

africa[®]
GEOGRAPHIC

RECORDING NATURE'S CALLS
JACANAS - TOP OF THE POPS
BLOODHOUND GANG OF THE DRC
MOZAMBIQUE MOODS
WEST COAST CRUISIN'

STOLEN FROM AFRICA

GREAT APES IN PERIL

ISSA: 845 (including VAT)

PRINTED AND DESIGNED IN THE UK

DIGITAL: 820 (including VAT)

www.africageographic.com



WILDLIFE • PEOPLE • TRAVEL

1 January -
7 August 2013
553 rhinos
killed

South Africa
RHINO WATCH

The past four weeks have seen 73 more rhinos killed. The Kruger National Park (KNP) is still hardest hit, with 345 having died there so far in 2013, while Limpopo, North West and KwaZulu-Natal have each recorded 50-plus rhinos poached over the past seven months. The number of arrests made for offences relating to rhino poaching has risen to 148 for the year.

At the end of July the Rhino Issue Management (RIM) report was released following a long consultation process led by former SANParks CEO Mavuso Msimang. It includes input from rhino experts, ecologists, specialist and community-based NGOs, professional hunters and resource economists, among others. No single solution to rhino poaching has emerged but, the report notes, a range of strategies will be required along several fronts. The report can be viewed at <http://bit.ly/15IBN2t>

Following discussions between Environmental Affairs Minister Edna Molewa and her Mozambican counterpart Alcinda Abreu, the two countries' conservation enforcement agencies are fine-tuning plans for cross-border operations to pursue and arrest Mozambicans who kill rhinos in the KNP. Those apprehended will then face extradition to South Africa. Poaching gangs from Mozambique appear to be shifting some of their attention to KwaZulu-Natal, however; over the past few weeks five rhinos have been killed in Tembe Elephant Park, on the province's northern border with its neighbour.

In the Czech Republic, 24 white rhino horns have been seized and 16 suspects arrested in connection with wildlife trafficking. Czech authorities reported that an international gang had employed bogus hunters to kill rhinos in South Africa and export their horns to the Czech Republic as trophies. The horns were then to be shipped onward to Asia. In a bid to curb practices such as this, the South African government has recently made changes to its environmental laws that are intended to close loopholes exploited by professional hunting operators and thus reduce the number of sham rhino hunts.

One man aiming to bring awareness of the rhino's plight to rural communities is Fritz Breytenbach (below), head ranger of Tintswalo Safari Lodge in the Manyeleti concession, Mpumalanga. As part of the Tintswalo Rhino Extreme Campaign (TREC) he completed a 1 000-kilometre awareness-raising walk on 10 July – and vowed to keep walking to spread his message even further. 'I want to continue engaging with the locals to ensure they fully understand

the importance of preserving our rhinos and the role they can play in protecting these incredible creatures,' said Breytenbach.

An Irishman accused of stealing rhino horns from museums, auction houses and shops across Europe is to be extradited to Austria to face trial. John Quilligan is believed to be part of a gang that has been under investigation for at least two years for drug trafficking, robbery and money laundering as well as rhino horn theft.



TINTSWALO PROPERTY GROUP



VULTURES POISONED

At least 48 Cape vultures and one African white-backed vulture have been found dead on a farm in the Drakensberg, KwaZulu-Natal. Initial tests revealed that the birds had died after ingesting Carbofuran, a pesticide also discovered in several sheep carcasses lying nearby. 'It was devastating to see so much wanton loss of life, particularly as there are only about 8 000 Cape vultures left in the wild,' said Cobus Theron of the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT). 'This incident also undermines the efforts of conservation-minded farmers in the district.' Another seven vulture carcasses were subsequently found on a neighbouring farm. 'In southern Africa alone, more than 400 vultures have been deliberately poisoned over the past two years,' added André Botha, manager of the EWT's Birds of Prey Programme. (Read about the impact of poisoning on vulture populations in 'Keep calm and carrion', in the July 2013 issue.)

Burkina Faso
UK HELP FOR ELEPHANTS

A new anti-poaching team, L'Équipe des Éléphants, is to be established under the auspices of the Born Free Foundation and with funds raised through the British *Sunday Mirror* newspaper. Its aim is to protect the 5 000 elephants in this impoverished West African country, the largest remaining population in the region. The newspaper has agreed that funds raised in the name of Anne, the last performing elephant in a British circus, will be deployed by the Born Free Foundation on the anti-poaching unit. www.bloodyivory.org