

## Project Update: February 2017

### MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Date	Meet with	Representing	Purpose	Project title/reference/purpose
08/02/17	Jaco Joubert	Kameeldrif-Wes Skool	Discussion on the continuation of the after school programme in collaboration with Roots & Shoots	After School Programme
09/02/17	Shannon Thorrold	Xyanamix Bookkeeping	Discussion around VulPro's financial / bookkeeping admin duties	Bookkeeping
10/02/17	Constant Hoogstad and Eskom	EWT and Eskom	Site visit regarding vulture electrocutions next door to VulPro	Vulture electrocution
10/02/17	Susan Wilkins	TUT Student	Questionnaire regarding her ecotourism assignment for her third-year environmental management degree	Ecotourism assignment
15/02/17	Lana Dyer	Boehringer-Ingelheim	Catch up, site visit and project update	Sponsor meeting
24/02/17	Ronel Breet	Standard Bank	Discussion and finalisation of VulPro's bank accounts	VulPro bank accounts
25/07/17	Director's meeting	VulPro's directors	Quarterly director's meeting and warm welcome to Antoinette Kotza as our newest director	Director's meeting
27/02/17	William Bowerman and Simon Gear	University of Maryland in the USA and Birdlife SA respectively	Skype meeting on vulture sampling collection for lead studies and field visits to Olifants in March	Sample collection and field studies

### **Media**

Ongoing media, awareness and exposure through Facebook and Twitter, as well as other social media throughout February; with 5000 followers on Kerri Wolter's profile and 7346 on the VulPro Facebook page. We have 858 followers on Twitter and now 288 followers on Instagram.

Date	Media	Publisher	Purpose	Comment
11/02/17	"VulPro and vultures"	Radio Today	Awareness and exposure	Update on vulture conservation work related to VulPro's activities
15/02/17	"VulPro and Xanado Echo Estate"	Komorant	Awareness and exposure	A short article was published on the support VulPro received from the local housing estate, Xanado, in Hartbeespoort.

## CONSERVATION

### A. DIRECT ACTIVITIES

#### *Rehabilitation*

Date	MR Ref*	Activity	Follow up	Comment
01/02/17	01.01	Collected a captive adult AWB vulture from Lori Park Zoo	Monitoring for pairing and breeding activity	Collected the adult AWB vulture from the Lori Park Zoo for the purpose of him joining our vulture captive breeding programme for population supplementation.
10/02/17		Collected a dead, electrocuted adult Cape Vulture	N/A	Collected a dead adult CV which was electrocuted in Rietfontein below VulPro. A report has been sent to the municipality and once again we await their response.
13/02/17		Released 3 Cape Vultures	Monitoring for re-sightings	Two CVs were released at the Nooitgedacht breeding colony and release site and the third one released at VulPro using the soft release method inside our open top enclosure. All three birds came in during January 2016 and only needed some tlc.
15/02/17	02.02	Collected an injured / electrocuted CV from Bela Bela	N/A	The bird unfortunately died on route to VulPro. He had collided with an electric game fence which caused internal burning and bleeding.

18/02/17	03.02	Collected a sub-adult AWB vulture from Mockford farms in Polokwane	N/A as the bird will remain in captivity for breeding purposes	The bird flew into a power line and broke his wing, exposing his bone. Unfortunately the wing had to be amputated. The bird has recovered well and has joined the open top handicapped vultures.
19/02/17		Travelled through to Lichtenberg to pick up a grounded AWB vulture which flew off before we arrived	N/A	A young AWB vulture was grounded for 24 hours on a farm alongside a dam. They thought the the vulture was poisoned but before we arrived, the vulture flew into a tree and then left, healthy and strong.
21-22/02/17	04.02	Travelled to Zimbabwe to assist with a rehab AWB vulture and fitted a tracking device to him	Monitoring his movements via the GPS device as well as visual sightings from his patagial tags.	The bird was initially grounded and then under guidance by VulPro, was rehabbed by Vic Falls Trust. VulPro then assisted with the final rehab methods regarding tagging and fitting a tracking device for monitoring purposes. This is the second vulture fitted with a tracking device in Zimbabwe. The vulture was released and left on 28th February 2017 at Victoria Falls.
21/02/17	05.02	Collected a very weak and grounded White-stork from Xanado in Hartbeespoort	N/A	The bird had several days of intensive care with no real diagnosis. After days of no improvement and no idea as to the cause, the bird was humanely euthanised.
21/02/17	06.02	Collected a CV fledgling from Mockford Farms in Polokwane	Monitoring for hopeful recovery and release	The bird flew into a power line and broke his leg which has since been pinned. The leg is still very swollen and bruised and prognosis for a full recovery is guarded.
24/02/17	07.02	Collected a grounded adult CV next door to VulPro	Monitoring for re-sightings	The bird was just grounded due to being water logged after 2 days of heavy rain but was released the following day with a metal ring and tags on both wings for monitoring purposes.

25/02/17		Searched for grounded juvenile CV in Skeerpoort	N/A	Bird 229 was found grounded in Millstream School and Riverside Security Complex, 2 separate occasions. Staff travelled to collect him but his flight was strong and he flew off both times.
27/02/17		Released a CV	Monitoring for re-sightings	A CV which came during 2015 with bad feather damage was finally ready for her release and after tagging, she was released in our open top enclosure using a soft release method.
27/02/17	08.02	Collected a young white-faced owl that was left on the side of the road after being knocked by a vehicle	Monitoring for recovery	The owl has an injured eye and prognosis is guarded. He is on a strong course of multiple eye drops every few hours throughout the day and is being treated sensitively for stress and starvation.
27/02/17	09.02	Collected a young CV in the Eastern Cape from the Burgersdorp area	The bird will be transported to VulPro for captive breeding purposes	Unfortunately, due to a power line collision, the bird has a broke wing in the wrist joint. Due to the break being in the joint, it cannot be pinned and thus, although the break will fuse, the bird will never regain full flight to be released.
28/02/17		Searched for a 'lost' AWB vulture which has flown from Tanzania to the NW Province in SA and from the tracking data, appears to have limited movement	N/A	Unfortunately, after searching the area for over an hour, the bird nor the tracking device was recovered and we are thus hopeful the bird is okay.

## Research and monitoring

Date	Project title	Project	Comment
04-07/02/17	Tree nesting vulture captures	Olifants	Visited the Olifants River Private Game Reserve where we attempted to capture tree nesting vultures with nooses again. Unfortunately, again we were unsuccessful but this time due to several carcasses being available for the birds to consume. We will continue in March.
12/02/17	Vulture capture	VulPro	Undertook a vulture capture for tagging and training purposes. Ringed and tagged 19 vultures and trained three bird ringers on best tagging and ringing methods.
February 17	Calcium study	VulPro	We are also still assessing Cape vulture calcium levels (in egg shells and various stages of chick development) across various facilities and backgrounds in collaboration with the University of Pretoria's faculty of vet sciences. Lauren Naidoo has now registered this study as her PhD at the University of Pretoria.
15/01/17	Research publications	VulPro	Our publication entitled 'High occurrence of extra-pair partnerships and homosexuality in a captive Cape Vulture <i>Gyps coprotheres</i> has been accepted in Ostrich for publication. Pending and still being written up: Manuscript: Can Cape Vulture (head) morphometrics be used as a sex determination tool? Manuscript: Can Cape Vulture juvenile plumage be used as a sex determination tool?
February 17	Power line aversion study	VulPro	Power-line aversion behavior programme continued and is being monitored via GoPro cameras and direct observations every afternoon and morning.
February 17	Re-sighting database	Southern Africa	Ongoing updating of the re-sighting database.
February 17	Vulture tracking	Southern Africa	Ongoing monitoring of all vultures still with tracking devices.

## Education & Training

Date	Activity	Project title	Project	Comment
01/02/17	Educational tour and community service	Educational and awareness	VulPro	A large group of 63 Grade 9 students from Pecanwood school undertook 2 hours of community service at VulPro as well as toured the Centre to learn about the importance of the species and the need to conserve them.
03/02/17	Educational tour	Educational and awareness talk	VulPro	A small family group of 5 guests toured the Centre and learnt about the work we undertake as well as the reasons behind saving vultures.
05/02/17	Educational tour	Educational and awareness	VulPro	A group of 4 guests toured the Centre and learnt about vultures, their importance to our ecosystem and the work we undertake aimed at saving vultures across the globe.
07/02/17	Educational tour	Education and awareness	VulPro	An overseas visitor and rehabber visited the Centre to learn about our work, our rehab programme as well as see our enclosures and rehab centre design for her work in Botswana.
11/02/17	Educational tour	Educational and awareness	VulPro	A couple toured the Centre and had a close-up experience with some of our vultures.
13/02/17	Educational tour	Educational and awareness	VulPro	One local guest toured the Centre and learnt about the work we undertake to save vultures.
16/02/17	Educational tour	Educational and awareness	African Wildlife Auction Rooms in Vaalwater	Gave a talk on "Saving our vultures" to a large group of 50 guests from the Waterberg Conservancy Forum. Brochures and contact details were given and lots of interest was expressed in starting vulture feeding sites and trying to attract the vultures back into the area.
24/02/17	Educational tour	Educational and awareness	VulPro	A small family group of one adult and two children toured the centre and learnt about the work we undertake.
28/02/17	Educational tour and presentation	Educational and awareness	VulPro	A group of 20 home school kids and nine parents visited the centre, learnt about the work we undertake, the importance of protecting vulture and then had a close-up experience with some of the vultures at the Centre. Each child was given two educational booklets.

**Hide booking:**

- 02/02/2017 Kristy MacNellie (3 people)
- 12/02/2017 Eleanor Hattingh (1 person)

**Administration and Pending**

Collection of donated carcasses

Maintenance of VulPro vehicles

Ongoing treatment and care of vultures and birds of prey at VulPro.

Fundraising

Report writing

Press release writing

Administration

Vulture restaurant feeding at the Vulture Centre

Facebook, Instagram and Twitter updates

Maintenance

Management of volunteers and students

Management of the vulture hide and bookings

Management of HR issues

Management of VulPro as a whole

Management and co-ordination of vulture research

Maintain updated captive breeding and rehabilitation records

Continual updates to website, including range maps of tracked birds, sponsor logos, and publications.

Continue to draft VulPro's Vulture Rehabilitation Manual manuscript.

Construction of our release enclosure at the Nooitgedacht breeding colony