

NEWSLETTER DECEMBER

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Dear clients,

There we are, the end of 2020 is in sight! In this newsletter you can find our year overview. Since we love what we do, every job is a highlight for us, but that would make the newsletter a tad too long! So, we hope you enjoy the random selection of stories and photos of 2020! We also tell you more about two Angola translocations we did.

Kind regards, Ulf and Mariska

MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A WONDERFUL 2021!

Who could have thought at the beginning of the year that 2020 would turn out like it did... COVID-19 has affected everybody in one way or the other. We hope your clients and guests find their way to you again in the new year. And some good news... the rain forecasts seems promising, we hope you get more than enough rain to start the New Year fresh and green!

We want to thank you all for your support and look forward to be of your assistance in 2021! Take care, have a wonderful Christmas and let's make 2021 an amazing year!

Best regards, Ulf & Mariska



WHAT A YEAR... 2020



January The year started off slow, with just a few small jobs. We did have an interesting case; a zebra got kicked in the face, and badly damaged his eye. The only thing we could do was to remove it. This procedure is called enucleation, hereby the entire eye is removed, and the eyelids are stitched shut.



March Early March we got an urgent call about a rhino that died (natural causes) and left behind a 6-month calf. She was bottle raised and became a strong big lady! Recently she moved with her 2 buddies to another reserve, and soon will be completely off the bottle and a 'wild' rhino again. What a success story!

We also had some 'cat' work in the South; we vaccinated and did health checks on several cheetahs and caracals. Even when immobilized, the caracals were not so easy to get though... 😊



February We held a Wildlife Para-Professional Weekend, sponsored and supported by Erindi Private Game Reserve. To us education and sharing of knowledge very important and with this weekend we could do just that! Right time, right place, as we also had to immobilize this lion who had a seroma (accumulation of fluid) and an injured African wild dog. We gave our PM course, and participants could share their experiences in their work field.

We also darted roans and sables on several game farms.



March Just before Covid disrupted everybody's lives, we held our Post-Mortem course at AfriCat. If you are interested in this course, don't hesitate to contact us! We hope that we can organize this course next year again.





April We were called out for a giraffe that struggled eating. Upon examination it appeared that many sharp bones were stuck in her mouth! This behaviour, called osteophagy (= bone eating) is common in giraffes, but she took more that she could handle! She recovered well, and had a calf a few months later!



At the request of the Ministry of Environment, Forestry and Tourism (MEFT) and N/a'an ku sê we captured and translocated the "Swakopmund" elephant in April. Good timing, as we just bought our own elephant crates! The 'beach boy' had to be moved away as dangerous situations started to arise, and the gardens of Swakopmund were not exactly proper elephant habitat. He is now walking around with two younger bulls at the N/a'an ku sê reserve.



May One of Erindi's African wild dogs got into a fight, and she was badly bitten in her face. We immobilized her twice to clean the wounds and we stitched a Granuflex wound dressing over the wound. This dressing helps with the granulation process (the new tissues and blood vessels that grow in a wound during the healing process). Check the result from only a month later (bottom photo)! You can read more about the amazing wound healing abilities of animals in the next newsletter.



June This young roan of about 8 months old had his horn broken when he was younger. In young antelopes, the bones inside the horns are still soft, and thus easily break. The horn started to grow skew, pointing towards the head, which may eventually grow into the skull. We therefore cut the horn off, to prevent future damage to the head. We did not completely remove it, as we then would have to cut into the skull to prevent any horn growth, and this means a lots of blood loss.



July To discourage poachers, we dehorn rhinos. A sad, but necessary measure... Rhino horn consists of keratin, calcium and melanin, and grows continuously throughout the life of a rhino, at an average rate of 25 to 66 mm per year.



July In July we also held our first Animal Crime Scene and Evidence Collection course, sponsored and hosted by ISAP. It was a great success, and we hope we can do more throughout the country next year!



WILDLIFE VETS
NAMIBIA

Video: Kudu & Eland Rabies Dart vaccination

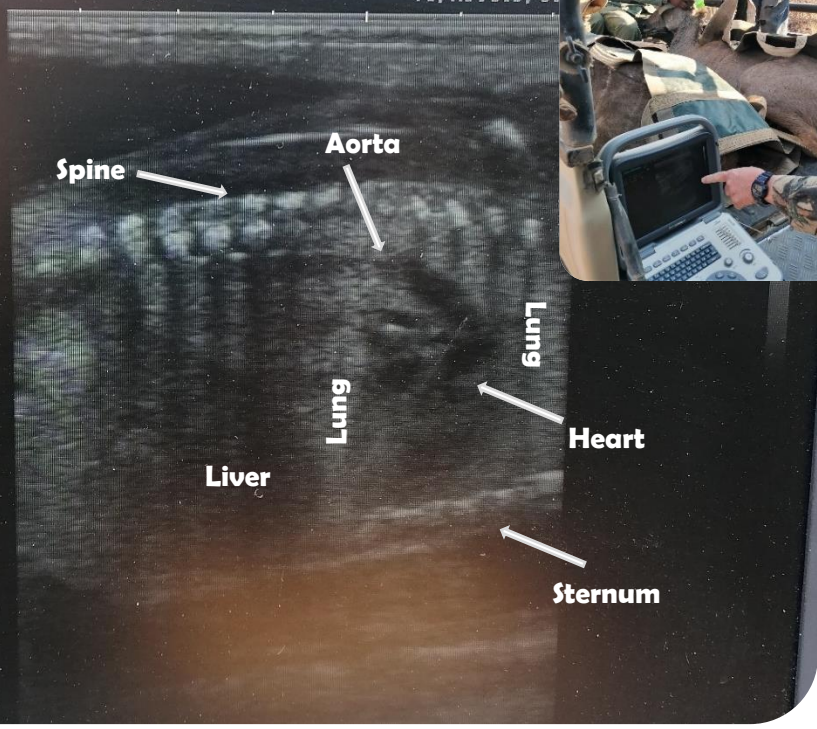


August During a round trip in the north we visited 13 farms, where we vaccinated 1843 kudus and eland against rabies. By pooling the work, and thus sharing kilometre- and helicopter ferry costs, the transport costs are greatly reduced for each farmer. Those farms where we prophylactically vaccinate annually or biannually now support a thriving kudu population.

Seeing the kudu prices of +/- 8000N\$ for kudu cows, and 18.000N\$ for a 47" kudu bull on the last game auction, it is well worth your money to protect them against rabies!

We also did a couple of rhino translocations, and one of CCF's cheetahs had to get an MRI scan.





September We captured and translocated kudu cows, that were mated by a 62'' bull. We checked them for pregnancy with our portable ultrasound machine, and of the 12 we darted, 12 were certified pregnant! This machine uses high-frequency sound waves to capture live images from inside the body.

In the photo on the left you see the foetus and some descriptions of what you can see. Simply said, fluid shows up black, so you can see the black aorta and heart, filled with blood. The liver is also dark, but a bit greyer than the fluid. The lungs are light grey, and bone shows up white, as it is very dense.

October Now here is an animal we don't often work with, the Damara dik-dik! These little guys lived in a lodge garden, and have been reproducing quite a bit over the years... Now they started to devour the garden a bit too much, and therefore they were relocated to another part of the farm.



November We were called out for a nyala with a lump on her flank. We examined it, and it appeared to be a tape worm cyst! This particular tapeworm is the 'Echinococcus granulosus', which causes fluid-filled cysts in the body. Usually a predator carries the tapeworm (the predator is the host), but do not get sick. When the tapeworm cysts enters the intermediate host (in this case the nyala), the cyst develops very slowly. We had to surgically remove the cyst. Luckily for the nyala, the cyst seemed sterile, as hardly any eggs were found. You can read more about these nasty cysts in our [September 2019 newsletter](#).



December Two interesting jobs, we measured this magnificent sable bull... A whopping 52^{3/4}! What a privilege to work with these impressive animals.

We also castrated a horse, something we don't do very often, but that it's the nice thing about our job, it's always something different and never boring! Castration involves removing the animal's testicles, which will stop the horse from reproducing, but also stops unwanted stallion behaviour. The horse usually gets calmer and more relaxed.



ANGOLA TRANSLOCATIONS

This year we did two Angola translocations. Sadly, due to COVID-19 and border hassles we could not go with, but we can always rely on our experienced guys Frederick and Romario! All the animals were gathered at Seeis Boma, until everything was ready for the transport. It was not easy this year, COVID-tests had to be done, and then the timing had to be right to cross the border within 72 hours!

The first translocation was a long way, almost 2000km from Windhoek all the way up to the Cuanza Sul area. We always take more than enough food and water with on long distance translocations. This means that there is one less compartment to be filled with animals, but we believe the animals travel much better when they can eat and drink enough. All the giraffes, waterbuck, kudus, eland, zebras and impalas travelled well and probably could not believe their eyes when they got out of the trucks; it's so green! In the meantime, kudu calves and impala lambs have been born, great news!



The second translocation was a bit closer to the Namibian border, to the [Cuatir Conservation Area](#) in the Cuando Cubango province. This is an exciting project in a relatively unexplored area of Angola which is home to roans, reedbuck, sitatunga, cheetahs and even African wild dogs have been spotted here! It is however not so easy to get there... The trucks had to brave the Cubango river and very loose sand. Luckily our Angolan friends were up for this challenge and had 6x6 trucks ready to help our trucks go through. All the animals made it through the trip, and were released in a special pre-release boma, and could roam free in their new home a few days later! And... the first impala lambs already have been born!





*We jump into the New Year,
may 2021 be an awesome
year for you!*



DR ULF TUBBESING
P.O. BOX 50533, BACHBRECHT,
WINDHOEK
+264 (0) 81 128 3050
ULFT@AFRICAONLINE.COM.NA

MARISKA BIJSTERBOSCH
+264 (0) 81 382 8473
+31 (0)6 4369 3095 (WHATSAPP ONLY)
MARISKA@WILDLIFEVETSNAMIBIA.COM

WWW.WILDLIFEVETSNAMIBIA.COM
FACEBOOK: [WILDLIFE VETS NAMIBIA](https://www.facebook.com/WILDLIFEVETSNAMIBIA)
YOUTUBE: [WILDLIFE VETS NAMIBIA](https://www.youtube.com/WILDLIFEVETSNAMIBIA)

