



Wild Dog update October 2010.

By Dewald van Wyk

It's proving more difficult to deploy the new GPS collar than I first thought. It is very hard to locate the wild dogs, when there is no working VHF/GPS collar on the pack. This is mainly because they use such a large area and cover great distances in a short amount of time.

Earlier this month I got a report that there were fresh wild dog tracks in the South-Western part of the reserve. So we went to the area early the next morning and met up with Stuart Quinn, an expert spoor tracker ready to track their fresh spoor. We followed the wild dogs' fresh spoor for a few hours, until the wind picked up and made it much harder to follow the spoor and finally made it impossible to follow the fresh tracks. This is because the wind blew the sand around, and the wild dog tracks got covered with sand. This was quite frustrating when you know that we were so close to the dogs but yet not able to locate their position and get a sighting of them.

A week or so ago we received news from a farmer in South Africa that saw fresh wild dog tracks on his property and he was not to happy to have the wild dogs on and around his property to say the least. Human-carnivore conflict is a major problem all over the world. Whenever predators leave protected areas the chances are high that they will get into trouble on neighboring land.

Luckily we heard that there was a sighting of the pack a couple of days ago in the reserve! All five wild dogs were seen in the western part of the reserve resting in a riverbed. So all of them made it safely back from South Africa.

