

Limpopo Valley Horse Safaris Mid Year Newsletter 2011

Hi Everyone!

Winter seems to be coming to an end here in Botswana-nights are still chilly but days are warm and sunny with stunning sunsets over the dusty Savannah .The weather could not be more perfect for horse riding and there is nothing better than sitting around the campfire after a glorious day spent in the saddle.

Sightings have been varied and some of the highlights include an aardwolf, very rare to



see. Also a lovely sighting of a dark chanting goshawk catching a dove right above the riders and some lovely leopard sightings from horseback, one crossing the dry Pitsani riverbed it then let the riders get within 30 yards of it to get a good look, another excellent sighting from horseback of a leopard on a kill in a big Mashatu tree. On one of our game drives we encountered a small herd of elephants with a new born calf – kindly the

mother, siblings and aunties let us have a good look before bustling the little one-still very unsure on his feet- back into their middle again. Two young male lions have moved into the Mashatu area and have kept guests, staff and horses alike awake at night a couple



of times with announcing their presence roaring loudly trough out the night.

Thanks to Cor, West and David being such responsible guides determined not to disturbed the wildlife, we are having increasingly good sightings of most species in the reserve- In the past it used to be fairly difficult to get close to Zebras and Giraffe and recently we have had some

very relaxed sightings this year. Zebras- notoriously for turning their stripy bottoms on tourists-seem to get more and more interested in their domesticated relatives. At Kgotla camp we have even seen three of the elusive bush pigs on the two last Tuli Safaris!



We have had two new additions to our barn early this year- Don Pedro a 7 year old, 17 hands TB/ Boerperd cross has already proved to be a superb safari horse and is very popular both with staff and guests. Tall, dark and handsome he takes it all in his-rather long-stride and is not phased by much. (Pictured above behind Cor on Harvey)



Our other newcomer is the 5 year old, 16 hand Namibian Warmblood Angelo whom especially Louise and Saskia are thrilled to have-he unfortunately had a severe case of African horse sickness in June, this had a knock on effect of also resulting in chock and thus he had a really hard month but miraculously pulled through it and is now on the road to recovery.

We sold Courtney, one of the LVHS veterans to the manager of a neighboring Pitsani game reserve along with our little boerperd Max. Courtney also known as “Mmushi’s red Machine” was starting to find the Safari work a little bit tiring and we are very happy he has found such a lovely home close to us where he still goes out on little hacks and has got three other horses to boss around and teach them the bush horse ropes.



Very sadly we had to put down the lovely Maru a Pula due to a fractured front leg, which he did overnight in the stable nobody knows how....He will be sorely missed by both staff and guests.

Jamie and Adam are true bush babies and are both equally adored by their parents and staff! Jamie-now 3 years old- already knows about half of the horses in the barn by name and does enjoy the odd little ride in the saddle with Cor, Louise or Saskia .. Adorable Adam is almost a year old now and seems to be growing by the day and is almost walking! Very friendly and laid back he shows great determination achieving his goals- be it food or places he wants to go. He even has been on a horse once or twice and rewarded us with a big smile on his face. (Pictured here whilst on holiday in July)



Louise had planned to attend the Nissan Easter show representing Botswana on the team Dressage over the Easter holiday but was sorely disappointed by the Limpopo River Flooding! Although we toyed with the idea of swimming the horses across to the South African side we had to abandon the plan after all, as the river was just too full of water –and crocodiles!

Louise with one of the guides is hoping to attend the FEI World dressage challenge in Gaborone /Botswana in mid September. Just for fun we have printed out various dressage tests and will hold a couple of competitions for staff here at LVHS.

For those of you who know the American TV program Equitrekking you can watch Darley joining Cor on safari! Darley and her crew spent a few days with us here in Mashatu in

July and she rode our fabulous horse Frank, who as per usual behaved like a perfect gentleman. All members of the film crew –used to work with trail horses all over the world- were impressed by how professional all of our horses behaved on set! We are all looking forward to seeing the episode when it s on show. Check out <http://www.equitrekking.com/video/preview/> for further information on the Equitrekking program.

Cor rode as a guide for the “Children in the Wilderness, Tour de Tuli” cycle race (www.tourdewilderness.com/TourDeTuli), which is charity raising money to take underprivileged kids into wilderness areas to educate them on conservation issues etc..- Mpho, Saskia and our current volunteer Katharina were helping out as mounted elephant patrol on Tugela, Maz and Frank to ensure none of the Tour de Tuli participants would run into trouble with the sometimes not so gentle Jumbos! Many a bike was offered in exchange for a horse that day!



We are trying something new this year...as we have had much success with our Limpopo Lodge ride we have two dates for Christmas and New Year for 2011, with most of the lodges having pools guests will be able to cool off during the midday and still be able to enjoy the lush vegetation and all the young babies on rides..

Cor will be attending both Burghley and Blenheim this September and looks forward to seeing both new and old faces..

We hope all of you are having an excellent year so far and hope to see at least some of you again with us here at LVHS...

All the best,

Cor, Louise, and the LVHS team

