

April Newsletter 2010



An exciting start to this years safaris! Little rain arrived in the beginning of the year and everyone speculated that it would be a dry year as by March all the grass had just about disappeared. However as our first Tuli for the season started so did a weeks worth of tremendous thunderstorms. We managed to get our guests organized into an impromptu Limpopo Lodge Safari using various camps & lodges and finished by having a fabulous week with good sightings including 200 elephants passing by. As our Big 5 safari started the next week, the rain ended, or so we thought...

another shower hit us again as the second Tuli started! But safari stress or no- it was good solid rain that the grateful soil sapped up, leaving everything fresh and new. The devil- thorn flowers are blanketing the landscape again and plenty of grass is around for all the animals. The Nells Vlei (Marsh) is full to the brim bringing with it heaps of birds and a few hippos too!

Sightings have been good, although it took Cor a frustrating 4 days to find elephants after the big rains but he did manage! There have been quite a few exciting lion sightings from horse back, including one lioness that crept up on our German volunteer Tanya and the little Highlander before being spotted by Mpho and Cor and promptly gave up the chase. Some nice sightings of leopard, hyena & a few cheetah both from horseback and on the game drives. Good hippo sightings have been a favourite this year and a few unusual sightings like this African python killing and eating a steenbok.



In December 2009 and with much enthusiasm three of our guides set off to gain horsemanship and cultural experience abroad. Mpho went off to the UK, Queensholme to work at an eventing yard. Past guests & good friends of LVHS, Rob & Michelle Taylor were kind enough to take Mpho in the London Eye and to have him over for Christmas. His hosts,



Mark & Tanya Kyle also took him to see 'War Horse' in London and he had some fabulous lesson on a brilliant horse called Drunk and Disorderly. West & Mmushi decided to brave the cold of Germany and worked at the Oldenburg Stud Farm with Andrea Deufel & Hajo Wilms, where they attended several shows and loved the food! They also backed young horses and enjoyed a lot of time in the snow. All three returned with a broader view of the world in which their guests live, more knowledgeable about riding... and slightly paler!

The horses are all doing well and, touch wood; we haven't had any African Horse Sickness yet! With the additions of Highlander & Cimarron last year we were a full barn until.... Unintentionally we managed acquire a miniature horse from a family with little (no) horse experience. He was completely wild and upon further inspection- a stallion! Cor aptly named him Masepane (little sh*t), others call him Kevin (our farrier) or just Pony- and he now lives in the farriers stall and joins the rest of 'his' herd out in the paddock during the day. With help from a patient volunteer, Tanja, he is now used to being handled, ridden and prodded by Jamie & his friends.



Cor lunging our stallion!

LVHS was very lucky to be visited by Candice Hobday, a professional dressage instructor who came down for a weekend to give our staff some pointers. Everyone greatly benefited from her lessons:



Mpho & Loenza



West & Lancelot



Mmushi & Albany



David & Rambo

Two Mashatus is now fully revamped. With relentless work from all staff, it was finished off with new showers, basins and running water in time to start the season. The paraffin geysers get the water smoking hot in seconds and guests can now be assured of plenty of water for a warm shower.



Also our long awaited reception area at the stables is now complete! Guests can enjoy more time upon arrival at the stables as well as a longer ride on the departure day. The dining room overlooks the majestic Limpopo and there are three bathrooms with showers, toilets and basins in each.



Jamie is just about talking and has a particular affinity with hoof picks and white board markers! Suco and Cleo the two puppies are all grown up and enjoy long runs out with the staff hacks. Cleo barely breaks a sweat while Suco lollops, flapping tongue, behind the horses. Louise was proud to represent Botswana in the Inter Africa Cup for Dressage this year, and despite much rain they did 2 very good tests.



Cor is balancing his guiding with a bit of cycling and has enjoyed a mountain bike race in Pretoria and will also be a team leader for the Tour de Tuli bike race in August. Malora will be representing LVHS at Indaba in May, as well as visiting Kenya's Ol Donyo Wuas Horse safaris in June. Old friend and colleague of LVHS, Saskia von Sperber will be joining us again in May to help with stable management and riding.

The ladies are cooking delights in the kitchen and with one or two changes here and there, the menu offers something new and tasty for all our return guests! Masebe and his team are once again in operation mobile mode, getting camps set-up and taken down in record speed time. We have also bought all our staff tickets to two of the World Cup Football games being played in Polokwane. Half will be going to Slovenia vs. Algeria & the other half to New Zealand vs Paraguay

After such a busy few months we look forward to what the rest of the year has to offer! We hope no more volcanoes will be erupting and wish everyone safe travels and a great rest of the year!



All the best from THE LVHS TEAM!

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