



Obelixa – Our old Lady

by Ingrid Wiesel

Many visitors to the E-Bay area have the privilege to observe Obelixa at one of her dens or at a resting site. She has always been a very relaxed animal, but more so with increasing age. I've been busy analysing her data for a publication for the past three months and would like to share some of her life history with you.



Obelixa had her first litter on 21 June 2009. We don't know if any of these cubs survived, but seven months later, on 5 March 2010, she gave birth to her second litter and raised a single cub: KC Sowande, our current main breeding female of the E-Bay Clan. Obelixa was a rather restless mother with KC. She used 12 different dens and moved den sites 18 times, as if testing every single available den site within her territory for its quality. She seemed to like Pipe Den 1, E-Bay plant and Green Valley den the most and these are, interestingly enough, also the den sites that she used most in recent years. KC Sowande was raised for 14 months and two months later, on 7 July 2011, Obelixa had her third litter of two cubs. Both cubs survived and Balu stayed with his clan at E-Bay. We have already fitted two GPS collar to him since 2014.

On 9 July 2012, Obelixa gave birth again, but may have lost her litter. Her next litter was born on 29 January 2013, but did unfortunately not survive for more than a month. Her next litter was born on 18 August 2013. The single cub that was born was Lilinoe, the young female that we collared in 2015 and 2016. We haven't seen her since 2016 and hope that she has just emigrated and did not die. By 2014 KC Sowande reached maturity and started to breed together with Obelixa. That year, KC gave birth on 23 September and Obelixa four days earlier, on

19 September. Each hyena had one cub and we captured and collared these two males, Kai-Alex and Lloyd during this year's darting season. These two are also the youngsters that were filmed for the BBC documentary Planet Earth.

Obelixa also lost her sixth litter from 26 July 2015. On 25 January 2016, two cubs were born and we saw her two cubs while darting at E-Bay in April this year. KC Sowande had a litter in 2015 and 2016 and just gave birth at the end of August this year again. Obelixa doesn't seem to breed any more, but with 14 years of age and seven litters on the clock she deserves to hand over the future of the clan to KC. We still capture Obelixa on camera traps carrying food back to KC's dens – so she continues to look after the cubs of the clan.

What an amazing life!



Road-kills

by Ingrid Wiesel



It's been quite a sad quarter of the year, four road-kills were unfortunately reported to us. Two road-kills occurred on the road between Aus and Rosh Pinah, the number there has been increasing over the years and increased traffic is expected due to the tarring and opening of the road from Rosh Pinah to Oranjemund. This new tar road has also claimed its first brown hyena victim. A young animal was killed there just a few days ago.

Whenever possible, we drive out to determine the age and sex of the animal, take body measurements but also to collect tissue samples and examine the stomach content. If you come across brown hyena road mortalities, please continue reporting them to us. You can call or e-mail

us directly or use the contact form on our web page www.strandwolf.org. With your reported data, we can determine vehicle collision hotspots and in case of an increasing frequency of recorded mortalities, we can alert road authority and apply for brown hyena wildlife warning signs to be set-up.

Zane – Finally Found

by Ingrid Wiesel

After having been missing in action for nearly a year, Zane finally made an appearance again, at Mount Valley, 90 km north of his original home. Other spotted hyenas are regularly recorded at the through, but it is still unclear whether he immigrated into a new clan. We won't be able to do an aerial search for him this year, but if he is captured on that camera trap more frequently in future, we will try to spend a few days in the area to track him from the vehicle.

One thing seems sure though, he has left the Garub Clan for good. After we collared him in May 2016 near Garub, he disappeared out of the area, but was captured on camera traps further north in August 2016. Since then there was no sign of him and we could not locate him from the plane either. His collar should still be operational and it would be amazing to download data to see where he has spent the last 12 months and where he has been hiding from us.



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Telemetry

Inga managed to find all currently collared brown hyenas of the Atlas Bay and E-Bay clans to download data: Alaika, Clyde Too, Luther, KC Sowande, Lloyd and Kai-Alex. Wallace and Lilinoe of the E-Bay clan have been missing since last year and we assume that they emigrated.

Garub

There is no news with regard to the spotted hyena and horse situation at Garub (please see the previous newsletter for more details). The horses still receive supplementary food and the hyenas are still provided with carcasses by the Namibia Wild Horses Foundation.

Donations

The **Predator Conservation Trust** in the UK generously supported the project with £ 1000. We applied for these funds to cover our genetic analysis expenses. The samples are analysed at the Cheetah Conservation Trust's genetic lab.

Citizen Science Project Images

by Ingrid Wiesel

Our data collection with regard to images collected by Citizen Science Partners is coming to an end in October. We will still distribute a couple of camera traps to farmers in the south-eastern part of Namibia to collect occurrence/absence data. Below are a few images taken at various farms across Namibia, as well as within Mining Area 1 near Oranjemund. A lot of images are of older cubs or subadult animals and it is fantastic to see how well brown hyenas seem to be doing. Data analysis will start in January and we should be able to present the final results in June/July next year.

We've also had some sightings reported, quite a few from Mining Area 1, but also around E-Bay.



Holgat River



Mount Valley



Hooggenog



Mining Area 1



Sandveld Game Ranch

