

Newsletter May 2022

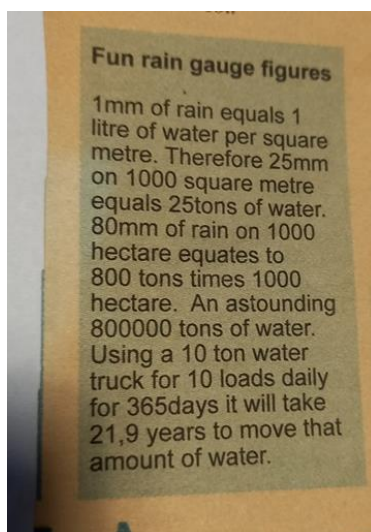
Bush clearing reminder

Don't let the late rains fool you. We would like to remind all residents and owners that bush clearing around the houses must be completed by the end of June. As stated previously, Raptor's Management are not able to do this for owners so please make alternate arrangements. Remember that if a fire should unfortunately go through the Estate, your negligence could seriously impact on your neighbours – and spread further into the Estate.

Rainfall figures

The following rainfall has been recorded at our three stations on the estate, since July 2021.

	Jul '21	Aug '21	Sept '21	Oct '21	Nov '21	Dec '21	Jan '22	Feb '22	Mar '22	Apr '22	May '22
Contractors' gate	0	0	0	14	113	121	132	29.5	62	41	101.5
Pumpstation 2	0	0	0	17.25	85	111	193.5	29.5	55.5	43.5	92
Phase 3	0	0	0	17.6	79	75	211.5	28	68	46	90



RV Residents Whatsapp Chat group

The RV Residents Whatsapp Chat group has been set up by fellow resident Tony Gunstone. The group is specifically a private group for residents to participate and communicate with each other and to share their views or give advice on issues that affect our day to day life living on the estate. To join the group please Whatsapp your name and stand number to the administrator, Tony Gunstone on 0839906062

Emergency medical response

All residents, as well as their friends and family, are covered for 24/7 emergency medical response. There is no charge for this service as it is covered by our levies. Additional services such as an ambulance or airlifting to get the patient for further treatment would be charged. Please make a note of the following response number.

Medical Response 072 170 0864

Introducing another member of the Canyon Risk security team

Derrick Mathebula started working at Raptors View in 2007. From early beginnings, he has been a valuable member of the Canyon Risk Team.

Derrick is married to Elly and has 5 children. Derrick, thank you for your many years of dedication to our safety and we hope you will be with us for many years to come.



Recycling

Domestic refuse and mixed recycling are collected by estate staff members and we actively encourage recycling. There is a nominal charge for the waste collection service.

Black bin bags must be used for wet and other non-recyclable waste and coloured bags, available from the office, are used for the wide range of materials which can now be recycled. If possible, different recycling items should be separated, e.g. glass, plastic or cans.

All refuse bags awaiting collection must be placed in an animal proof bin or cage. The Estate Manager and his team can advise residents how to make their bins etc. baboon proof. It is essential that homeowners cooperate with this in order to avoid problems with all wildlife, but primates in particular, trying to access waste food.

In Hoedspruit town there is a recycling drop off point at Pick 'n Pay where light bulbs & fluorescent tubes, batteries and printer cartridges can be disposed of. Lowveld Power Tools (Moose/Panther streets) also take defunct electronic items.

The recycling skip is collected weekly by SkipGo, taken to the Maroela Recycling plant where it is sorted into the various classes.

Leopard reproductive behaviour

Given the excitement on our estate generated by reports that a pregnant female leopard was caught (& rapidly released) in a trap targeting the large male leopard with what seems to be wire around its abdomen, followed by the amazing camera trap images of a female leopard with 3 cubs having a drink from a resident's bird bath, the subject of leopard reproductive behaviour is quite topical.



- It is generally accepted that leopards do not have a specific breeding season & that individuals become sexually mature from two & a half to four years of age
- Breeding interval is 17 to 20 months
- During the courtship period, individuals remain in very close proximity to each other, with eventual copulation occurring multiple times every 15 minutes or so
- After a gestation period of approximately 106 days, 1 to 3 altricial* cubs are born in a secluded shelter & the mother moves the cubs to new shelters every 2 to 3 days
- Suckling ceases after 100 or so days, with meat being introduced already at 72 days
- Once suckling ceases, cubs are led to kills by the mother until around 11 months old when they can be expected to make their own kills
- Juveniles gain independence from 12 to 22 months, with siblings sometimes remaining together after leaving their mother
- Offspring (females in particular) may affectionately reunite with their mother from time to time & enjoy supplementary feeding from their mother as they grow and learn to become proficient hunters

References:

- Skinner & Smithers. The mammals of the Southern African subregion. 1990.
- Estes. The safari companion. A guide to watching African animals. 1999.

* Google explanation of 'altricial' – (of a young bird or other animal) hatched or born in an undeveloped state and requiring care and feeding by the parents.

Wild animals on the estate

The letter sent by our Chairman, Tony Patten, on 6 May 2022 regarding residents being responsible for their own safety and especially the safety of children in their care, refers.

We have several trail cameras situated throughout the estate which are closely monitored by Management and Security. The two photographs pictured below, highlight the importance of being aware of one's surroundings and that potentially dangerous wildlife may be around every corner.

The first photo was taken at 4:54pm and the second at 4:57pm on 4 May at the Riverbraai next to Zandspruit Estate.



The leopard was probably ambling along the fence line, heard the cyclist approaching and moved off to let the cyclist past. Whilst this might appear to be a “close shave” the leopards on Raptor’s View appear to avoid contact with humans, but the danger cannot be taken lightly.

Aerial survey for erosion

As was reported previously, the aerial survey to determine the extent of the erosion problem on Raptor’s View had been postponed to the end of May. However, with the late rains and the very good canopy cover, the Board has again taken the decision to further postpone the survey. It is thought that, in consultation with the service provider, it will now take place towards the end of June/early July.

Responsible use of pesticides

The RVHOA Eco Committee feels that it is prudent to provide all estate residents with guidelines on the ‘Responsible Use of Pesticides’ for use whenever necessary, in and around our homes.

As we have the privilege of living on this wonderful estate, we need to conduct our pest control actions in a manner that is as environmentally compatible as possible.

A series of guidance documents will be created and shared with residents via the regular RVHOA newsletters in the coming months.

The first document in this series is a discussion on the general good practises to be followed.

The ‘Responsible use of Pesticides’ guidelines are distributed with this newsletter, and are also available on the website at: <https://raptorsview.co.za/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Responsible-use-of-pest-control-products.pdf>

Baboon activity

A number of residents are members of the Raptors Baboon Alert Whatsapp group and watch, with interest, the on-going baboon movements and antics. After looking carefully at the statistics, it appears that the problem is not only refuse bin access but those residents who are not securing their houses properly when they leave to go to town or away for a few days. Windows are left open, sliding doors not secured properly and food in clear view.

For those who do not have secure areas for their refuse or acceptable locking bins, this is also a problem. Luckily there are only a few houses that are contributing to this problem. Management is discussing the possibility of installing secure metal cages if necessary, and passing the cost on to the relevant owners. Unfortunately, we have noted that even the lath cages are not strong enough as the baboons are pulling the laths away from the frame, and thereby still managing to raid the bins.

Management is asking everyone to PLEASE do your part to assist with this on-going problem. We do not want to have to threaten fines, but if the lack of cooperation continues, unfortunately, this could be the only way to go. It is impossible to monitor baboon activity and try to prevent it while there are those who are just not working with us.

Access cards

There have been a few incidents where unfamiliar vehicles have been seen on the estate roads. Upon investigation, we have found that a residents' card was used to gain access to the estate – the occupants were neither owners nor tenants. Please do not give out your access cards to non-residents. Raptor's View administration needs to be informed of all rentals and have all the necessary paperwork in place. Maintaining estate security protocol is just as much our responsibility as it is Canyon Risk's.

From the office

It is imperative that you use your RVHOA account number as the beneficiary payment reference as it makes identification of the payment easier.

Likewise, please put your site number in the subject line of all email correspondence for ease of identification.

Levy payments

The majority of owners keep their levy payments up to date. Unfortunately there are always some who default and this wastes a lot of management's time in following up with requests for payment through emails, phone calls, etc.

From July 2022, defaulters will be charged a monthly Admin fee for outstanding accounts over 60 days. Interest will still be charged on the overdue amounts.

Danni's resignation

Danni has submitted her resignation as Administration Manager of Raptor's View. Danni has been offered an opportunity in tourism, which she cannot refuse, to pursue her lifelong passion.

In the interim, we will follow a process of appointing a new Administration Manager, and have him/her spend sufficient time with Danni for hand-over.

It will be a pity to lose Danni as a colleague, as she has adapted well to our working environment, and brought a spritely vibe to the office, and has proven to be very efficient at her job. Management and the Board wish to thank her for her hard work and wish her all the best with her future.

Should you know of anyone that has the necessary administrative and financial skills and would want to join the Raptor's View team, please forward their contact details to the office. Advertisements for this position will be published.

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. Mkhebela, Dr M. Kirstein, Dr H. Shivambu

Any comments on the newsletter would be welcomed, as well as any interesting articles that residents may want to include.