

## My Own Game Ranch! (Part 2)

You have managed to buy a game ranch consisting of 1400 hectares of prime bush veld at a price of R21 000 000. The next big venture is to introduce free ranging lions onto the game ranch. Prior to the issuing of permits to allow for lions to be introduced, the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism will require that a viability study be done.



A study like this will look at the following aspects;

- The determination of the overall carrying capacity of the ranch.
- The various numbers of antelope species currently occurring on the game ranch.
- Proposed introduction of prey related antelope species with reference to lions in particular.
- A predator - prey relationship comparison.
- Details regarding the lions to be introduced, such as current location, are they problem animals, are they currently self-sustaining etc.
- A management plan for the lions to be introduced.
- Details, lay-out and the general management of the lions whilst being kept in the temporary holding facility on the game ranch prior to being released.
- The details of the veterinarian that will be associated with such a project.

- The management and monitoring of the lions after they have been released from the temporary holding facility onto the game ranch.
- Procedures in place to arrange for the re-capturing when one or some of the lions escape from the game ranch.
- Written approval from the adjacent landowners with regard to the proposed introduction of the lions.



This study will then be reviewed by the Department and on approval of the required information and provided the outcome of the study is favourable, permission will then be granted for the introduction of free ranging lions onto a game ranch. The landowner now have to apply for a TOPS permit and once this has been issued, only then can the landowner start making plans to acquire the animals. This entire process can take up to two months to be completed.





## Strawberry Coloured Leopard Spotted

The picture of the leopard above was taken in the Madikwe Game Reserve. This leopard is suspected of a condition known as erythrism. Erythrism is a genetic mutation believed to cause an excess amount of red pigments, or a deficit of dark ones. Erythrism is unusual in carnivores but has been documented in raccoons, Eurasian badgers and coyotes. Pinkish fur, after all, is probably not the best colour for an animal that has to rely on camouflage to make a kill.



*Pictured above is a regular colour scheme of a leopard.*

## Stuck with nowhere to go!!

One morning, game rangers on a routine patrol, discovered a bushbuck female that was stuck between a rock and a hard place, or shall we say a palisade fence and a hard place! The female bushbuck tried to push her way through underneath the palisade fence. The wildlife management team had to come up with a plan to free the female without her getting hurt in the process. The game rangers decided the best option was to grab both

her front and back feet in an attempt to prevent her from struggling. She was then gently moved backwards until she was free. She did not appear to have any serious injuries, other than a few scrapes and bruises.



## 61 inch Kudu Bull Sold

On a game auction recently held in Vaalwater a kudu bull with a horn length of 61  $\frac{1}{8}$  inches was sold for a record amount of R80 000. When it comes to hunting big kudu bulls, finding a 60 incher is like picking up a De Beers diamond in the street, it is not likely but also not impossible.



## Interesting wildlife occurrences

### Buffalo cow sold on a game auction

Recently this buffalo cow and a four months old calf were sold on a game auction for a staggering R20 million rand. A number of the people that attended the game auction held in Rustenbug arrived in helicopters and planes. Only one individual was in a position to pay that much money for a buffalo cow and her calf. In the race to breed the best trophy quality animals some people are willing to go all the way. It is often said that trophy hunting is detrimental to the survival of the biggest and best trophy quality animals.

Over the last couple of years the trophy quality of species like buffalo and sable in South Africa has



been unprecedented. This is the result of game ranch owners being very selective as to what kind of genes are brought into their herds. It used to be every professional hunters dream to hunt a buffalo bull with a horn spread of more than 40 inches. Nowadays it is possible to hunt buffalo bulls with a horn spread of 48 - 50 inches and bigger, provided the money is right.

## Pictures submitted by Ledibeng residents



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**We would like to hear your story!**

Should you have an event or story you would like to share, please send us your photos and a few words to **wildlife@lantic.net**

*From your Wildlife Management Team*

