

# emdoneni CATNEWS



NOVEMBER 2015 - 24TH EDITION



Following the 2015 voting period, we are proud to announce, that Emdoneni Lodge has won: **Global Winner in the Game Lodge category of the World Luxury Awards.**

The full announcement is available on:

[www.luxuryhotelawards.com/winners/2015-hotel-awards](http://www.luxuryhotelawards.com/winners/2015-hotel-awards)



Mafuta



Cassidy



Cenessa

## OUR SERVAL

**MAFUTA** is pretty much all grown up now; which means it's his time to shine in the bigger enclosure for breeding purposes. He has been in there for a couple of days and it looks like he and Sheila are getting along just fine. We might actually be successful this time. He really just spends his day following Sheila around talking to himself, looking a little unsure about what to do next.

**CASSIDY** is still by himself. He was given an opportunity to mate with Sheila as she came over to visit him... Cassidy was either too overwhelmed with this very attractive female or he totally forgot the purpose of this well planned visit. He is such a joyful cat and loved the attention to a point that he actual forgot about Sheila sharing an enclosure with him. He loves chasing anything that moves or catches

his eye, and often entertains himself by knocking the ball around the enclosure.

**CENESSA** has been inside the big enclosure along with the other older cats. Unfortunately she didn't get along with Sheila as Sheila is the dominant female. She constantly bullied Cenessa when it came to feeding time. She was moved back into her own enclosure. She loves it when guests come to visit her and still rolls over to beg for the usual rub of the her stomach!



*Touch the wild where the waterberry grows*



*Sheila*

**SHEILA** is doing well - especially now that Cenessa is not with her anymore. She is a lot more comfortable and only has Spotty to deal with (and she hardly ever comes down from the tree). She has gone back into season and Mafuta has been with her, so let's keep our fingers crossed that they may find mutual attraction!

**SPOTTY** is also fine and spends most of her time hiding out in the trees and only featuring when it comes to feeding time. From time to time guests might be lucky to see her out and about entertaining herself in the early morning but as soon as there's too much movement, she goes straight back up the tree.

**NOAH** is by himself at the moment. As mentioned earlier on, we took him out of the main enclosure and replaced him with Mafuta. He sleeps all day; when he was in the larger enclosure there was no time for rest as he spent every minute chasing the females around. It looks like he is catching up on some well-needed rest. He has never been one for too much attention but doesn't mind guests hovering around him taking pictures occasionally.



*Spotty*



*Noah*



*We recently treated the cats to fresh venison meat. They had a ball!*



*Raine in action - proof of her mischievous behaviour*



*Summer*



*Raine, listening carefully to Gerry's planned activities for the day*

## OUR CHEETAH

**STORM**, the offspring of our female cheetah, Autumn, has settled in nicely in his enclosure. He loves all the attention he receives from guests. He gets taken out in the mornings to run off some energy with Summer and Raine. He really does his best to take them on but at the end of the day is always outnumbered by the two girls. Storm has a loveable personality and is loved by all.

Of the two sisters, **SUMMER** is definitely the most loveable, she will not hesitate to get up from lying under the trees to greet the guests. Her loud purring puts the guests a little more at ease. She loves a good scratch behind the ear and cannot help licking everybody. She is persistent to make herself part of every conversation and group visiting her enclosure.

**RAINE** is not really the one for big crowds but if there are few people visiting she will happily come join her sister for some interaction. If nothing else, she's always looking for a way to sneak up on guests. She's not like her sister who sits around with the guests, but would rather have you run up and down with her or throw a ball. She loves showing off her agility and speed to the guests and will not hesitate to chase after something that's been thrown.

**JUBA** seems to be over the moon about the new cats next door. Summer and Raine keep him entertained most of the morning by sneaking up to him, intriguing him to start running up along the fence with the two girls beside him. Still today, he is all about giving attention, he seldom gets annoyed with too many guests being around him, instead he would rather purr away with contentment as guests stroke him from his head and down his back.



*Raine*



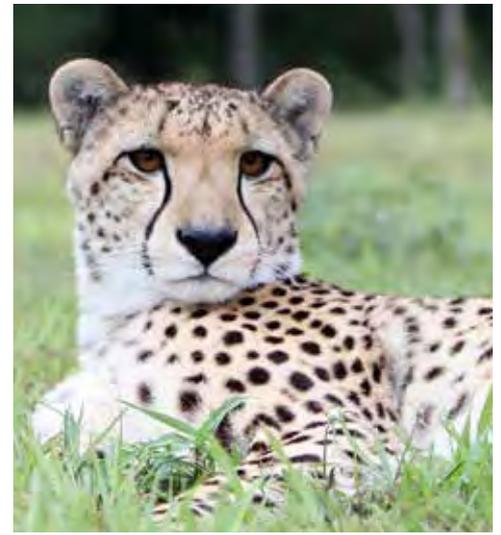
*Juba*



*Moya*



*Skye*



*Shadow*

**MOYA** prefers small groups of visitors, different to his brother who loves giving guests great photo opportunities. He is always rolling over or stretching and from time to time he will put his big paws up on the tree and sharpen his claws, giving the visitors a good idea as to how big he really is. Most of the times he is the first one to approach the gate. Funny enough, he loves to walk the visitors out. Enough is enough, the older brother as spoken!

**SKYE AND SHADOW** are doing well without too much interference. Every now and then they show themselves to the guests but otherwise they prefer spending time, lying under the massive Natal Mahogany, which gives them a huge amount of shade. For shy cats, they seem to love it when the staff come in to clean their enclosure, giving them lots of things to play around with, for example, the buckets and brooms.

With summer approaching most of the female cats in the project seem to be going into season which balances out the natural order of things. In the wild females usually synchronise breeding with when there is an abundance of food. We all are still waiting and praying for more rain as the earth is extremely dry and dusty.

**AUTUMN** is still with Cheetah Experience and loving it. Riana often gives us feedback on her well-being. She is having a good rest whereby she will be introduced with a male for further breeding. Hopefully we will have her back before the babies are born. Our main purpose with this litter would be to keep them wild and prepare for our first successful release.

**ZERA** is a precocious female who is still not interested in any male. She went with Autumn to Cheetah Experience for breeding purposes, but to date she has shown no interest at all. What a pity, but we cannot force her if she wants to keep her independence.



*Autumn*



*Zera*



*Lulu*



*Bar-One*

## OUR CARACAL

Unfortunately **LULU** has become of an age now when breeding is the last thing on her mind, more than once this year she convinced us that she was pregnant. This was however just a fake pregnancy, better known as pseudo pregnancy. But besides that, Lulu maintains her lady-like behaviour and for some odd reason she has formed a very good bonding relationship with Savanna, one young caracal that was born at the project. Their enclosures are close to each other so oftens they lie side to side close to each other, but in opposite enclosures. Lulu will become very aggressive if you approach Savanna.

**BAR-ONE** is still the legend of the project regardless of the young blood who are taking over his fame. He is popular due to the fact that he is not shy when people are around him. He has a habit of showing off and running up and down. Running in between peoples' legs then rubbing himself against them is as far as his affection

goes. If any attempt is made to touch him, all things change. He hates being touched! This week he was busy running in between people's legs as usual when he approached a lady guest who was wearing a long dress, he decided to crawl underneath that long dress and stayed there! The poor lady was really scared but everyone else on the tour couldn't stop themselves from laughing. With Lulu avoiding him so much, Bar-One tends to become very angry and aggressive and that's when most respect should be given to him.

They say in the ancient Egypt, cats were worshiped as gods and for some reason cats haven't forgotten that. **MAX** is a very good example as he does things on his terms and his terms ONLY. He is such a moody cat on some days and other days just wants to be loved. When in that 'not-so-good' mood he becomes irritated quickly, even at the call of his name. So far, Max holds the title of the best jumper – which also depends on his mood of course!



*Max*



*Ruby*



*Carlos*



*Diego*



*Pop Eye*

**DIEGO** - In all the American movies I have seen if there is a character named Diego, they are usually never associated with good characters and this cat really lives up to his name. The guides at the project have finally bonded with him, as at first he never allowed people into his enclosure, but now he doesn't mind and when he sees people he usually walks right up to them and lets them touch him. We assume he has two spirits in him, a wild one that wants to break free and the tame spirit that loves all the interaction.

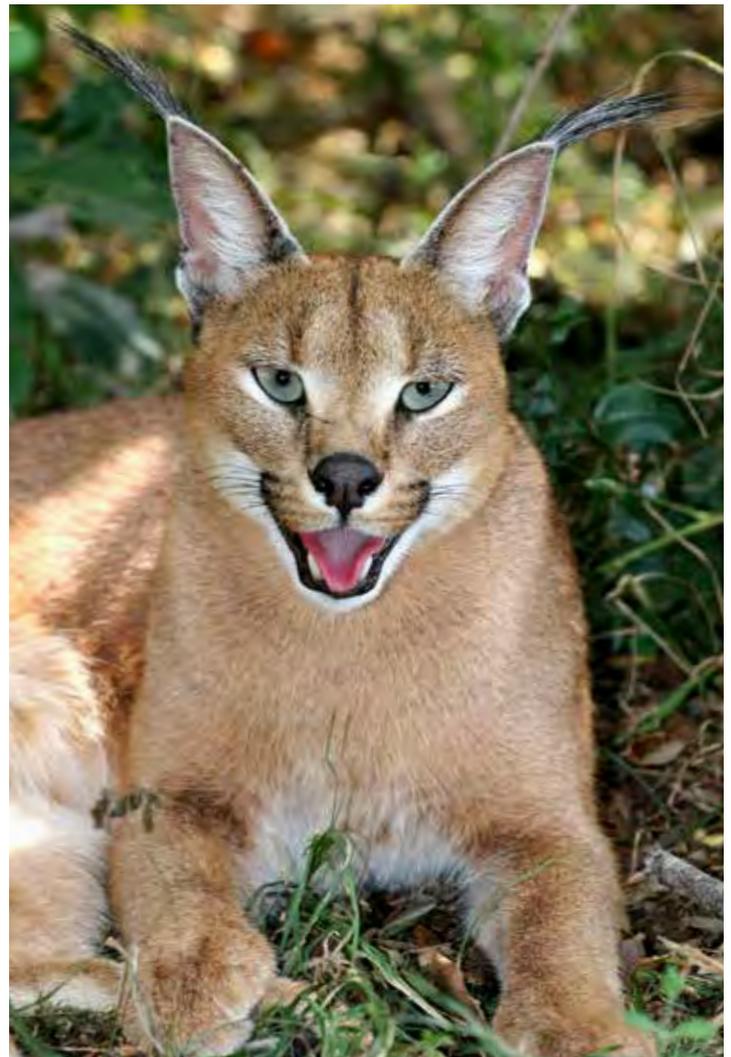
Guests often commented on how cute **RUBY** is. The truth is she may look timid but she has chosen to keep her fear of humans. She never lets anyone within three meters of her, which by the standards of the project is good, keep it wild. Depending on our breeding numbers at the project, Ruby is an excellent candidate to be released in the years to come.

**CARLOS** arrived at the project as a girl...Cara. A few months ago we realised this girl is actually a boy! Even though this little guy was previously domesticated he is good reason why it's not easy to keep caracals domestic. Even with all the people he sees daily, he just doesn't want to get used to people. He is growing really fast and hopefully will be a good breeding male.

After a few good years at the project **POP EYE** was released on the farm. We thought it best to do a soft release with her only having one eye, and it all went very well. She was often seen at night, roaming around the farm, leaving traces of her hunting capabilities. Parts of a monkey she killed were found and the remains of crested guinea fowls. After a few weeks, there is no trace of Pop Eye anymore... We miss her daily.

**SAVANNAH** is a young female and growing up to be a beautiful cat. She stays alone at the back behind Bar

One's enclosure, keeping Lulu company most of the time. She was never hand raised; so doesn't appreciate any attention except when it comes to feeding! Then she quiets down and comes straight up to the fence without a sound, with a very interested look on her face.



*Savannah*



*Apple and her kittens*



## OUR AFRICAN WILD CAT

On the 20th of October Emdoneni was blessed with four new African wild cat babies and the mother was our own **APPLE!** At least now she got something to occupy her with as she has stopped crying for constant attention. For a first time mother she is doing very well, every time we check on her and her babies, she does this cute thing. She curls her paw and rakes her little ones underneath her, looking up to you and just purring with content. She is the proudest mother and does not leave her babies alone for a single moment. We have decided to keep them wild as we are planning their release back into a conservation area.

**CINNAMON** is becoming very good friends with **KHAYA**. The older male likes to give Cinnamon a hard time, but he usually don't take it lying down. Cinnamon was introduced to Grumpy, a much older female, but only for a short while as the two didn't see eye to eye. Seems that Cinnamon is also becoming a big boy now... when he

was small, he was always more friendly than his sister Apple. Nowadays, he is a different cat. He does not like to be picked up anymore but from time to time he likes a little rub on the belly. But that's as far as it goes!

**GRUMPY** lives up to her name, hating everything around her except for her lifeong partner Michael. For a while, when Michael was taken out and Cinnamon was introduced to her, she went through an emotional period. She did not eat and stayed up in a tree. When we brought Michael back, her behaviour changed completely. Who said these cats are solitary? It is amazing what bonds these cats can develop and it looks like this is a partnership for life.

The fact that **MICHAEL** was actually tame at one stage is a really hard one to believe, but maybe it's old age. My grandfather was nice to people at some stage as well... Besides the fact that he has always indicated that he prefers to be left alone, the old guy has still got what is takes and fathered four beautiful kittens. We are proud of you, old man!



*Grumpy*



*Michael*



*Khaya*

**NEW CAT ADOPTIONS**



*Cinnamon*

October 2015		
Bianca Lapham	Apple	Life
Lize & Bruce Anderson	Storm	Life
Aubrey & Casey Aird	Cenessa	Life

Thank you to the above new 'parents' for their much needed support - the cats send their love!

**10 Commandments for Africa**

1. The Earth is our Mother, care for her.
2. Honour all your Animal relations.
3. Open your heart and soul to compassion.
4. All life is sacred; treat all beings with respect.
5. Take from the Earth what is needed, nothing more.
6. Do what needs to be done for the good of all.
7. Give constant thanks for each day.
8. Speak the truth but only for the good in others.
9. Follow the rhythms of Nature.
10. Enjoy life's journey but leave no tracks.



## Wind and Drought Effects on the Lake St Lucia System Narrows

In view of the dramatic sight of mud banks that appeared in the narrows due to the strong winds today I thought the following would be of interest.

The effect of wind on water levels in coastal lakes with enclosed water bodies like Lake St Lucia have been observed over time by scientists. Winds are known to produce standing waves (or seiches) that are maintained by the wind force that drives water in the same direction as it is blowing. This results in water being blown from one area to the other, creating lower water levels in the area from which it is blown. This effect has often been seen in Lake St Lucia where a southerly wind drives lake water towards the uMkhuzi river mouth area of North Lake, while a northerly wind drives water in the opposite direction towards Brodies in the south. Stronger winds can change the depth at either end of the main lake by up to 50 cm.

The Narrows component of the Lake St Lucia system is

generally oriented north-south, parallel to the prevailing winds and subject to the same effects.

Due to the drought with its low rainfall and reduced input from rivers like the uMfolozi, the water levels in the Narrows are unusually low - the lowest they have been since 2009. With these low water levels mudflats have been exposed in the lower Narrows. The effects of the strong southerly wind, which reached speeds of over 40 knots, are much more noticeable today than they would be with higher water levels. This situation is likely to remain as long as the strong southerly winds persist. A decline in the wind strength or a swing to a north-easter will allow the standing wave to break down and the water level in the lower Narrows to rise again.

Putting the wind aside - if we do not get good rains this summer and make sure that uMfolozi River water flows into the Lake St Lucia system, conditions could well become extremely dire. We will continue to keep you updated on the state of the Lake.

ANDREW ZALOUMIS - CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
iSimangaliso Wetland Park Authority

# LATEST NEWS: DOUBLE TRAGEDY HITS EMDONENI



## SUMMER

It is with very heavy hearts that we announce the untimely death of Summer on 12 November.

From Cecillie Nel: "It still feels like a horrible horrible dream. The autopsy says that she died of kidney failure. My heart is broken into pieces and still cannot believe it. She stopped eating over the weekend and we took her to the vet on Sunday but her little body did not cope with this despite all the efforts from the vet and medicine. She was on a drip and feeding tube. She died yesterday morning between the 04h00 – 06h00. I cannot stop crying..."



## MICHAEL

After 14 great years in our project Michael was put down due to old age. His legacy will continue as Apple gave birth to 4 beautiful kittens from him.

All those at the project, friends and associates of Emdoneni, feel these losses with them and wish the project team strength and best wishes during this sad time. Time alone will heal the void you feel. Sterkte.



© Jamie Lucas Photography