LUSH GREEN SUMMER
CHRISTMAS AT EMDONENI

The Lodge grounds and surrounding bush are especially lush and green this year after very welcome good rains over recent months.

The wildlife on the grounds have benefitted from this, with all the wildebeest, zebra, impala and other antelope feeding well on the greenery.

The pans on the grounds have also filled up from the rains, which is a good sign as the water table is therefore high. This also encourages more birdlife and helps the animals, so making a better spectacle for guests. Do come and visit this summer and enjoy the wonderful surroundings as you may never have seen them this green before.

Nature has truly blessed us with magnificent colours for the Festive Season!

Warm regards from Louis & Cecillie Nel

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SERVALLS

BRUCE the dominant male serval has been separated from the other serval since he does not agree with the fact that men should stick to one woman and be happy for many years! He doesn’t like to be involved for a long time and decided to call it a day… so he has moved on and will be on his own again.

SHEILA is also in her own camp now, heavily pregnant and waiting for her babies to be born. Watch out for news in the next edition of the newsletter!

JANE and MANDLA, the two sisters, love lying in the sun and basking in the warm weather. Mandla is also pregnant and we are very excited about her having babies soon.

SPOTTY came back after escaping for two weeks and moving to a neighbouring farm, Malala Lodge. She missed the rest of the family and so

Still no babies from MUHLE. She plays hard to get by staying up in the tree and needs to be told that they is nothing wrong with walking on the ground! We have even tried to stop feeding her from the tree hoping that she will climb down for food, but it seems like old habits die hard.

NOAH and LORKEN are looking healthy and happy - growing into young adults and we hope that they will soon start mating.

She returned home. We are happy to have her back where she belongs!

Spotty relaxing up in the tree, back after her escapade to a neighbouring farm.

Lorken hissing at the photographer, in typical serval fashion. A lot of noise, but not really aggresive.

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Emdoneni Lodge

With Animal Care & Rehab Centre

Touch the Wild where the Waterberry Grows

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CARACAL

LULU and POPEYE had kittens on almost the same day but with all the heavy rains, they were unable to survive until we could rescue them, which was a big loss. It is a part of nature for cats to lose kittens sometimes, due to genetic weaknesses, and we have to accept it, but it is never easy.

LYNXI passed away on the 15 October. We all knew that he ate grass to get rid of the fur balls that gather in cats stomachs, but this time he accidentally swallowed a long piece of straw that choked him. It is a great loss for the project - our star of the show is sadly gone. Rest in peace our friend.

BAR-ONE is now married to LULU. Just as in local Zulu culture, if the husband dies the widow is not permitted to get married to another man but must choose one of the family members to be her new husband. This means that Bar-One is the lucky new ‘husband’ now!

PEACHES is still waiting patiently for the love of his life. Now and again he and Max always hiss at each other when they spot each other next to the fence, but otherwise they are good neighbours.

MAX leads the tour by jumping higher than Bar- One - so he is the new star of the show. One day in the morning while checking on the cats we found Bar-One and Max in one enclosure lying next to each other - no fighting! We were really surprised because they normal fight and may kill one another over their space. Perhaps miracles do happen - even in the wild!

SNAKE ALERT!

Spot the well camouflaged Spotted Bush Snake

The distinctive and symmetrical leaf clusters

Waterberry blossoms - like Christmas stars!

Waterberry tree berries - the inspiration behind the Emdoneni logo - can you see it?
**AFRICAN WILD CATS**

Our African Wild Cat family are all looking healthy and happy.

**GRUMPY**, has lost most of the fur on her back from fighting with Khaya the young male, so we hope it grows back soon enough.

**KHAYA** enjoys spending time sitting in the tree on Sundays after spending a long hot summer day in KwaZulu-Natal.

**MICHAEL** is doing very well and starting to get along nicely with the rest of the family members.

**HOUDINI** the escaping girl is mature now and we spotted her mating with Khaya - maybe, if all goes well, we will have a little Houdini or Khaya soon will have to make sure that she does not teach them her bad habit of escaping!

**FOOTNOTE:** Although we know it can be distressing for readers to see animals in weak condition, it is a fact of nature that they do suffer from illness and old age, and even accidental deaths. These are also amongst the challenges that face the staff at the Rehab Centre, who often become very attached emotionally to the animals, making it extremely difficult to take tough decisions about the animals. However, we act in the best interests of the animals on the advice of professionals such as veterinary experts and conservationists, who provide advice and support to the centre.
Juba, back in good health after a recent sick spell.

**CHEETAHS**

**MOYA** and **JUBA**, the two brothers’ still enjoy spending time interacting with guests that visit the project.

**JUBA** was sick for two weeks and we called the vet who rushed over and sorted him out in a flash! He is back to normal and we are very happy that he recovered so quickly!

**SKY** and **SHADOW**, the two young boys are doing well, growing into cute-looking males with the girls eying them out big time! In some ways, the cats are so like humans!

We once again thank all our parents for adopting Cats and being part of the Emdoneni Family. We appreciate your contributions and with your support we can make a difference!

**NEW ADOPTIONS**

Barry and Noeline Nicholls adopted serval Sheila for a lifetime.

Heiko Marx adopted cheetah Skye for 1 year.

The Welsh Girls adopted caracal Popeye for a period of 1 year.

Marc R Faucher adopted caracal Max for a period of 1 year.

Trish & Mel (Go Travel) adopted serval Noah for a lifetime.

Gina Lorenzi & Adam Oldfield adopted caracal Popeye for a lifetime.


Thanks to our all the above new members and to VESA once again for their hard work at the project.

**ZERA** and **AUTUMN**, (the girls), are looking healthy and happy but we are still waiting for them to show signs of wanting to breed, so we are keeping our finger crossed.

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Serval Cats in iSimangaliso

iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority has introduced two rare servals into the Eastern Shores section of iSimangaliso, complementing the small resident population. Less than a dozen of these elusive creatures are currently thought to be found in the 230 000ha long iSimangaliso which offers the ideal habitat and wildscape.

Vryheid who alleged that he found them in snares in his farm. They were recovered by an Ezemvelo Centre near Hluhluwe, which has been in operation for 18 years. During this time they have successfully rehabilitated and released into the wild cheetahs, servals, caracals and an African wild cat. They have previously given iSimangaliso servals that were released on the Western Shores.

“We are delighted to play our part in supporting an organisation like Emdoneni Animal Care and Rehabilitation Centre in ensuring the conservation and protection of this rare and beautiful species. The Eastern Shores of iSimangaliso’s Lake St Lucia provides them with a wild, secure home away from inhabited areas and the threat of snaring” Andrew Zaloumis, iSimangaliso CEO.

iSimangaliso was also pleased to welcome Ms Fanny Douvere, Coordinator of UNESCO’s World Heritage Marine Programme, who was accompanied by the famous documentary, Thalassa, of the French main TV channel France3 to the serval release. Thalassa is producing a 30 minute documentary dedicated to marine world heritage that will be aired worldwide later this year. UNESCO’s 46 marine world heritage sites are considered “Jewels of the Oceans”. iSimangaliso was one of only two sites selected to represent these jewels in the documentary. In view of iSimangaliso’s close working partnership with Reserve Marinha Parcial da Ponta do Ouro and the proposed listing of Reserve Marinha Parcial da Ponta do Ouro with iSimangaliso as Africa’s first transboundary world heritage site, the visit was extended to Mozambique. Cross cutting issues include compliance; research; visitor management; managing disaster risks and large scale developments; community benefits and empowerment. A joint management framework is currently being drafted.

Emdoneni Cat Rehabilitation Centre welcomes visitors to experience their environmental education projects and offers informative twice-daily tours and feeding during the afternoon. Wild Cheetah, Serval cats, African Wildcats and Caracal (lynx) which have been orphaned or injured are cared for and rehabilitated for release back into their natural habitat where possible. For more information visit www.emdonenilodge.com.

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