



Namibian Environment & Wildlife Society

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NaDEET outing: 1 to 4 May 2010

We have just returned from a wonderful experience at NaDEET situated in the NamibRand Private Nature Reserve in the southern Namib. Usually an environmental education centre aimed at children, NaDEET once a year opens its 'doors' to a limited number of NEWS members. This year about 20 adults and 10 children had the privilege to experience first hand in a pristine area, how we can reduce our impact on our environment.

The trip down from Windhoek was an experience in itself as it rained on and off all the way. It made for very attractive scenery indeed, a wet and chilly breakfast on top of the beautiful Spreetshoogte pass and slippery roads. We won't quickly forget the delicious apple tart and coffee at Solitaire in the pouring rain!

We were welcomed by Victoria Keding, the director of NaDEET, her husband, Andreas and the rest of the NaDEET staff. Victoria explained that awareness of our carbon footprints is the first step to change. During our stay our water and energy usage and waste production would be monitored, and we would get feedback on the last day. We only used 12.6 litres per person during our 3-day stay! Solar is the main source of energy used at NaDEET- for heating water, parabolic solar cookers that provided instant heat and which are used like a stove top, for solar ovens and storing power for lighting and other electrical needs (e.g. overhead projectors, charging cell-phones, etc). Fuel-efficient stoves using newspaper bricks, and gas for the refrigerator are also used. Refuse is sorted and binned accordingly. As much re-cycling as possible is done.

The following environmental newsletters of interest have recently been distributed and can be viewed at the following websites:

- BIRDCALL - NEWSLETTER OF THE NAMIBIAN BIRD CLUB, MARCH 2010
WWW.NAMIBIABIRDCLUB.ORG
- CHEETAH CONSERVATION FUND NEWSLETTER
WWW.CHEETAH.ORG
- CHEETAH CONSERVATION FUND PRESS RELEASE - FUND EDUCATION PROGRAMMES DURING THE UN'S YEAR OF BIODIVERSITY
WWW.CHEETAH.ORG

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NaDEET outing continued

We were given an outline of the program planned for our stay. The first day, a half-day dune-walk exploring whatever we come across, with a visit to the newly inaugurated campsite close to the Family Hideout later in the afternoon followed by a drive to the Gorrasis Mountains, taking us through different vegetation zones, the next day.



The NaDEET Centre from a wet dune vantage point (left) and Victoria Keding identifying beetles caught in the pitfall traps (right) (© Olga Jones & Manda Steynberg)

Sleeping arrangements had to be adjusted the first night as it was still raining and the 'huts' had only shade netting for roofs. Most people slept in the dining area and lots of water was saved, because most people didn't bother with showering in cold water (the only down-side of solar geysers!!). The sun came out the next day, drying out our wet bedding, etc.

The dunes were compacted by the rain, which made the dune-walk much easier. Our walks lead by Victoria (carrying Marlene, their 9 month old baby) very ably assisted by Andreas (carrying Alexandra, their 3 year old daughter), were very informative including all aspects of the fauna and flora we encountered, all set in spectacular scenery. Some of the highlights were finding a horned adder, all curled up and a Namaqua chameleon. From a botanical point of view, the river courses in the granite hills were most interesting with many plants flowering, probably as a result of the rain. At night we had various talks, Victoria on NaDEET, Mike Scott on NamibRand Nature Reserve, Werner Schultz on the fuel efficient Vesto Stove and Manuela Schmid on NEWS, followed by a (small) camp-fire to socialize afterwards on the non-raining nights. The last evening, traps were set, using 20 yogurt containers and 10 small metal traps, and eagerly inspected the next morning by the children (and adults). Various tok-tokkies, dung beetles, a young sun-'spider' and three hairy-footed gerbils were trapped. Unfortunately no golden moles!

This was altogether a most informative and enjoyable experience, done in a very professional but relaxed manner! Hopefully we will all try to implement some of the methods taught at NaDEET in our everyday lives and so help to use our environment more sustainably.

Olga Jones & Manda Steynberg

[Viktoria & Andreas Keding and the entire NaDEET staff are once again thanked for hosting NEWS & for all their tireless input & effort!]

Giant Sable update

A recent update concerning Giant Sable from Angola has been published acknowledging Pedro Vaz Pinto's, a researcher, who presented a NEWS talk on 27 February 2008 - "The status of the Giant Sable in Angola".

The update concerning Giant Sable capture and movements to various locations in Angola is titled: "Recent Milestones in the Efforts to Save the Giant Sable in Angola" by Jeremy Anderson, Richard Estes, Joe Holmes, Peter Morkel, John Frederick Walker and Pierre van Heerden.

This note can be viewed on the NEWS website:

www.NEWS-Namibia.org

Neckartal Dam update

As NEWS members were informed in September 2009, a feasibility study for the proposed Neckartal Dam and Irrigation Scheme on the Fish River in southern Namibia is underway.

All interested and affected parties (IAPs) should be aware that while the environmental and socio-economic impact assessments have been underway since the end of last year, the report on the scoping phase of the study has been approved and should be available to IAPs.

For more information, contact Günther Leicher at Knight Piésold Consulting (Pty) Ltd

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(© Manuela Schmid)

Roll of Honour

We gratefully acknowledge the support of our corporate members, which allows us to pursue our mission to conserve the natural environment of Namibia and to promote appropriate protection, wise and sustainable use of natural resources and sustainable development.

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