



Peninsula Hyenas

by Ingrid Wiesel



Photo: Jessica Kemper



Camera Name: 529 157C 31-03-2018 23:11:15



Camera Name: 529 157C 11-21-2017 11:46:14

We've been monitoring the brown hyenas, resident on the Lüderitz Peninsula, with the help of VHF and GPS telemetry since 2000 and with camera traps since 2013. A few camera traps were stolen, but we never gave up and managed to find some suitable sites to study the Peninsula clan away from human activity. After Tosca and Alaika moved their centre of activity away from the Peninsula closer to Atlas Bay, 15 km south of Grosse Bucht, in 2010, not much activity was recorded in the area and also none of the known den sites was used to rear cubs.

In 2016, we began to suspect that there was breeding activity, as our camera trap near Grosse Bucht started to record unmarked brown hyenas on a regular basis. Young males from the E-Bay clan also started to show interest in the area and moved far outside their territory to investigate the new situation on the Peninsula. From 2017 onwards, an increasing number of sightings was reported by the public and at the beginning of this year, we received some amazing images from a young brown hyena foraging at Grosse Bucht and at the Second Lagoon. The same subadult was captured on our camera trap and we also recorded images of some beautiful adult animals.

We investigated whether the new Peninsula clan members originated from Alaika's litters, but the stripe patterns did unfortunately not fit. However, we also know that Minerva, the former breeding female of the Agate Beach clan, died at Grosse Bucht a few years ago. We already assumed that the Agate Beach clan extended their home range south onto the Peninsula when Tosca and Alaika left. Therefore, it is possible that the new clan originated

or is part of the Agate Beach clan. We will set-up additional camera traps at dens in July this year to continue to monitor breeding activity and to get to know these new, interesting animals. We are currently processing camera trap image data from the Peninsula, Atlas Bay, E-Bay, Rotkop and Prinzenbucht area. With the help of these images, we will not only be able to determine density in different parts of our study area, but also establish a photographic ID book for some animals. We will try to find out how many individual brown hyenas are actually foraging on the Lüderitz Peninsula at present and we will update you in one of our next newsletters. *Thanks very much to Jessica Kemper and Jean-Paul Roux for sending amazing ID photographs of the subadult hyena foraging at the beaches.*

Spotted Hyenas at Garub - Update

by Ingrid Wiesel



There has finally been some rain in the Garub area and the horses started to feed on fresh grass. So far, there haven't been any implemented changes in the management of the horses and hyenas in the area, but we may have news next time, as things seem to be moving ahead.

Marie Lemerle started with data collection and image data processing of the Garub camera traps and has been looking through tens of thousands of images taken at the Garub horse trough between 2015 and 2018, trying to identify all spotted hyena individuals. Her results are absolutely amazing and we get a first impression of spotted hyena clan composition and emigration rates. Clan size has been pretty stable between 2015 and 2016, with a monthly average of five different individuals recorded at the trough and a maximum of eight. This includes adult and sub-adult hyena sightings. Only the breeding females Nya and Clover (Clover was killed on a neighbouring farm last year) and Caspar were resident during the entire period.

Spotted hyena monthly averages at the trough increased to 8 different individuals including one cub, Nya and Caspar with a maximum of 10 from March to December 2017, this coincides with the time, when spotted hyena diversionary feeding started. Nya still has got her collar, but it is not sending a VHF signal any more, which means that we can't trigger remote downloads and we therefore don't know whether it is still recording positions. We tried to replace her collar last year, but the hyenas were just too skittish around the bait and did not approach it close enough to be darted safely.

We have two satellite collars available to be fitted to the Garub clan, and Marie is going to spend some time with the clan to let them get used to our vehicle, so that we may be able to fit new collars this year and to retrieve Nya's damaged collar.

Oranjemund Hyenas

by Ingrid Wiesel

We are probably going to report more about the Oranjemund brown hyenas in future, as we have planned a new study along the Orange River. However, they have always kept us on our toes, with hyenas often being reported roaming around in daylight at the Golf Club and also in town. Some even became well discussed subjects on social media.

In January, an injured brown hyena was seen near Op my Stoep and Shepherd Lodge. MET and the Brown Hyena Research Project were alerted, but no further sightings occurred. We just hope that it had not been hit and injured on the tar road and died of its injuries elsewhere.

Good-bye

We would like to use this opportunity to thank Inga Jänecke, who has left the Brown Hyena Research Project to pursue her PhD plans, for being part of the Project for so many years. We will certainly miss her enthusiasm and wish her all the best for the future.

Carnivore Sightings

A brown hyena mortality was recorded by Crispin Clay on the Lüderitz Peninsula in January. Namdeb reported the sighting of 5 cheetahs near E-Bay plant and brown hyena sightings were reported by Mandy Scheibe, Jessica Sack and Rachel du Raan. Thank you for participating.

Donations

Namdeb renewed their annual donation to the Hyena Project. We are very grateful for their continuous support. **Varta Namibia** has supported and supplied us with Lithium batteries that we need to operate our camera traps. A big thank you also to **David** and **Gudrun Winston-Smith**.

Camera Trap ImageSelection

by Ingrid Wiesel

Processing camera trap image data is very time consuming, boring at times, but also very rewarding:



HCO ScoutGuard 2.19.2018 3:38:25

Brown hyena crossing the fence....



HCO ScoutGuard 2.23.2018 6:02:15

and 'elegant' spotted hyena crossing.



23.02.2018 17:05:15

23.02.2018 17:05:15

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