



LEGODIMO NATURE RESERVE IS SITUATED ON THE BANKS OF THE LIMPOPO RIVER. IT IS A PART OF THE TULI BLOCK IN THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA.

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This female leopard (*Panthera pardus*) was busy hunting when we spotted her in the road.

Editor's Letter

Dumela Conservationists,

We are already in the second half of 2010 and things are looking good! On the Conservation front we have been working hard through winter to ensure that when the raining season arrives, we will be ready to reap the gifts of nature.

Our Legodimo Team has once again undergone a few changes and so has our camp...

Thank you to all of you who take the environment and the Natural world seriously, without your efforts and inspiration, it would be a fruitless battle.

We all have to work together to keep this earth as healthy as possible.

The newsletter has

undergone a bit of a facelift and credit to Harry Kent from Projects Abroad UK, who came up with the name for the Legodimo Newsletter. We hope you enjoy and like it!

Gerrit and I have been away through July to celebrate our wedding and honeymoon, but we are happy to be back home.

All the best, keep on

Feature: Poaching on Legodimo



A Female Impala,
caught in a
poacher's snare

THE BUSH
TELEGRAPH
SOUTHERN
AFRICAN
CONSERVATION
-
LEGODIMO
NATURE
RESERVE

The world we live in is an amazing place, but sometimes bad judgement and greed cause our beautiful world to distort. Humans have given monetary value to Natural resources and put a price tag on things that, once, were for free. As a result, people would do anything to acquire valuable resources, even here in the peacefulness of our Nature Reserve.

The Legodimo Conservation team made a shocking discovery this month. We have found evidence of poaching (the illegal killing or stealing of an animal) on our Northern boundary. It takes nearly a whole day to drive from camp to the Northern boundary and back. When we eventually arrived there, we found more than 20 snares and the remnants of 7 Impala, 3 warthog, 2 cattle and even 1 leopard! We specifically went up North to do some snare removal, but we did not expect such carnage. Needless to say, we were all very sad and disappointed. Gerrit decided to follow the tracks of the poachers, **but he couldn't get far, as sunset was approaching.**

The next day the team made the trip again and removed as many of the snares as they could find. We then approached the police and the local wildlife department, but we did not receive the response we were seeking.

So we decided to pull out the big 'guns' and we went to ask for the help of the BDF- Botswana Defence Force. They were so helpful and very grateful that we informed them of the illegal activity on the Reserve.

The BDF was already at camp when we got back. They said that we just needed to show them where we had found all the snares and they will camp out there until they have made an arrest.

The soldiers are still ambushing the poachers as I type this... so I will keep you posted on the situation.



A Soldier, patrolling our
Northern Boundary



Highest Point of Legodimo

Sitting on the roof of Legodimo Nature Reserve. WOW. That is the only word that can describe the view from the highest point of Legodimo. It is not easy getting all the way up that mountain and at some point you might consider giving up, but it is absolutely breathtaking and worth it once you make it to the top. All around you is the vast open wilderness. Up here is where your thoughts calm down and you can take the time to appreciate the beauty of Earth.



*The mountain we climbed is the one directly behind camp, it is called **“Tswi”** which is the Tswana name for Reebuck*

Football or Soccer?

In the spirit of the recent FIFA World Cup, the volunteers decided to construct a football field, they named it **“Theatre of Dreams”**



The field became a big hit. Eventually the locals from the nearby village **“Mathathane”**, started coming by everyday in the late afternoon to take on our volunteers. We had some epic games, but it seems that the locals got the best of our volunteers and returned home triumphantly, many times.



The volunteers also joined the locals for a few games on the village home grounds....



Project Article: Alien Plant Removal

The removal of Alien plants in the area around us is an important and constant task of the Legodimo Conservation team. Alien plants pose a threat to the indigenous vegetation of any area. This is because they do not have any natural enemies and therefore they are likely to over-populate the eco-system. If over-population occurs, these Alien plants compete for resources directly with the native species. Some Alien species can transform a vast area into a maze of vegetation, inaccessible by animals.



So we make it our duty to find and eradicate such plants. This month we got the chance to permanently exterminate a whole bunch of Cactus- **“Queen of the Night” (Mexico)**. We used fire to burn piles of plants we previously removed and laid out to dry. This was a very satisfying moment for staff and volunteers alike...but, alas, there are still many plants waiting to be eliminated.




 Burning the cactus is just one way of getting rid of it. There is also an option 
 in the form of **“biological control”**. This is when you take a natural enemy of 
 the plant (also exotic) and you distribute it amongst the plants. We are working 


Volunteer's corner



This story was written by Ingrid Herbelin from France, she joined us for

Bonjour aux anciens, nouveaux et futurs volontaires !

Je m'appelle Ingrid, j'ai 22 ans et je vis mon rêve en étant dans une réserve naturelle africaine !

Legodimo porte très bien son nom, c'est un coin de paradis dans un monde où le stress et le pouvoir sont maîtres !

On vit au milieu du bush avec pour seuls voisins des singes, des écureuils, des geckos, des éléphants, des hippopotames, des crocodiles, Brian le porc-épic... je peux continuer longtemps comme ça tellement la biodiversité est exceptionnelle ici, on s'en met plein les yeux !

On vit au rythme du soleil : quand il rayonne on peut faire la lessive, recharger les batteries de nos appareils photos et prendre de magnifiques photos !

Je suis restée trois mois ici et je pense que cela m'a changé. On apprend à vivre en communauté avec les moyens du bord, sans technologies poussées, on réapprend à vivre simplement. On apprend beaucoup sur la nature qui nous entoure, sur les volontaires qui viennent des quatre coins du monde et aussi sur nous-mêmes.

Alors que j'écris ces quelques lignes, il ne me reste plus que deux jours à passer dans « le paradis fait pour mon esprit » et je pense que se sera très dur de revenir à la civilisation autant pour le côté technologique qu'humain. En effet quand on vit 24 heures sur 24 et 7 jours sur 7 aux côtés de mêmes personnes des liens se créent, ça sera très dur de dire au revoir. Je suis tellement chanceuse d'être ici ! J'agis pour sauvegarder la biodiversité, c'est tellement mieux d'être sur le terrain, en contact direct avec la nature.

On est encadrés par une équipe ultra compétente, je suis très impressionnée par leurs connaissances.

J'espère revenir un jour dans ce paradis car une fois qu'on y a goûté on ne peut plus s'en passer...

Vis tes rêves avant de rêver ta vie...

Ingrid HERBELIN,

Française d'origine Normande, l'Afrique est née en moi...



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 ☆ Hannah Osborn and ☆
 ☆ Ingrid Herbelin ☆
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 ☆ Ingrid was a very interested ☆
 ☆ volunteer, she liked to know ☆
 ☆ everything from the smallest ☆
 ☆ plant to the biggest elephant. ☆
 ☆ We miss you Ingrid! ☆
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 ☆ Ingrid Herbelin , ☆
 ☆ Hannah Osborn and ☆
 ☆ Felicie Charles ☆
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Staff page

Here is your Legodimo team...

Left in this picture is me, Mieke Prinsloo. I am the Desk Officer and I deal with all the preparations, questions or concerns a volunteer may have, before and during placement.

Next to me is my husband, Gerrit Prinsloo. He is the Director of the project and he is your go-to man with anything concerning Nature.

Both of us grew up in South Africa and have a major passion for Nature Conservation.



Meet Rachel Kilby. She was born in the UK, she studied and got a degree, then she left for the Amazon jungle. Rachel has spent the last seven years working on the Projects Abroad Peru Conservation project.

This is the person you want next to you in a dangerous situation, she has impeccable “staying calm” skills and can handle anything from bugs to passport problems. Rachel joined our project as **Conservation Assistant** and we wouldn't give her away for anything in the world.



This is Sam. Our very own research co-ordinator. Sam studied Nature Conservation in Cape Town and then worked at Mapungbwe National Park during 2009.

Sam joined us in February and has proved to be a very valuable asset to our team. Not only does she get the job done, but she is always ready to make you laugh or brighten your day.



Andrew Jackson, our newest recruit. Andrew also studied Nature Conservation in Cape Town and has an immense passion for plants and literature.

Andrew joined us as a temporary staff member, but proved himself a million times over. Now we have asked him to stay and continue spreading his magic through the project.





Photos in month



The softer side of the Mighty Limpopo



Research drive



Chilling by the fire...



A curious teenage elephant



Full moon



G and Jannie, fixing the waterhole's pump



The road from Alldays to Camp

And Finally...

Well, that is it for August. The season is rushing towards Spring and the environment is about to change. I look forward to it.

Please remember to send me any comments or suggestions.

Please old volunteers– Send me your VOLUNTEER STORIES and photos of you in Le-godimo.

Have a great month stay in touch and be safe

Lots of Love

Mieke Prinsloo and the Legodimo Nature Conservation team.

xxx