

MARATHON FOR LEOPARDS...

In April 2009 Beverley Lewis of London took on a marathon task...she trained her heart out for months to prepare herself for the London Marathon which she ran to raise funding for the Leopards of Erindi Private Game Reserve!

In her leopard ears and tail Bev started her run slow and steady and then began picking up her pace half way...but then at the 19 mile mark sharp pains caused by shin splints began to slow Bev down again.

Unbelievably Bev did not give in, she pushed on forward through all the pain (to the later dismay of her doctor!). At the 24 mile mark Andrzej lifted

her spirits and this encouraged her on right till the end!

Bev ended up on crutches and later found out that she had a small fracture in her shin and an ilio-tibial tendon/muscle sprain...she ran the London Marathon's last 7 miles like this!

For all her unbelievable effort and pains, Bev raised **£1 500** for the Global Leopard Project to be put towards the GPS collars that are so much needed for the young male leopards.

When young female leopards are left by their mother's they often

establish a territory within their mother's range. Young males however, wonder far for up to 4 years before establishing territory and in this time they could be on neighboring farm lands. The GPS collars are thus vital for us to keep track of them into the future.



THANK YOU BEV, YOU ARE ABSOLUTELY AMAZING!

A LETTER FROM A GUEST...

RE: ERINDI MALE Leopard

"From the outset may I take a moment to extend our sincerest gratitude for your time taken to fulfill one of my life's ambitions - to see a leopard in the wild. The 2 phenomenal days spent in the bush tracking then viewing these majestic animals

were exhilarating to say the least. Your knowledge & understanding must also be commended.

As a token of our appreciation we would like to assist you and the project with your relentless endeavors. WE HEREBY PLEDGE TO COVER THE COST OF 1 GPS COLLAR FOR

ERINDI MALE and hope that through this opportunity your research & conservation efforts become far reaching. We hope that you may also bring joy to others by providing them with the feeling that you did for me...the sighting of my first leopard in the wild. Words cannot express this feeling!!!" *D. Jones*

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Special thanks...

I would like to give very special thanks to those that are helping us make this project a success.

- Thank you Bev for running yourself crippled for the leopards!
- Thank you Derek and Karen for the collar for Erindi Male and the inspiring letter.
- Thank you Freddie and Mari for the local support and GPS collar for Commiphora Male.
- TO PAUL, GERT & ERINDI GAME RESERVE...

PHANTOM TREE FEMALE

Phantom Tree Female has always been unbelievably relaxed with the research vehicle especially when she has a kill. In Mach we struggled to get visual of her just after sunset as she was pursuing a herd of Red hartebeest. The antelope were in a flat panic and ran in all directions around us as we followed the signal of the leopards collar. When we finally spotted her in a drainage line, she had just captured a juvenile hartebeest and she was in the process of holding it by the throat. After a few minutes she let go and she rested for a short while after the hunt. She then had only a few mouthfuls of her hard earned catch before she headed off into the darkness...the only explanation being that she was going to fetch the youngsters. We were unable to get into the thick block of *Acacia* trees that she



Phantom having a quick bite of the Red hartebeest she had just killed. PHOTO: G.P.

disappeared into so we waited on the road. And then they were all there...Phantom crossed first then Commiphora Male in his own time and

lastly Honey-thorn Female came bounding past! It was a fabulous sight! She led them to the kill and they feasted over 24 hours. On the second eve the leopard family was robbed of their meal by a Brown hyena and they all left the area. Phantom Tree Female suddenly had a complete change in behavior and movements just after this. She was found during daylight hours on numerous occasions calling and profusely marking territory. First thoughts were that she was simply marking territory but her movements indicated otherwise. She was found way out of her territory on the large mountains north of Erindi Game Reserve and this was a clear indication that had searched for a male and had followed him out of her normal range. She would be mating. This means we

GUINEA FEMALE

Guinea Female is still concentrating her movements around Granite Hill where she was suspected to have a den site with cubs in January & February. In April she was noted to be moving longer distances again and this would indicate that if she has cubs, they are starting to move with her to kills. The timing's perfect, cubs remain in a den for about 3 months before the mother starts leading them to kills. It has been

exactly 3 months that Guinea has been returning to the same area and in the fourth month since we noted this behavior, she has began moving further away from a single place. Unfortunately we have had no visuals of her and the data we are gathering from her VHF collar is very limited.

We have 6-7 months left

on Guinea Female's VHF collar and during this time we would like to try and raise funds for a GPS collar for her.

This will make it far easier in the future for us to pin-point exact positions that she spends a great deal of time at - like a den site where she would have cubs hidden away.

"It is every man's obligation to put back into the world at least the equivalent of what he takes out of it."

MICROLIGHT FEMALE

Microlight Female is an unbelievably interesting leopard to work with! She still will not accept the vehicle but on the odd occasions she allows me to approach to less than 50m with the noisy engine! Thank you to Ruan who takes me up in his microlight, we still get great sightings of her from the air and we can fly close enough to see that she is in excellent condition. From the ground, we have been working hard to find signs of her cub and we finally had

a stroke of luck! While heading out to look for her one afternoon we found tracks of 2 leopards crossing the road. I jumped onto the roof of the vehicle to check for signal from her collar and what luck...she was right there! There was a good chance that the tracks belonged to her and her



Microlight Female's Tracks with her cub...we need more information before we can be certain whether the larger tracks belong to mother or cub...

cub, the question was, which tracks were hers and which were the cubs? There was a large set and a small set and first thoughts were that the small set was the cub which would make the cub female...we needed more evidence! We found tracks on numerous occasions and I walked in each time but had no

XINKOVANYANA FEMALE

During March and April Yana Female was noted with 6 kills. She was found with Erindi Male on 2 different springbuck kills, a kudu kill and a large impala ram kill. I spent a great deal of time with her while she was out hunting in the late afternoons and I realized that she has a unique day time hunting tactic. She definitely has a specialty for hunting warthogs and she does this in the late afternoons by climbing trees and watching for prey from a high vantage point. On one occasion she managed to capture a young warthog close to the vehicle and my excitement caused me to start the vehicle to get a closer look. This disturbed Yana and after dragging the warthog a few meters, she dropped it and moved away. My first thought was that the piglet was dead but after a few minutes it began to kick...such hardy

creatures are warthogs that after a time this one got up and appearing uninjured it turned and amazingly ran away!

It seemed that my starting of the vehicle disturbed Yana and caused her to leave



Yana Female greeting Erindi Male to lead him to a warthog kill that she made a short while earlier.

her catch, a mistake I felt awful making.

On another occasion while guests were with me, we had signal of Yana's collar just across a deep river bed that we could not cross. We climbed onto the roof of the vehicle to try get a view of her when suddenly we heard her catch another warthog! This time we were not close enough to disturb her and when all went quiet, we headed around the drainage to find her. We followed her to a rocky outcrop where she sat and called for Erindi Male. When the young leopard arrived he first came over to the vehicle to have a look before he made his way to his mother and the 2 met with an elaborate greeting ceremony before she led him to the fresh kill. They remained in the area for a few days feeding on the kill and then split up again soon after it was finished.

HONEY-THORN FEMALE

Sightings of Honey-thorn Female were few and far between possibly due to the behavior changes of Phantom Tree Female. We had a wonderful sighting in early March when Phantom took Honey and Commiphora Male to the hartebeest kill and we did manage to do some great work with Honey on that occasion.

She was incredibly relaxed with the vehicle and she sat on a termitarium for much of the day watching every move

we made inside the car!

We tested the drugging pole with her and it all looked very promising. She was comfortable enough to take a small piece of liver from the pole and this was perfect preparation for administering drugs orally giving us hope that we would not have to dart her. The time to fit tracking

"The world says that time is money, I say that time spent with leopards is life!"

devices to all 3 youngsters is near and Dr Douw Grobler is planning to come through to Erindi for this in the next few months.

We hope that the youngsters will be prepared and that we can find them when Dr Douw is on the reserve. It will not be long until this little female is in

COMMIPHORA MALE

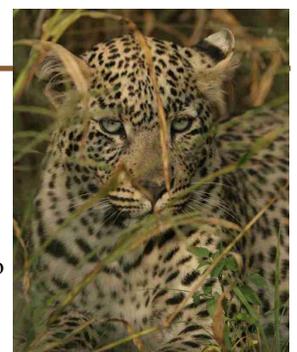
When Phantom Tree Female led Honey-thorn Female and Commiphora Male to the hartebeest kill we noted that Commiphora was still far shier than his sister.

He kept a further distance from the vehicle than Honey and when we began to test the drugging pole he showed great interest...but he did not have the courage to touch the pole. Each time we set it up for Commiphora, his sister,

being braver, went around him to investigate the pole! Commiphora growled at her in frustration each time but still did not get close enough to take anything off the pole!

We know that tagging this young male is going to be the most challenging job and we need to keep a close watch on him so that we know where he is when the vet arrives.

The immediate plan is for the youngsters to get VHF implants until GPS collars arrive for them.



Commiphora Male is looking fantastic and is still with his sister but we for how long?

ERINDI MALE

Erindi Male is certainly the star leopard of Erindi Game Reserve! He always gives guests the most wonderful leopard sightings and he never fails to show them every aspect of leopard behavior...he stalks something, nearly always climbs a tree and his unusual fascination for the research and game drive vehicles always has guests smiling as he allows people to get a close up look of him almost every time we see him!

His attitude towards the vehicle often frustrates his mother as he does not pay as much attention to her as he does to the car! When Yana Female called him to lead him to a warthog kill, he had wondered off quite far. She began by calling with a soft "cub contact call" but this eventually erupted into a full rasping sound when he did not respond!

After her third attempt, Erindi finally did react and he came strolling down the road towards the rocky outcrop where his mother was calling from. We were parked in the road with the vehicle and Erindi decided that he had to investigate the vehicle before he went to his mother who was calling profusely! He sat in the road and allowed guests to take fantastic photographs before he eventually went to his mother!

Erindi Male is very respectful of Yana Female and although he



Erindi Male is growing fast and as with the other young leopards, we are not sure how much longer he will be looked after by his mother.

is larger and possibly even a little stronger than her, he still respects the mother/cub pecking order. At kills that Yana Female has made he waits for her to eat before he eats and he never tries to take a kill away from her.

This is a good sign for us as we hope she will still call him for kills for a while giving us time to capture him to fit him with an implant tracking device. As soon as Yana leaves him it will be very difficult to find him and the data we are aiming to gather is all related to young males, their movements and their behavior after their mothers

GER MALE

We are unfortunately getting less and less data on Ger Male as time goes on. He still visits the reserve a few times a month but he spends more than 90% of his time on neighboring farms. When he was first fitted with a collar he spent most of his time within the reserve. He slowly moved south out of the reserve and then he began moving in a south easterly direction. The only way that we are able to get GPS points on him is

from the microlight and Ruan does see him on occasion often at one of 2 large dams on the property south east of Erindi Game Reserve.

Due to the fact that we almost never see him, we are not certain how he is actually doing. We have no data on what he has been hunting or what relations he has with other

male leopards in the areas that he moves. As he gets older he is sure to pose more of a threat to the territorial males and at this point we still believe

Questions that still remain unanswered: How long does it take a male leopard to establish territory and how far from where he was born will he settle down?

that he has a year or two to survive in the domains of the territorial male leopards before he finally establishes a territory of his own.

UNIDENTIFIED LEOPARDS

There have been numerous sets of tracks of unidentified leopards seen. The female and her female youngster west of Yana Female spends a great deal of time in well traveled areas of the reserve. We would very much like to tag both of these females as they are already accepting of the vehicles.

The male that we have set a cage trap for in various areas is certainly smarter than we are! He seems to bypass the

traps when they are not set and early one morning he passed within 80m a trap but he did not detect that it was there or he decided not to go and have a look! We think that it is possible that this male is the father of Ger Male but until we capture and tag him we cannot be sure!

It is possibly this same male that has such a close relationship with Yana Female. We spent the night with her at a

kill and throughout the night we heard the male calling nearby. At sunrise we searched for his tracks and found them circling the area where we had been with the female. Perhaps he was too shy of the vehicle to join her.

We have many recordings in other areas of males, females and youngsters sharing kills and perhaps if it was not for our presence, he would have fed with Yana Female and Erindi Male.

CAPTURE

During March and April we began setting traps for leopards again as we have identified numerous cats that we would like to start including in the project to gain a better understanding of territories.

The main aims of capture however, are the plans to tag the 3 young leopards that are already part of the Global Leopard Project at Erindi. This needs to be done with as little impact as possible as the youngsters are unbelievably accepting of the vehicle and we do not want to frighten them by darting them.

We have thus devised a new capture plan. We have created a 3 m “drugging-pole” that we are hoping the youngsters will accept so that we can administer the necessary drugs orally.

We began with Erindi Male while he

was with his mother at a kill. He accepted the pole immediately due to his playful nature and his confidence around the vehicle.

We then introduced the “drugging-pole” to Commiphora Male and Honey-thorn Female while they were at a kill with Phantom. Commiphora has always been shier than Honey-thorn and although he appeared to want to approach the pole, he would not get that close to the vehicle! Honey-thorn had no fear with regard to approaching the vehicle to investigate the pole and Commiphora hissed at her each time she overtook him

to look closer!

The main test day arrived when we attempted to administer the sleeping drugs to Erindi Male. He had no problem taking the dosage but sticking with him proved a serious challenge! The first attempt had little effect on him and after more than half an hour hard playing, he rested showing little reaction to the drugs! The second attempt was almost perfect, Erindi consumed his dosage and he was 90% asleep. He chose refuge beneath the vehicle but unbelievably the effects of the drugs were short acting and after 40mins he was completely



Erindi Male taking drugs from the drugging pole.

GUESTS

We had some very special guests visiting Erindi during April and May. Professor Ian Glenn and Lesley came to visit from South Africa but the leopards were very difficult indeed! Fortunately they did get sightings of the cats and I am incredibly lucky that Prof. is helping with the academic side of the project and Lesley is putting a wonderful storey about the Erindi Leopards into a magazine.

Tommy Hall from NATH came to Erindi to help us with elephant behavior and he headed out in the leopard research vehicle hoping to see a leopard. Unfortunately it was still wet from the fantastic rain season and we were unable to get close enough to see a leopard but en route back to the

“It is not easy work trying to see a leopard and the rewards are often poor but with patience and trying anything is possible”

lodge the elephants appeared to see the “elephant man!”

8 Guests joined the Leopard Experience trips and all had fantastic sightings and a group of 20 people came for the

Leopard Presentation. Slowly but surely the leopards are accepting the game drive vehicles and 50 lucky people on

PHOTO COMPETITION



DEREK JONES
“ERINDI MALE”

It is always exciting to have a camera to take photographs of special moments with but very often with leopards this is a difficult task as they are such elusive cats! Both Derek and Bruno were able to capture moments of their Leopard Experience at Erindi Game Reserve and it has been impossible to give these stunning pictures a “first” or “second place” so we would very much like to highly commend both photographs!

Well done to you both!



BRUNO KOKOSHKA
“YANA FEMALE”



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The mission of the Global Leopard Project is to “internationalize the plight of the leopard through communication and research”.

We are dedicated to the gathering and sharing of data from wild leopard populations to aid in improving understanding of leopards as individuals and ultimately in the future holistically as a species.

We aim to improve awareness of the leopard through ecotourism and media, to contribute towards reduction of livestock/wildlife conflict and to help ensure that utilization of leopards occurs in a sustainable manner.

The Global Leopard Project is based at Erindi Private Game Reserve in the Central Western region of Namibia, truly one of the most amazing conservation areas on earth...

GLP SPONSORS, MEMBERS & FUTURE GOALS

FIELD SPONSORS

~ ERINDI GAME RESERVE: Home of the Global Leopard Project and the leopards.

~ CATCHCO AFRICA/DR DOUW GROBLER: Capture and training.

ONGOING SPONSORS

~ ERINDI GAME RESERVE: Accommodation, vehicles, fuel, capture and tracking equipment.

~ PULSE AFRICA: A contribution from every booking made with Pulse Africa is put towards the GLP.

PLATINUM GLOBE MEMBERS

~ FLORISSA KEISEL: 2007

GOLD GLOBE MEMBERS

~ Vlasta & Keith Ross-Jones: 2006

~ Rick & Lindy Dekker: 2007

SPONSOR A LEOPARD/GPS COLLAR

~ FREDDIE & MARI KLEYNHANS: GPS Collar

~ KAREN BUCHANAN & DEREK JONES: GPS Collar for Erindi Male

~ ANDRZEJ JANDZIOL & BEV LEWIS: GPS Collar equipment

TULLIANA FIELD MEMBERS

~ Dr Andrzej Jandziol & Dr Bev Lewis



Honey-thorn Female, one of the young leopards that we are raising funding for. We need GPS collars for the young leopards so that we can follow their movements when their mother's leave them.

We are currently trying to raise funding to improve and expand the research work on Erindi Game Reserve and to begin aiding farms that have conflict with leopards. In order to do this we are currently working towards acquiring the following equipment:

~ DIGITAL CAMERA TRAPS

US\$ 500-00 EACH

~ SATELLITE/GPS COLLARS

€ 2 500-00 EACH

There are daily running costs that we are able to fund through guest experiences and leopard viewing trips at Erindi Private Game Reserve.

FOUNDERS OF THE GLP

N. de Woronin

Dr Douw Grobler

W. Pearson

Ruan Cloete

G.P. Britz

Pieters Horaseb

Reinhardt Ngaringombe

Erindi Game Res.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to know more about the project or the Leopard Experience trips.