

WE'VE GOT THEM BACK: RETRIEVAL OF THE GPS COLLARS

Last year some hyenas were fitted with GPS collars to determine their home range sizes and habitat use. The collars were equipped with a drop off device triggered by a remote control. We knew that the collars' batteries would be drained by the end of February and therefore we needed to retrieve them. Easier said than done, as the weather situation was as bad as usual and we therefore could not fly to locate the first animal, Merlin.



Merlin, fitted with a GPS collar

But, the luck was on our side and Gino and myself received Merlin's signal near the Unverhofft Pan in the Sperrgebiet. As we had never used the remote control before, it was a bit of a gamble, as we did not know how close we had to be to the brown hyena to be able to release the collar. Therefore we took it meter by meter. Finally the remote control "communicated" with the collar and we pressed the "red" button. Silence...and suddenly the signal pulse changed and we knew that the collar had dropped off. We scanned the area to get a glimpse of Merlin, whom we expected to see running somewhere in the area, but nothing. So we had to search for a needle in a haystack, a brown collar in a desert environment. Again, we were incredibly lucky and found the collar a few minutes later. It dropped off nicely and judging from Merlin's spoor around it, he was not too bothered about the detonating noise and walked off towards Atlas Bay.



Merlin's GPS collar after drop off

We still did not know if the collar worked and if GPS locations were recorded during the last few months, so we rushed back to town to download the data. We got nearly 700 data points from the collar and are busy analysing all the data at the moment.

Gypsy II's collar was detonated from the plane and it recorded over 2000 positions. Dollar's collar, which dropped off by itself in December had 300 data points stored.

We will keep you informed about the results in our next Newsletter.

Thanks to...

Gino Noli and Kathy Peard for all their time and enthusiasm helping to retrieve these collars. The collars belong our collaboration partner at Duke University, who received the data set for analysis as well.

SLOT TINS

Caron Crafts at the Waterfront collected N\$ 115-97 and Diaz Coffee Shop N\$ 133-80.

Thanks to every body for their support. Unfortunately one slot tin was stolen again and we decided not to replace it.

BAKER'S BAY MONITORING PROJECT

The GPS collar which was sponsored by the Commercial Bank Go Green Fund arrived from the Swedish supplier Televilt in Lüderitz in February. We arranged for Dr. Hartmut Winterbach to fly to Lüderitz at the beginning of March to dart one of the brown hyenas at Baker's Bay. We planned to spend at least one week in that area, as we had no idea how successful we would be. The brown hyenas around Baker's Bay are not habituated to humans and have never been trapped or darted before, so we hoped that it would be easy, but one never knows.



Trapping team Dr. Winterbach, Jessica Kemper and Justina Anghuwo with Halenge

Luckily, Jessica Kemper from the African Penguin Conservation Project was able to join us and we took Justina Anghuwo, our new assistant with on this field trip. Just as we arrived at Baker's Bay, the first brown hyena, Max, was walking past us and we could hardly withstand the temptation to dart him straight away. Max lives in the area north of Baker's Bay and we preferred a brown hyena from the south, as we want to investigate the effect of Diamond Mining on the Baker's Bay brown hyena movements and the active mine is south of Baker's Bay at present. Therefore we decided to spend the night close to the bait to try to dart a "southern" brown hyena. The plan did not work out: the jackals had a feast, but the hyenas decided to ignore the goat and rather go for their usual meal of seal pups. After breakfast the next morning, we spotted a hyena at the seal colony and followed it with the vehicle. It disappeared behind a rocky ridge after a

while and Hartmut managed to get close enough to dart it. The hyena turned out to be a well known animal, which was seen at Baker's Bay already in 2002. It also seemed to live south of Baker's Bay, so the luck was on our side. He is a healthy male and Justina named him Halenge. He will carry the collar for just over a year before it drops off and we can't wait to see the results.



Halenge fitted with the new GPS collar

As none of us wanted to leave for Lüderitz so early, we spent the next night at the igloo at False Plumpudding and caught another hyena there. Chubby is a huge male, weighing over 50 kg and we fitted him with a visual collar.

Hartmut then spent another two days in Lüderitz and we managed to replace Emma's collar, which would have expired end of October this year.

Thanks to...Namdeb and the Go Green Fund for supporting this study.

FALSE PLUMMPUDDING IGLOO

Thank you so much to....

Daggie and Volker Jahnke for supplying the well needed mattresses for our new research Camp.



Namdeb Oranjemund for sponsoring a table and chairs for the igloo.

ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION CENTRE LÜDERITZ

The Environmental Information Centre at the Lüderitz Waterfront, Harbour Square, opened on the 16th of March. It is open on weekdays between 8:00h and 17:00h and on Saturdays between 8:00h and 13:00h.



Justina Anghuwo is running the Centre and can be reached under 063-202117. She will also take appointments for presentations.

FUNDRAISING AND DONATIONS

Namdeb's monthly donation was renewed. This donation is used to cover the basic running costs of the Brown Hyena Research Project. **Namdeb** also exchanged our old project vehicle with a second hand Toyota. Thank you so much for your long term support and trust in the project.

We fitted the solar panel which was sponsored by **Siemens** and **Shell Solar** onto our new research vehicle.

A big thank you again for accepting our slot tins goes to **Luderitz Yacht Club, Coastway Tours, Sandrose, Diaz Coffee Shop, Luderitz Safaris and Tours, Kolmanskop Coffee Shop, Caron Crafts** and **Namibia Wildlife Resorts**.

The **NNF/Sidewinder Films** sponsored another year of aerial tracking and the **Predator Conservation Trust** in the UK sponsored three radio collars.

THE BROWN HYENA RESEARCH PROJECT WOULD LIKE TO THANK THE FOLLOWING PEOPLE AND COMPANIES FOR THEIR HELP AND SUPPORT:

Namdeb	Wilderness Safaris	Divpac	Coastal Electric & Hardware	Jessica Kemper	Ronel v.d. Merwe
Caltex	Wildlife Trust	Raleigh International	MET	Jean-Paul Roux	Steve Appleton
Siemens	NNF	Luderitz Bay Shipping & Forwarding	MFMR	Trygve Cooper	George Shimaneni
Shell Solar	Sidewinder Films	First National Bank	Luderitz Safaris and Tours	Volker Jahnke	Gisela Wolters
Predator Conservation Trust	Forbidden Land	Luderitz Yacht Club	Riaan Laubscher	Daggie Jahnke	Kolette Grobler
Conservation Int.	Coastway Tours	Luderitz SPAR	Gino Noli	Johann du Toit	Norbert Klosta
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Green Fund	Namibian Breweries	Diaz Point Exploration		Carla Jooste	
	BHP Billiton			Rene Rossler	



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If you would prefer to do a bank transfer, the details are as follows:

Brown Hyena Research Project – Commercial Bank of Namibia

Lüderitz Branch

Account number: 1610 007182

ADOPTION AND DONATION FORM

Post form to Brown Hyena Research Project, P. O. Box 739, Lüderitz, Namibia or
e-mail to strandwolf@iway.na

- Adopt/Sponsor a brown hyena for one year (N\$/ZAR 1500-00, Euro/US\$ 250-00, £ 150-00)
- Become a friend of the Brown Hyena Research Project - annual fee: N\$/ZAR 500-00, Euro/US\$ 50-00, £ 35-00 discount for members from Namibia (60%) and other African countries (30%)
- I would prefer to donate N\$/ZAR, Euro/US\$, £

I enclose a cheque for the amount of N\$/ZAR, Euro/US\$, £

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Thank you very much for your support!