

# whatsUp!

Waterberg News, Happenings and Events May 2021

**The WSI (Waterberg Security Initiative)** represents 250 Waterberg farmers and residents in an area of 35000ha. Due to Covid 19 it was impossible to hold the 2020 annual fund raising dinner and the WSI is planning a virtual auction for May/June 2021

The auction will kick off on Monday the 29th of May as a silent auction. Anyone, worldwide, can participate in the auction and place their bid on the packages they are interested in from the comfort of home or office. The silent auction will close on Thursday 2nd of June at 10H00 and at 11H00 the boardroom auction will start. Each lot will then be auctioned off with the starting bid on which the silent auction ended. If there are no other bids, the package will be sold to the highest bidder of the silent auction in order to generate the maximum auction turnover.

Contact **Annalie Smit** 073 4709 9178 - <[annalie@waterbergsecurity.co.za](mailto:annalie@waterbergsecurity.co.za)>

## Waterberg Living Museum

After many delays due to the Covid pandemic, the Waterberg Living Museum has finally been able to open its doors and by the end of April, more than 450 children had visited the museum furthering their cultural and environmental education under the guidance of the museum's FGASA guide

**Sekwhiri Langa** and **Moji Kitsi** of **Welgevonden**

**Environmental Awareness Programme**. The visits were

sponsored by the **Marataba Community Conservation Fund** and it is anticipated that a further 150 children will be able to visit in the next two months.

Information courtesy **Kelly Abram STWR**



## Security

Associate WNC member **WSI** truly showed its mettle and value during the recent Vaalwater disturbances. **Richard Venter** and his team were quickly on site supporting the SAPS with **Annalie** keeping our members constantly informed of the situation. Well-done WSI.

## Wild Dogs ( *Lycaon pictus*) in the Waterberg

There appears to be a popular fallacy circulating that wild dogs (painted wolves) were not resident in the Waterberg but were 'introduced' in modern times, a fact clearly discounted by historical accounts.

### WHA Caine (1859-1929)

Caine was the manager of the New Belgium Estate on the northern Waterberg from 1894 -1903. This is an extract from his diary which is lodged in the University of Capetown.

"28 September 1900 I reached Noord Brabant (HQ New Belgium) - work went on steadily until 12 October when Smith (Caine's assistant) sent word that a pack of wild dogs had put in an appearance - he told me that the night before a pack of 40

wild dogs came right up to the Kraals."

### CR Prance (1872-1955)

Prance was a tenant on the farm Mamiashoek in the western Waterberg from 1908-1921. Here are extracts from his book "Under the Blue Roof":

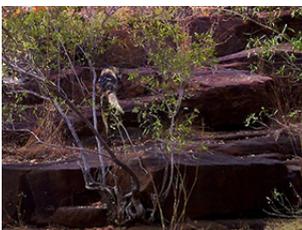
" my camp - a mountain waste, till now the untroubled home only of buck and rock rabbit, partridge and hawk, leopard, wild dog and jackal."

" - a chaotic tempest of noise as a pack of wild dogs sweeps down the vlei, questing close on the heels of a buck."

"Still the ten years have not been wholly unprofitable - although leopards and wild dogs have taken their toll of the herd."

Research **Richard Wadley**. Image of San rock art **Lyn Wadley**

## The Waterberg Wild Dog Initiative (WWDI) and Halali, a very special Painted Wolf



In 2018 the EWT fitted Halali, a Melkrivier area dog, with a GPS collar. However, after a brief period the collar stopped sending and Halali vanished from the EWT screens. Her collar was found recently between Mokolo Dam and Lephale and the stored data provided valuable insights into her movements. She had left the Melkrivier pack and moved north, joining up with a pack in the Marken, Lephale,

Mokolo Dam area. Camera trap footage taken about 50km east of Lephale in September 2019 was recently matched with the data pulled from Halali's collar. Halali's movements highlight the importance of maintaining undivided habitat for wildlife species. Wild dogs naturally move away once they reach sexual maturity to avoid in-breeding. Restricting suitable habitat for wild dogs decreases the likelihood of lone dogs like Halali being able to find each other and form new

packs, further threatening the conservation of South Africa's most endangered carnivore.

WWDI is working to build our understanding of these special animals by collating historic and recent information. If you have any photos of African wild dogs in the Waterberg, please send them to **WWDI Project Coordinator Reilly Mooney** at [waterbergwilddoginitiative@gmail.com](mailto:waterbergwilddoginitiative@gmail.com)

**Reilly Mooney**

## **Waterberg Biosphere**

Established in 2001, the WBR celebrates its 20th anniversary and continues to bring new projects and benefits to the region despite the covid restrictions. A new board was elected at the recent AGM:

**Chair - Lesiba Masibe; Vice chair - Mphadeni Mthangeni; Treasurer - Mashudu Makhokha; Secretary - Dimakatso Nelly Tsolo-Dhlamini; Jessica Babich; Zach Sekhu; Malasela Chokwe.**

Information **Jessica Babich WNC**

## **Sue, Snake and Shoe**

I admit I don't like snakes, we are not happy bedfellows

The other day Sue spotted one in our bedroom, by the time I arrived it had vanished - apparently into our dressing room. We called our friendly neighbour Clayton who arrived with all his snake catching gear. After searching for an hour, moving clothes from shelves, rails and racks - no snake. We assumed that it had somehow snaked past us back into the bush. Okay! Put everything back - a good thing as we realised that some of our clothes had amazingly 'shrunk' (or perhaps we'd expanded) or would have been fashionable in the sixties and really should go, or maybe, those fashions might just come back!! Anyway a good job done and no reptile. Now, just the shoes to put back on the rack, Sue picked up one of my shoes -aaaaagh! A slithery movement! We shot out with boot in hand, after much banging and bashing a 1.5 metre ringhals uncurled itself from its would-be home and slithered off into the grass.

Moral of the story - never leave a stone or shoe unturned!

**Robin**

**Special thanks to WNC members Shelley and James Zeederberg of Zeederberg Cottages for providing accomodation for our speakers**

# Mouthwatering Lineup of Speakers for WNC meeting! Full Covid protocols will be observed

For our first 'live' meeting of the year the WNC has lined up stellar and diverse speakers.

The legendary Kruger Park ranger **Oom Louis Olivier**; grass specialist, agricultural and environmental trainer and author **Frits van Oudtshoorn** and famed professional hunter **David Sutherland** with a degree in veld and game management and a hunting school near Vaalwater.

A must attend meeting so diarise Thursday May 20th at 2pm. The Lapa at NG Kerk Vaalwater.

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## WNC meeting 20th May 2021 Covid 19 protocols will be followed

Programme with full details will be sent

Remember advertising on the whatsUp! is free to members

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