



JOINING HANDS TO RESCUE WOUNDED WILD DOG

14 August 2014

Start

Members of the Waterberg community in Limpopo have helped the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) rescue a wounded female African Wild Dog that was spotted by a group of mountain bikers at the side of a road in the Waterberg on Sunday 3 August 2014. Mountain biker Mr Alex Lamberts contacted the Limpopo Economic Development, Environment & Tourism Department (LEDET) which alerted the EWT about the dog which had been shot.

Owners of Lindani Lodge, Mr Sam van Coller and his wife Peggy responded to a call from the EWT to search for the Wild Dog. Thanks to clear directions from the mountain bikers, they were able to locate the dog and advised LEDET that it would be possible for a veterinarian to dart the dog. Dr Naomi Smith from Game per Capita rushed to the scene to dart the dog and was accompanied by Mr Kobus Pienaar from LEDET.

On examination, the Wild Dog was found to have a bullet wound that had badly damaged the animal's ear and also resulted in a severe concussion. The Wild Dog was transported to a veterinary facility in Vaalwater, where it was further examined by Dr Peter Caldwell of Old Chapel Vet Clinic and transported to his practice in Pretoria for treatment and surgery to repair the damaged ear. A satellite collar was fitted to her so that her movement could be monitored after release.

Derek van der Merwe, Conflict Mitigation Field Officer of the EWT's Carnivore Conservation Programme said the ear mended well and the dog had recovered. "We are grateful to the EWT Bosman Wild Dog Emergency Response fund for covering the related costs" he added.

The EWT's database of reported sightings and photographs of Wild Dogs outside of protected areas, showed that the Wild Dog was a member of a pack that had been recently moving around the Melkriver area between Lapalala and Entabeni.

Physical Address: Building K2, Ardeer Road, Pinelands Office Park,
Modderfontein 1609, Gauteng, South Africa

Postal Address: Private Bag X 11, Modderfontein 1645, Gauteng, South Africa

Tel: +27 (0) 11 3723600 **Fax:** +27 (0) 11 6084682 **E-mail:** ewt@ewt.org.za **Web:** www.ewt.org.za

The Endangered Wildlife Trust is a non-profit, public benefit organisation dedicated to conserving species and ecosystems in southern Africa to the benefit of all people.

NPO Number: 015-502, **PBO number:** 930 001 777, **Member of IUCN** - The International Union for Conservation of Nature
The Endangered Wildlife Trust is US 501(c)(3) compliant under **US IRS Registration number:** EMP98-0586801.

The Wild Dog was returned to the Waterberg on 11 August 2014 and released on Lindani Lodge where the pack had been recently sighted. The Lindani Lodge owners are predator-friendly and welcomed her onto their property. Wild Dogs are very good at finding each other after being separated, even over larger distances and the EWT is confident that she will rejoin her pack.

"As soon as we arrived on Lindani she started *hoo* calling (a call that Wild Dogs use for locating each other) as if she knew she was home. She was released from the crate and trotted off to freedom, with the injured ear barely noticeable. The EWT will monitor her movement using the satellite collar" said Derek van der Merwe.

"The African Wild Dog is southern Africa's most endangered carnivore, with less than 450 Wild Dogs left in South Africa and approximately 35 left in the Waterberg. This is the only area where dogs have been surviving outside of protected areas in South Africa and every dog, and pack is valuable. If we need to save them one at a time, then we will" remarked Kelly Marnewick, Programme Manager: EWT Carnivore Conservation Programme.

African Wild Dogs are protected in terms of the National Environmental Management: Biodiversity Act (Act 10 of 2004) and the Threatened or Protected Species Regulations of 2007 (ToPS). They are categorised as Endangered by the IUCN. The activities of hunting or shooting ToPS listed species require a permit from the relevant conservation authority, and where no permits have been issued for such activities, it is deemed a crime.

"The EWT thanks community members and partners such as the mountain bikers, LEDET, Game per Capita, Dr Peter Caldwell, the EWT/Eskom strategic partnership for transporting the dog, and Lindani land owners for involvement in the rescue operation. The enthusiasm and concern from everyone involved highlights that there are many landowners out there who appreciate the value of having endangered carnivores on their properties. It is these landowners who truly contribute to conservation and should be saluted" continued Marnewick.

The fact that the Wild Dog was shot highlights the threat that humans can pose to Wild Dogs. If anyone has any information on the shooting of this Wild Dog, please contact Derek van der Merwe at Derekv@ewt.org.za.

The EWT's Wild Dog conservation work is supported by the Association of All Wheel Drive Clubs of SA, GCCL², Investec, IQ Business Group, Knowsley Safari Park, Land Rover Centurion, Land Rover South Africa, Painted Wolf Wines, Vaughan de la Harpe.

End.

Contact: Derek van der Merwe
Wildlife Conflict Mitigation Officer: Carnivore Conservation Programme
Endangered Wildlife Trust
Tel: +27 11 372 3600
derekv@ewt.org.za

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Lillian Mlambo
Communications Manager
Endangered Wildlife Trust
Tel: +27 11 372 3600
lillianm@ewt.org.za

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Modderfontein 1609, Gauteng, South Africa

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