

## Dear friends in hunting...

The intricate, complex beauty of our natural world is testimony to a greater force, every good hunter feels and respects this. Living in close proximity to wildlife, one is closest to the natural order of things, one appreciates the thin line between life and death and the triviality of the human condition in the face of this huge unity. It is the reason why we seek the outdoors. Even if we do not in the least understand it, we can humbly be grateful for all its gifts... and sometimes it will seem that the natural order will act in our favour.

When Annette, Rudie and a tracking team in the DRC (more on the trip below) unexpectedly got attacked by an elephant cow in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) on August 3<sup>rd</sup> 2019, Rudie was a guardian angel to the rest of the team. But in return for his act he must have had a few dozen watching over his shoulder. His miraculous recovery from the traumatizing attack and the events that followed is nothing short of extraordinary. Heroically taking all of the cow's frustration on himself, Annette and the others remained unscathed, but Rudie suffered a broken pelvis, leg and arm. There is no question that the mighty elephant could have crushed him, but maybe Annette's courageous act of yelling and startling the confused cow may have in return been the first of a long sequence of events where Rudie's life was saved. Surviving the elephant attack with all organs intact, enduring the bumpy ride to Kinshasa hospital and several weeks in ICU in Kinshasa and Windhoek with infections, Malaria through a bad blood transfusion and various complications... is nothing short of a miracle. Annette has been watching over her dear friend for weeks on end, and it has paid off. After 10 weeks in hospital, several operations and thanks to an excellent team of Doctors from Switzerland, Rudie still has some physiotherapy to look forward to... but there are few people who can say they survived an elephant attack and be up (and sort of walking) again within a few

months! In life and spirit, Rudie is one of mother nature's direct descendants, and she has worked her miraculous ways to reward him for his dedicated work for her, sparing not only his life, but granting him a full recovery.

We are so grateful to have you back Rudie... and thank all of our friends out there for their good wishes and prayers, Rudie is safe now!

PH Rudie has been of immense help raising orphaned rhinos, monitoring our lion prides, rhinos and elephants in particular. His passion for wildlife is an immeasurably valuable asset, and the reason behind his beautiful wildlife photography.



*"I was relieved when the elephant hit me, because I knew then that everyone else would be safe. I am not afraid of dying, but the pain was excruciating. After that, I went into survival mode, I knew I needed to focus to survive." - Rudie*

## NEWSLETTER October 2019

Rudie's recovery

The Trip to the DRC

Injured Leopard treated

Rhino RHODIS DNA  
sampling

More news on our rhinos

Alex obtains commercial  
helicopter license

Hunting Show China

# Jan Oelofse Hunting Safaris

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The elephants are darted by Dr Ulf Tubbesing and Alex flying the helicopter...



## Water for Elephants – and the trip to the DRC

The elephants at Okonjati game reserve have finally exceeded the carrying capacity of their already dry environment, risking destruction and loss of habitat for themselves and other species. A great opportunity arose to relocate them to the newly established “Parc de la Valle de la N’Sele” in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), where lush green trees would await them on 20 000 hectares protected land. After long weeks of preparation, organizing permits, logistics, heavy machinery and in a combined effort involving several institutions and organisations, the first 6 elephants were carefully selected (keeping complicated social structures in mind). Six elephants were darted by Dr Ulf Tubbesing and Alex in his helicopter, strung upside down and lifted at their feet into specially built crates with the help of a crane. They were then driven by truck to Walvis Bay and their crates loaded on to an awaiting ship. Another 5 days at sea followed, and finally, another trip by truck through the wilderness of the DRC, including Kinshasa... the truly amazing and emotionally moving video is available on youtube and a must-see!

The heavy mammals are loaded by crane while still tranquilized...



Tons of food accompanied the elephants on their long way by ship to the DRC...



The final stretch: another 15 long hours by truck...



This will be their new home!!! A huge river, the “N’Sele” flows right through the parc, lush green trees as far as the eyes can see, 20 000 hectares of protected wilderness!!!

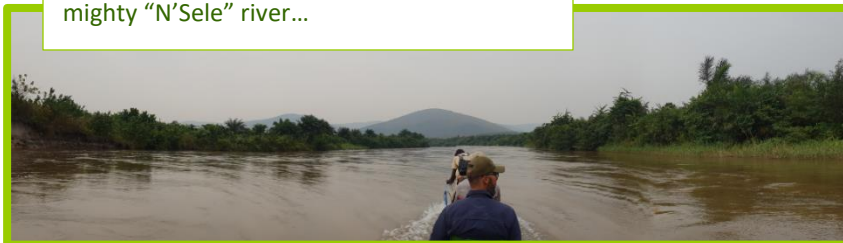


Watch the movie HERE:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VDzWfmrrRhw>

Photo credit: Annette Oelofse and Wildlife Vets Namibia

Rudie and Annette on a little boat on the mighty “N’Sele” river...



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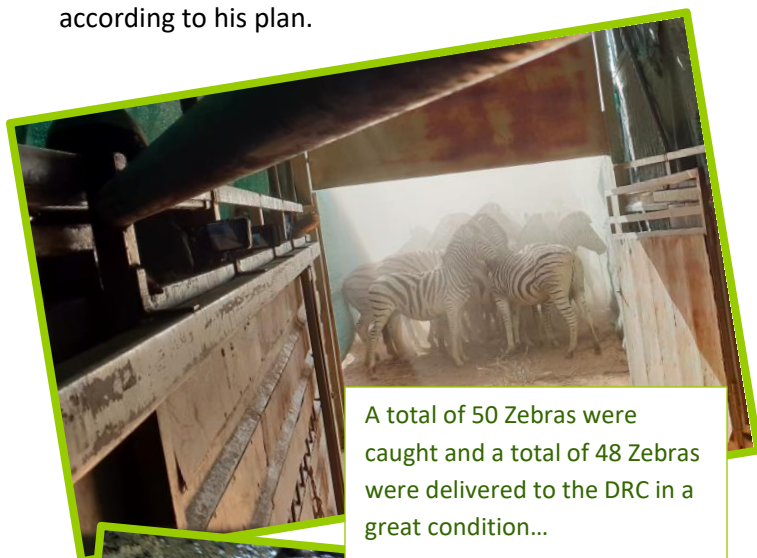
"Land in sight!" – after 5 long days on the ship, land was a welcome sight for Annette. Both she and the hippo bull now know the feeling of sea-sickness...



Apart from the elephants another 50 zebra were to be caught and loaded, and a young hippo bull. Catching zebra would prove an easy task for Alex, but catching a hippo would require some careful planning. A hippo needs to be darted such that it cannot reach water and drown once the tranquilizer has taken effect. Not so easy when the time schedule requested the hippo to be darted during the day and not during the night when hippos usually leave the water to feed. Alex thus set up a trap on the little island on which the Villa at Mount Etjo Safari lodge is located – and it all worked out beautifully according to his plan.

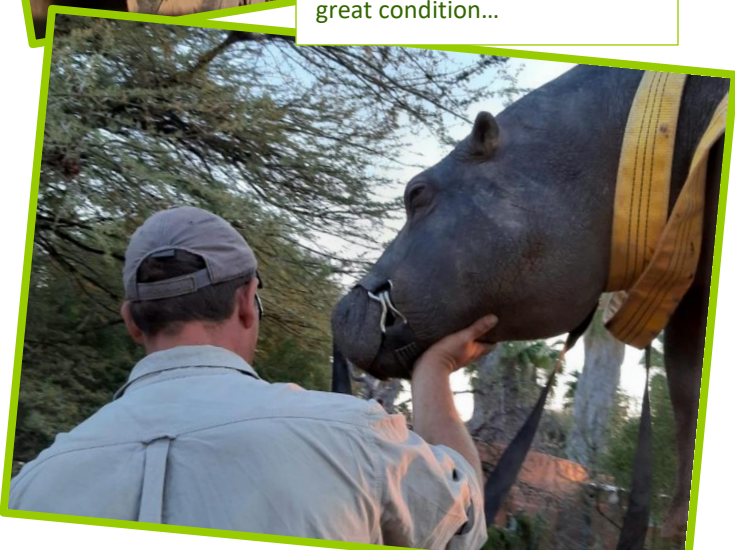
On the second trip involving another 5 elephants of a total of 15 which were to be relocated, Annette was offered to join these amazing animals on their long and strenuous trip – and Annette did not hesitate!

Her husband Jan had in the 1960s done something very similar, delivering a handful of elephants and other animals to the film set of "Hatari" in Hollywood on a DC6. Now she, too, would be a part of a major elephant translocation, knowing how much joy this operation would have brought Jan, seeing that his once beloved elephants were to repopulate an area which had once belonged to elephants in the first place...



A total of 50 Zebras were caught and a total of 48 Zebras were delivered to the DRC in a great condition...

Annette – giving the elephants water – and seeing to it that they will have water for the rest of their lives...



At first, the vets were reluctant to transport the young hippo bull, worried that hydration of the hippo's sensitive skin would prove a challenge. But the hippo bull made it to the DRC in full health, joining up immediately with a little girlfriend hippo of similar age 😊



No traffic rules in busy Kinshasa city...



The entrance to the parc! HOME!

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From left to right: Dr HO Reuter, Annette, our good friends John Ward (representing Camillus knives) & Linda Ward, Keith Beasley, and a huge male leopard, now roaming the area with a healthy eye again 😊



The translocation of the elephants has been a great adventure, and seeing them in their new habitat, safe, protected, with more water they could have ever dreamed of, is the greatest reward. There have been a few hick-ups and even a few animal fatalities... and last but not least Rudie's injury (see intro) the most distressing part of this journey... but sharing a space and time with these majestic and beautiful animals remains the greatest privilege. Such is the life of a good shepherd: always at the edge, the distinction between hope and desperation, good and bad, life and death as thin as the blade of a knife. Following in the great footsteps of our founding father Jan, neither one of our family would choose another path than that walking with the great species of Africa. The elephant story has a happy end, with the first calf having been born in the DRC recently, for over 150 years! For a full report on the relocation of animals to the Park de la Vallee de la N'Sele in the DRC, follow the newsletters of Wildlife Vets Namibia: [http://wildlifevetsnamibia.com/onewebmedia/Information%20letter-DRC%20elephant%20translocation\\_Wildlife%20Vets%20ONamibia.pdf](http://wildlifevetsnamibia.com/onewebmedia/Information%20letter-DRC%20elephant%20translocation_Wildlife%20Vets%20ONamibia.pdf) .

## Injured leopard treated and collared

A majestic leopard was spotted at the same location for several weeks, seemingly unperturbed by the presence of humans in his proximity. One of his eyes was hurt, perhaps from a fight with another cat. Fortunately, Dr HO Reuter was available to dart and treat the injured cat accordingly. To further trace its whereabouts for perhaps future photographic opportunities, the beautiful cat was collared and set free. We hope to see him again sometime... On this occasion, the famous **BEASLEY BROTHERS**, who produce a popular TV series on the Canadian hunting channel could coincidentally be part of the rescue team – watch out for this episode sometime in the future!

## Rhino RHODIS DNA sampling

With the ongoing rhino horn poaching in Namibia and South Africa, a huge database keeping track of each rhino's individual DNA profile is being set up to better identify any rhino horn that has been poached and confiscated. At the most recent COP conference in May this year, requests from several African countries to have the trade in rhino horn legalized, were (unfortunately) rejected. But the hope is that one day that the countries actively protecting these animals will have more of an incentive to do so. If the trade is ever to be opened, all rhino horns will need to be RHODIS sampled.

At Okonjati game reserve we have already darted, tranquilized, measured, vaccinated and sampled around 35 of our white rhinos for protective measures, allowing us to keep better track of them and their relations in the future.



Alex and his family with one of the rhinos that was treated and sampled. Rhinos sometimes fall victim to clostridial infections, this can be prevented through vaccination.

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Annette with white rhino ladies Girla and Chayka, who have now been fully weaned off milk, but are still very much attached to Annette. They will be released after the next rains, when there will be better grazing available.



## More on our rhinos...

Actually coming to film the POLYCARE low-cost-housing experiment that is taking place at Mount Etjo, a film team from Germany was beyond impressed with the work Annette has been doing to save rhinos. In a highly emotional short documentary film, the team managed to capture the hearts of the German audiences, resulting in great feedback and some donations to our RHINO TRUST FUND. Another BBC film team from the UK presented Annette's work in yet another short episode – CLICK THE LINKS TO THE PICTURES BELOW TO SEE THE FULL VIDEOS.



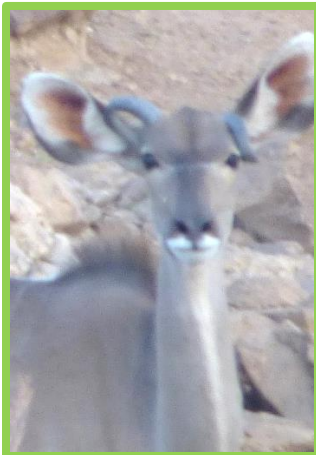
SAT1.DE  
AKTE - Der Kampf um die letzten Nashörner



YOUTUBE.COM  
BBC Africa: What's New? (Episode 65)



The interest in saving the rhinos in Namibia is growing and we are proud to call Dr Reid and Dr Chartrand of Xavier University and Mrs Elgin Ritter of Ritter Safari Adventures one of our great collaborators and supporters!



**Different...** Female kudu usually do not have horns, but this lady is somewhat of a tom boy! One of her horns is growing downwards. Sometimes nature is a bit weird. But that is ok, we do not all have to be the same 😊

**CONGRATULATIONS!!!** During his short 3 weeks of training end of August 2019 in Los Angeles, Alex managed to receive his commercial helicopter license with flying colours! A great achievement, considering Alex is used to operating with minimal air traffic in the bush – obtaining his license at busy LA airport is quite outstanding! Converting his license to a Namibian accepted document, however, will still be a bit of a bureaucratic battle...



**THANK YOU!!!!!!** Ken Behring foundation sponsored 20 wheelchairs to Mount Etjo Safari Lodge, which Annette distributed to children and old people in the nearby village of Kalkfeld. To these people, having a functional wheelchair will be a life-changer!!! Thank you sooo much!!!



# Jan Oelofse Hunting Safaris



Weeks before this successful leopard hunt with Jeff, Rudie had an incident where a leopard, highly distracted by the chase, ran down an impala right into his truck with single-minded purpose... reminding Rudie of a leopard's fierce strength and agility – and fearlessness!

Jeff and Rudie spent some long hours in the blind, but when the cat finally appeared and the first shot pierced the air, he got away. Nothing is more dangerous than a wounded leopard! The next morning they took the dogs to follow the blood trail. They found him, livid and dangerous, charging them at full speed. Both Jeff and Rudie fired then, and luckily this time, one of the shots was enough...

Congrats to Jeff!



PH Rudie took this amazing photo of a python devouring an entire springbuck! Sometimes the eyes of these magnificent snakes are bigger than their stomachs. Not being very mobile with such a full stomach, they may sometimes regurgitate their ambitious meals under stress or when under attack.

## Hunting Show in China

The hunting show in Shanghai, China, on 20<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup> June was interesting for Alex to see, to say the least. "The Chinese are highly organized, extremely polite and immaculate in everything they do. Learning about this very different culture was an eye-opener. It will take a few years and much work from our side for the Chinese to develop a hunting culture, but they are open-minded and unbiased towards it", Alex says. Although communication was somewhat a challenge, it did not deter many interested people from visiting our booth, and making much effort to understand things with the help of a translator. Alex made some promising connections with some renowned Chinese companies. It would be greatly beneficial to conservation efforts if an economically strong population such as the Chinese were to understand and support hunting in Africa. With a growing middle-class, being the forerunners in many technological developments and a major investor force specifically in Namibia, it is essential that Chinese are to be made aware of the important role hunting plays in keeping ecosystems and wildlife healthy and thriving.

**FOREVER GRATEFUL....** The Amy Bell Scholarship is still funding the school and hostel fees for three of our girls currently studying for degrees at tertiary institutions. Specialising in the fields of education and marine biology, they hopefully will contribute much to their generation of young leaders in our country. We are so proud of them!

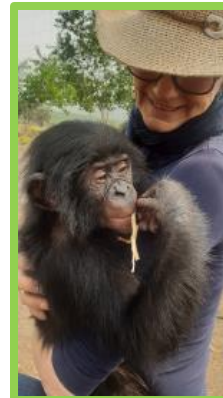


### Human kind

has not woven the web of life.  
We are but a **thread** within  
it. Whatever we do to the  
web, we do to **ourselves**.  
All things are bound together.

**All things connect.**

-Chief Seattle, 1854



Annette met  
this little  
bonobo  
monkey in  
the DRC – he  
trusted her  
immediately



Greetings from **Jan Oelofse Hunting Safaris!**