

## Game Drive Sightings

Our game drive guides report the following news on recent sightings of wild-life in the Park:

There are now 9 lions in the main game area and 3 in the Nyathi area of the Park. Lions are mainly seen in the south of the main game area (Colchester area) with Ngulube and Vukani Loops seeming to yield the most sightings. Aardlam and her subadults are sometimes seen in the Carols Rest area in the northern part of the main game area.

The southern section is also a good place to spot buffalo and eland herds which concentrate on the grasslands there.

Spotted hyena are being spotted mainly in the Rooi-dam – Gwarrie area.

A number of black-backed jackal cubs have been spotted on sundowner and night drives while caracal have been spotted on sunrise and morning drives.

Night drive sightings have included porcupines, striped polecats, scorpions and plenty of spotted eagle owl and barn owl adults and juveniles.

Bird sightings in the main game area have included rednecked francolins with their young and many black shouldered kites. Swallows, steppe buzzards and yellowbilled kites are back for the summer and also very active.

Due to the plentiful recent rains, giant earthworms have been spotted on the Roodam and Hapoor roads.



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## 80 Years of Conservation Success

Addo Elephant National Park turned a grand old 80 this year and this was celebrated on a number of platforms.

Members of the public stood a chance to win free entry into the Park for day visits through giveaways publicised on Algoa Fm and Bay FM. 160 lucky callers were treated to a free day out in their local national park.

An exciting SANParks website forum competition saw "Bush Baptist" from the Western Cape win a two-night luxury stay at Gorah Elephant Camp, managed by Hunter Hotels, in the Addo Elephant National Park. Forum members had to record their fondest memory of the Park.

Local tourism partners gathered for an informal celebration of the Park's birthday in August.

First proclaimed in July 1931 to save the last remaining elephants in the area, the Park has, in the last decade, grown exponentially and now conserves some 180 000 hectares.

Speaking from the Park's administrative offices in Addo Restcamp, Park Manager, Norman Johnson said that the Park, which is now the third largest national park in the country, had witnessed a number of conservation milestones over the past twenty years in particular.

"The expansion of Addo Elephant National Park has resulted in an incredible diversity of wildlife species, landscapes and experiences that are available to visitors," said Johnson.

*Mandlakazi Skefile CEO of NMBT celebrating with Park Manager Norman Johnson*

The list of milestone in recent years is extensive, with the introduction of lions in 2003, the proclamation of a Marine Protected Area around Bird Island in 2005 and the amalgamation of the main game area and Colchester areas of the Park in 2010 top of the conservation landmarks.

Johnson said the partnership with local communities bordering the Park had taken a leap forward with the establishment of the Mayibuye Ndlovu Development Trust in 2005 along with a unique profit-sharing agreement that ensured communities received tangible benefits from the Park.

Tourism achievements include the addition of new accommodation units to the popular Addo restcamp, the opening of the informative and interactive Ulwazi Interpretive Centre in 2010 and the addition of Spekboom Tented Camp to the range of overnight experiences available to visitors.

Addo Elephant National Park's list of milestones is expected to continue to grow with the ongoing process of expansion and consolidation in the future.



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# An Addo Legend Passes



## Holiday Fun for All Nature Enthusiasts

Kids and adults alike can look forward to having some fun while learning at Addo Elephant National Park this December.

The Park is offering a holiday programme for children on day visits and overnight stays during the December holidays. Young-at-heart adults are also welcome to join in any of the activities. There is also a programme of evening talks aimed at adults focusing on the fauna and flora of the Park.

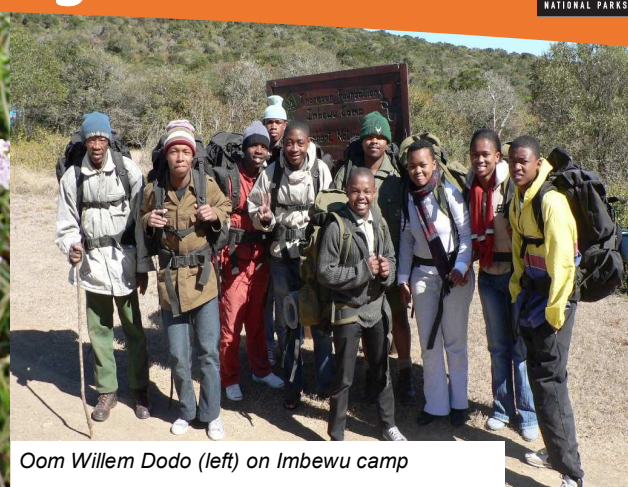
The kids programme, which runs from 12 to 23 December, features guided game drives, guided walks and DVD screenings. The holiday programme activities are available free of charge to children once the entrance fee has been paid. Game drives (for children aged 6 to 12 years only) carry a cost of R50, which is a great discount on standard prices.

Interactive talks on relevant environmental topics also form part of the programme. Children can learn about current issues such as climate change as well as the unique features of the Park like the Big Seven.

Nature enthusiasts can take advantage of a series of evening talks presented by local experts at the Addo Main Camp during December and early January.

The talks will feature fascinating topics such as "Creatures of the Deep", "Archaeology & History", "Predators & Prey", "Snakes" and "Addo's Coastline".

Full programme details are available on the Park's website



Oom Willem Dodo (left) on Imbewu camp

**Oom Willem Dodo (15/09/1939 – 06/06/2011) walked the trails in Addo Elephant National Park for many years, first as a field ranger and then as a wise elder, leading Imbewu and Umzi Wethu camps.**

Oom Willem was always dedicated to his work with the Imbewu and Umzi Wethu programmes and, tragically, collapsed while leading a trail in June 2011. He was rushed to medical care but sadly passed away the next day due to stomach cancer.

Oom Willem was appointed as a field ranger in 1990 and served the Park for 10 years before he resigned. During his ranger days, he patrolled the Park on

foot and horseback, covering many kilo

metres and amassing an excellent knowledge of the plants, birds and animals of the Addo Elephant National Park.

He was then appointed in 2000 as a wise elder to lead camps in the Imbewu and Umzi Wethu programmes, which are jointly run by the Wilderness Foundation and SANParks.

Oom Willem's knowledge of the medicinal uses of indigenous plants was legendary and he often treated himself and fellow rangers that were willing with medicine from the bush.

His quiet, humble manner as well as his shy smile will be re-

membered by all who knew him. Willem Dodo enriched the lives of many young people who benefitted from his knowledge of the bush and of cultural traditions.

Oom Willem was 71 years old when he passed. "Phumla ngoxolo, Tata Dodo"

## Appreciate Your Clean Beaches

**For those of you are looking forward to a holiday full of sun, sea and sand, take a minute to appreciate how clean your local beach is.**

Addo Elephant National Park's 50 kilometres of pristine coastline stretch from the Sundays River mouth in the west to the Bushman's River mouth in the east and include the largest coastal dune-field south of the equator. This coastline can be accessed via Woody Cape near Alexandria or Sundays River mouth near Colchester.

Although some stretches of the coastline are fairly unfrequented by visitors, refuse washes up on the beaches from sea vessels and fishermen.

But never fear, Working for the Coast is here! This poverty relief programme, funded by the Department of Environmental Affairs employs disadvantaged people from local communities to clean up our beaches.

Not only does this provide jobs, but protects our coastal and marine resources and improves tourism too. Everyone likes a clean and safe beach.



Working for the Coast team cleaning up the beach



Woody cape coastline

## Mayibuye wins at Kudu Awards



Mayibuye Ndlovu compost project

The Mayibuye Ndlovu Development Trust's contribution to conservation in the community was recognised at the 7th annual SAN-Parks Kudu Awards, held in the Kruger National Park recently.

Mayibuye Ndlovu Development Trust (MNDT) was established in 1994 as a forum to plan and implement conservation-based community development projects in the communities living in and around the Addo Elephant National Park. With the active support of SAN-Parks, MNDT aims to enhance the capacity and well-being of its local people and promote their sense of ownership of the local assets through the long-term and fair distribution of tangible economic benefits.

MNDT's first joint project with SAN-Parks was a profit-sharing agreement which sees a percentage of the turnover of the Addo Elephant National Park's Matyholweni rest-

camp (sliding scale of 6-12%, depending on occupancy levels) being fed into the trust funds to be used for community projects. This initiative was the first of its kind within the SANParks environment and allows communities to see tangible benefits from their local national park.

MNDT now manages several community upliftment programmes, including the Mayibuye composting project – a successful public-private partnership which reduces alien vegetation on agricultural land and in the area's major river system. There is also a tertiary student assistance initiative and SMME development focused on the conservation and tourism sectors. The MNDT, widely regarded as the key entity with community buy-in, is not only supporting and empowering local community members but is also improving the environment through

conservation.

Other Eastern Cape winners at the Kudu Awards were Mike Vincent for Environmental Media Contribution to Conservation Award (TV Programme) and Nomonde Ntsundwana an educator from Port Elizabeth for Environmental Education/Capacity Building (Individual).

A Lifetime Contribution Award was presented to Mayedwa Kilani who spent 49 years as a Mountain Zebra National Park employee before retiring in 2005.

## Change to Horse Trails

Following the release of lions into the Nyathi area of the Park, operations of the Addo horse trails have undergone some changes.

Addo Elephant National Park now offers a two-hour morning and two-hour afternoon ride. Lions and other Big Five wildlife will be monitored regularly. If lions, or other potentially dangerous animals, are located within the zone in which horse trails take place, the trails will be moved from Nyathi area to the botanical reserve adjoining main camp, at a discounted rate.

Riders need to be confident that they can handle a horse within a large game area. As in the past, no riders under 16 years or over 90kg will be allowed on horse trails.



## Addo Mighty Elephants Trump Radio Station Soccer Team



Addo Mighty Elephant Team in green



There was a rumble in the air on Saturday 19 November as the Addo Elephant National Park 'Mighty Elephants' soccer team prepared for their match against Umhlobo Wenene FM players.

The match, which was held in the local Nomathamsanqa sports stadium, kicked off at 2pm in the mid-day heat.

There was much excitement and trepidation when the mighty Elephants found out that Former Springbok rugby team manager, Zola Yeye, would be representing Umhlobo Wenene as goalkeeper.

However, their fears were unfounded and they went on to win the match 4 -3.

Luyanda Warrington scored the first goal, followed by a goal by team captain, Philip Tom. The third goal was driven home by Storm Coldridge and the final goal was scored by Mphumi

Grootboom.

The only disappointment of the day was that the Addo Netball Team was unable to play their match against the Umhlobo Wenene ladies, who did not arrive.

The day was rounded off with a celebratory function at the Addo Elephant National Park community hall in the staff village at Main Camp.

# Snap Away and Win!



Last year's winning photo by Richard Marsh

The Weekend Post and Katz Camera World, together with the SANParks Honorary Rangers: Addo Region, will be giving away more than R30 000 in the MyAddo Photographic Competition.

The aim of the competition is not only to raise awareness about the biodiversity within the Addo Elephant National Park, but also to raise funds for research as well as to upgrade facilities for the benefit of all visitors to this wonderful conservation area.

How do you enter?

- All you have to do to enter is take a photograph of a nature scene in the Addo Elephant National Park. Photographers must indicate where in the national park the photo was taken.
- The entry fee is R40 for adults and R20 for scholars and includes an A4 print by Katz.

There are two categories in which to enter:

- Serious photographers using SLR cameras.

- An open category for those with point-and-shoot cameras.

Prizes will be awarded to the top three photographs in each section, and include:

- a two-night stay for two at Lalibela Game Reserve;
- a one-night stay for two at Pumba Game Reserve and a
- one-night stay for two at the Spekboom Tented Camp in Addo Elephant National Park.

Canon has sponsored R10 000 worth of vouchers for each category.

Proceeds will be donated to SANParks Honorary Rangers: Addo Region.

Entries are unlimited. The closing date is January 31, 2012. Entry forms are available on the Katz website: [www.katz.co.za](http://www.katz.co.za)

Enquiries: Nicky Bosman, Honorary Rangers: Addo Region, Cell: 082 336 4471, e-mail: [Nicky.Bosman@nmmu.ac.za](mailto:Nicky.Bosman@nmmu.ac.za)

## 2012 Diary Addo Elephant National Park

Every Day	The Park is Open 7am – 7pm Main Camp Reception 5am – 10pm Main Gate open for arrival / departure (with prior arrangement for early/late arrivals) 7am – 5pm Matyholweni Camp Reception 7am – 5pm Matyholweni Gate open Game Area Gate times vary according to season
4 February	VW Herald Cycle Tour Mountain Bike Race Zuurberg Mountain Area
10 March	50Mile & 25Mile Trail Runs Kabouga & Zuurberg Mountain Areas
11 May	Addo Honorary Rangers Golf Day Port Elizabeth
21-27 May	National Honorary Ranger Indaba Main camp
29 June – 1 July	Absa Kirkwood Wildlife Festival Kirkwood
30 June	Kirkwood Wildlife Auction Kirkwood
3 July	Park's Birthday! 81 years old
September	SA National Parks Week Free entry for SA day visitors Mon-Fri
15 September	Coastal Cleanup Day Sundays River Mouth
22 September	Eden to Addo MegaHike ends Kabouga Section
7 October TBC	Kabouga Mountain Bike Race Kabouga Section
15-19 October	Marine Week Woody Cape Section
19-21 October	Addo Birding Bonanza Starts at Main Camp
28 October TBC	Addo Mondri Mountain Bike Race Zuurberg Mountain Area

## Tis the Season...

To be jolly, and to look out for the some of the sightings of this season in the Park:

- ✦ Vervet monkey babies clinging to their mothers' tummy
- ✦ Wobbly-legged red har-tebeest calves
- ✦ A flash of green and melodious calls: Diederik's and Klaas' cuckoos
- ✦ Swallows sweeping the sky, here for the summer

- ✦ Tall thin plants, waving their flowers in the wind – the thin man, *Urginea altissima*, said to be one of the plants the Bush men used to poison their arrows

- ✦ Cape gannets are in the middle of their breeding season on Bird Island

- ✦ Cape fur seal pups, born in November or early December are beginning to test the waters



Foto: Piet Heymans



Foto: Piet Heymans

If you are travelling this festive season, please travel safely and kindly abide by all the rules that apply in our national parks – speed limits, no littering, no exiting your vehicle – to keep our wildlife safe!