



## HWE TELEGRAPH

Issue 5 October 2021



Photo by Lydia Schoeman

### From the Chair...

Dear HWE Residents

The current Hoedspruit Wildlife Estate (HWE) Home Owners' Association (HOA) board has been in place for almost a year now and I thought it would be useful to reflect on a few things from the past months.

The role of the board and that of management are very different. The board is essentially the governance structure of the estate made up of elected HOA members who volunteer their time. On the other hand, the day-to-day management and operations of the estate are placed in the hands of people employed by the estate for this purpose.

The primary role of the board is fiduciary oversight of the operations of the estate. This means the board has a duty to ensure that the resources of the estate are applied in the best interests of the estate and its members collectively. Financial oversight obviously forms a significant part of this fiduciary duty, but it is not limited to finances. It also involves ensuring the estate operates in a way that will ultimately not undermine or be detrimental to property values, the reputation, and the essential nature of the estate. In addition to this fiduciary oversight, the board also needs to ensure that any decisions made, and actions taken are legal.

Some recent matters requiring a significant amount of discussion, consultation, deliberation, research, and decision-making include the baboon issue, the proposed limiting of lodges proposal, the estate's dog policy and the proposed new mall development, to mention just a few.

It is pleasing to note that the implementation of baboon monitors and a baboon alert Whatsapp group has significantly reduced the number of baboon raids on homes in the estate. For this reason, the deployment of the baboon monitors will be continued at least until the bush recovers after the rain season begins. There is also a need for ongoing education regarding baboon behaviour and ways in which to "baboon proof" homes on the estate. The reality is that we have all chosen to live on a wildlife estate and baboons remain an integral part of this wildlife environment.

Although a majority of those members who voted in the recent limitation of lodges resolution voted in favour of limiting lodges (59% in favour), this did not meet the 75% threshold required for the resolution to carry. It was concerning to note that only 183 members submitted votes. On an estate this size it means that the majority of members did not vote. Unfortunately, the issues related to unruly behaviour of guests staying at self-catering lodges that do not have a management presence on site continue. Serious consideration will have to be given to putting strict measures in place to deal with these lodges. The reputation and by extension the estate property values depend on this matter being dealt with effectively.

I recently saw a comment on a social media platform from an estate member that suggested the HOA board should rather look at establishing a solar power plant on the site where the new mall is being proposed than investing in a shopping mall. I would hope that the majority of members of the HWE HOA would be aware that it is not the HWE HOA board that is investing in the proposed mall. It is the owners of the property on which the proposed mall is to be built who are wanting to build the shopping centre. Since this proposed development falls within the HWE development the HOA board are monitoring progress and interacting with the developers to ensure that everything is done by the book. As it happens, the HOA board is investigating solar energy as a possibility for the estate, but this has nothing to do with the proposed new mall development.

Many other vexing issues demand the attention of the board, like the policy regarding pets on the estate. As it stands, the estate is often presented as “pet friendly” by estate agents and people wanting to rent out their properties. Of course, in reality the estate is dog friendly and only for property owners and not tenants and then only for a maximum of two dogs per owner. The problem that exists is that many tenants on the estate have dogs and a recent resolution to allow tenants to keep dogs was voted down. This matter needs to be resolved in some way and the board is considering various options, but at the end of the day it is the members who will decide by voting on any resultant resolution presented by the board.

As I have said previously, we are extremely privileged to live on this magnificent estate. Many years of hard work by previous boards and management teams have grown the estate to be what it is today. It is up to each one of us to ensure that we do our part to continue developing the estate and keeping it the amazing place it is. This includes members participating by taking the time to read proposed resolutions and voting on them. Frankly speaking, it simply is not good enough that only 183 members of this large estate voted on the most recent resolution presented by the board. It really is up to each and every one of us to play our part in keeping this estate as good as it is and ultimately making it better.

At this point I would like to recognise the great work being done by our estate management team, which sees to the day-to-day operations of the estate and consists of Nicholas Naylor, the General Manager, assisted by Nita Scholtz, our Financial Manager, Sydwell Kubayi our Staff Co-ordinator and Jana Lamprecht, our Admin Clerk. Fourteen staff members are currently employed to do maintenance, projects and refuse handling. This relatively small team of highly dedicated people do an incredible job and I would like to thank them for the excellent work they do to keep our estate functioning as well as it does.

Please feel free to contact the HOA Board directly with any concerns, ideas, proposals etc. We welcome your participation in the process of managing this exceptional estate.

*Ant de Boer*

HWE HOA Board Chair

#### NOTES FROM MANAGEMENT:

1) Management was notified that even with permission from Limpopo Nature Conservation to euthanise any particularly problematic animal, they would not be given the necessary (by law) permit from the Police Department to do so as using a firearm in an urban setting is against the law and as such no permit would be allowed or issued.

2) Management has asked the following of residents:

Can you all please send in ideas and recommendations on what you would like to see added to estate recreation-wise/infrastructure e.g., a club house with a pool and play area for children.

Management is specifically seeking input from residents, so please send in your ideas, they will be most appreciated.

### 3) Game Count as of September 2021

Animals	Animal Count	Male	Female	Juvenile
Bushbuck Total	2	2	0	0
Duiker - Grey Total	30	0	0	0
Giraffe Total	17	4	3	2
Impala Total	80	41	2	0
Kudu Total	43	13	0	0
Nyala Total	13	6	2	0
Vulture Nest Total	1	0	0	0
Nyala Total	13	6	2	0
Vulture Nest Total	1	0	0	0
Warthog Total	49	0	0	0
Waterbuck Total	50	8	5	1
Wildebeest - Blue Total	15	0	0	0
Zebra Total	13	0	0	0
Grand Total	313	74	12	3



## Baboon Monitors and eBikes

*By Tom Vorster*

Following regular incursions into the estate and raids on houses by a troop of baboons, which generated much debate and anger amongst members, the Estate was loaned two ebikes, to establish whether they could be an effective deterrent against the baboons. Two baboon monitors were appointed and trained in the use of the bikes as well as handling paintball guns.

After three weeks of testing the efficacy of the monitors on the bikes, it was noted that while baboon incursions on the estate continued, the number of raids reported on houses declined considerably. With the use of the bike and patrolling the Estate daily the monitors could respond quickly to reports of baboon activity and move the troop on before they had the opportunity to raid houses. The board decided to purchase two new Baroudeur Rhino ebikes to continue with the baboon monitor program. When no baboon activity is reported, the monitors patrol the fence line.

On average, the monitors cover over 40km per day within the estate either chasing baboons or patrolling the fence line, there are two monitors on duty seven days a week.

For the monitors to remain effective, it's crucial that residents report the presence of baboon activity on the Estate immediately using the HWE baboon alert WhatsApp group or by contacting security. Please only share the street name, stand number and direction the baboons are moving, this information will be conveyed to the monitors immediately by radio from security.

To join the WhatsApp group, click on this link: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/LSiugygDkSkJrMrCZugpl9>.

Please note that this is not a chat group and admins will remove anyone not following the guidelines.

We live in a Wildlife Estate and are privileged to live in this environment alongside wild animals, it is the responsibility of each homeowner / resident to ensure that their garbage is secured and not accessible to our opportunistic wild neighbours. It is also crucial that residents ensure that their homes are secured to prevent baboons or any other wild animal from accessing their premises.

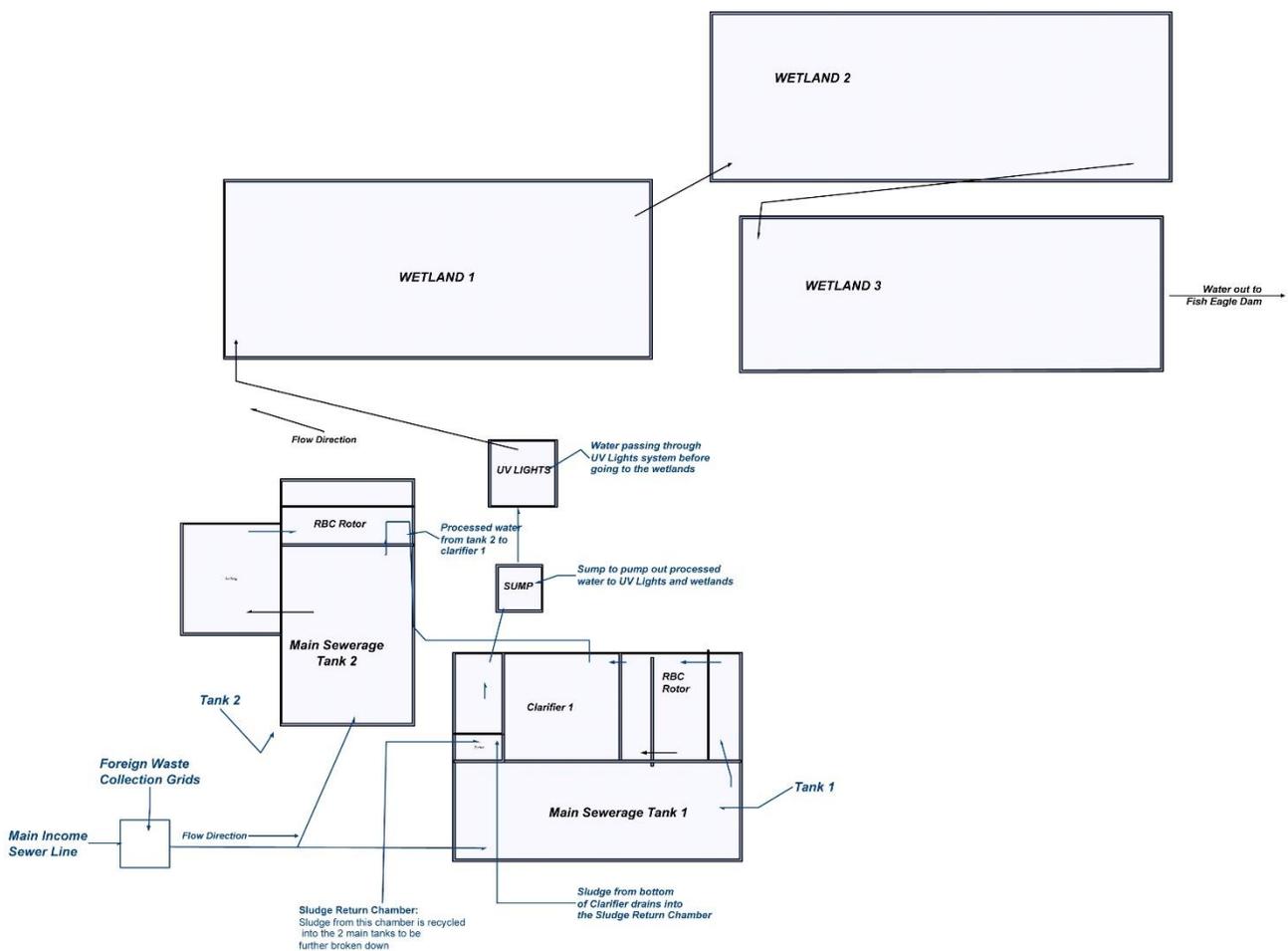




## Where it all goes....

By Nicholas Naylor & Jackie During

Our Estate Manager, Nicholas Naylor, has provided a layout, as well as basic explanation of how the sewage works function on our estate. As many of you may be aware, we recycle the sewage water and then use it to fill the dams for the animals as well as irrigate certain areas, towards the end of the dry season, in the greenbelt to provide food for the browsers and grazers.



As well as providing a background into how the system works, Nicholas would also like to highlight a few issues with regards to the recycling/cleaning process of the sewage water, with specific mention as to what we as residents are presently disposing of via the sewage water.

Our manager asks that we please all be a little more conscious about the fact that certain products, even items such as “wet wipes” which are labelled biodegradable take too long to break down and we are having to cart off loads of solid waste. This solid waste is, no pun intended, wasteful as well as at times clogs the filtration system. (Feminine hygiene products are apparently a major source of blockage in the filters.)

Nicholas also requests that, where possible, to use “green” or environmentally friendly cleaning products as this will greatly help reduce the chemical build up in the water. Pick n Pay, for example, has a range of green products which, in my opinion, are incredibly well priced as well as more effective than many other products.

Please also inform guests via, e.g., notices in the bathrooms and cloakrooms of lodges not to dispose of the list of items Nicholas mentions in the table below, via the sewage system.

**Plant Process:**

- Stage 1 - Grit/ Foreign Object Removal
- Stage 2 - Primary and Secondary Settling
- Stage 3 - RBC Rotor Aeration
- Stage 4 - Lamella Clarification
- Stage 5 - UV Lights
- Stage 6 - Final Polishing and Contaminant Removal via Wetlands

The Sewerage plant goes through a first stage of grit removal where foreign objects are removed from the main line before entering the plant. Currently we are removing 5 black bags of foreign objects per week. Foreign objects are anything that will not breakdown in the system by itself. Some of these are Wet Wipes, Sanitary Products, Blue Disposable Wash Cloth, Condoms, etc. If these types of items do pass the grids they will remain in the system for years affecting the systems effectiveness and life span. Eventually the system will need cleaning out and the process to start over again.

The system is also affected by the types of chemicals used at homes or businesses. We ask that all residents consider the use of more eco friendly products where possible.

We are currently investigating the implementation of Sludge Drying Beds, so that we can slowly reduce the biological load on the sewerage plant. This will ultimately prolong the life of the system. Once the sludge drying beds are active the dried sludge will be broken up and stored in piles to eventually be used as compost for the garden areas.



My name is Ryan Ker and together with my wife, Thale (pronounced Ta- La), and son, Felix we are lucky enough to occupy a stand on this awesome estate we all call home. My wife and I own and manage a small tour operating business called Wild Planet Safari. The majority of our tours are multiple day safaris in Kruger National Park. We have been operating for 10 years now and for the first 7 we were based in Johannesburg, it was always our plan to move closer to Kruger and we managed to move to Hoedspruit in 2018 once the transfer companies such as Safari Link, started to run regular tourist transfers. It has been an absolute pleasure to be able to return home from a Kruger safari to Hoedspruit Wildlife Estate rather than all the way back up to the concrete jungle, Johannesburg.

In August 2020 we started to operate Day Tours to Kruger and the surrounding areas but only found work over the weekends and holidays. We started what we call `Children's Bush Club` to keep ourselves busy during the week and it has turned out to be one of the most fulfilling things to come from the last year for us. Our Bush Club is a weekly experience for the younger children of the estate between the ages of 4 and 11. Bush Club is all about getting the children off the iPad and away from the screens by having fun with them in the bush and showing them that they can have a much better time outside. It is not a study group or a training school however we do educationals each week showing the children useful bush skills and techniques that they can have fun with going forward, such as using the Magic Guarri to divine water, different methods of finding direction, what leaves and berries they can eat as well as various lessons about tracks and signs. Eating seems to be quite high on the list of things the kids enjoy, and they have become particularly fond of eating Buffalo Thorn leaves as well as the berries of the puzzle bush. We also strive to rid the kids of some of the irrational fears they have picked up from their parents, snakes, insects, and spiders would give most of the kids the heebie-jeebies in the early days of bush club, a year later and when we ask the group what they want to do for the day we get a communal roar of `Let`s try find

some snakes`. Of course, we don't teach the kids to go around grabbing any insect or snake willy-nilly, we are ethical and when we do find something interesting, we watch, observe and learn why there is no threat and don't interfere.



We do have a particular focus on the flora of the green belt, and I believe if you can create interest in the plants and trees then the desire to expand ones wildlife knowledge comes naturally. The Bush Club is a 2-hour experience for the lighties and we mix up game drives, bush walks and tree climbing for about an hour. For the second hour we play fun bush games such as capture the flag, stuck in the mud and scavenger hunts.

There is currently a core group made up of 10 children and the growth of their bush knowledge and how much more comfortable they have become in the bush is so rewarding to see. We have a few boys that can i.d. well over 10 different tree species and we have a few girls who in the beginning refused to walk off the dirt road and now they run around the bush like playful impala lambs. We are a pretty noisy group and I do apologize if we have upset anyone with all the joyful but rowdy play, it is only for 2 hours and at a fairly quiet time as far as green belt use, we are busy between 2:30 and 4:30. It is essential to the future of our natural areas that the younger generations connect with the wilderness and that they then feel the need to continue the conservation of the areas for future generations. What better way is there to get the kid`s to connect than to allow them to be children in the bush and enjoy the childish things that we used to do many moons ago.



On another note, I am currently working with Nic from management on replacing all the old and deteriorating tree tags in the green belt with bigger new tree tags, so look forward to that in the near future. Jackie has also asked me to provide a tree feature/article for the HWE telegraph. I am going to be writing about 3 trees for each edition, one will be a tree that has an estate road named after it, another will be a tree that is flowering at the time of publication and the third will be a tree that in my opinion is a less known tree and that could be a new tree for residents to get to know.

This edition `Road Name` tree is the Rotsvy, *Ficus abutilifolia*, the Large-Leaved Rock Fig. We only have one wild Large-Leaved Rock Fig in the estate that I have ever seen, that's not including the numerous individuals that can be found in pots in many gardens on the estate, we don't have many rocky areas that is

the preferred habitat of the Large-Leaved Rock Fig. You can find our beautiful specimen on the left-hand side of Rotsvy as you travel east, the tree is growing on the rocks where the powerlines cross through the estate. The small mall outside the estate is also named after this Samson of a tree even though I have yet to see one anywhere near the Rock Fig centre. There are a number of mind-blowing characteristics of the Large Leaved Rock Fig, most impressive is the trees ability to split rocks!



Granite boulders the size of cars and houses have met their match against this powerful tree. The roots stretch out from the base of the tree and find small protective cracks that they can follow and stay hidden and out of reach of the herbivores. The roots grow and follow these cracks and crevices in the rocks searching for hidden water sources. As the tree ages these roots expand and over time the root expansion causes the rock to slowly split and once the rock starts to split the tree keeps growing and the roots keep expanding until the granite boulder is split in 2. This is not a fast process and can take many years for the tree to defeat the rock. Interesting is that the rock initially provides the tree with protection but after being provided with safe housing the tree in turn breaks the rock kind of like the relationship between our current government and our country, the fig tree however does something good in the end, by breaking the rock it increases the surface area of the rock to the process of weathering which breaks down the rock and introduces new soil particles to the ecosystem.



Another fascinating fact about Large Leaved rock figs and all figs for that matter is the species-specific relationship that the tree absolutely relies on in order for pollination with a specific fig wasp. The large leaved rock figs in South Africa can only be pollinated by the Fig Wasp, *Elisabethiella comptoni*. It is a long story, but to make it short, the flower of the fig is inside the fruit and at the top end of the fruit, the fig, there is a tiny opening, inside there are the eggs of the fig wasp, a minute stingless wasp, which are laid on the flowering parts of the fig. The eggs then hatch inside the flowering fig and the males, who have no wings, mate with the females as soon as they are developed. The males then dig holes out of the ripe fig so that the female can depart without damaging her wings. She departs the fig with pollen from the flowers of the fig she was born inside and is then attracted by the scent of another flowering fig, she enters the next fig through the small opening at the tip that only the fig wasp can fit through. Whilst entering the fig the gravid female fig wasp, tears off her wings squeezing through the tiny hole. She brings the pollen from the fig she was born into the new figs flowering parts, starting the pollination process and then lays her eggs and dies inside the fig, the eggs hatch and the



process is repeated. The females are born inside a fig, leave, lay eggs, and die inside another fig, the males on the other hand die inside the same fig they were born in.

Really the most important thing to take from that is how reliant the fig trees are on the specific fig wasp that pollinates each specific fig tree. Slight changes in environmental conditions could cause the wasp populations to decline and in turn decrease the pollination rate of the fig trees. The relationship is called Obligate Mutualism and basically means that neither species can survive without the other. The Large leaved rock fig fruits all year with peaks from September to March, so you can go have a look and see if you can find a ripe fruit, open the fruit up to expose the parts of the flower and look closely and you may see tiny fig wasps moving about. The seeds of the fig are dispersed by various fruit eating birds and bats.

All parts of the Large-Leaved Rock Fig contain milky latex however this time it is not poisonous, and you can apply the latex to remove skin warts. The tree uses the latex to seal any wounds it may incur and stop the tree from getting any fungal disease. The fruit is edible and very tasty; however, you will almost always get an extra portion of protein from the fig wasps inside the fig.

The Large-Leaved Rock fig is an excellent tree to have in the garden as long as you grow it far away from your house or any other structure, the roots will spread and in the search for moisture and can grow into the tiniest cracks, just like the tree will split rocks it can split walls and break through into swimming pools.

You can grow the Large-Leaved rock fig from seed which can be obtained from drying out the ripe figs, it can also be grown from cuttings. Plant it in a rockery away from your house and after about 10 years you will have the most beautiful specimen with roots hanging over and clinging onto the rocks.

The flowering tree that is featured this edition is the *Cordyla africana*, Wild Mango. It can't be found in the green belt, but it is a tree that most of us see every day. There are some beautiful specimens just over the wall in the Village and even bigger Wild Mango trees can be found in the Pick and Pay parking area. They are one of best trees that can be grown for shade cover and the

crown of the tree spreads out in a flattish canopy with dense foliage that is perfect for blocking out the scorching summer rays.



The Wild Mango stands out very well during the winter months and retains its leaves for almost the whole year, if it is well watered through winter the canopy can remain throughout the year. It is most easily identified during the summer, and you can spot it by looking for the largest gathering of people on a hot sunny day, large groups of people gather under the shade outside pick and pay to take a break and enjoy the shade provided by this cool stunner.



The flowers which are currently present do not have showy petals and are made up of a mass of around 45 yellow stamens grouped together like a pin cushion similar to albizias. The tree flowers en-masse and looks amazing with all the pockets of orangey yellow spread throughout the dense green canopy. The Flowers are laden with nectar and attract many birds especially the sunbirds. I have seen White Bellied, Scarlet-chested and Marico sunbirds in the Wild Mango trees outside Pick and Pay over the last few days.



The fruits are large and yellow in colour, they resemble a small mango however they are not true mango`s. They are edible but nowhere near as tasty as the delicious, cultivated Mango`s grown up the road from us. The fruit has a very high content of vitamin C but does have a very bitter taste and the fruit falls from the tree before it is fully ripe similar to the Marula. Elephants love to feast on the fruit and are responsible for the spread of the tree.



The wood is used in carpentry and is most desired for making the base of African drums, when I was working a lot in Victoria Falls the local musicians would make sure their drums were made from the hollowed-out trunks of the Wild Mango, they said that the sound made from a Wild Mango drum spread further than any other wood.

The Wild Mango is fairly easy to grow from seed, I have picked up a few in the past that were already starting to sprout when I opened the fruit, but you will have to plant it behind a fence or cage because the Kudu and Nyala will continually browse the leaves throughout the year.

The natural distribution in South Africa of the Wild Mango is further south of Hoedspruit, mainly from the North coast of Zululand through Swaziland to the South of Kruger. The biggest specimens I have ever seen are in Skukuza camp, it is far more widespread in Zimbabwe and Mozambique and there are plenty to be seen in the gardens of the houses in Victoria Falls.

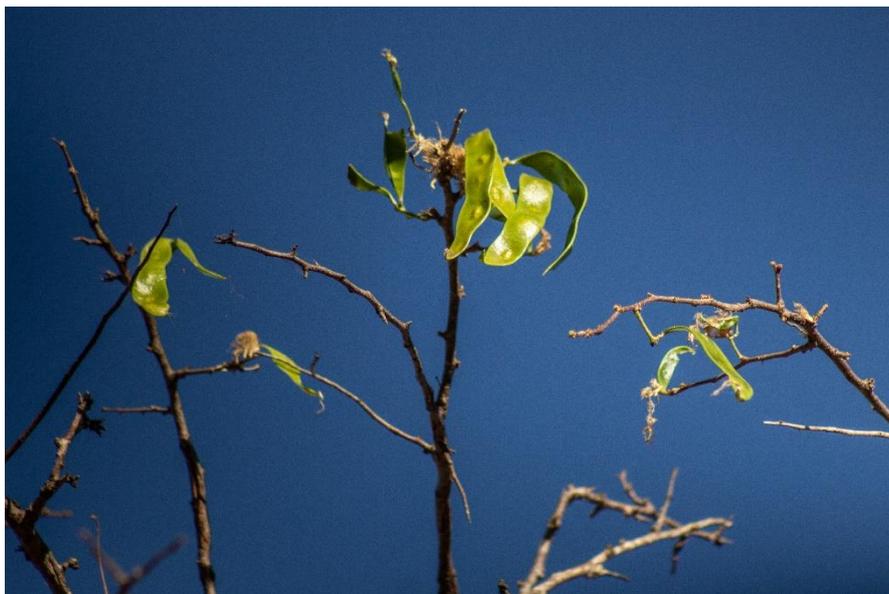
The last tree described for this month is the *Albizia anthelmintica*, the Worm-Cure Albizia. This is a less known tree, and the distribution is a little sparse, it could be from over utilization of the bark for medicinal uses or perhaps it is just overlooked and easily missed. We have a stand of Worm-cure Albizias growing on Hornbill drive about halfway between Hoepoe Drive and Drongo Drive, they are on the left-hand side of the road if you are moving East.



It is a fairly messy looking tree, and the branches and stems grow in very confused and irregular directions and don't create a spreading canopy. It is an Albizia also known as a false thorn and if you look up at the branches it appears to look like an acacia but on closer inspection you will see the young twigs end in spiny looking tips, but they are not true thorns or spikes.



The Worm-Cure Albizia is deciduous and loses its leaves during the Winter months. The leaves look like a smaller version of the weeping boerbean and the flower is a typical Albizia pin-cushion collection. The tree flowers before the leaves return in Spring and the trees are currently flowering now. The giraffe love to eat the flowers and you have to look carefully at the top of the tree to find any of the flowers, the giraffe also eats the seed pods before they fully ripen so obtaining seeds for cultivation can be quite difficult.





The worm-cure Albizia is very important ecologically as are all albizias, the roots of the tree have a symbiotic relationship with a bacteria called rhizobium, the trees roots provide a safe place for the bacteria to form nodules and they are able to fix nitrogen, which the trees cannot utilize, and release ammonia back into the soil which increases soil fertility.

As the name suggests the Worm-Cure Albizia is used as a traditional remedy for tapeworm and other intestinal parasites. The roots and the bark are used as decoction, a tea or in powdered form and I have been told it is very effective especially with livestock.

The Worm-Cure Albizia can be grown from seed fairly easily but as mentioned before the difficulty is in obtaining the seed, be prepared to climb high for that treasure, or try to find specimen in areas without giraffe or kudu. This can be difficult as outside of protected areas the bark is stripped for medicinal use and these open wounds on the tree can get infected and the trees can die from various fungal diseases, the tree is also far more vulnerable to fire after the bark has been stripped.

That is it from me for this edition, hopefully everyone can find the 3 trees mentioned and enjoy their beautiful characters.

***If anyone would like to get more information on the Children's Bush Club or Wild Planet Safari you can contact Thale on 0792967297.***



*An interview with Frank Watts*

*Tell us a little about yourself...where were you born, how long have you and your family lived on HWE, and where did you live before?*

I was born in Durban where I grew up. I really loved the beach and spent my youth as a surfer. We have lived in Hoedspruit for about 9 years. I lived in the Kruger National Park for 17 years. Di lived in the Netherlands for 12 years and then in George.

*Do you and your family enjoy life on the HWE?*

We absolutely love Hoedspruit. Di moved here because she wanted her children to go to Southern Cross and they both finished their junior schooling there. I moved here to be close to Di and the kids. I often used to drive through Hoedspruit and imagined living here so for me it is like a dream come true.

*You have a Safari/Tour company called The Other Animals. How did that start?*

*How many years have you been running?*

*Do you enjoy your work?*

I was fortunate enough to have been guiding an American tourist some years back when we witnessed an incredible wildlife interaction in the Kruger National Park which he caught on video. He posted it on You Tube and it has become the most watched wildlife video of all time with over 80 million views. NatGeo made a documentary, and I received a lot of media coverage. It is worth a look – called The Battle at Kruger, it is truly amazing. It inspired me to write a book which I called The Other Animals of The Kruger National Park and in 2010 I decided to start my own business and name it after the book.

I have been working with nature since 1988 with people from everywhere in the world, even from countries I have never even heard of. I know the names of some of the animals in a variety of different languages – even Mandarin 😊

I love my work – it is a huge privilege sharing peoples dreams and meeting these individuals from all over the globe. I have met some really interesting people and seen some incredible things. Wild nature is unbelievable, and it never gets old.



*Where do you run your tours?*

We run a variety of trips into the Kruger National Park which was our only activity but since Covid we have started doing trips into Pridelands and on the Hoedspruit Wildlife Estate. As bad as what Covid is, new opportunities availed themselves and I will be forever grateful to Anton of Pridelands and the lodges in Hoedspruit who opened these options to us.



*Is there a typical tour on the estate which you offer, or do you take your cue from your guests' requests?*

The Hoedspruit Wildlife Estate tours have been truly amazing and a huge change from what I am used to. We offer morning and afternoon drives as well as morning and afternoon walks. The activities are about 2 hours in duration and the afternoon (sundowner) drive has proved to be by far the most popular.



*Can you tell us some interesting or amusing anecdotes from your tours, especially here on HWE or Pridelands?*

The owners of one of the lodges I do tours for has a tame squirrel which runs around free all over the place. I had just picked up a honeymoon couple for a sunset drive on the estate and I drove a short distance from the lodge and parked on the roadside to introduce the tour. As I turned to face the couple, the man started screaming and jumping around perched on his elbows and kicking his legs in the air. It was like he was taking break dancing to a whole new level and the only music was his shrieks of terror. Just for a moment I was extremely concerned as to what could be ailing this poor gentleman when suddenly with an impressive flick of his leg a squirrel was ejected from under his trouser leg and became airborne out of the safari vehicle and into the bush some distance away. The guy's wife could not stop laughing for the rest of the drive and my relief was tangible that I was not dealing with some terrible affliction. The gentleman took it extremely well and also saw the funny side. He may have to manage his relationship further down the line during his attempts at being macho but let's hope that squirrel did not do any lasting damage to his ego. His reaction was certainly understandable given the circumstances. I mean imagine coming from an upmarket housing estate in Johannesburg to the deep jungles of Hoedspruit and feeling some unknown creature heading up your trouser leg. Seriously !!!

The Pridelands sunset drive is the most popular. We go in an hour or so before sunset and then stop at a nice spot to watch the sun go down. We supply a drink and some snacks, and it usually is a profound moment watching the day slowly disappear and the night taking over. On one occasion the group I had on safari had obviously been having sundowners the whole afternoon and I had my hands full trying to keep them quiet. About 30 minutes into the drive and trying to stay in the thick bush away from everything with my rowdy bunch I came around a corner and there was a massive elephant bull walking down the road straight towards us. I had nowhere to go so I pulled to the side as best I could and switched off the engine. I turned to my guests with my finger on my lips indicating they should keep very quiet. The moment we saw the elephant the mouths got small, and the eyes got huge. All selfies were forgotten as the great beast

lumbered past us humbling the rulers of the world. It was truly a great moment enabling all of us to reflect on how small we really are.

*What is your most memorable sighting on HWE? And Pridelands?*

I was returning to the lodge on the estate, our drive almost over when we drove past a huge termite mound which I see often. There are a number of large holes in the mound, and I have often wondered aloud to guests about what lives in there. As we were passing a porcupine popped out one of the holes and started shuffling around. The guests were absolutely mesmerised, having never seen anything like that before. Based on the guest's reaction it must go down as one of the best along with a leopard sighting I had on another occasion.



On Pridelands there is a big pride of lions which with a number of other prides traverse the area. One evening the big pride pitched at a water hole – a big male, 6 females and around 14 cubs of varying ages. They were lazing around when a buffalo bull arrived. They had full bellies from a previous kill so were quite lethargic, but a couple of lionesses decided to harass him. Every time one of the lionesses got too close, he would charge making them back down. This carried on for a while under the watchful eyes of the cubs before their mothers lost interest and the dugga boy wandered off.



Pridelands



Pridelands



## Pridelands

*It goes without saying that the pandemic would have hugely affected your business; are things looking up now and how can you be contacted by those wishing to book you for a tour or game drive?*

Yes, like so many people worldwide the pandemic hurt us big time. We have had fantastic support from the South Africans which has kept us going. Being able to do the safaris on Pridelands and the HWE has without a doubt enabled us to survive because the KNP safaris have just about dried up. Things are slowly getting better but let it be said that we are not going to forget the support from our locals and if the internationals come flooding back it definitely won't be business as usual. We will find a way to accommodate all our guests. The best person to contact is Di because she is the one with her finger on the button.



[info@theotheranimals.co.za](mailto:info@theotheranimals.co.za) or cell 076 834 5602.



## Important Contact Numbers

HWE office: 015 793 1188 / 015 793 1609

General Manager (Nic Naylor): 083 320 9831

Financial Manager (Nita Scholtz): 073 630 3800

Security Control Room: 065 807 0888

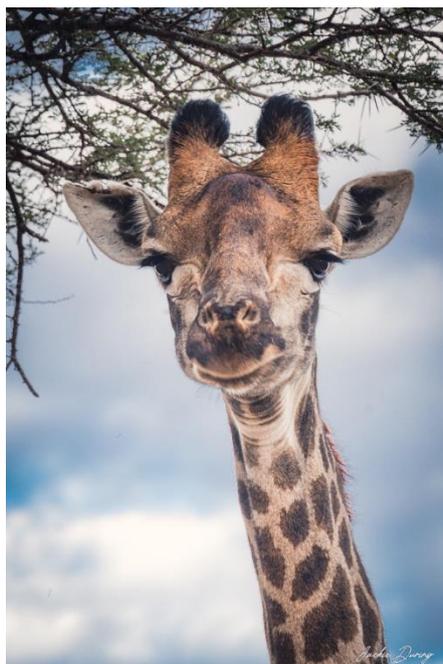
Snake Removal: Damien Ellett: 082 401 8757

Ian Owtram: 083 286 8281

Tim Baynham: 073 934 6156

Reptile Park: 015 795 5203 / 082 299

If anyone would like to contribute articles or photographs and suggestions for the newsletter, please email Jackie: [jackie.during@gmail.com](mailto:jackie.during@gmail.com)





# Sightings Gallery

*Photos taken by HWE Residents*



by Kevin McDonald



by Di Gibson



by Lynne Stone



by Di Gibson



by Lydia Schoeman



by Helen Saccone



by Jackie During



by Kevin McDonald



by Angela Harvey Lang



by Lydia Schoeman



by Jackie During



by Jackie During



by Owen Grobler

