

Bambelela's days start with monkeys snuggled up our cheeks and waking up with the first raise of sunshine in the morning and ends usually with in Nappy wrapped tiny Pinkfaces cuddling up in bed with us. In between we have many projects running to better the days for the adult monkeys, new arrivals and ex-Pet monkeys which are in desperate need of psychologically therapy. We also assisted C.A.R.E. with a few baboon rescues and transfers.



Since Bambelela has been "approved of in principle" during the last quarter of last year more people seem to have heard about our work with Vervet Monkeys. Although we are currently busy with two releases the influx of orphaned Pinkfaces and Ex-Pets has been enormous.



Our biggest challenge started with Rafiki's Troop Release of 41 Monkeys at Arnot Farm 17km out of Bela Bela on the Alma Gravel Road. A beautiful location with the mountains offering endless feeding opportunities with wild fruit bushes and plenty of suitable habitat. In Rafiki's Troop were all our first hand raised monkeys and for sure they are the ones we had to learn from and the one most used to us and Humans. After a smooth capture and transfer mission the monkeys were for 3 weeks in the release cage which gates opened 25 November 2010.



All of them running into freedom. Rodney, our release manager moved into the cage. The Monkeys enjoyed their new found home and freedom. Many weeks later it became clear that not all of them were interested to really live on their own, as some of them stayed more and more around the camp, no longer moving off with the others and not joining the ones which ventured out in the wild. A few of the monkeys ended up at neighbour's farm and houses: Maisha at Lucanus Lodge 7km away being the attraction amongst the few holiday maker who almost started to fight for the honour to feed the monkey, spoiling her with all sorts of treats and happy about receiving Maisha's company in return....and the well sought after photo. Three weeks past this way, she never returned to her troop which were on the move. She fell back into the comfort of being with humans.

Romeo, Bwana, Thandi and her Pinkface-Baby Thando on her belly ended up at the Orange farmer, who had still a ton of oranges dumped at the slopes of the mountains for Baboons and Vervets to enjoy. No need to hang around the houses, and they urged us not to trap and remove them, but the workers there had started feeding at their houses, all sorts of food like bread and Pap.....although we did explain the concepts to all neighboring farmers in our pre-release visits...but the answer was given back to us: "but she has a tiny baby, we needed to give her food". So instead of "just passing" the houses these few monkeys fell back into the comfort of being near Humans too. Sometimes going away for 1 or 2 days but always returning for more permanent. We decided to bring them back too.

The last and recent one brought back was our big Boy Dingaana. Almost 2 months after the release we received a call from a farmer saying that there was a male vervet living with them on the farm, which they didn't mind and quite enjoyed.....first there were more...but then only him. Our questions asked and the same answer, yes, they started feeding him because he was so nice and consequently coming closer and closer to them. They thought of a great relationship they are having with the monkey trusting them more and more. Now their relationship was so trusting, that after over 3 weeks this monkeys which even got named by them, tried to follow them into their house. When one of their dogs slightly pinched the tail of the monkey they got worried for the monkeys' safety and called around and eventually called us. Lienkie and Doug went out with a trap and quickly ID' Dingaana who was very happy to see them too, 5km away from the release camp. We trapped him with ease and he is now the big boy next to Tsotsi in the new Bwana Troop.

Rafiki took 3 weeks to decide whether she wanted to be wild or not and was the last one to join the free life with little Adam.

All in All one could look at the release like this: 50% success and 50% failure...I would have wished that the troop didn't split the way they do, but half of the monkeys living free is better than none released. Now we will see how much more time the remaining monkeys will need to reform their troop , interesting to see that most of them are just before entering sexual maturity being 2,5 to 3 years old, which is possibly the reason for them having been with their emotion in between staying in comfort or exploring the new freedom and choosing the easier way of staying around the camp for weeks on end....??? What a pity that there is no handbook on how to rehabilitate Vervet monkeys...but Bambelela is working on DATA.



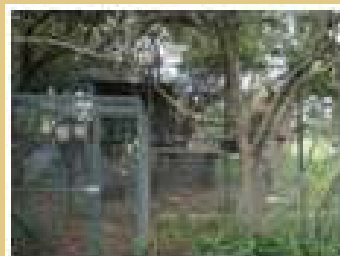
Only a few days after coming back to Bambelela , Impi had a deadly accident. At feeding time he choked on a Pumpkin seed. All so unlucky, although we were within seconds on the scene I couldn't save his live. My heart is sore beyond any description, it still hurts and will keep on hurting. I felt so guilty about not being able to help him which possibly could have been because of the foreign object entering his lungs and causing them to collapse, resulting in his quick death. I tried Heimlich manoeuvre,

having him upside down and all. No help. My "Impi" who taught me everything I know about Pinkfaces was gone. He is gone. R.I.P. my big boy who choose to come back to Bambelela although offered the freedom in the Waterberg.

As the year changed we were busy with our next release. Release Manager "Shane" is on his last task for Bambelela. Sadly for Bambelela he is taking on a new position not too far away on another farm .

We were lucky to have been offered a release site at Dunroamin Safaris, over 20km out of Vaalwater on a 608ha game farm. It is Duimpy's turn to be re-released after their release at Klippan farm didn't work out for all the wrong reason and 'Sangoma"-stories after which we had to take the monkeys, who were already

for 2 months free-living, back to Bambelela for their own safety.The troop of 12 Monkeys is expected to do well and we will keep you posted.



Some adult female monkeys were brought to us and with lots of love, time and passion we have to trigger their natural instinct, teaching them to be social and maternal. Letting them change from solitary living Pets into social Vervet monkeys. A time consuming effort but we are happy to say that we have 4 of them living together and enjoying the Pinkfaces' daily visits. Two others, very dominant fighters are paired up right next to them.

That's what Bambelela does with ex-Pets and disturbed monkeys: first we evaluate them, than we pair them, after which we are trying to group them according to their character, personality and behavior and then the final step in "trooping" them, integration or the forming of a new troop. After having had so much bad luck due to local businesses being paid by us for services and no goods delivered [our failed Diary2011 fund raiser] or wrong goods installed and damages occurred, no refunds has been made yet. We do not have money to seek legal advice.

A new idea was born recently: A way to get everyone involved in our cause. Family, friends, previous, present and future guests, students and volunteers, schools, also for the young and the more wiser ones. GUARDIAN ANGEL CERTIFICATES suiting everybody's pocket and helping the Monkeys in our care for as long as you can afford to help them. A nice "green" gift and a way to be part of it all and to stay in touch with the monkeys you may have had as a Pet or the pleasure to caring for. Monkeys which were special to you and meant a lot to you while visiting here. Monkeys which posed for your camera or gave you a nip. Monkeys which story touched your heart. Now you can help the monkey with the given second chance to live.

A Guardian Angel Certificate for Monkeys over 10 months of age in our Rehab is a R100, contribution per month which goes straight onto our Fruit&Veggies Market Account.

A GUARDIAN ANGEL Certificate for our special need monkeys in the Handicap or Golden Oldies Camps is R150 per month, which supports their vitamins and medication.

A GUARDIAN ANGEL Certificate for supporting an orphaned Pinkface Monkey Baby for 10 months, assisting us with the costs for Nappies, S-26 No1 Formula Milk, Body Wash, Tetavax Vaccine etc.

All certificates will be specially designed for you with your photo, name, the monkey's photo and history. A monthly update with a photo of "your monkey" will be mailed. The certificate will be mailed or posted to you and will be very decorative and a nice advertising tool showing your interest in Vervet monkey Conservation.





Bambelela
Wildlife Care & Guestfarm

W-A-N-T-E-D Guardian Angels for our orphaned Vervet Monkey Babies W-A-N-T-E-D 22J anuary 2011

When being a Guardian Angel to a Pinkface it will also give you the opportunity to name and visit the monkey here at Bambelela.

We also had some nice releases: 2 hand raised Pearl spotted Owlets have flown into freedom next door on top of Leopard's Rock. A rescued Leopard Tortoise from the road in the middle of Bela Bela has found a new home this side of the mountains. And a Blue Wildebeest Baby was found laying next to an electrical fence and brought o us. Rodney Junior is hand raising the little Bull and it is doing very well. We also started to form a new Banded Mongoose troop after two have been brought to us and ten Ostrich youngsters have been returned to their owner after taking care of them this past 6 months.

EVERYONE is VERVET WELCOME to visit us and join our guided tours. We'd like to thank you for supporting our cause and for caring. Sending you all lots of Bushveld Greetings from Bambelela, Silke & the Bambelela –Team.

A big THANK YOU VERVET MUCH for our newest GUARDIAN ANGELS:

Marian McFarlane-Weissenborn for being the Guardian Angel to “PRINCE” and Matthew McFarlane for being the Guardian Angel to “PRINCESS”.