



VULTURE PROGRAMME MONTHLY REPORT

February 2019

INTRODUCTION

February proved to be a testing, exhausting and ridiculously busy month with the addition of 43 flamingo chicks needing to be rescued as part of the greater Kimberly Flamingo Rescue operation. VulPro opened its doors to these characters but not only were we looking after the cute and cuddlees, we tended to volunteers, their needs and the needs to operate a state of the art flamingo rescue centre. If anyone knows how I operate, I do not do half measures. I cannot thank each and every individual enough and my heartfelt thanks goes out to each and every one of you. I am pleased though to also now report the chicks have moved on to their next phase as VulPro once again needed to focus our attention on vultures and our up and coming breeding and monitoring seasons. So, what you will read in the below report, is in between us working 24/7 handraising flamingo chicks. I trust you will see our dilemma in remaining sane with the amount of work we have already undertaken in 2019. None of this is possible without your support so please again, accept my heartfelt thanks to each and everyone of our sponsors.

MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Date	Met with	Representing	Purpose	Project title/reference/purpose
05/02/2019	Debra Toor	EcoLiteracy	Skype call to confirm ease of communication for future Skype Meeting	Education
06/02/2019	Megan Murgotroyd	Post Doctorate with UCT	Discussion around her post doctorate study and the use of VulPro's tracking data for a wind farm risk map modelling exercise	Post doctorate research
13/02/2019	Jakes Swart and Marlien Low	Leopard Lodge	First meeting of the year, where we discussed planning and our next gala dinner; to be hosted in August 2019	Gala/ Fundraising
13/02/2019	Alexandra Dovey	Whitley Awards	Skype call with Alexandra to discuss Kerri Wolter being shortlisted for the Whitley Conservation Fund Award. Hundreds of proposals were submitted and they have now shortlisted 5 individuals/organisations.	Whitley Fund
16/02/2019	Kevin Graham	Dallas Zoo	Site visit to VulPro and to catch up on VulPro and the work we undertake	Sponsorship
19/02/2019	Thando Mqgada and Bennedict Mbatha	TUT students	Held a meeting with TUT intern students Thando and Bennedict regarding conduct and expected behaviour during their internship period	Staff/Interns
20/02/2019	David Scott	RaptorMed	Training regarding VulPro's new database	Training/Collaboration
23/02/2019	David Scott	RaptorMed	Ongoing training of the database	Training/Collaboration

Date	Met with	Representing	Purpose	Project title/reference/purpose
25/02/2019	Steven Sotiriou	Urban Signature	Urban signature came to the VulPro facility to view our artificial breeding cliff, as they plan to construct a similar one at the Johannesburg Zoo	Advisory
26/02/2019	John Thompson and Joan Sitzaterley	Thompson Law Attorneys	An amazing member of the public, Joan Sitzaterley has chosen to leave her estate to VulPro NPC, and wanted to view the property and the work we undertake	Donation/Trust
27/02/2019	Tshwane Municipality	Tshwane Municipality	Follow up meeting regarding the need for mitigating municipal power lines surrounding VulPro	Power line mitigation
27/02/2019	David Scott	RaptorMed	Ongoing training on the new VulPro database	Training/Collaboration

Media

Ongoing media, awareness and exposure through Facebook and Twitter, as well as other social media throughout January; with 5000 followers on Kerri Wolter's profile and 10 839 on VulPro's Facebook page. We have 1160 followers on Twitter and 719 followers on Instagram.

Date	Media	Publisher	Purpose	Comment
01/02/2019	Radio	Waterberg Stereo	Awareness	Radio interview with James Breed of Waterberg Stereo to spread awareness about the plight and importance of vultures
14/02/2019	Newspaper	Fourways Review	Awareness	Article about VulPro's involvement with the Flamingo rescues, entitled "Rotary supports chick rescue"
14/02/2019	Newspaper	Kormorant	Awareness	Article about VulPro's involvement with the Flamingo rescues, entitled "VulPro cares for Kimberley Flamingo Chicks"
21/02/2019	Television	KykNet	Awareness	KykNet filmed a short segment of the work VulPro does and the important role that vultures play for one of their shows, called, "VeranderDinge"
25/02/2019	Magazine	EcoTraveller	Awareness	Interviewed for a article in EcoTraveller's next magazine

CONSERVATION

A. DIRECT ACTIVITIES

Rehabilitation

Date	MR Ref	Activity	Follow up	Comment
02/02/2019	01.02	Collected a weak Cape Vulture from the Steynburg area in the Eastern Cape	Monitoring for improvement and release	Individual came in very weak but with no physical injuries, and will be released shortly
05/02/2019		Released two Cape Vultures from Rookwood, Eastern Cape which came in during December 2018.	Monitoring for re-sightings and GPS tracking	Individuals were released after recovery, and will be monitored through visual re-sightings and GPS tracking
08/02/2019	02.02	Collected an injured Cape Vulture from Thabazimbi	Monitoring for improvement	Individual came in severely dehydrated and emaciated, with an injured wing. We suspect the injuries were from barbed wire fencing.
09/02/2019	03.02	Collected an imprinted juvenile Cape Vulture, which had been confiscated from guards at PG Bison in the Eastern Cape	Monitoring for release	The bird is otherwise healthy but is being sent to VulPro head office where he can learn to feed and interact with other vultures in a captive situation before his hopeful release.
11/02/2019	04.02	Collected an adult African White-backed Vulture Wolmarandstad in the North West Province from suspected poisoning	N/A	Unfortunately after 48 hours of ICU treatment, the bird succumbed to her poisoning.
14/02/2019	05.02	Collected a juvenile Cape Vulture from the Rietfontein area close to VulPro	Monitoring for release	The bird was found to have electrocution wounds on his legs but otherwise, in good health. He has been treated accordingly and has been moved into our rehab enclosure to prepare him for his release shortly.
15/02/2019	06.02	Collected a juvenile African White-backed Vulture from the Wolmaransstad area	Monitoring for release	The bird was found to be slightly dehydrated and super hungry. He has been stabilized and is being fed up in preparation for his release.
15/02/2019	07.02	Collected two dead electrocuted Cape Vultures near Rhino and Lion Nature Reserve	N/A	Reports have been submitted to Eskom and investigation is currently underway.
21/02/2019	08.02	Collected a Black Chested Snake Eagle with an open wing fracture from Rustenburg	N/A	Due to the nature of the injuries, the most humane option was to euthanize the individual
21/02/2019	09/02	Collected an electrocuted dead Cape Vulture in Skeerpoort	N/A	Report submitted to Eskom

Date	MR Ref	Activity	Follow up	Comment
22/02/2019		Three African White-backed vultures and five Cape Vultures which came in during January for rehab, were released	Monitoring for re-sightings	All seven were released at the Nooitgedacht breeding colony and vulture restaurant
25/02/2019	10.02	Collected an electrocuted Cape Vulture from the Steynburg area	N/A	Sadly, the individual succumbed to its injuries shortly after having been collected
26/02/2019	12.02	Collected a Cape Vulture with an wing injury from Skeerpoort	Individual will remain in captivity due to its injury	X-Rays will be taken in order to determine the extent of the injury, but the break appears to be in the elbow joint.

Captive breeding

Date	Project title	Project centered at	Comment
February 2019	Ex-situ breeding	VulPro	<p>We spent February preparing most of the captive bred chicks for their move to the release enclosure. Thus, so far, all 2018 captive bred White-backed vultures have been fitted with their tracking devices (3 in total) and will be moved to the release site early in March 2019</p> <p>Three of the six 2018 captive bred vultures have been fitted with their tracking devices. The other three will be fitted with theirs during the first week of March.</p> <p>One 2017 captive bred Cape Vulture has been refitted with his device after he suffered a severe infection but has recovered well enough to be moved with the others. In addition to this one, another 1 2017 captive bred individual and 2 2016 captive bred individuals will be refitted with devices and moved.</p> <p>In total, 10 Cape Vultures and 3 African White-backed vultures will be moved to the release site early in March for the next phase of their journey and their start to freedom. Any additional rehab vultures will be moved with them for their release as a group and at the colony.</p>

Research

Date	Project title	Location	Comment
February 2019	Vulture re-sighting database	VulPro	Continue to update the re-sighting database- Including repeat individuals, we have recorded 36345 re-sightings to date.
February 2019	Vulture tracking device studies	Southern Africa	Continue to monitor the vultures with tracking devices and assess their movements and investigate any stationery positions. Currently there are still 16 active cellular tracking units and 9 active MaxPlank transmitters.

Date	Project title	Location	Comment
February 2019	Health Checks	VulPro	Continued to undertake health checks of all captive birds housed at the VulPro facility
20/02/2019	Site visit/ Power line survey	Christiana	Undertook a site visit in Christiana, where it was reported that African White-backed Vultures were nesting on Delta transmission structures. A power line survey was undertaken, and suspected nests were investigated.
February 2019	Vulture Restaurants: The role of supplementary feeding stations in conserving southern Africa's vultures	VulPro/ UCT	PhD student from UCT is continuing with his research and his first paper in in prep entitled "The distribution, number and resource contribution of vulture supplementary feeding sites in South Africa." VulPro is proud to be a co-author of this paper
February 2019	Wind Turbine Collision Risk Model	VulPro/ UCT	Research done by UCT postdoc Megan Murgatroy to create a model based on VulPro's tracking data together with others, in order to create a collision risk model of wind turbines. This research has now finally commenced.
February 2019	To identify areas of collision risk for Cape Vultures	Eskom/VulPro	A collaboration with the Biodiversity and Development Institute and Eskom. This project will create a GIS map indicating the correlation, if any, of powerline structure locations and the movement of vultures fitted with tracking devices. This project is in the developmental phase as we sought for funding and await for additional collaborators such as KZN-Ezemvelo to come on board.

Education & Training

Date	Activity	Project title	Location	Comment
01/02/2019	Education, awareness and training	Volunteers	VulPro	Taylor Rubin arrived from Zoo Atlanta to assist with Vulture Health Checks and learn about the work we undertake at VulPro for a two week period.
03/02/2019	Education and training	Volunteers	VulPro	Volunteer Bonnie Vandam arrived to assist VulPro with the rearing of 37 Flamingo chicks.
07/02/2019	Education and Awareness	Education and Awareness	VulPro	Held a Skype conference call with Debra Toor and 150 students, to show them the VulPro centre over a virtual interface.
09/02/2019-10/02/2019	Education and awareness	Volunteers/Community service	VulPro	Matthew Bauwer along with three scouts assisted at the VulPro facility in order to complete their community service hours

Date	Activity	Project title	Location	Comment
12/02/2019	Education and Awareness	Volunteers	VulPro	Long term volunteer John Turner arrives for his third visit, and will be assisting at the centre for a 2 month period.
14/02/2019	Education and Awareness	Volunteers	VulPro	Volunteer vet Maren from Dallas Zoo arrived to assist VulPro with the rearing of the Kamfers Dam Flamingos, as part of the PAAZA programme.
15/02/2019	Education and Awareness	Volunteers	VulPro	Volunteer Cher Fajardo from Detroit Zoo arrived to assist VulPro with the rearing of the Kamfers Dam Flamingos, as part of the PAAZA programme, as well as vulture work.
16/02/2019	Education and Awareness	Volunteers	VulPro	Volunteer Rebecca Young from Zoo Atlanta arrived to assist VulPro with the rearing of the Kamfers Dam Flamingos, as part of the PAAZA programme.
16/02/2019-17/02/2019	Education and awareness	Volunteers/Community service	VulPro	Matthew Bauwer along with three scouts assisted at the VulPro facility in order to complete their community service hours
19/02/2019	Education and Awareness	Volunteers	VulPro	Volunteer Serengeti Rodrigues arrived to assist and learn about the work we undertake at VulPro

Hide booking

27/02/2019- Shawn Hefner- 2 Adults

Administration and Pending

- Collection of donated carcasses
- Maintenance of VulPro vehicles
- Ongoing treatment and care of vultures and birds of prey at VulPro.
- Ongoing care for captive vultures and supplementary feeding of wild birds at Nooitgedacht.
- Fundraising
- Report writing
- Proposal submissions to various funders
- 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.