

GREATER KRUGER PROJECTS

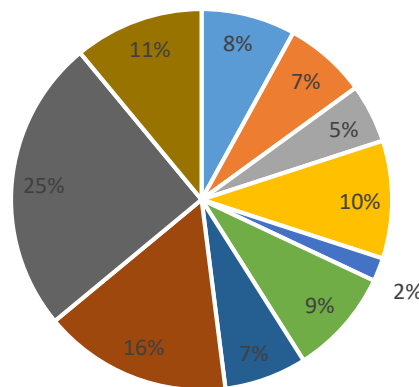
APRIL - JUNE 2019



66 VOLUNTEERS
19 NATIONALITIES
8318 HOURS VOLUNTEERED



HOURS SPENT VOLUNTEERING ON EACH ACTIVITY



- Data Crunching
- Community Projects
- Presentations & Discussions
- Habitat Conservation
- Bushwalks
- Photography Tuition
- Critiques & editing
- Large Predator Focus
- Big 5 Research
- Rhino Monitoring

AVG TEMP:



HIGH: 25 °C

LANGUAGE LESSON:

“NGIYAKUTHANDA”

“I love you” in
isiZulu

WHAT'S NEW ON THE GROUND?

1. Johann Nortje joined our family in May as Community Manager. Hailing from South Africa, Johann has also spent some time abroad in New Zealand. We are extremely fortunate to have such an experienced and passionate member join our team and take a hold of our community projects.
2. We also welcomed Devon, Georgina, Ryan and Jack to our guiding team. Four fantastic, highly trained and passionate additions to our ever-growing family.

BIG 5 RESEARCH AND CONSERVATION

- In one of the reserves we monitor, a pride of five lions have successfully bred two cubs. While one of the cubs had a rocky start, both cubs are now thriving.
- Elephants have returned to our overnight stay location after some months of absence. We've been lucky enough to record data on large, successful herds (with many calves), as well as seeing elephants browsing directly outside our camp.
- There has been a successful rhino calf birth in one of the reserves we visit. This is very exciting as this rhino hasn't been able to birth live young previously. We're looking forward to watching this first-time mother raise her calf.
- Leopard sightings have been abundant these past few months! We've spotted our resident female leopard (FBL7) multiple times, as well as a large male (MBL11)





PREDATOR RESEARCH PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Often when people think of large predators here in South Africa, leopards and lions will feature. While we have had some fantastic sightings and collected beneficial data on these species, we have also been lucky enough to see and collect data on spotted hyenas and African wild dogs.]
- These species have fascinating social structures and exhibit unique behavior among individuals. Spotted hyenas live in what is called a 'fission-fusion' society, meaning that they can live both together (in a 'clan'), or solitarily.
- In one of our reserves we have been monitoring a den, where one adult female has been living with her cub and adopted two subadults. Other spotted hyenas regularly visit this area, allowing us insight into clan dynamics and behavior of individuals.
- Spotted hyenas often have a bad reputation (not helped by films such as The Lion King), so sightings such as these are also a great opportunity to raise awareness of a species with so many misconceptions.
- Our next steps are to look more into their reactions to vehicles and whether spotted hyenas are more likely to be habituated to the presence of cars compared to other predator species.
- We also came across a large pack of African wild dogs for the first time on the way to our overnight stay – while this was a fleeting sighting, it is exciting to know that they are in the area. Volunteers are currently in the process of identifying these individuals from photographs taken so we can look more into the structure and dynamics of this pack of South Africa's most endangered large carnivore.



COMMUNITY PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- We have seen an amazing growth in our Farmers of the Future project. Throughout the last three months our interns have been working hard on creating and fine tuning our new business training program. We are about halfway through writing the business modules and have started our first teaching sessions as part of our weekly workshops.
- Thanks to the ongoing passionate and dedicated work of our volunteers, interns and project participants our Farmers of the Future side has grown immensely in size, with all the plots being cleared of weeds and ready for new seedlings to be planted. One of the highlights of this quarter was the design and planning of our first ever Farmers of the Future market stall, which was premiered at the Hoedspruit Farmers Market.
- Our Reading Club project has received an abundance of gift donations by our kind and generous volunteers. Together we have created 62 Back to School gift packs for our hard-working students, entailing books, pencils, notepads and so much more.



Having volunteered in the past with African Impact, I have had the chance to experience some amazing sightings! It is part of the reason why I choose to keep coming back.

During my first overnight trip we had some epic sightings of elephants as we drove into the reserve, and on the night drive that followed we had a close encounter with a young male hyena!

As we headed out of the next day, we stopped to look at a riverbed. We were checking the water for monitor lizards and then someone spotted a leopard. It was passing through the riverbed and stopped to check us out. We watched the leopard for around ten minutes.

Any leopard sighting is a good sighting and this one worked out perfectly because I was able to get identification photos. After a closer examination of the photos we were able to tell that this leopard was an older female and possibly pregnant. Hopefully next time we see her she might be accompanied by some cubs.

Felix Schroder, Germany

PHOTOGRAPHY PROJECT

- Our Photographers have contributed an astounding number of photos to aid our sister projects in research and community. Over three months, 440 photographs have been taken, edited and submitted for their use; ranging from documentation of farming activities to identification shots used for ID kits. This number, however, pales in comparison to the amazing 55,000 photographs taken overall.
- Night drives have proven extremely successful lately, with owls and genets to bush babies and civets – allowing our photographers more opportunities to photograph these elusive and difficult subjects. It is important these animals get as much of the limelight as possible, being as important part to our ecosystems.
- One of the educative highlights of this quarter for our photographers was the opportunity to take part in a rhino dehorning operation. Naturally this was a highly sensitive undertaking, with strict rules being put in place to protect these majestic animals and the reserve, allowing our photographers to get some fantastic shots that encapsulated the day.



Until next time... THE KRUGER TEAM

