



### **Limpopo Valley Horse Safaris Winter 2007 Newsletter:**

A wonderful season to date for LVHS; Both Tuli and Big Five rides have proved very popular. We have also seen the return of many guests and hope to see you all again next year. Also many new faces which we hope to see again.

Game sightings have been numerous and excellent. Brown Hyena on two occasions, both while riding from the Kgotta camp. Huge herds of eland (50 to 60) were encountered many times also in the Kgotta region. Some very special canters with zebras in the mopane veld; and sometimes with both wildebeest on one side and zebra on the other ensured guests were left with an indelible memory. Again big groups of giraffe (30 +), who seem to be getting more used to the horses, even approaching to have a look at us! Some of the more unusual sightings included two tawny eagles killing a Kori bustard, several sightings of the cheetahs from horseback, aardvark on the game drive, and of course numerous leopard sightings both on horses and the game drives. Some spotted hyena sightings too, one day they worried us a bit by following the horses for about 15 minutes! And of course lots and lots of elephants, the latest count has 663; only in the Northern Tuli Game Reserve. Some memorable moment for guests included riding through a group of 200 plus elephants without bothering them at all. I think everyone let out a great sigh of relief once they passed through!

Our new and much bigger tents have been admired by all. The mobile safaris are becoming much more comfortable without losing their appeal of being in a wilderness area. Our safari manager Adrian is busily perfecting the art of setting up and taking camp down in record times, whilst keeping his sense of humor and enjoying his bush office!

The Two Mashatus camp is proving itself to be a real hot spot for hyenas, leopard, jackal and lion calling at night. It makes for a welcome start and finish for each safari, what luxury to have an ensuite loo and shower with a view! The lovely Rondavel built by our local staff and Cor has a lovely atmosphere, and has seen some late nights as guests enjoy the open bar and good company of fellow riders and guides.



Our horses are all in mid season peak fitness, when given too many days off they all get a twinkle in their eyes and show a bit of a buck and a squeal.

Our Vet Sheelagh Higgity has also been to deworm and do the teeth; all behaved well and seem much more comfortable with smooth teeth! Poor Kalahari seems to have bone chip that is bothering him on his hind fetlock joint so will be out of action for a while. Thanks to Hans and Monique our Dutch vets Rhodes is making a super recovery from a nasty wire cut on his hind leg. Thankfully this year did not see any African Horse Sickness, always a big worry during end of summer and autumn.



Our new horse Boggart, pictured left, is going well and has completed a couple of safaris after having a couple of bouts of bilary (tick bite fever) earlier this year.

We have been very lucky to have had some very good volunteers to come and help us with the horses, keeping them disciplined, supple and of course well loved. Thanks to Jenny, who got Lancelot to stop hanging on his left rein as well as teaching the young shires not to worry about people dismounting unexpectedly!! And to Antoine who mastered the art of riding Impi as well as being Adrians right hand man. And then thanks to Shrek who could single-handed lift anything at all!

West and Sahara are still going strong and more recently West has started working with Tugela, who is making an exceptional guide horse. Festus who is Wests back up guide has also been the lead guide for a couple of ad-hoc rides, and very successfully too, no doubt he will be guiding safaris in the near future. Mpho continues to improve his riding and is a big help with schooling the more difficult horses. David as occasional back up guide and my head groom is excelling at teaching the two new grooms Jupiter and Baker, how to look after the horses to a high standard. Martha, Grace and Maitseo all continue to experiment with new and improved menus; the most recent addition to the menu is chocolate mousse cake and classic French lemon tart. Very yummy!

Cor and I continue to enjoy every minute of living in this beautiful spot, and the amazing opportunity to ride over such vast country. Harvey and Coolmore are still the most spoilt horses in the barn! Definitely there is never a dull moment at LVHS!

Cor and Louise

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