

THE BARKING GECKO

September 2019

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NEW CAMPSITE AT HIDEOUT

GREETINGS FROM THE CEO

WORD FROM THE WARDEN

NATURAL SELECTION

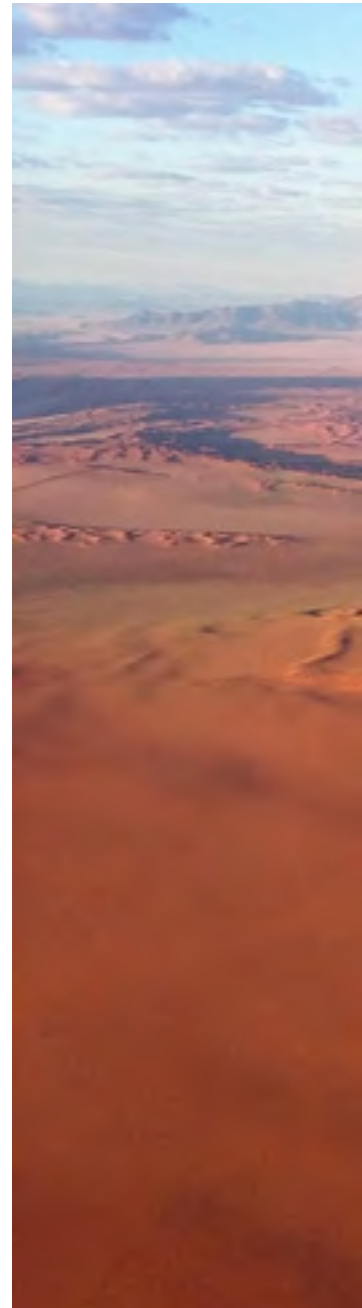
TALES FROM THE SOUTH

NEWS FROM NaDEET

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*"The poetry of the
earth is never dead."
- Anonymous*





Tracy Robb



EDITOR'S INPUT

I am always surprised by the passage of time. Given the large gap between editions of the Barking Gecko, it is more apparent. 2019 has been an incredibly busy, productive and interesting year so far.

We have experienced another distressing year of limited to no rainfall. Several people who have lived in the area for over a decade, have commented that it is the driest and sparsest they have seen. A sobering thought. Considering how dry the conditions are, it is remarkable to see that the desert adapted animals are still able to survive in these desperate times.

There are so very many theories being discussed about the upcoming rainy season. For farmers and conservationists alike, there is a desperate hope that the 2019/2020 rainy season will be better.

NamibRand has experienced some huge changes over the last few months. It has been a time of rich growth, as well as one a time of challenges. A significant amount of time has been spent in providing assistance to tourists. Break downs, accidents and often trespassing and off-road driving have keep us all busy. Many visitors assume that no fences means free access, instead of simply open migratory routes for wildlife. In all cases, when we are able to educate off-road drivers, we ask them to sweep their tracks closed, clean up after themselves and explain why what their

actions are deeply damaging to the environment. The hope is that these people leave NamibRand more enlightened and that they would think twice before driving off-road again. Although some of these encounters are challenging, they have also given us all an opportunity to meet new people, whose path we would otherwise not have crossed.

This edition of the Barking Gecko, is filled with great news and stories from our concessionaires. Wolwedans, the Family HideOut and the newest members of the Reserve, Natural Selection Safaris, have articles. Two concessionaires are celebrating awards: NaDEET, our partner in environmental education and Wolwedans. Congratulation goes out to them and their teams!

More to follow.
Enjoy!

Lee Tindall

A WORD FROM THE WARDEN

This report provides a brief summary of the numbers of animals counted during the NamibRand Nature Reserve Annual Game Count in May 2019 as well as the total estimates for the Reserve.

With the last significant rainfall in 2012, we are now seeing the drastic effects of an extended period of drought. Both oryx and springbok numbers are at their lowest since we started annual counts in 2004. It is worth noting however, that since the game count is now covering a much wider area through the Greater Sossusvlei- Namib Landscape (GSNL) initiative we are able to get a better indication of what this actually means for the overall population. Preliminary analysis of the GSNL game count data shows that while numbers have declined on NamibRand Nature Reserve they have increased in other areas, most notably on the Gondwana-run property in the north of the landscape. It is hugely encouraging that the removal of migration barriers through the GSNL initiative is showing such results in terms of direct benefit to the movement of wildlife, especially in these difficult drought conditions. We

are all aware of the climatic variability of the Pro-Namib ecosystem and the challenges this presents for individual properties in the management of their wildlife. The fact that we can see such clear evidence of the benefits of unrestricted movement is a great reward for the work that all of the stakeholders in the GSNL initiative have focused on over the past few years. Ongoing work to extend the boundaries of the landscape, particularly to the east across rainfall gradients, will only serve to increase this benefit further and help protect the wildlife populations of the area in the face of what could become a new climatic norm.

Unfortunately, due to space constraints I have not included any of the maps showing the shift in the densities of wildlife across the landscape, but please be sure to keep an eye out for the GSNL Game Count report to be released soon.

Murray Tindall
Control Warden

Total estimated numbers of game (Zone 1-10; May 2018 - May 2019)					
Species	May-18		May-19		Percentage change
	No. Counted	Total estimated number	No. Counted	Total estimated number	
Gemsbok	995	3707	1026	3480	-6,12%
Springbok	266	1722	267	1351	-21,54%
Kudu	0	0	0	0	0,00%
Steenbok	0	0	0	0	0,00%
Ostrich	54	131	65	175	33,59%
Ludwigs Bustard	0	0	21	192	0,00%
Ruppel's Korhaan	12	124	24	293	136,29%
B. zebra	172	329	307	485	47,42%
Hartebeest	25	67	16	66	-1,49%
Total	1524	6080	1726	6042	-0,63%
Giraffe*	9	9	10	10	11,11%

* Total (estimate) numbers known

GREETINGS FROM THE CEO

Exciting developments are happening on NamibRand and in the Greater Sossusvlei-Namib Landscape. Work plans and important tasks have kept us so busy, that we suddenly realised half the year was over and we had not yet produced a newsletter. We apologise for the delay in this issue and will endeavour not to let this slip again.

&Beyond closed its Sossusvlei Desert Lodge earlier this year for extensive renovations. The lodge will re-open in October 2019. Natural Selection Safaris, who recently purchased the farm Kwessiegat, have started construction on a new lodge at the old Kwessiegat homestead. They hope to open this facility in April 2020.

Sadly, our warden in the South, Peter Woolfe, has taken early retirement due to medical reasons. Zazapamue Hange, a recent graduate from the Environmental Biology programme at the University of Namibia, has been appointed as the ranger in the South. Hange is currently being

mentored by our Control Warden, Murray Tindall. We welcome Hange to the NamibRand family and wish him a happy and fulfilling time on the Reserve. Please see Hange's introduction later in this issue.

Work with the Greater Sossusvlei-Namib Landscape (GSNL) is progressing well. In the landscape, NamibRand works closely with our like-minded neighbours to co-manage the landscape for enhanced biodiversity management and for the benefit of socio-economic development of the area. As previously reported, we were selected as one of ten projects internationally to receive assistance from the IUCN Finance Incubator program. As part of this initiative, Mr Andreas Brückner has been appointed as a consultant to help develop a business plan and financial management strategy in an effort to make the GSNL sustainable. To improve financial literacy and to expose people to various conservation finance strategies and tools, GSNL senior management were invited to a



The Namibian team at the 2019 IUCN Regional Conservation Forum



workshop in Brazil by the IUCN. Murray, Lee and Nils spent a week at Sinal Do Vale, an eco-retreat just outside Rio De Janero, with team members from other projects under the guidance of experts appointed by the IUCN.

We extend a huge congratulations to NamibRand Safaris for winning the 2019 Sustainable Tourism Award for their Wolwedans Collection of Camps! The award was handed over at this year's Tourism Expo by the Minister of Environment and Tourism, the Honourable Pohamba Shifeta.

Murray Tindall attended the African Biodiversity Challenge prize giving ceremony in Accra, Ghana. Team Namibia, which consists of participants from the Ministry of Environment and Tourism and the GSNL, was awarded a bronze prize of US\$5,000.

Nils was also fortunate to participate in the Regional Conservation Forum in Johannesburg in July 2019. The conference was an opportunity for IUCN members to review the next conservation program and work plan for the period 2021 to 2024 for the Eastern and Southern African Region under the theme "Securing A Future For Nature in Africa."

We would like to thank you all for your interest and commitment to NamibRand. Our conservation

project would not be the success that it is today, with you!

Yours,

Nils Odendaal
Chief Executive Officer



Jason Nengola, Wolwedans Sustainability Co-ordinator receiving the award from the Minister of Environment and Tourism, the Honourable Pohamba Shifeta.

NEWS FROM

THE GREATER SOSSUSVLEI-NAMIB LANDSCAPE



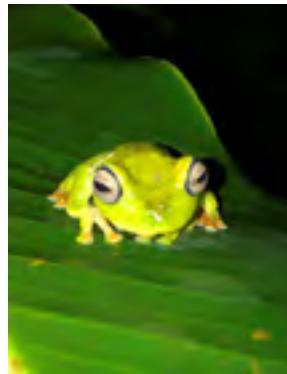
Desert dwellers in the rain forest!

Murray Tindall attended the Etosha Symposium, held in June at Mokuti Lodge near Etosha National Park. This symposium was set to showcase the research taking place in and around Etosha, as well as providing an opportunity for projects to showcase their research and work. This event was interesting, with some of the topics being relevant to the GSNL and giving us a possible directions for new research projects.

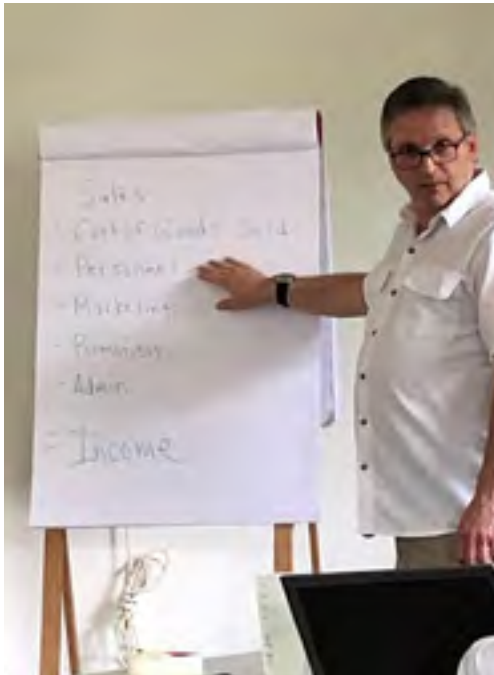
Other activities have been taking place within the landscape include; the AGM and game count, reinstatement of the mobile clinic into the landscape through work between the Ministry of Health and Social Services and members of the landscape, several meetings and a clean up campaign driven by the Ministry of Environment and Tourism and supported by members of the landscape.

Members have pulled together often this year and have yet again shown that dedication, commitment and perseverance can lead to strong results. The GSNL is forging ahead and looking forward to continued success.

It has been a busy and productive year for the Greater Sossusvlei-Namib Landscape (GSNL). In March 2019, Nils, Murray and I were privileged enough to participate in a workshop on Finance in Landscape Conservation, facilitated by the IUCN Finance Incubator, just outside Rio De Janeiro. The Finance Incubator project is aimed at supporting landscape conservation projects across the world to find ways to become financially sustainable. The workshop and the time spent in discussions, with others who attended and the IUCN team, were of huge value and stimulated interest and new possibilities. The workshop was held at Sinal Do Vale, a regeneration site in the Mata Atlantica, the Atlantic forests about an hour outside of Rio De Janeiro. The habitat there is just a little bit different to what us Namibians are used to! A bamboo forest and crossing a small stream was part of our daily walk to the conference venue. We also saw some fantastic fauna and flora.



Interesting fauna and flora



John Winter, from the IUCN Finance Incubator



Ministry of Environment and Tourism leading the charge and getting the Namib clean



Representing the GSNL at the conference



Team Wilderness cleaning up the Namib



Team Taleni-Sossusvlei cleaning up everyone's favorite party spot



The guys' from Bullspoort getting rid of litter

NEW CAMPSITE AT THE HIDEOUT

In late 2018 NamibRand Family Hideout received permission from the NRR board to build another exclusive campsite in the dunes on Stellarine to add to the existing two, Orion and Venus. Initially we were going to call this campsite Scorpio, but when a guest asked if that was because of scorpions, we decided it would be safer to choose Jupiter as the name.

Campsite Jupiter is nestled in a secluded dune valley with its own waterhole, so it remains true to our motto – only you and the desert.

Jupiter, like the other campsites, is built from wood and canvas with a tin roof. However, it has some unique qualities. It is wheelchair accessible and disabled friendly, there are few such places available in Namibia. The new upgrade includes a wooden deck with a ramp leading up from the dune sand and an in-laid braai with access to the wash-up area. We also decided to add a slightly elevated viewing platform in line with the bathroom deck, which has one fixed wall with the bathroom, and roll-up canvas blinds on the other three sides which can be let down as a sun and wind protection. This is a useful feature in our often harsh weather conditions. Another ramp leads up to this platform area.



The building team was a bit of a family affair as we were fortunate to secure the expertise of our niece's husband, a craftsman of note. He whipped up our beautiful new Jupiter campsite in lightning fashion, while his family was having a bit of a holiday at the Hideout nearby.

The "doors" of Jupiter opened on 1 March 2019, and the feedback from guests thus far has been very encouraging. The grandeur of the desert can best be experienced in solitude and that is the trademark of our facilities.



NEWS FROM THE SOUTH

Peter Woolfe

Greetings from the south! Although some of you may have noticed I have not been in the south recently. This is because of health issues that require that I am closer to medical facilities. I am however, still available to help and contribute where ever I can, so one could say that I am semi-retired.

Since my first visit in the 1970s, the Namib has always been a special place for me. When the opportunity came to move there in 1999, there was no way I was going to allow it to slip through my fingers. My relationship with the Namib only grew stronger as I learned more about the workings and interactions of the flora and fauna, and the adaptations all things have made to survive in this dynamic and wondrous place. I also became aware of NamibRand Nature Reserve's work to ensure that this jewel would be protected and preserved for future generations. It became my dream to become a part of that effort. Dreams

do come true and in 2010 Franziska and I moved to Aandstêr to work for NamibRand.

During my time on the Reserve I have witnessed so many positive developments, made many wonderful friends and been given the chance to broaden my knowledge and understanding of the place that changed my life and gave me purpose. I have also seen how NamibRand has done this not just for me, but all the people who have walked through that door – sorry, through that gate – from Field Ranger to Control Warden.

I would like to thank NamibRand for the opportunity they extended to me and give a special thanks to Albi Brueckner, Stephan Brueckner and Nils Odendaal. I wish NamibRand and all of you every success in the future and I am gratified to know the Namib is in safe hands.

PROFILE ZAZAPAMUE HANGE

My name is Zazapamue Hange and I recently completed an honours degree in Environmental Biology (Major) & Geology (Minor) at the University of Namibia. Since high school, I was always amazed by the benefits we get from our surrounding environment. However, I had always been surprised by the way human beings tend to impact negatively on the environment despite the benefits they receive. The impacts include both air and water pollution, as well as the unsustainable and illegal harvest of natural resources. Knowing that I am directly dependent on the environment and its natural resources, I became very concerned. As a result, I chose to pursue a career in an environmental related field so I could gain the necessary knowledge that would enable me to actively take part and help other scientists in the protection of our environment.

I have always been fascinated by terrestrial ecology and conservation biology. When I completed my degree, I had a strong desire to work in an area that promotes conservation of natural resources and protection of our environment. Through research, I got to know about NamibRand Nature Reserve and its outstandingly interesting work. I applied work at NamibRand and I was fortunate to get this opportunity. As a Ranger, I am looking forward to work very hard and



apply the knowledge I acquired from my studies. I am hope to become a skilled conservationist by learning from the experts who have been running this Reserve, so that I can play more important roles in the better management of resources as well as improved biodiversity conservation.

NEWS FROM NADEET

Viktoria Endjala & Panduleni Haindongo

UNESCO Regional Appreciation Ceremony of the awarding of the UNESCO-Japan Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Prize to NaDEET

Windhoek's Roof of Africa Hotel & Conference Centre hosted international delegates from 9 countries who gathered for the UNESCO regional appreciation of the awarding of the ESD Prize to Namib Desert Environmental Education Trust (NaDEET). The event was aimed at celebrating the prize which NaDEET was awarded in October 2018 and improving regional awareness.

The UNESCO-Japan Prize on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) was established in 2014 to honour the outstanding efforts of individuals, institutions and organizations engaged in ESD activities, in the framework of the Global Action Programme on ESD (GAP) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Government of Japan provides funding for the prize, which annually rewards three deserving recipients with USD 50,000 each.

Funded by the Government of Japan, the Prize was established by UNESCO's Executive Board in the framework of the Global Action Programme on ESD (GAP), to showcase and reward outstanding ESD projects and programmes. 2018 was the fourth edition of the Prize. UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Education and a representative of

the Government of Japan awarded the Prize to the three laureates in a ceremony at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris on 9 October 2018, during the 205th session of the UNESCO Executive Board.

At the event in Windhoek, Mr Djaffar Moussa-Elkadhum, the Director and Representative of UNESCO to Namibia, highlighted the importance of ESD as a key that enables the achievement of the SDG's and encouraged the delegates to share their ESD practices and establish partnerships as he welcomed the delegates to the celebration.

The representative of the Japanese government H.E. Ambassador Hideaki Harada, Ambassador of Japan to Namibia congratulated the laureates. He expressed Japan's commitment to ESD and the Global Action Programme which is in its final year.

In her keynote address, Honourable Anna Hipondoka, Deputy Minister of Education, Arts and Culture, highlighted the importance of the SDG's framework and emphasised the importance of education as a vehicle for achieving the SDG's. In appreciating the efforts of NaDEET's national role of ESD nationally, the Deputy Minister also ensured the delegates that government continues efforts to achieve the SDG's by including it in national policies



as well as in all school curricula as a cross cutting subject topic. She further urged the formation of a high-level national task force to coordinate efforts from different organizations for ESD in Namibia. The Deputy Minister applauded NaDEET for closing the gap between learning about the environment and practicing for the environment.

During a follow up question and answer session chaired by UNESCO Programme Officer, Ms. Patience Awopegba, delegates had the opportunity to learn from the award winners NaDEET (2018) and Sihlengeni Primary School Permaculture Project (2017) about how the projects earned the award. This platform provided the participants with an opportunity to learn the best ESD practices as the principal of Sihlengeni Primary School, Mr Sibanga Ncube, and the Director of NaDEET, Viktoria Keding shared the sustainability and challenges of running ESD projects.

NaDEET Centre Site Visit

After a successful gathering in Windhoek, a delegation of 20 participants visited NaDEET Centre on NamibRand Nature Reserve, for a two-day site visit. Here they experienced practical sustainability by using bucket showers to save water, cooking their food using direct solar energy via solar cookers and ovens and practicing waste management.

Each country representative had the opportunity to share ESD practices from southern African countries. The approaches to ESD from the different countries ranged from high level educational and institutional policies such as the inclusion of ESD in curriculum, curriculum reformation and translating ESD into local languages as well as making ESD inclusive of everyone regardless of background or disabilities. Other approaches were more practical, such as training teachers and the youth on income generation and information sharing centres developed to disseminate ESD to the countries.



Participants preparing food with solar ovens



From L-R: Mr Rod April, Mr Djaffar Moussa-Elkadhum, Hon Anna Hipondoka, Viktoria Keding and H.E Hideaki Harada

Reflection after site visit

A delegate learned that she was actually “home in the red Namib sand dunes” because the dune sand originated from her own country of Lesotho. Her appeal was; “Let us not delay, as more damage will be done if we do, let us make louder positive noise. SDGs have to be lived by us. Let us talk it and live it, dumelani.”

“I will help integrate what I have learnt here and never leave any equipment on standby” was the learning outcome of a delegate after the energy efficiency experiment.

“The experience at NaDEET has been eye-opener to me. Who knew living sustainably could be so comfortable? I will start to solar cooking when I am back at home” said one of the delegates.

The NaDEET team that hosted the delegation was impressed by the group’s interest levels in the activities and they were proud to share ESD practices. The team was left with the refreshing assurance that the message of sustainability that they shared was spread beyond the borders of Namibia.



The delegates at NaDEET Centre



NATURAL SELECTION

Natural Selection will open their latest Namibian property, Kwessi Dune Lodge, on the 1st March 2020. The new property will be set in the vast 215,000 hectare NamibRand Nature Reserve, with easy access to Sossusvlei's iconic rusty red sand dunes and the photogenic Deadvlei.

The NamibRand is a vast place of awe-inspiring beauty. One of the largest private reserves in southern Africa, it was the vision of Namibian businessman Albi Brückner in the 1980s and was created from the integration of several livestock farms and the removal of the fences which divided the land. The wire Brückner removed was in fact long enough to stretch from Windhoek to Cape Town. The result is a protected wilderness area that today is an internationally recognized model of conservation success. For Natural Selection, it was the perfect location for their sixth Namibian property and an exciting opportunity to contribute to the conservation of this fragile eco-system for generations to come.

When Kwessi Dune Lodge opens on the 1st March, it will bring Natural Selection's low-key style and quirkiness to southern Namibia. The ten thatch and canvas rooms measuring 88 square meters inside and out will feature vintage four-poster beds, striped canvas walls and a beautiful map mural feature wall. Each room will also have an ensuite bathroom with both indoor and outdoor showers and a shaded, outdoor veranda. High thatched roofs and air-conditioning will keep guests cool during the hot desert days.

The rooms at Kwessi Dune Lodge will really come into their own after the sun sets. Each room has

been designed with a special "star gazer" room and every night there is the option to sleep outside, under the African night sky. In 2012 the NamibRand Nature Reserve was selected by the International Dark Sky Association as an official International Dark Sky Reserve on account of its low light pollution and cloudless night skies. It is one of the best places on earth to stargaze and enjoy spending the night under a canopy of twinkling stars. The guides at Kwessi Dune Lodge will help guests to tell the Southern Cross from Orion's Belt, but if that all feels like too much hard work then counting shooting stars is a wonderful way to fall asleep.

The view from the lodge is spectacular and the glass windows and doors at the main area will look out onto the undulating landscape that only ends when it meets the mountains, far in the distance. Inside, there will be a well-stocked bar, library area and several seating and dining areas. When the sun rises in the morning, the camp fire will be the perfect place to enjoy a cup of tea and in the heat of the day, the swimming pool will be the only place to be.

The days at Kwessi Dune Lodge will be about discovering the subtle charms of the desert. The area can be explored on guided nature drives, nature walks and by quad bike. The NamibRand has long been famous for its "fairy-circles", mysterious patches of grass where nothing grows. Theories range from that they were formed as the result of poisonous fungi, termites or even meteor showers, but no one yet really knows. Although the semi-arid desert may seem inhospitable, it is still home to an extraordinary variety of species who have found a way to survive



and thrive. For example, gemsbok have white bellies that reflect the heat of the sand and a sophisticated vascular system that cools the blood around the brain.

As with all Natural Selection's projects 1.5% of turnover will go straight back to conservation projects which directly impact the area. The new lodge will also make use of the latest clean and green technology, ensuring that it leaves as light a footprint as possible on the fragile environment.

Dave van Smeerdijk, co-founder and Director of Sales and Marketing at Natural Selection says, "With its iconic dunes and sprawling landscapes, this is one of the most spectacular desert areas in the world. The cool and comfortable lodge has a light footprint and is set on a vast private reserve to ensure exclusivity and close to Namib-Naukluft's iconic Sossusvlei."

Rates at Kwessi Dune lodge start at NAD\$ 6500 per person per night.



ABOUT NATURAL SELECTION

Natural Selection may be a new(ish) safari company, but its roots in the African safari business run deep. It is devoted to the simple premise that safari tourism, when done right, can be an incredibly powerful tool for conserving and protecting Africa's last great wild places. As such, Natural Selection partners with local communities and governments to help protect and even expand protected areas and critical wildlife habitat through the development of gold-standard ecotourism projects across Southern Africa. Natural Selection donates 1.5% of its turnover revenue annually to conservation. This deep commitment to conservation is matched only by our devotion to providing our guests with truly extraordinary safari experiences.

Website: <http://naturalselection.travel>

PORTFOLIO:

BOTSWANA: Meno a Kwena, Jack's Camp, San Camp, Camp Kalahari, Mapula Lodge, Sable Alley, Hyena Pan, Jackal & Hide, Skybeds and Tuludi

SOUTH AFRICA: Lekkerwater Beach Lodge

NAMIBIA: Hoanib Valley Camp, Shipwreck Lodge, Etosha Mountain Lodge, Safarihoek, Safari House and Kwessi Dune Lodge

THE WOLWEDANS WINTER FESTIVAL



The Wolwedans Winter Festival is the annual sport & culture celebration at Wolwedans, hosted by it the Wolwedans Foundation. This festival has been paying homage to staff since 2013 and for the first time in 2020 it will also be open to guests of the Wolwedans Collection of camps and lodges.

The Festival is a chance for the Wolwedans Foundation to reiterate and celebrate the values

of the organisation as well as the essence of their 4C Framework (Commerce, Conservation, Community, Culture), in particular, the C of Culture. The event is crafted to celebrate diversity, sport and physical fitness, tradition, food, music and increased general knowledge on sustainable tourism, conservation of the NamibRand Nature Reserve and our unique and fragile ecosystems in the Greater Sossusvlei-Namib Landscape.

Over three days and nights, sporting events such as volleyball, soccer, tug of war, Ama-Goose, E-biking and three legged racing were held alongside a potjiekos competition and treasure hunt. The amazing Wolwedans choir serenaded the team with





a special concert and an outdoor gala dinner was prepared for the team. Throughout the festival, the menu at the staff canteen explodes into a gastronomic feast and the team at base camp wear their team colours, presenting a rainbow of pink, yellow, green, blue, purple and brown all over the Village.

The potjiekos cooking competition aims to bring raise cultural awareness and provides team members the opportunity to work together, be creative with a set amount of ingredients and explore their natural abilities by preparing traditional food in a competitive spirit while also having fun and getting to know each other outside of the hospitality environment. The judges of the competition this year included the Food & Beverage Manager and the Sustainability Coordinator, who judged the dishes presented to them for plating, presentation, taste and of course - Namibian flavour.

Another exciting event that takes place during the Winter Festival, is the treasure hunt. This is perhaps the most rewarding of the activities. The teams, named after animals found on the Reserve, like Oryx, Fox, Giraffe, Leopard, Cheetah and Ostrich, follow a set of clues and instructions that lead them all around the base camp Village, answering questions, collecting clues and directions as they make their way to the final location, where a large treasure is hidden. The teams are asked to perform



songs together, solve riddles and puzzles, test their knowledge and work as a team, all while testing their physical fitness during the race to get to the treasure first.

The Festival's flagship event is the Wolwedans Winter Cup. The Soccer Cup draws teams from various concessionaires on the Reserve and the surrounding areas lodges, camps and towns. Teams from many places participate, such as Solitaire, NamibSky Hot-Air Ballooning the rangers of the NamibRand Nature Reserve. In 2019, over 12 teams entered, however, only eight teams were selected for the tournament. The semi-finals and finals were played at Wolwedans during the Winter Festival. A staggering N\$ 20 000 in prize money was up for grabs during the event and this guaranteed awesome action, coupled with a fighting spirit and spectacular goals and saves. In 2020 we plan to include 16 teams, for a fully-fledged soccer tournament that hopes to grow from strength to strength, giving hope and encouragement to the football players of southern Namibia.

The Festival culminates in a gala dinner, prepared for the team at the Village. An intimate and special prize giving ceremony rewards team members for attitude, demeanour, warmth and approachability. These are all characteristics which are all very important in the tourism and hospitality trade. In 2020, the Festival will be open to guests for participation and attendance. The dress code for the gala dinner was simply 'traditional dress' and the team came out in a spectacular array of colours and displays.

The 2019 Winter Festival and the Wolwedans Winter Cup are supported by various suppliers who sponsor beverages and refreshments, some foodstuffs and even prizes. 2019 was a jubilee year, being Wolwedans' 25th birthday and the event was laced with a spirit of achievement and success. The Managing Director of The Wolwedans Collection, Mr. Stephan Brückner, described the event which he attended and participated in with his family as **'simply, out of this world!'**



Thanks to all the contributors for their contributions to this edition of the Barking Gecko. We would like to thank Venture Media for always supporting the Barking Gecko and putting past issues of the newsletter together. This is a busy time in the print media world, and we would like to thank Vicky Human of Magic Carpet Designs, for being able and willing to jump in and assist us with the this edition of the Barking Gecko. Thanks to both Venture Media and Vicky for sharing their extraordinary design talents and time with us.

As this is a newsletter for you, our readers, friends and colleagues of NamibRand Nature Reserve, we welcome feedback, ideas and input.

KINDLY NOTE:

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