

2022 – Where has the first month gone?

No sooner were we wishing each other a Happy Festive Season than we realised that January had flown by. The Board and Management would like to wish everyone all the best for the remainder of this year. We continue to remain committed to doing our best to make sure that Raptor's View remains amongst the Top 10 Estates near the Kruger Park.

(refer to <https://www.property24.com/articles/sas-top-wildlife-estates-for-2021/30817>)



Game numbers

Our annual game census was conducted on 22 September 2021.

As can be seen from the figures below, some species are very difficult to see from the air and count, as they are either fairly small, or tend to stay in the thicker riparian bush. Despite this, an aerial census provides accurate trends of game numbers and is not specifically aimed at having an exact figure. Mortalities that are reported during the year are also factored into the Ecological report compiled by Dr Mike Peel of the Animal Production Institute and the Agricultural Research Council.

Specie	Males	Females	Calves/Lambs/Foals	Total
Baboon Troops				1
Blue Wildebeest	5	5	2	12
Bushbuck		1		1
Duiker				10
Giraffe	9	14	2	25
Impala	26	114		140
Kudu	4	9	1	14
Nyala	9	8		17
Steenbuck				2
Warthog				23
Waterbuck	6	20		26
Zebra		28 (not sexed)	3	31

Alien Invasive Plant species to look out for on the estate

Fact Sheet:

Name:

Cereus jamacaru Queen of the night (Eng) Nagblom (Afr)

Origin:

It is indigenous to South America. It was imported into South Africa as an ornamental plant and is common in many gardens. The seeds are mainly spread by birds and mammals

Growth:

It is a perennial continuing to grow for a number of years. It is able to out-compete indigenous vegetation

Invades:

Savanna, grassland and rocky ridges

Status:

A declared weed – category 1b, must be removed and destroyed as part of an invasive species control programme

Danger:

Classified as non-toxic, unless the fruit is eaten in large quantities. The spines cause irritation if lodged in the skin of an animal



Bush clearing around the houses

Although much too early, we would like to remind all owners that it is a requirement in terms of the Raptor's View Rules, that bush clearing takes place around their homes before the end of June each year. In most cases this is also an individual insurance requirement, sometimes as early as the end of April. This year, with the bush being so very green, an extension could be applied for to individual insurers to extend the date. Last year some owners had the expectation that Management would undertake this important task and just charge them. Whilst Management did all that they could, this cannot be allowed to happen again. We simply do not have sufficient resources. Please would each and every owner diarise for around March/April and start thinking of who they would use to complete their bush clearing?

This is very important especially where your homes are rented out and managed by Estate Agents. Guidelines will be issued by Management to the various contractors.

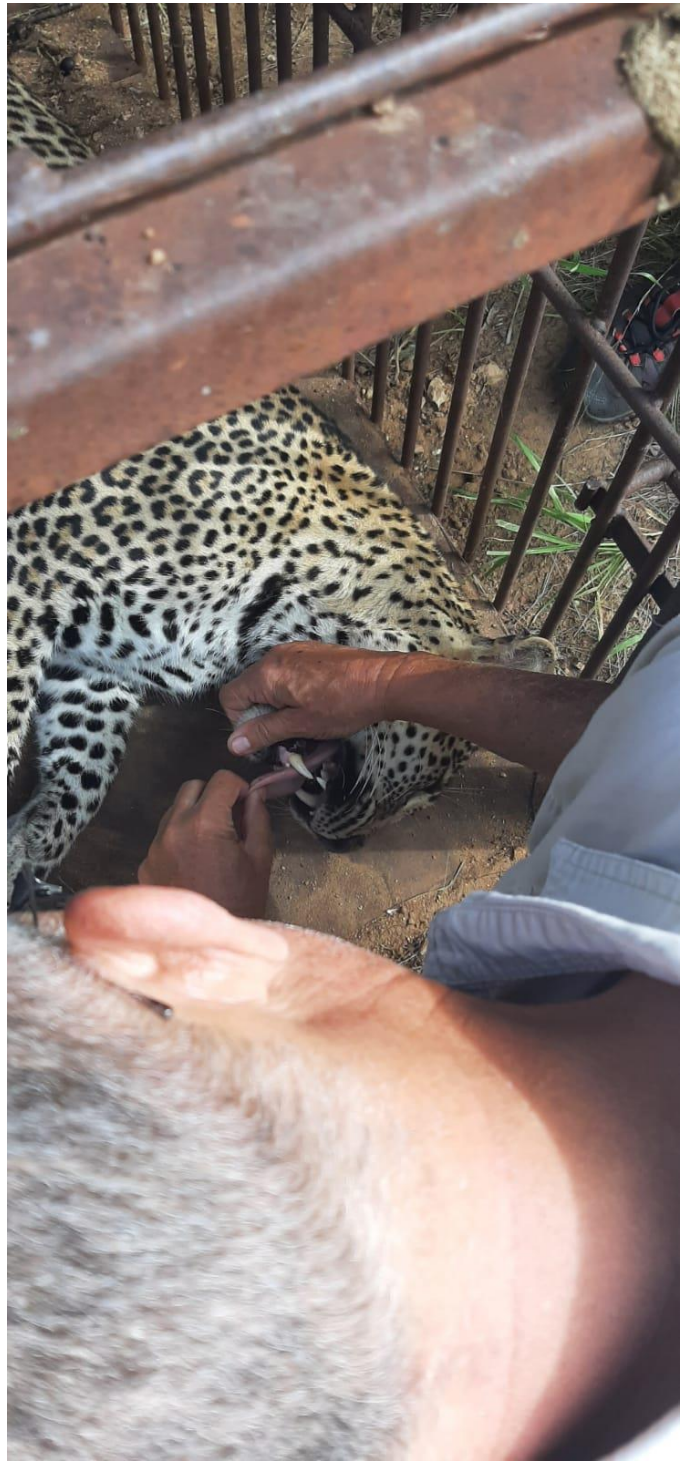
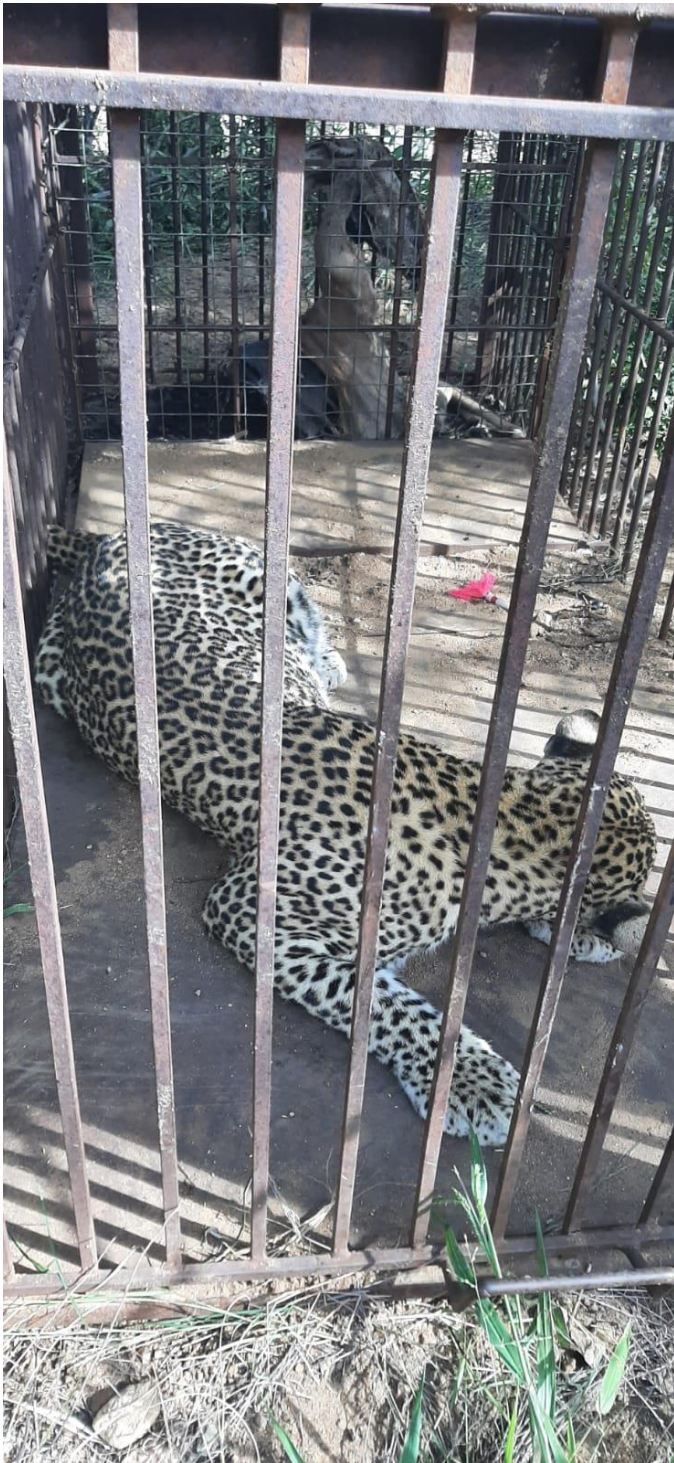
We would also like to appeal to residents to advise us of any contractors who would be available for this task. We are aware of a few but feel sure that there will be too big a demand for them to cope on their own.

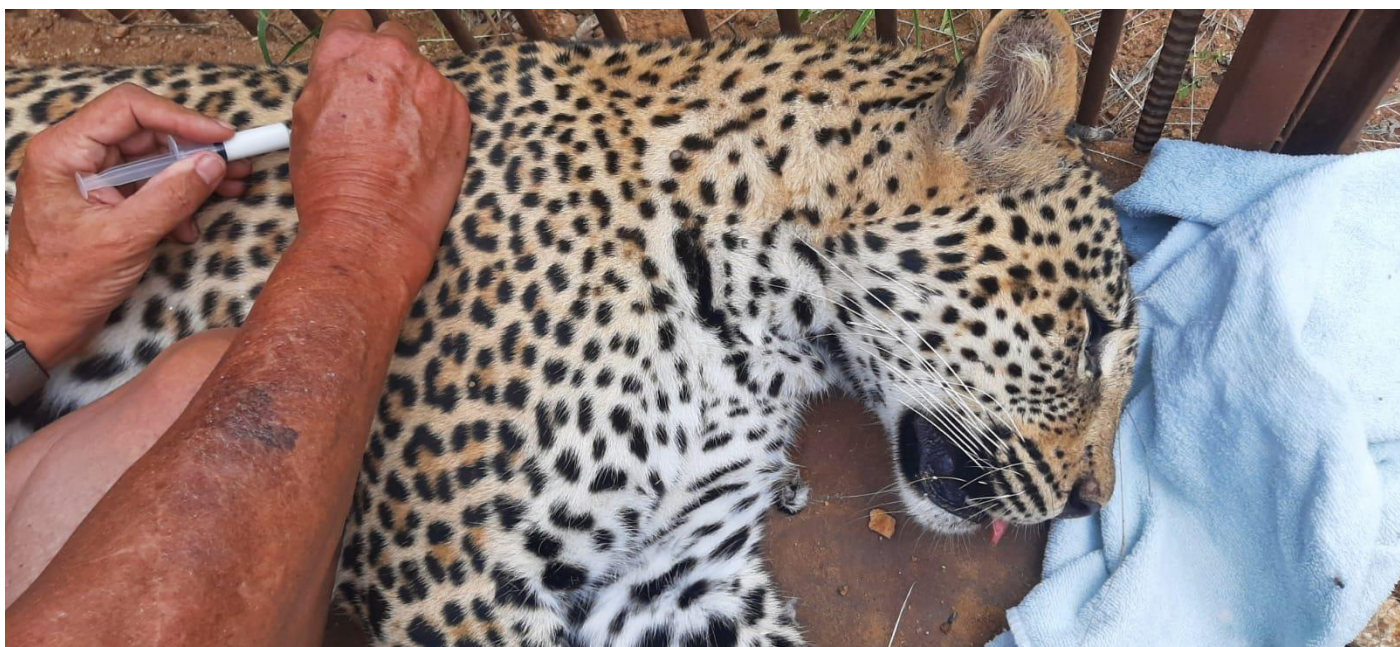
Snared leopard

A number of residents have camera traps set up at their homes. Management were alerted to the fact that one of the leopards had clearly shown a snare near its hindlegs. Management set up a trap cage and, under the professional guidance of Brian Jones of Moholoholo, managed to capture a leopard early on Saturday morning. Dr Pete Rogers of ProVet was on hand to tranquilise the leopard in the cage. Unfortunately, it was not the snared leopard.... Imagine, however, our absolute delight to find that she is

pregnant. She was obviously released without harm. We hope to be able to show a few pictures of the proud mom and cub(s) in due course.

The cage trap was re-baited and reset, as the cage is located 150 metres from where one of the camera trap photographs of the snared leopard was taken. The cage is monitored by a RikRhino trail camera, and is also physically inspected daily.





A more recent development is that the snared leopard has been spotted on Khaya Ndlovu, and two cage traps have been set there as well.

Appropriate dress when outside your home

Unfortunately, we have had a few incidents recently where Management and staff have been faced with inappropriate dress. As has twice happened, residents have forgotten to put out their refuse for collection and decided when they heard the collection vehicle, to rush out the door with a big black bag in hand – and not much else.

The second undesirable incident occurred when Security was called to a rental home due to unacceptable noise levels one night. Although it is perfectly OK to swim naked in your own pool with some friends, it is not acceptable that the noisy behaviour warrants Security staff being called to attend to it.

These incidents have caused considerable embarrassment for the staff who serve Raptor's View with diligence and dedication and the Board feels that they deserve the same respect while having to interact with residents.



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Dams and birdlife

With the magnificent rain that we have had, the dams are all full. The increase in the number of birds is evident with some unusual visitors having been recorded.

Some of the species listed below have been seen in the more distant past, but were never added to our bird checklist. Thank you to Steve Benbow and Jöel Roerig for the additions.

Blue-billed Teal (Hottentot teal)
African Black Swift
Common Moorhen
Squacco Heron
Goliath Heron
Great Egret
Black Heron
African Cuckoo-Hawk
White-headed Vulture - CR
Yellow-rumped Tinkerbird
Blue-mantled Crested Flycatcher
Lesser Swamp Warbler
House Sparrow
Village Weaver
African Firefinch

Erosion

As has already been reported, Raptor's View needs to give some serious attention to the erosion on the Estate. The aerial survey, planned for the 30th December, could not be undertaken due to cloud cover. With the bush also being so green and dense, a decision has been taken to hold off on the survey until later in the year. Management have already rescheduled the survey to June.

Domestic staff

If you are an owner/resident employing domestic staff privately, the staff member must go for SAPS screening every two years, at either Canyon Risk Solutions, situated on the main road (R527) near MeGraphix and Hoedspruit Numberplates or at Blue Swallow Integrity Solutions, situated at the Rhino Convention Centre.

Please note that all contractor staff working on the estate have to complete a re-activation form and be re-activated on the access system at the start of each new year. The relevant company's management must ensure that this is done timeously to prevent the contractor's staff being denied access to the estate.

The cost to screen is around R100. If for some reason their Raptor's View ID card or photo are not clear, they will need to apply for a copy at Canyon Risk Solutions only. The additional cost is R80.

It is of utmost importance in maintaining and improving our security levels, that all domestic staff are correctly recorded. Please do your bit to assist us.

Next information evening

The next info evening is being planned for February or March. Please let us have any ideas or items you would like to discuss. Bear in mind that in some cases, there is research that needs to be conducted prior to us being able to discuss some items. The Info Evenings are for all of us living on Raptor's View, so your input is appreciated.

Important Contact numbers

Estate Management (emergencies only)	071 675 2525
RV Main Gate	015 793 1663
Canyon Risk Solutions Control Room	072 806 4868
Medical Response	072 170 0864
Police	015 799 4000
Fire Brigade Maruleng	015 793 0728
After hours Primary Health Care Assistance for Medical Emergencies from 6pm to 6am (no house calls)	063 051 2999
Times: Weekdays: 18h00 – 06h00 Monday – Thursday	
Weekends: 18h00 Friday – 06h00 Monday	

The doctor-on-call would be one of those shown below:

Dr S. Verhagen, Dr A. Polley, Dr J. Mkhebel, Dr M. Kirstein, Dr H. Shivambu