

KRUGER²CANYON NEWS



Bosbok Olie
Our products and service are our pride!!

HOEDSPRUIT
015 793 2424 OR 793 1104
bosbokolie@cybertrade.co.za

Vol 3 Issue 01, December 03, 2004 Kruger2Canyon News, PO Box 1529, Hoedspruit, 1380 Tel & Fax: (015) 793-2643 e-mail: heidi.lee@mweb.co.za

5000 newspapers distributed **FREE** 1700 POSTED in all the POST BOXES in Hoedspruit

French cheetah breeding initiative hope to break new ground

1700
POSTED
in all the
POST
BOXES
in
Hoedspruit

Kampersrus
The Oaks
Acornhoek
Klaserie



HOEDSPRUIT – Cresam (which in French stands for – The Reproductive Centre for African Endangered Species) has recently completed what they believe to be a tremendously successful mission in South Africa. Their quest on this mission was to surgically fertilize a female cheetah. Cresam is a non-profit organisation that aims to ensure the survival of endangered African animals. The project is 100% funded by inter-

Phalaborwa
and now
in the
**Kruger
National
Park**

JosMac's

Bush Pub

083 320 2160



We are at Timbarati
on Argyle Road.....

**Affordable
Accommodation
from only
R130 pppn!!
015 7932951**

**The best
PUB in
the
Lowveld**

**WE ARE OPEN
7 DAYS A WEEK**



continued...pg3

there is no charge for their work. Should they be successful, they will continue to work for free, and will hopefully be able to contribute to the increase in genetic viability and survival of numerous species in Africa specifically the cheetah. Currently they have funding that will allow them to take DNA tests from any cheetah in the world. Through this they hope to develop a DNA data bank to increase

AMARULA LAPA

*Visit the Amarula Lapa,
in the Limpopo Province town of Phalaborwa,
and experience true African hospitality,
and taste the exotic fruit of Africa,
together with millions of others worldwide.*

*Open for Tastings and Sales
Monday to Friday: 09h00 - 16h00
Production Tours: 10h00 & 14h00*

*Tel: (015) 781 7766 Fax: (015) 781 7666
E-mail: amarulalapa@iefrica.com Web: www.amarula.com*

Home of Amarula Cream Liqueur



ELEPHANT *walk* **ramble**

**Over 10000
copies SOLD!!
Book your
advert in the
next edition of
the "Elephant
Walk Ramble"
The newspaper
insert that tells
visitors all about
our area, where
what and how
to do it! To be in
it! Call us on
015 7932643**



French cheetah breeding initiative hopes to break new ground



Above: The specialized team each have a task to do as they work efficiently in their lab in the bush. Right: The female cheetah has her heartbeat monitored while under anesthetic.

the genetic viability of the species.

Cresam hopes to donate animals to National and Private Parks, as well as fertilize animals in the wild, where there is suitable habitat. The only condition being that the animals may not be resold or hunted.

The team that recently visited Hoedspruit

window when the fertilisation can occur.

On this mission they only managed to collect semen from one male (whom they had previously tested in March). It was fortunate that this male's sperm had an 80% mobility, which is very high, and a rarity in cheetah. The sperm was then kept in a special freezing liquid

The heat is on...

HOEDSPRUIT – The searing heat of the last few weeks (with temperatures reaching 40°C) has had a devastating effect on the newly surfaced roads in Hoedspruit.

“There are sensitive issues between the client (Maruleng Municipality) and the main contractor (Selby Construction) that make it difficult to discuss the various issues at the moment, which hopefully will be resolved by the 29th of November 2004” he continued. “There are certain contractual obligations that

only be done when it is hot. Therefore the contractor needs to wait for the best days to do this.”

It appears that the problem is that the finishing off of the road surface is not being done due to late payment and this is hampering the contractor from returning to complete and finish off the contract. This in turn means that the contract is not complete, and so the contractor will not get paid for the balance of the project until it is finished. It all seems to be a vicious

and a large contingent of top international media who were sponsored to come to South Africa by SATOUR - Paris.

Numerous obstacles stood in their way, the key one being the complications of the female cheetah herself, said Michel Laforet the founder of Cresam.

The cheetah species lacks genetic potency as a result of a genetic "bottle-neck" that the species went through a million years ago. To add to this the cheetah female's uterus does an "S-bend" making regular artificial insemination impossible. Surgical insemination has been unsuccessful to date with the exception of one cub that was bred in a zoo in America. A further difficulty is that the female is reliant on the mating process to stimulate her ovulation.

According to Michel, Cresam has done extensive research in France over the past six months. They have developed techniques; using new technology that they believe will enable them to:

- Enduce the female into season
- Stimulate the ovulation of the female cheetah
- Successfully collect and store the sperm of the male cheetah for up to eight hours
- Check the ovulation process of the female, and finally
- to surgically fertilize her

The process followed during the past few weeks was to dart a female, inject her with the hormone that stimulates her to come into season. Three days later she was darted again, and vaginal tissue was taken and viewed under microscope to confirm that she had effectively gone into season. With the newest echo-graph technology her ovaries were checked, to see if the ovary follicle was ready to release the ovary. A second hormone was then injected to stimulate ovulation. In nature the mating process stimulates this. Two days later she was again darted to check that she had in fact ovulated. This is a critical phase as sperm must be gathered, preferably from three males, and there is only an eight to twelve hour time

hours.

The female was darted for the last time and half the sperm used to fertilise the one ovary and half for the other, to increase the chances of success. She recovered well and was released from her holding camp three days after the surgery. In three months time - if she produces cubs - the team will know if they have succeeded in fertilizing a cheetah in the wild. The entire process was done out in the bush with the use of the mobile echo-graph and other mobile equipment.

The Cresam team have also done extensive research during the past six months on the drugs used for darting the animals. Because their method involves the female being darted a number of times, it is a top priority for them to use the minimum dosages possible. The team also aspire to reducing the entire process in the future.

While out here they also began research on lion, which are much easier to breed because their quality and quantity of sperm is excellent. Michel voiced his concern that thus far their project has been snubbed by nature conservation, national parks and all the cheetah breeding projects and rehabilitation centres that he has approached.

"I don't understand this mentality. If there are only 70 cheetah left in the Kruger National Park, people must move their behinds to save them," he stressed. "Cheetah breeding centres are just jails for cheetah, and they don't have much success with breeding. There are few cubs that go back to the wild and most get sold to the overseas market."

"I'd like to know why these centres have thirty to forty adults lying in camps and cages all their life and not breeding very successfully, why don't they release them back into the wild?" asks Michel.

"With game parks being fenced the gene pools are limited and that could be contributing to the decline in numbers, we could make a valuable contribution by introducing new genes. Our contribution is for free, we are here at the service of wildlife, and not for profit," concludes Michel.

Apparently the contractor has agreed to repair the road surfaces as soon as their account is brought up to date. They are not willing to do any repairs until they are paid for the work done thus far.

"The roads are deteriorating rapidly and need to be attended to immediately," the project manager agreed. "What has happened is that the bitumen in the road surface has been kneaded to the surface by traffic, this is known as bleeding," the project manager explains. "This is not a bad thing for a new road, but when bleeding occurs, the surface then needs to be 'blinded'."

"Bitumen remains 'alive' for about four to five months and when it is hot, the traffic kneads the bitumen to the surface. The contractor then needs to return and seal the tar by means of a process called blinding. This is when crushed stone is rolled into the surface of the road in order to 'seal' the tarmac. This process increases the life span of the road, and can

additionally be complicated and costly problem. According to the project manager, there were engineers on site while the contractors were working to make sure that certain specifications and regulations were met.

People with vehicles that have been damaged as a result of the roadworks either by bitumen staining their paint or stones being flicked up and cracking windscreens, should direct their claims in this regard to the main contractors (Selby Construction) and their sub contractor (Hillary Construction).

Letters regarding damage caused to vehicles should be addressed and faxed to both firms as well as the project manager on the following: (Selby Construction) Att: Selby Mahthata P.O. Box 4296, Aqua Park, Tzaneen 0850 Fax: 015 307 2048, and to (Hillary Construction) Att: Ed Hillary P.O. Box 288, Ladanna, Polokwane Fax: 015 293 1258 and also Fax: 015 307 7512.

"It's HOLIDAY time again, don't forget to drive carefully and have plenty of fun on the way there and back!!"



THE NIGHTOWLS CLUB



**OPEN TUESDAYS
TO SATURDAYS
TEL: 072 422 5884**