



# LEDIBOS

LEDIBENG ESTATE NEWSLETTER

Issue 33 - February 2013

## ANIMALS **KILLED** ON **PURPOSE**

Over the last couple of months numerous animal species have been killed on the roads within the Estate. Some residents refuse to comply with the speed limit of 30 km per hour and some intentionally try to run over these animals.

The Wildlife Management Team is very concerned about the attitude and behaviour of some of the residents living on the Estate. Once you enter the Estate animals have the right of way, no matter how big or small. Animals that are being killed include tortoises, mongooses, chameleons, squirrels, snakes, crowned plover chicks, nocturnal cats, hares and bull frogs. Some tenants also think that the dirt roads on the Estate resemble stage 3 of the Dakar Rally, or a place where they can drive off-road bikes or quad bikes as fast as they can.

Some residents believe that the storm water canals and the heaps of sand located at various places on the Estate make a good 4x4 track. The Wildlife Management Team will not tolerate these actions anymore.

**Off-road motor cycles and quad bikes are NOT allowed on the Estate at all.**



## REPORT THE KILLERS

The **Wildlife Management Team** would like to ask residents to report these activities by calling the following number: **0727636992**.

The **Estate security vehicle** can also be notified and the telephone number is **0791871387**.

## THE DRAGONFLIES OF LEDIBENG (PART 1)

*With all of the good rains we've had over the last couple of months the big dam located on the north eastern side of the Estate has filled up to capacity. This has created the perfect location for a large number of dragonflies to make an appearance.*

A dragonfly is an insect belonging to the order Odonata. A dragonfly has a life span of more than a year, but very little of this life is actually as an adult dragon fly. The dragonfly life cycle begins with the eggs, once the eggs hatch a nymph emerges. This nymph lives in the water and this nymph stage can survive for up to 4 years in some species. During this time the nymph will moult their skin anywhere from 8-17 times.





**Dragonfly Nymph**

Whilst the nymphs survive in the water they feed on mosquito larvae, other aquatic insects and worms, even tadpoles and small fish. The dragonfly nymph is an extremely fast swimmer and makes use of a hyper-thrust mechanism to give them the extra

speed-boost when they pursue their prey. For a quick burst of speed they eject water from their anal opening to act like a jet propulsion system, making it almost impossible for the prey to escape.

Once they are ready to leave their aquatic homes they crawl out of the water and will attach themselves to the stem of a plant or a suitable object above the water surface. Here they will moult their skin for the last time before taking to the skies as an elegant mature dragonfly. The skin left behind by the nymph is called an exuvia.

Adult dragonflies are born to hunt, feed and breed. They usually live for about two months. They are very sophisticated predators and will feed on insects like mayflies, flies, mosquitoes and just about any other insect that comes close enough to the water's surface. Adult dragonflies have been seen eating insects as big as butterflies, wasps, ants, moths and even bees. They will catch their prey in mid-air by grabbing it with its limbs and turning it into a gooey mass with its powerful mandibles before swallowing it. Usually the chase doesn't last very long.

Dragonflies are amongst the fastest flying insects in the world and can reach a maximum speed of 10-15 metres per second or 6,6 metres per 100 metres. To complete the life cycle the adult dragonfly will find a suitable partner, mate and then lay its eggs in a spot where the water is shallow and standing. This will complete the life cycle of the dragonfly.



This dragonfly is called a **Black-tailed Skimmer** or *Nesiothemis farinosa*. This dragonfly is very aggressive towards other dragonflies and it is closely associated with large bodies of water.



This dragonfly is called a **Banded Groundling** or *Brachythemis leucosticta*. This particular dragonfly is often seen sitting on the ground and is not seen flying over large bodies of water.



This dragonfly is called a **Black-winged Widow** or *Palpopleura lucia*. They are associated with smaller streams or stagnant water pools. This is a strange looking dragonfly when it is sitting facing downwards.

## Dragonflies photographed on the Estate



This dragonfly is called a **Common Tiger Tail** or *Ictinogomphus ferox* and is often found around big dams. This is a fairly common dragonfly in South Africa and can be up to 70 mm long.



This dragonfly is called a **Green Hooktail** or *Paragomphus genei*. This dragonfly can easily be confused with the Common Tiger Tail. True to its name the end of the tail ends in a hook, whilst the end of the Common Tiger Tail dragonfly is straight.



This dragonfly is called a **Red Basker** or *Urothemis assignata*. It is fairly common just about all over the world and is often found around big dams.



This dragonfly is called a **Violet Dropwing** or *Trithemis annulata*. Like the Red Basker this dragonfly is fairly common and usually hangs out in the shallow water of big dams.



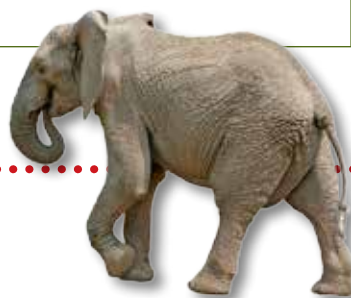
The name of this dragonfly is **Kirby's Dropwing** or *Trithemis kirbyi*. It can easily be confused with the Red Basker but the difference is in the red colour of the veins located on the wings.



## Wildlife Quiz (Part 3)



1.	A mole feeds on the roots of plant species.	True or False
2.	A civet cat can retract its claws like a true cat.	True or False
3.	Roan is the English name for a "swartwitpens".	True or False
4.	A molerat feeds on insects.	True or False
5.	A buffalo diet consists of 80 % grass and 20 % leaves.	True or False
6.	Temperature is the determining factor resulting in male or female crocodiles hatching from the eggs	True or False
7.	An elephant bull usually leads the herd.	True or False
8.	The Namibian ostrich can fly.	True or False
9.	A grasshopper doesn't have a heart.	True or False
10.	A female crocodile can lay up to 75 eggs.	True or False



***From your Wildlife Management Team***



For information on property sales contact:  
Tel: **012 665 5308**  
Email: **info@cranbrook.co.za**

**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**



**Answers: 1.(False), 2.(False), 3.(False), 4.(False), 5.(True), 6.(True), 7.(false), 8.(False), 9.(False), 10.(True).**