial commitments from businesses and individuals for rhino conservation. In return for their support, each ambassador will be invited to participate in a series of events and functions aimed at profiling their commitment, nurturing their understanding, and progressively growing a network of ambassadors committed to stemming the rhino slaughter

**We have several NEW Rhino Ambassadors on board –
WELCOME and THANK YOU for your invaluable contribution!**



PAT GOSS

STAN KOZLOWSKI

FILIPPO FARALLA

PAT LAMBIE

SHAUN POLLOCK



ADOPT-A-RHINO

There is an increasing need to gather information on the whereabouts of the individual rhino on a reserve, thus allowing efficient patrolling by the Field Ranger and Anti-Poaching teams. The community reserves such as Somkhanda are no different, and it is with the help and support of generous members of the public that Wildlands is able to protect these rhino populations. Through the 'Adopt-a-Rhino' programme, ordinary people are able to get involved with the fight against Rhino poaching and play an active role in helping and understanding Somkhanda's rhino population.

We have had a number of new individuals and companies join the programme in the past several months, many from outside the borders of South Africa. It just shows that people from all over the world are passionate about our wildlife and are frustrated by the illegal syndicates taking advantage of the natural environment.

We have had Peter Eastwood from 'iMake a Difference' in New Zealand become heavily involved in all aspects of the fight against rhino poaching, not only assisting on Somkhanda, but also with Project Rhino KZN's many projects. 'iMake a Difference' even ran a competition to name their newly adopted rhino, with the final winner coming out as 'Tane' (Tah-nay).

Debbie Eastwood, also from New Zealand has been involved, adopting a white rhino bull, 'Jonah'.

Another two overseas companies have also become involved, with 'Noble Grape' from Canada and 'SPL-International' from the UK each adopting White Rhino. Philip from SPL-International gave their rhino the name 'Hope' which is obviously very fitting.

Jonah



HELP US STOP THE SLAUGHTER

2009 - 122 rhino killed
2010 - 333 rhino killed
2011 - 448 rhino killed
2012 - 668 rhino killed

**2013 - you can
make a difference**

Your donation will help a range of projects designed to protect South Africa's remaining rhino population.



RHINO EVENTS

Mail & Guardian "Greening the Future" Awards

Wildlands CEO, Dr Andrew Venter and Marketing Manager, Lauren Laing attended the high profile Mail & Guardian "Greening the Future" Awards evening on the 4th of July. They witnessed the handing over of an award to Project Rhino KZN (a collective of 18 organisations – one of which is Wildlands) Secretariat Coordinator – Sheelagh Antrobus. The award was the "Rhino Rescue Award" and acknowledged the fantastic work this collective is doing to help save the rhino species.

Faced with the poaching onslaught against rhinos, conservation initiatives often splinter along turf lines, causing confusion among members of the public who want to support them. Project Rhino KZN put the rhino cause ahead of personal agendas by eliminating duplication of efforts, coordinating activities and combining fundraising campaigns. Sheelagh Antrobus, says it is an association of 18 credible state and private stakeholders across the province.

The fight to save rhinos is particularly poignant in KwaZulu-Natal because the province is renowned for bringing the Southern White Rhino back from the brink of extinction once before. It is now home to roughly 21% of South Africa's White Rhinos and 24% of the country's critically endangered Black Rhino population. Southern White Rhinos roamed throughout Southern Africa until uncontrolled hunting in the 19th century all but exterminated them. Thought to be extinct, about 40 individual animals were discovered in Northern KwaZulu-Natal in 1894, leading to the proclamation of the Mfolozi Game Reserve to protect them. By the 1960s their numbers had increased to 600 and so began Operation Rhino, the international success story that saw the translocation of hundreds of Southern White Rhinos back into habitats across Africa, including the Kruger Park.

"Project Rhino KZN is today's version of Operation Rhino, committed to the same ideals but operating in a vastly changed landscape," says Antrobus. Launched on September 22, 2011 on World Rhino Day, a crucial pillar of the project is community outreach. It is providing boreholes to 22 schools with no water, for instance, while teaching children in the affected communities about the value of rhinos and other wildlife in ecosystems. The project recently teamed up with humanitarian adventurer Kingsley Holgate on a "hearts and minds" tour along the Lebombo mountain range to encourage community support for rhino conservation.



"Kingsley used art and soccer to communicate with rural villagers. The villagers are at the front line of defence against poaching. They know who the poachers are, and were encouraged to contact the hotlines set up for anonymous tip-offs," said Antrobus. Another strategy is using aerial surveillance to monitor rhino populations and track poachers.

"We pioneered a region-wide programme that provides surveillance and reaction support to 24 state, private and community game reserves. It is linked to intelligence efforts and has helped in the capture and arrest of poachers, recovered illegal firearms, found getaway vehicles hidden in thick bush and prevented poaching from taking place," said Antrobus.

The project uses GIS technology for crime mapping and analysis of poaching syndicates operating in the province. Members meet monthly for report backs, decisions on funding allocations and to share sensitive information in a confidential setting.

"Project Rhino KZN is not only preventing the decimation of rhinos in the province, it is also having a wider impact. There is a growing awareness of wildlife crime in general, as well as the vital role conservation plays in society – not just protecting rhinos and other vulnerable wildlife species, but the value in maintaining ecosystems and protected areas for future generations," said Antrobus. KwaZulu-Natal brought the Southern White Rhino back from the brink of extinction once before.

Project
RHINO
Monitoring • Protecting • Conserving • Together

Somkhanda Rhino Run

The Wild Series events run by Wildlands Conservation Trust have a reputation of being unique. The latest edition to the Wild Series events has been the Bonitas Radox Somkhanda Rhino Run. The 26th of April 2013, saw 100 passionate trail runners set off to an unknown gem of a nature reserve, Somkhanda Game Reserve, to take part in the inaugural Bonitas Radox Somkhanda Rhino Run. The participants were greeted with cosy fires and an awe inspiring sunset and full moon. The 11,600 ha Somkhanda Game Reserve, is a community owned game reserve, which is run and managed in partnership by the Gumbi Community and Wildlands Conservation Trust. Apart from the rhino populations, the game reserve has valuable populations of leopard, nyala, zebra, giraffe and a variety of typical bushveld game.

Runners set off on a chilly Saturday morning under a blanket of mist, which turned out to be a blessing in disguise as it cooled down the toughest part of the race. The 50km route was described by runners as a "hilly first 25km's and a fairly easy second half," with two tough hills to conquer and rocky roads to navigate. Avid trail runner and passionate Wildlands supporter, Filippo Faralla, led the race for most of the day and went on to take first place with Warren Eva and Jacques Burger in second and third place respectively in the male category. In the ladies division, Alison Misselhorn came in first place with Julia Hackland in second and Driekie Black in third.

"With the current rhino poaching crisis gripping South Africa, Somkhanda Game Reserve provides a significant refuge for both white and black rhino," commented Wildlands Strategic Manager, Kevin McCann.

"The Somkhanda Trail Run has raised much needed funding to support the ever growing security requirements for these rhino populations. Wildlands Conservation Trust is partnering with Wildlife Act Fund to ensure the intensive and regular monitoring of these valuable rhino populations, with this event contributing to the expense of the rhino monitors," said McCann.

As a way of giving back to the local communities surrounding Somkhanda, a 'Big Day Out' was held for children from the surrounding schools. One hundred children from nine primary schools in the Gumbi community participated on the day. The event is made possible by Bonitas Medical Fund and Old Mutual, and 20 bicycles were also donated by Coca-Cola as prizes on the day. The children eagerly participated in a 3km

run and then joined teams from the Wildlands Conservation Trust and Wildlife ACT Fund for some leadership activities and a game drive into the reserve to see and learn about the reserve's flagship species, the black and white rhino.

This event is more than just the accomplishment of a gruelling trail run, but rather brings a group of passionate people together to assist in the conservation of South Africa's incredible heritage. Funds from this event go directly towards conservation projects on Somkhanda Game Reserve, focusing on securing their critical Rhino populations. It is through projects supported by events like this that organisations such as Wildlands Conservation Trust and their partners are able to make a difference to these species survival. A huge thank you must be made to the Somkhanda Game Reserve staff, and to Bonitas Medical Fund and Radox for sharing our passion for conservation, and making this event possible.



Trail runners tackling the route of the Somkhanda Rhino Run.

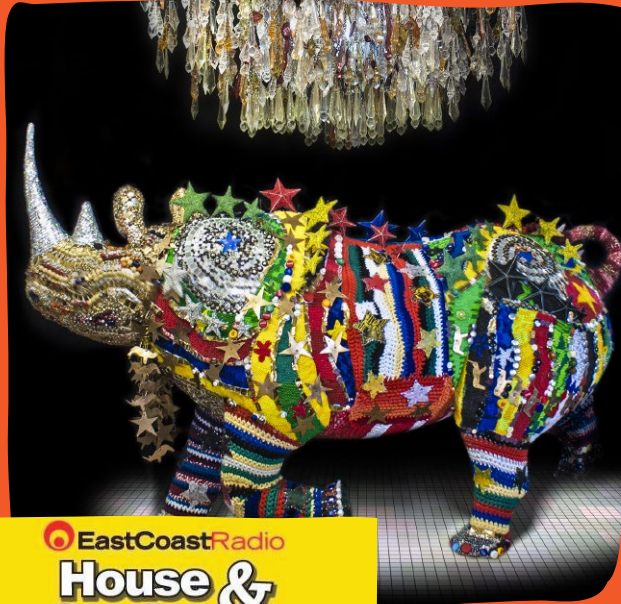


A happy Filippo after completing the Somkhanda Rhino Run in first place.

Heritage Day at Shongweni Market

Come and support the Wildlands Conservation Trust stand at the Shongweni Market on the 24th of September – Heritage Day – from 9am – 4pm. Wildlands will have a stand focused around their RHINO CONSERVATION PROJECTS – creating awareness and fundraising.

For more information email: Simonw@wildlands.co.za



EastCoastRadio
House & Garden Show

East Coast Radio House and Garden show

This year's East Coast Radio House & Garden Show saw two of our "Rhino Parade" rhinos, Yenza and Nkanyezi, feature as part of this exhibition from the 28th of June - 7th of July. The House & Garden Show is held annually at the Durban Exhibition Centre and it brings together some of the finest exhibitors with over 90 000 visitors during the course of 10 days. You can expect to find the best in lifestyle, home and outdoor from the latest furniture to appliances, antiques, plants and gadgets. Wildlands Conservation Trust together with the eThekweni Community Foundation (eCF) were part of the exhibition, sharing a rhino focused stand to raise awareness and funds towards saving the rhino. R8000 was raised in donations from the public who visited the stand.



Lance's rhino-themed birthday cake.



Birthday Party- Lance Moor

For his 6th birthday, Lance Moor asked his parents if they could throw a party to help save the rhino – and they did just that! The cake, the décor and even the cars parked outside (which were all fitted with plastic rhino horns) were themed around rhino. Lance and his parents also used the party as a platform to raise funds for Wildlands' Rhino Conservation Projects – and collected a total of R463! When we received these pictures and heard this story it honestly MADE OUR DAY and inspired a lot of staff in the Wildlands office to try and make a difference, no matter how small your efforts might seem.



OUR PROJECTS - UPDATE

African Rhinos

Latest trends in rhino numbers and poaching

With all the focus on the potential impacts of rhino poaching, it is important to also understand the actual numbers of rhino in Africa. The majority of Africa's (Black and White) Rhinos (98.0%) continue to be conserved by only four range states: South Africa, Namibia, Kenya and Zimbabwe (see table right). Botswana, Tanzania and Swaziland each conserve over 100 Rhinos with smaller numbers in Zambia, Malawi, Uganda, Mozambique and Angola. There are currently 5,055 Black Rhinoceros (*Diceros bicornis*) and 20,405 White Rhinoceros (*Ceratotherium simum*) in Africa.

Provisional estimated numbers of African rhino by country as of 31 December 2012

COUNTRY	WHITE RHINO		BLACK RHINO		TOTAL
	NUMBERS	TREND	NUMBERS	TREND	
ANGOLA	0		1		1
BOTSWANA	185	▲	9	▲	194
KENYA	394	▲	631	▲	1 025
MALAWI	0		26	▲	26
MOZAMBIQUE	1	▼	0		1
NAMIBIA	524	▲	1 750	—	2 274
SOUTH AFRICA	18 910	▲	2 044	▲	20 954
SWAZILAND	84	—	18	▲	102
TANZANIA	0		127	▲	127
UGANDA	14	▲	0		14
ZAMBIA	10	▲	27	—	37
ZIMBAWE	283	▼	422	▼	705
TOTAL	20 405		5 055		25 460

In South Africa there are an estimated 18,910 white rhino, with the majority of these being in Mpumalanga (mostly in the Kruger National Park (10,700), followed by KwaZulu-Natal (3,325). The other provinces with significant populations include Limpopo (1,800) and the North West Province (1,050). An interesting fact is that a quarter of the White Rhino in the country are located on private land, indicating the importance of these landowners in conserving rhino. Far fewer Black Rhino occur in South Africa, with an estimated population of 2,044, mostly being in the Kruger National Park (700) and KwaZulu-Natal (470), while almost 300 occur in the Eastern Cape. While numbers of both species have continued to increase, the continued escalation in population growth has slowed, predominantly due to the poaching threat.

Poaching Trends

The IUCN's Species Survival Commission's (SSC) African Rhino Specialist Group predict that if poaching continues to increase at the current rate, Rhino populations could start to decline in less than two years' time.

"Well-organised and well-funded crime syndicates are continuing to feed the growing black market with rhino horn," says Mike Knight, Chairman of the IUCN SSC African rhino Specialist Group, a group of rhino experts within IUCN's Species Survival Commission. "Over the past few years, consumer use of rhino horn has shifted from traditional Asian medicine practices to new uses, such as to convey status. High levels of consumption – especially the escalating demand in Vietnam – threaten to soon reverse the considerable conservation gains achieved over the last two decades." Rhino poaching is driven by economic forces. If we really want to save the rhino, we must understand how those forces work and look at examples of success stories to see what we can learn from them.

Between 2006 and 2012, a minimum of 2,387 rhino were reportedly poached in 11 of the 12 rhino range States in Africa. Updated figures show that poaching has escalated significantly since September 2012, and especially in the last quarter of 2012. Since 2006, rhino poaching in Africa has increased by an average of 25% year on year, while the average number of rhino poached a each day has increased from 0.16 in 2006 to its current level of 2.18 rhino per day.

Poaching Trends - continued

South Africa conserves more rhino than any other country with 83% of Africa's rhinos and 73% of wild rhinos in the world. South Africa has also continued to experience the highest absolute levels of poaching, although in relative terms some other range States have been suffering similar or higher levels of poaching. The total number of rhinos poached in South Africa between 2000 and 2012 is 1774, with 93% of these being poaching in the past 5 years (see Figure 1). Between January and July 2013, 554 rhino were poached, with the estimated number being poached for this year probably exceeding 800 rhino. The hardest hit areas are obviously the Kruger National Park, KwaZulu-Natal, the North West Province and Limpopo, which corresponds with those provinces with the higher population densities (see table bottom right).

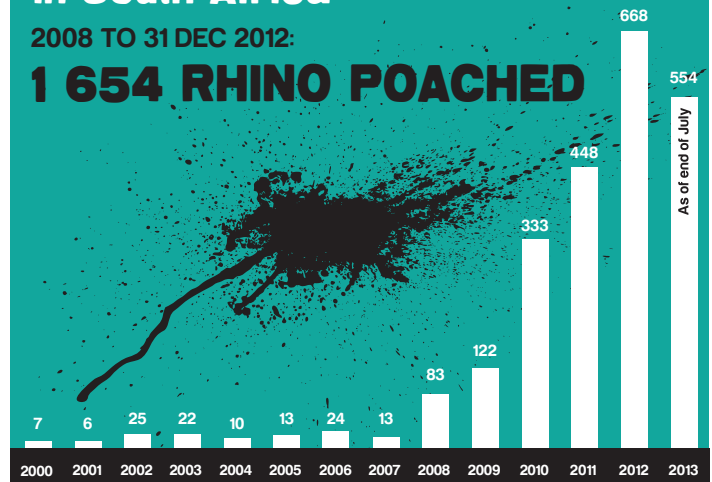


While it is difficult to conclusively determine the causes behind short-term fluctuations in rates of poaching, the successful clamp down on poaching by South Africa in 2012 and the cooperation agreements being developed with both Vietnam and China, will hopefully significantly constrict the illicit rhino horn supply. However increases in poaching in Kenya and Zimbabwe in the last quarter of 2012 suggest that other factors that are completely unrelated to South Africa's policy decisions and legislative and law enforcement changes (such as the escalation of demand in end-user countries) could also be behind these increases. Anti-poaching efforts in South Africa continue to increase, and while numbers of rhino related arrests per day in South Africa have been rising year on year, so have poaching levels. We all need to continue to be vigilant and cooperate to eradicate this threat to our rhino!

Numbers of Rhino poached between 2000 and 2013 in South Africa

2008 TO 31 DEC 2012:

1 654 RHINO POACHED



NUMBERS OF RHINO POACHED (per province) between 2010 and 2013.

SOUTH AFRICA	2010	2011	2012	2013
KNP (SANPARKS)	146	252	425	345
MNP (SANPARKS)	0	6	3	2
GAUTENG PROVINCE	15	9	1	3
LIMPOPO PROVINCE	52	74	59	56
MPUMALANGA	17	31	28	37
NORTH WEST PROVINCE	57	21	77	55
EASTERN CAPE	4	11	7	2
FREE STATE	3	4	0	0
KWAZULU-NATAL	38	34	66	54
WESTERN CAPE	0	6	2	0
NORTHERN CAPE	1	0	0	0
TOTAL	333	448	668	554

ZAP WING UPDATE

The Zululand Anti-Poaching Wing (ZAP-Wing), Project Rhino KZN's proactive initiative to combat poaching in the province, has expanded its operation throughout the area. Effectively coordinated, it tackles the problem holistically, deploying aircraft to all reserves with rhino populations, covering state, private and community-owned land. ZAP-Wing currently operates on 24 game reserves in Northern KZN, and covers approximately half a million hectares. With the success of the operation, there has also been an increase in interest from a number of other reserves and it is likely that the project will expand in the near future.

The project had a slight set back earlier this year when one of the aircraft, the Bathawk, had a crash landing in Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park. Thankfully, the pilot was not injured; however, the plane was damaged from the accident. With assistance from Wildlands Conservation Trust, WWF, Save the Rhino International and the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Bathawk has been fully repaired and is back in action.

To have a presence in the air around game reserves is making a huge difference in the fight against poaching. There is already mention from community members living around these reserves about the aeroplanes flying overhead, giving testament to ZAP-Wing's noticeable security presence. The success of the project hinges on the fact that it is inherently flexible, has multiple applications and was established in partnership with all the rhino conservation role-players in KZN.



For more information on the ZAP Wing project, visit the website at www.zapwing.org



PROJECT RHINO INVESTIGATIONS & PROSECUTIONS

With a number of organisations and game reserves joining the fight to clamp down on rhino poaching, we are beginning to see where gaps are left in this battle. Wildlands and Project Rhino KZN have been actively involved in establishing means of protecting the rhino directly, and also in apprehending poachers (hopefully before they kill rhino). Thanks to the brilliant work of dedicated individuals within Project Rhino KZN, there have been a number of arrests of poachers. 2013 has seen 25 individuals arrested in KZN, with 165 arrested nationally.

In the past, however, many of these criminals have been released on technicalities or other legal loop holes. It is for this reason that Project Rhino KZN has decided to include a legal focus in its repertoire. This will ensure that the legal aspects of the arrest take priority, with the alleged poacher being brought to justice under the correct laws and that relevant evidence is collected right from the start. With many of the poachers being linked up to international criminal syndicates with big budgets for defence lawyers, there is a need for legal support of the prosecutor, ensuring that they are backed up where necessary.

This will ultimately ensure that the punishment fits the crime and that the big sums of money from poaching do not steam roll the prosecution. This support will prove invaluable in the greater fight against poaching syndicates.

2013 has seen 25 individuals arrested in KZN, with 165 arrested nationally.

Getting to know some of the staff at Somkhanda Community Game Reserve

Nkosinathi Mbhele is a 37-year old father of two. He stays in Pongola with his parents, siblings and his two children. He is the breadwinner at home. Previously he used to hold 'tog labour' because he didn't have a permanent job. He saw that there was a lack of job opportunities so he learnt about brick laying and plumbing in order to upgrade himself. While still looking for a job, he heard there was a community meeting and that there were openings at the Somkhanda Community Game Reserve - he then applied for a position and the rest is history.

Nkosinathi has been appointed as the acting Game Reserve Manager at Somkhanda, after doing so well in his theory studies since October 2012. As a reserve manager his duties involve him knowing about all the ins and outs of the reserve. "I am happy to be part of this amazing initiative that is uplifting our community and it will allow me to save the animals of our country. I couldn't have asked for a better job", said Nkosinathi.

To do work that allows Nkosinathi to give back to his community and save his community's heritage means the world to him. "Look at me now, I am fulfilling this passion I hold. Working in the reserve will allow me to assist in helping the endangered animals, especially the rhinos," comments Mbhele.

Nkosinathi knows that when his community all work together as a team they will do their best to save the rhino.

"The Wildlands Rhino Projects are amazing and keep me motivated to wake up every morning because I know I am working for a good cause, and the Gumbi community is happy to be part of this initiative."

concludes Mbhele.



**Nkosinathi Mbhele -
Somkhanda Reserve Manager**

Botsotso started working at Somkhanda Game Reserve as a Field Ranger in 2006. Before joining the team that works at the reserve he worked as a security guard. Gumbi currently stays by himself – but does have a family that he provides for back home in Pongola.

“I never ever thought that I could work in a reserve - because of the stereotype that every animal is dangerous, but when wildlands came and implemented this project in our community I knew that this was my opportunity to rise and work for a project that is uplifting and bringing infrastructure in my community. I even forgot about my fears,” said Botsotso Gumbi.

Botsotso plays a role of being a Lead Field Ranger at the reserve. He is passionate about the work that he does because it gives him great pleasure to know that he is part of a team that aims to protect the heritage of our country. Being a field ranger has taught Botsotso to care for animals and treat them in a respectful manner and not harm them. “If I had not worked at the reserve, I wouldn’t have had this knowledge,” comments Gumbi.

“Working at the reserve has made me more aware of the rhino poaching crisis. It saddens me to know that people have become this heartless. Killing a rhino for its own horn is just unforgivable in all aspects,” said Botsotso. He said that he hopes that this nightmare will end one day and believes that the tracking devices that are inserted in a horn of a rhino or a foot collar will make a difference – because it is much easier to monitor the rhino and make sure that they are safe at all times. “As part of the Gumbi community I am proud to be part of this amazing initiative – I would like to thank everyone who has made this reserve a success”, concludes Gumbi.



Field Rangers Somkhanda (L-R):
Blokwakhe Gumbi, Botsotso
Gumbi, Skhumbuzo Dlamini and
Bhekumuzi Masondo.

MINI RHINO REPORTER

A recent partnership (sparked by one of our Trustees, Phillida Ellis) has developed between Wildlands and the ‘Independent on Saturday’ publication, resulting in a mini version of this newsletter – The Mini Rhino Reporter. This is a feature that appears on the last Saturday of every month in the ‘Independent on Saturday’ Newspaper. It offers up to date news on the Wildlands Rhino Conservation projects, as well as news on projects we are implementing with other organisations.

**Look out for it on SATURDAY 31 AUGUST
and SATURDAY 28 SEPTEMBER!**



NEW RHINO PARTNERS

Rhino bracelets

"My dad has always been a bush fanatic and is passionate about wildlife," said Angelica Aurel. "I had no clue what to buy him for father's day, and then I thought, why not make him something? I decided on the Rhino Bracelet. My dad was my inspiration!" said Angelica. "My family then commented how lovely it was and suggested I should sell them. I then decided I wanted to see the bracelets 'making a difference' to donate proceeds to a rhino conservation trust. I chose Wildlands as it was clear, after speaking to their staff on the phone that they were passionate about what they do," concluded Angelica.

Find Angelica on Twitter or Instagram and order your bracelet today!

Twitter – @bowtiq
Instagram – bowtiq



Totem Bags

Totem is a leading brand of Ergonomically designed schoolbags and accessories for kids and teens of all ages. The bags are engineered for back protection and durability. Our main objective is to supply well researched, comfortable schoolbags that make a difference to children's daily lives at school. Totem bags are endorsed by medical professionals to prevent kids from developing muscle strain and posture distortion. We care about kids and we wanted to bring attention to both kids and their parents that we also care about the plight of our beautiful rhino.

We designed a small range of "SAVE OUR RHINO" pencil cases, to draw attention and help in our small way to support and save these beautiful animals. We will be donating a percentage of sales to Wildland's Conservation Trust. The pencil cases are available from - Shoprite Checkers, Pick 'n Pay, Waltons and selected independents.



TOTEM

Torture tested. Posture protection.

Or buy on line: www.totembags.co.za

THE RHINO REPORTER



**WE THANK YOU FOR JOINING
US IN THE FIGHT AGAINST
RHINO POACHING!**

CONTACT and QUERY info :

RHINO events

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RHINO Projects

Kevin McCann on kevinm@wildlands.co.za

Rhino Parade or General Queries

Lauren Laing on laurenl@wildlands.co.za