



Nuusbrief / Newsletter

SEPTEMBER 2024

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Seminar on predation management

A seminar by Prof. Ben Allen of the University of Southern Queensland is to be held on his study of dingo ecology and management.

The Nelson Mandela University's Centre for African Conservation Ecology is also planning a short workshop that afternoon. It will address the issue of "Humaneness assessment tools for animal harm and killing", which will include scoring training.

Contact Prof. Graham Kerley on Graham.Kerley@mandela.ac.za if you would like to attend either of these events.

NELSON MANDELA

UNIVERSITY

Zoology Department : Seminar



DATE:

**WEDNESDAY,
16 OCTOBER 2024**



TIME:

10:30 – 11:30



VENUE:

MS TEAMS



Title: Ecology, impacts and management of dingoes"

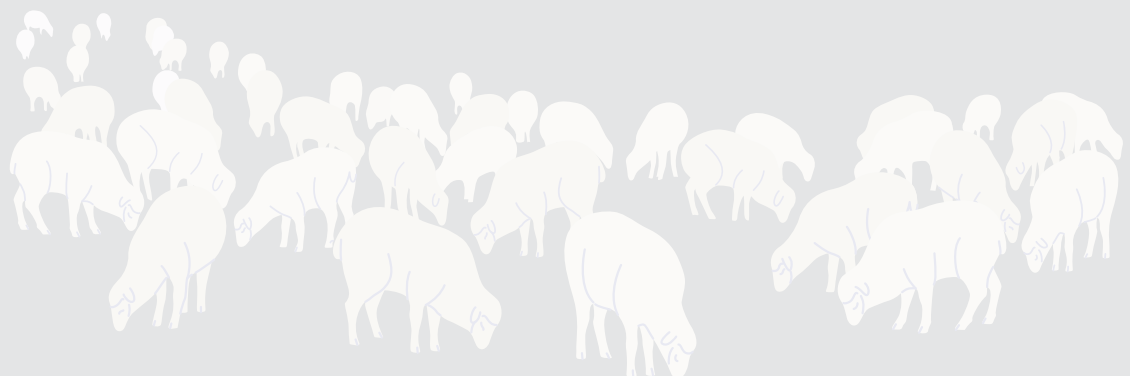
Speaker: Prof Ben Allen

¹University of Southern Queensland, Institute for Life Sciences and the Environment, Toowoomba, Queensland, Australia.

²Centre for African Conservation Ecology, NMU

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SANParks cooperation



During his annual report, PMSA chairman Niel du Preez declared good cooperation with SANParks in the areas of predator management in and around national parks. SANParks had discussions with its park managers to address the issue of animals leaving parks. The primary responsibility lies with the respective province, but SANParks has come to realise its co-responsibility in the matter.

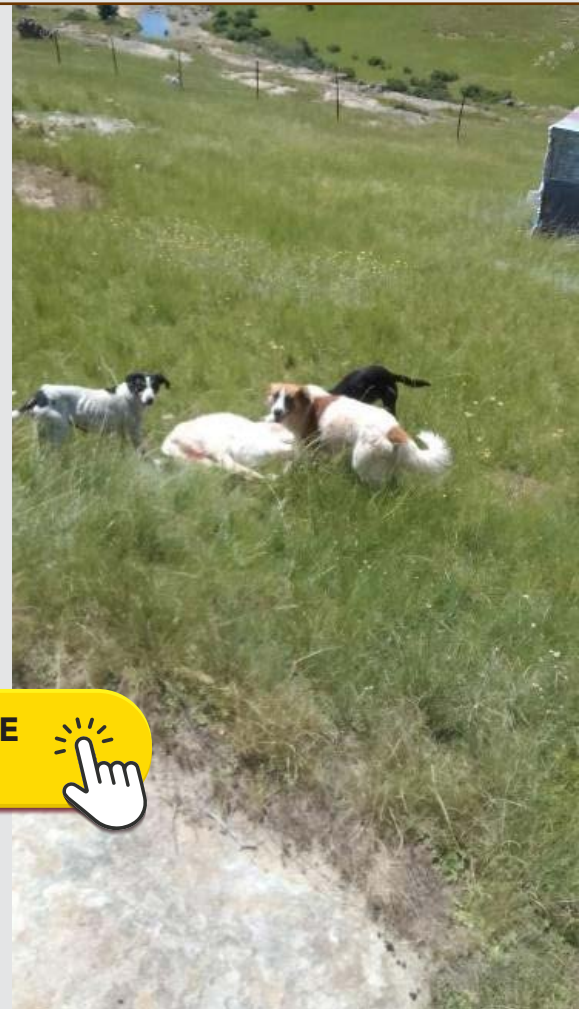
With regard to SKA developments, it was reported at the annual predation management forum meeting that a tender for fencing had been placed. Park management, for the interim, will be having regular engagements with farmers and surrounding communities to deal with issues on a case-by-case basis.

Rondloperhonde: Dingo's van die Oos-Kaap?

deur Tisha Steyn, ProAgri, 31 Mei 2024

Rondloperhonde raak al hoe meer 'n las vir skaap- en bokboere op kommunale landbougrond in die landelike gebiede van die Oos-Kaap.

“Die probleem word heeltemal onderskat en het dringend ingryping nodig,” sê Niël Viljoen van Livestock and Predation Management in sy 2024-verslag, wat pas bekendgestel is.



**KLIEK HIER OM DIE VOLLEDIGE
ARTIKEL TE LEES: PROAGRI**



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From the desk of Predation Management Centre, Free State University

Small mammals, big moves: Uncovering the shift in distribution patterns



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In recent years, there have been notable shifts in the distribution of smaller mammal species, likely driven by a combination of environmental, climatic, and anthropogenic factors. Climate change has probably been a big factor, with increasing warmth prompting southward migration of species traditionally found in the warmer northern regions. Additionally, the general east-to-west shift could have been assisted by changing rainfall patterns. Urban expansion and land use changes have also played a crucial role; the spread of cities and towns has fragmented natural habitats, forcing many smaller animals to relocate. Meanwhile, an increase in game ranches and unoccupied farms has created new, more suitable habitats for these animals.

Brown hyena is believed to have occurred widely in the past before human activities and farming pushed them out. They are still well known in the Namaqualand West Coast and Skeleton Coast, the Karoo, the Drakensberg mountains, and occasionally seen in the Kruger National Park. Their numbers seem to be increasing again, and they are observed more frequently in the eastern Free State (Vrede, Memel, Harrismith) and places where they were not seen in the recent past, i.e. Dealesville, Soutpan, Bultfontein.

Servals (*tierboskat*) are seen more frequently, especially around Bloemfontein, Petrusburg, Bultfontein, Dealesville, and in the southern Free State. Their distribution seems to be moving south and west, since they are already at Wesselsbron, Trompsburg, and apparently west of Kimberley. This species seems to be moving back into areas where it had occurred historically. Although reports have been received about cheetah appearing in certain areas outside of their normal range, cheetahs are often confused with servals and alleged sightings must be verified.

African civets are usually associated with the more subtropical and warmer areas of the country, such as northern KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo, and the Kruger National

Park. For about 15 years, civets have been present in the Ficksburg area, with more recent sightings around Kroonstad, Vredefort, Parys, and Thaba Nchu (close to Bloemfontein).

Honey badgers (*ratel*) were found between Dealesville, Soutpan, and Bultfontein. They are not expected to be present in the central Free State, so it is very interesting to find them in this area.

Many reports indicate that the distribution of the South African bush pig has shifted westward from KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape. Although there is photographic and anecdotal evidence of bush pigs eating lamb meat, they are likely opportunistic omnivores that scavenge rather than actively hunting and killing lambs. By 1994, bush pigs were already reported around Smithfield, Wepener, and Tussen-die-Riviere Nature Reserve. Two years ago, they were found in Dealesville, Boshoff, and Jagersfontein. They are now also confirmed near Bloemfontein, Petrusburg, and Kalkfontein Dam Nature Reserve, indicating their presence in the southern and southeastern Free State. They should not be confused with the warthog (*vlakvark*), which is also becoming a nuisance in large parts of the country.

Of the carnivores mentioned, only brown hyena poses a possible threat to livestock. It is important to correctly identify the predator culprit, since brown hyena and even cheetah are often wrongly accused of damage caused by jackals, especially with larger prey. The inclusion of the other carnivores and omnivores is relevant because changes in their distribution might indicate shifts in the distribution of other species as well. And those species could potentially become damage-causing animals in the future, making it important to take note of distribution changes.

It is crucial to remain vigilant and proactive in addressing the factors driving these distribution changes. This information is largely available thanks to reports from farmers and members of the public, so we encourage everyone to share any interesting observations of wild animals in their area. By supporting conservation efforts and adapting to the needs of small to medium mammals, we can help them thrive. This will prepare us to take appropriate management actions against potential damage-causing animals when necessary.

Information compiled by Beanelri Janecke from personal communication with Lourens Goosen from DESTEA – Free State. Email Lourens: goosenl@destea.gov.za, or Beanelri: janeckbb@ufs.ac.za with any relevant information.



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Daar is menige boere wat predatore doeltreffend bestuur en daarom wil ons graag sulke suksesstories aanhoor en deel met medeboere. U geslaagde bestuurspraktyk sal in die maandelikse PMF-nuusbrief verskyn en ook op die webtuiste geplaas word. Skakel Bonita Francis by (041) 365 5030 of per e-pos by nwga@nwga.co.za.

