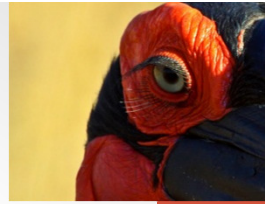


# Boom in the Bushveld

Mabula Ground-Hornbill Project

January 2012



## Another successful harvest season completed

Good rains and good people have ensured the 2011/2012 Southern Ground-Hornbill harvest season was a success (yet again).

A total of eleven chicks are safely in the capable hands of Delecia Gunn from Mpumalanga Parks and Tourism Agency at Loskop Dam Municipal Reserve and Lara Jordan, Elaine Bratt and Christine Giannone at Johannesburg Zoo. Hand-rearing these chicks requires skill and immense stamina for the long hours and is not an easy task by any means and for their commitment we are eternally grateful. We are all looking forward to seeing these chicks fledge.

**Background:** This annual initiative, during the breeding season (Dec - Jan), is conducted mostly in the Kruger National Park and the Associated Private Nature Reserves (APNR). The hornbills lay (on average) two eggs about three to five days apart in natural hollows in large trees (figs, baobabs and leadwoods are their favourites). If the first chick is healthy, the second one is always doomed to dehydration and starvation due to parental neglect; if there is something wrong with the first chick, the second will be raised to fledging instead – nature's insurance scheme. In collaboration with the Endangered Wildlife Trust, SanParks, APNR, Makalali Private Reserve, and the Percy FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology we harvest these doomed second-hatched chick. Each chick is stabilised and carefully transported to hand-rearing facilities. This effectively doubles the productivity of wild nests and a means to increase the Southern Ground Hornbill numbers. This is needed to safeguard the declining wild population and rebuild locally extinct population; through both the captive breeding programme and release back into the wild.



## New experience brought to the Project



**Natasha Nienaber** brings a wealth of new experience to the Project as Assistant Project Manager. She has excellent bush knowledge, has hand-reared white rhino and been the lead on a very successful cheetah release. We are very excited to have her experience and enthusiasm on board.



## Accepted for the MyPlanet Programme

We are proud new members of the MySchool MyVillage MyPlanet programme. If you would like to join or add us as a beneficiary please contact us for more information (project@ground-hornbill.org.za). This is a very easy way of supporting Ground-Hornbill conservation at no extra cost to you – every time you shop at Woolworths or various other outlets a percentage of your spend will be donated to the Project. Registration is quick and easy and then every swipe of the card will be helping us get more of these birds back into the wild.

donate @ <http://groundhornbillproject.givengain.org>

*The Ground Hornbill Team*

