



P R E S S R E L E A S E



**ENDANGERED
WILDLIFE TRUST**
Protecting forever, together.

27 June 2019

For Immediate Release

Saving Endangered Wild Dogs takes a team effort

Start

The Endangered African Wild Dog is a rare sight for visitors to a handful of game reserves that still have them. But one more opportunity to catch a glimpse of these scarce and reclusive animals will soon be available in South Africa.

The Makalali Game Reserve has recently become the newest addition to the Wild Dog Range Expansion Project, coordinated by the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) and the Wild Dog Advisory Group of South Africa (WAG SA) as part of ongoing efforts to save this species from extinction.

Since its inception in 1973, the EWT has worked tirelessly to protect Africa's carnivores. Today, these predators remain close to the organisation's heart, particularly African Wild Dogs. The ultimate goal is to reverse the decline of Wild Dogs globally, by actively increasing their populations and range throughout southern Africa. This is achieved by establishing, maintaining and expanding safe space for Wild Dogs; reducing threats to their survival; ensuring positive changes in human-based values to Wild Dogs; and supporting laws to better protect them. Despite this, Wild Dogs are still among the most threatened animals in Africa, under severe threat from snaring, poaching, disease, roadkill, and habitat loss. In southern Africa, the EWT is proud to help reverse this continent-wide trend, and the population has stabilised at around 500 individuals.

This most recent relocation was made possible thanks to a group effort by aha Hotels & Lodges, the EWT, WAG SA, the owners of Makalali Game Reserve in Limpopo, and Rob Panos, the Makalali Reserve Manager.

The reserve is currently 26,000 ha and recently obtained National Private Nature Reserve status. Due to its size, ecology and the efforts made by management to keep the area protected, Makalali was identified as an ideal site to introduce a pack of Wild Dogs.

While Wild Dogs have passed through Makalali before, the introduction of this new, young pack of four is aimed at making the species a permanent fixture in the reserve. The two young males, nicknamed “Nyezi” and “Mkhovu”, were born in 2016 and are the ideal age to start their own pack. The females, “Zeyheri” and “Pacman”, were born in 2016 and 2017 respectively.

The pack was successfully relocated to Makalali on 9 June 2019, thanks to the EWT Carnivore Conservation Programme’s Cole du Plessis and Grant Beverley, and is currently being held in a 100x100m section of the predator boma on the premises. In just a few months, they will be fully released into the wild.

aha Hotels & Lodges and Makalali contributed much-needed funds towards making the pack’s introduction to Makalali possible. aha CEO, Graeme Edmond was also on site to lend a hand to the EWT team and Dr Joel Alves from Wildlife Vets SA by taking samples, fitting a GPS collar to one of the males, and loading the dogs into the custom-designed crates for the long drive from KZN to Limpopo.

Graeme, who has taken a very personal interest in the process, says, “this project is something that’s very close to my heart and I’m over the moon that I could get aha Hotels & Lodges involved in finding a new home for these Endangered animals. We’ll be paying close attention to their progress in Makalali and will continue to support the process in any way we can.”

EWT CEO, Yolán Friedmann, added, “The EWT is very excited to partner with organisations like aha Hotels & Lodges and Makalali private game reserve to relocate these Endangered carnivores to new areas. Without their support and vision, relocations such as this would not be possible. The EWT encourages tourists from all over the world to view animals in their wild and free habitats, in places such as Makalali.”

End

About aha Makalali Private Game Lodge

aha Makalali Private Game Lodge is a wildlife-centric, luxury ethnic-style retreat in the in the North-eastern Lowveld. This newly built five-star lodge has 30 comfortable Superior Rooms to choose from, each with their own ensuite bathroom and indoor and outdoor shower.

You can also prepare for a unique culinary adventure at aha Makalali Private Game Lodge, with a variety of delectable African cuisine options available on the menu, and take advantage of the truly holistic wildlife experience that Makalali offers, complete with the Big 5 and, possibly, even a Wild Dog or two.

To find out more about aha Makalali Private Game Lodge, visit aha.co.za or call 010 442 5800.

aha Hotels and Lodges manages a collection of hotels and lodges throughout Southern Africa, including Gauteng, Western Cape, Northern Cape, Free State, North West Province, KwaZulu-Natal, Mpumalanga, Limpopo and in Southern Africa; Botswana, and Zambia.

About the Endangered Wildlife Trust

The Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) has worked tirelessly for over 45 years to save wildlife and habitats, with our vision being a world in which both humans and wildlife prosper in harmony with nature. From the smallest frog, to the majestic rhino; from sweeping grasslands to arid drylands; from our shorelines to winding rivers: the EWT is working with you, to protect our world.

The EWT's team of field-based specialists is spread across southern and East Africa, where committed conservation action is needed the most. Working with our partners, including businesses and governments, the EWT is at the forefront of conducting applied research, supporting community conservation and livelihoods, training and building capacity, addressing human wildlife conflict, monitoring threatened species and establishing safe spaces for wildlife range expansion.

A beacon of hope for Africa's wildlife, landscapes and communities, the EWT is protecting forever, together. Find out more at www.ewt.org.za

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