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Introduction

The Vervet Monkey Foundation (‘Foundation’) is proud to present its Annual Report for the year 2011. This year’s focus was for the sanctuary to become more educational in its outreach, and to set up a suitable fundraising programme to help with day-to-day funds. The Foundation is proud of its achievements this year being able to complete all goals outlined in the Annual Report from 2010. On behalf of all involved with the Foundation, it is our pleasure to present the 2011 Annual Report.

Signed,

Dave Du Toit (Director & Co-Founder) &
Josie Du Toit (Animal Manager & Rehabilitator)
Volunteers and Staff

Volunteers play an integral part in the day-to-day running of the Foundation. 2011 saw 144 international volunteers arrive at the Foundation demonstrating the VMF is getting more exposure each year. The range of volunteers shows how people from different areas and backgrounds can all work harmoniously to provide a service to achieve one goal, and how widespread the conservation message is.

In addition to the number of volunteers arriving at the Foundation, several new voluntary staff members were recruited to join the already dedicated team assisting in the running of the sanctuary and maintaining upkeep of the enclosures. As mentioned, in 2010, volunteers had an incredible impact on the success of the Foundation, and all the achievements listed in this year’s report could not have taken place without the outstanding commitment shown by volunteers from around the globe. The Foundation would like to extend its heartfelt thanks to each and every volunteer, both long term and short term, for the achievements that made 2011 such a success.
2011 saw the arrival of a serious fire onto the Foundation. The fire reached Camelot Enclosure on 18th September and volunteers, workers and staff members worked hard to extinguish the threatening fire.

The fire was put out successfully with much after care being given to the enclosure in the following days to ensure it did not spark again. Unfortunately despite the hard work of all the volunteers, there were three young vervets that did not survive due to burns and smoke inhalation and one baby that had to be euthanised due to severe pain and smoke inhalation.

Due to public awareness through Facebook of the disaster striking the Foundation, all recovery funds for the enclosure were raised within 3 days.
Enclosure Changes

The following enclosure changes were made during 2011:

- Dino and Daniel enclosure (the new one hectare orphan enclosure) was completed during the beginning of 2011.
- Gismo enclosure was extended to allow more monkeys to be integrated into social groups.
- ‘Special Cases’ block was knocked down.
- Camelot enclosure fences and water pipes were repaired after the intensive fire in October and new vegetation was planted to replace that which was lost during the fire. Artificial shade was provided whilst the new vegetation established.
- Robert enclosure fencing was repaired to ensure the enclosure was secure and functional.
- Automatic water taps were installed in many of the enclosures and introduction cages that were yet to have them meaning monkeys have greater access to a constant supply of fresh water.
Gismo Extension
**Arrivals**

Ten injured, orphaned and ex-pet monkeys were brought to the Foundation during 2011. Injuries were either from dog bites or hit-by-car. Of these ten monkeys, four were able to return to troops in the wild due to knowledge about their wild troops and location found.

**Orphans**

Four young orphaned monkeys arrived at the Foundation at the beginning of 2011. Buster, a juvenile whose mother was killed by a car, was brought in during May with the hopes he could return to the wild. Unfortunately due to mis-information, his troop was not found and he successfully joined the orphans from 2010.

November 2011 saw the arrival of three orphans which all took part in the foster mum program running at the Foundation during this breeding season.
The Foundation continues to receive young monkeys that have been kept as pets every year. The most common age for ex-pet arrivals is from 3 months to one year. Often, ex-pets are orphans that have been cared for during the start of their life and not handed over to a rehabilitation centre soon enough; others are monkeys that have been sold as pet monkeys on the side of the road.

It is important to the monkey’s rehabilitation process to ensure vervets are out of the public’s hands as quickly as possible. Monkeys that are brought to the Foundation at a younger age are easier and much quicker to integrate into a natural social group and have fewer learnt behaviours and social problems in the troop.

The Foundation had two ex-pets arrive in 2011; TJ, in February, who was successfully integrated with the orphans of 2010, and Francis in October who displayed severe signs of distress and trauma on arrival, started her integrations and became friends with the troop monkeys in the new Dino and Daniel enclosure.
Releasable Arrivals

Three juvenile monkeys were hit by cars and brought into the Foundation during 2011 and all were successfully returned to the wild after a full recovery was made. Despite many arriving with severe head trauma, the Foundation has had much success recovering and returning car accident victims back with their troops in the wild.

Returning them to the troop was made possible due to the specific information regarding their wild troops that was given to the Foundation upon their arrival and following up the times of day troop members were seen so they could be located.

A one year old female from the Letsitele area was also successfully returned to her troop in March after being bitten by a dog.
Jayla
Integrations

Integrations of small groups of monkeys (or single monkeys) into natural enclosures is an integral part of the Foundation ensuring all the primates here get the most natural life possible. 2011 was a busy year for integrations and movement of monkeys to more suitable enclosures. Integrations vary depending on the dynamics and numbers of each troop along with the individual personality of the monkeys being integrated. Some monkeys are easier to integrate than others taking as little as 3 weeks to become accepted as a troop member whilst others can take months. It is a job that requires attention to individual behaviour, patience and dedication for long periods of time to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all monkeys involved.

A total of 33 monkeys were successfully integrated into suitable social groups during 2011 including:

- Emblem (an ex-pet adult female) into James Enclosure
- Sangoma, an adult male was kept in a small cage for many years which led to trauma and stereotypical pacing behaviour. He was successfully integrated in less than 3 weeks into Sickbay Enclosure
- Dolly (adult female) was integrated into Sickbay Enclosure
- Dino & Daniel juvenile integrations
Quarantine

The nine monkeys who spent a period of time in the Quarantine facility moved to introduction cages around the Foundation after veterinary health checks gave them the all clear following a tuberculosis scare. Some of these monkeys started their integrations into social groups which meant the quarantine facility remained vacant the rest of the year.

Geriatric females Cane and Brownie, along with juveniles Abel, Uh-Oh and Tom-Tom were re-integrated into the extended Gismo Enclosure, Victoria, Niamh, Button and Goblin were moved to an introduction cage at Skunkey enclosure and Batman was returned to an introduction cage at Goliath enclosure.
A group of 15 orphans was split into two groups to enable them to be integrated into a troop. The juveniles varied in age and backgrounds as to when and how they arrived. Many of them were ex-pets and had been kept in the hands of the public too long which has made their rehabilitation a much more lengthy process.

Integrating eight juveniles into a large troop is no easy mission and so the juveniles spent their first time by themselves in Koko enclosure in November where they also spent time getting to know the troop. This enabled them to explore the enclosure safely before meeting a large group of troop monkeys at once.

The Koko integration will continue through 2012 thanks to the dedication of voluntary staff and dedicated long term volunteers.
Irene
This one hectare enclosure was completed during the beginning of 2011 with the official opening being February 2011.

The 13 juveniles living in Disneyland received a health check, micro-chip and de-worming medicine before moving up to an introduction cage at the new enclosure.

The juveniles spent their mornings and afternoons out in the enclosure to begin with and spent their first full night in the enclosure towards the end of March. This was a big achievement for this group of juveniles getting them one step closer to a natural life.

Meisie, a geriatric female, was successfully integrated into the troop with the juveniles during April. June saw the movement of seven orphans from 2010 from Disneyland to Dino and Daniel enclosure.

The orphans began integrations into the troop during July after having met the troop through the fence for a month. They became accepted as part of the troop ....
2011 saw the start of a primary focus introducing the orphaned monkeys with vervet foster mums as quickly as possible to ensure a smoother and quicker transition to a natural habitat and troop.

Three orphans arriving in November were hand raised by voluntary staff and taught to drink milk from feeding cages before being introduced to three different adult females.

All three introductions were successful with two orphans, Ayla and Spiegel, moving into Sickbay enclosure with foster mums Pippa and Chico, and Lew moving to Gismo Troop with foster mum Eva during December.

The program has been very successful in the early stages seen during 2011 and will continue into 2012.
Pippa and Ayla
The Foundation was lucky enough to welcome two volunteer veterinarians Amy Murton and Sue Harvey during 2011. With the assistance of Veterinary Nurse Lacey McCutchen they were able to complete over 30 vasectomies on juvenile males at the Foundation. Vasectomies are an important practice for the Foundation to continue enabling the centre to maintain its non-breeding status. There was a significant decrease in the number of births at the Foundation this year.

The time donated by the veterinarians help in reducing the financial burden relating to medical bills and provides an opportunity for volunteers and staff to learn about the veterinary practices which occur on site.

Microchipping of a number of monkeys also took place during 2011 which allows the accurate identification and record keeping of individuals in addition to using facial recognition alone.
One of the Foundation’s local staff - Benny Reginaldo Mucavele sadly passed away in May 2011 due to sickness. Benny had worked at the Foundation for over 10 years. Benny had gotten to know the monkeys and their behaviour very well over the years and had become a big part of the Foundation, it was a tragic loss.

Six staff in 2011 were trained in First Aid to ensure a continuity of basic human emergency procedures which the Foundation feels is vital when living and working with groups of international and local people.

Staff training continued throughout the year by promotion of Voluntary staff Daniel Grove to Head Primate Carer to ensure knowledge is passed on and shared to all new Staff. Hollie Vercoe played a vital role of Assistant Manager in 2011 to ensure the smooth running of the Centre.

The Foundation would like to thank all local and voluntary overseas staff for their continued dedication and commitment of care.
Education

Education of the public with regards to the importance of not only the vervet monkey but all species is crucial if change is going to be made in the community.

Many children follow in the footsteps of their parents and so educating at the local schools is important as it teaches the children to think differently of the vervets and other wildlife.

The children of today are tomorrow’s leaders and so ensuring the local children understand why we need to peacefully co-exist with vervets, how they play a role in the eco-system and why we should worry about conservation means the vervets have a better opportunity in the coming years.

It is also important to educate visitors from overseas as many know very little about vervet monkeys. It is encouraging for the Foundation to have visits from overseas students as it not only encourages people to learn about the vervet monkey but also increases awareness about the Foundation in general.
School Visits

The Foundation made trips to visit three different schools in 2011 which included a presentation about vervet monkeys as most schools the Foundation works with do not include any subjects on primates or vervet monkeys in their curriculum so it was seen as an opportunity for education. The schools targeted were those that already live in close proximity to vervets.

Schools visited in 2011 included:
- Forest Hill School, Haenertsburg
- Haenertsburg Primary School
- Educare

Of these schools, Educare chose to participate in the Pan African Sanctuary Alliance (PASA) Disney Program which is a 10 week education program designed to teach the children about vervet monkeys and educate them to understand the importance of them in the environmental community. This project will continue in 2012 in more detail.
After construction of the Education Centre took place in 2009, it was decided during 2011 to extend electricity to the Centre to enable the Foundation to provide professional PowerPoint presentations to visitors at the Foundation.

Electricity in the Education Centre has allowed the centre to be used to its full potential. It allows visitors, international and local, to have a specific area to learn about the Foundation and the importance of the vervet monkey.

It has also provided the Foundation with the ability to show short films regarding conservation and ethical living to volunteers to help educate them and offer many topics for discussion.
For the third consecutive year, the Foundation was visited by students from Ball State University, USA, for a day during June.

They were accompanied by Brandi Wren (PhD Student) from the Department of Anthropology, Purdue University, USA and partner Shawn Hurst. They spent their time observing the vervets, learning about their behaviour.

The Foundation was also visited by 24 students and their professors from the University of Queensland, Australia for a day during July.

These students received a presentation from Dave Du Toit (Director & Co-Founder) in the Education Centre followed by a tour of the Foundation where they were able to observe and learn about the vervet monkeys.

The university was impressed with the tour and look forward to returning to the centre in the future with new students.
Awareness Events

Awareness events are an important part of the Foundation’s education program both locally and internationally.

By holding stalls at different festivals and fayrress, the Foundation can provide education to the local communities about the plight of the vervet monkey and explain the importance of this species to the environment, whilst overseas they can educate people about the problems the vervet faces in South Africa and spread awareness about conservation.

Overseas events also assist in advertising the Foundation as a worthy place to volunteer at and these events provide the Foundation with many new volunteers each year whilst raising the Foundation’s profile.

Networking has played an important role connecting with other organisations and contacts through the VMF UK events Co-ordinator Sarah-Jane Smith who is responsible for organising the UK events.
Local Events

The Foundation attended two events in South Africa to promote awareness of the Foundation and to educate the public about the importance of the vervet monkey during 2011:

- Eco-Fayre, Tzaneen Country Lodge, 28 June
- Sustainable Living Festival, Hoedspruit, 30 Sept – 2 Oct

International Events

Six events were attended in the United Kingdom during 2011 and were organised by the VMF UK Events Co-ordinator Sarah-Jane Smith. These events create awareness about the Foundation to people overseas and help to increase the Foundation’s profile.

The following events were attended:

- VegFest, Brighton
- VegFest, Bristol
- Bristol Festival of Nature, Bristol
- Animal Charities Fayre, Camden, London
- VegFest, Tunbridge Wells
- Employers Fayre, Bristol
The Foundation relies heavily upon volunteers and volunteer donations for the daily running of the sanctuary. May, 2011, saw the launch of the ‘adopt a monkey’ programme, which was a goal for the year.

The programme allows donors to adopt a specific monkey and receive updates on the progress of their chosen monkey and the Foundation. This promotes a more personal relationship between sponsors and the Foundation, providing the sponsors with something for their donation.

The online shop was officially opened in June, 2011 with a few additional products for sale. Virtual products are for sale allowing sponsors to ‘buy’ food for the monkeys, as well as being able to buy new products now available. New products include a vegetarian/vegan recipe book (launched in June), VMF Calendars (launched in October) and fridge magnets of the monkeys available for adoption.
The Vervet Monkey Foundation Veggie/Vegan Challenge was launched in November 2011 to coincide with World Vegan Month.

One of the core beliefs of the VMF is the importance of ethical living, compassion and the lack of this which occurs in the meat and animal product industry. For this reason, the Foundation provides only vegetarian meals and encouraged all volunteers to participate in the VMF Veggie/Vegan Challenge.

This challenge was for meat eaters and vegetarians to change their food options for one month whilst asking for sponsorship from family and friends. The Foundation strives to promote compassionate eating and being an informed consumer. The funds raised from this endeavour are being used to secure a release site; a goal for 2012. The challenge was successful during 2011 and looks to be continued in the years to come.
Social media plays a large role in the fundraising for the Foundation as the VMF can reach a multitude of people through the Internet.

The VMF Facebook group was reaching close to 1000 members towards the end of 2011. Facebook allowed the possibility for all recovery funds for the Camelot Fire disaster to be raised within three days. This meant recovery efforts could be started a lot sooner than was expected and allowed a better recovery to occur.

Without the use of social media like Facebook, the Foundation would not be able to reach the extent of people it currently does.

The use of social media alerts people to the plight of the Foundation and encourages people to donate, volunteer and learn about the vervet monkey.
The Foundation remains an active member of the Pan African Sanctuary Alliance (PASA) since joining in 2005. The PASA Code of Conduct adopts a number of values required for all PASA certified sanctuaries to exhibit, including:

- a concern for the primates;
- integrity;
- transparency;
- fairness;
- conscientiousness;
- professionalism; and
- personal and institutional commitment to conservation.

The Foundation attended all three PASA workshops in 2011 which are used for sanctuaries to come together and discuss the happenings going on in their own foundations and to assist each other with any difficulties each may be facing. Each year the conferences are held in different countries providing opportunity to visit PASA Sanctuaries in that area. The Foundation attended the following during 2011:

- PASA Management conference; England
- PASA Education conference; Kenya
- PASA Veterinary conference; Uganda

A visit from PASA to the Foundation to perform a routine inspection, ensuring the Foundation adopts the values offered by PASA was welcomed and carried out during November 2011.

Further information about PASA can be found at http://pasaprimates.org
The GFAS (Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries) mission is to promote excellence in sanctuary management and in humane care of animals through international accreditation, collaboration, mentoring, and greater recognition and resources for sanctuaries, while seeking to eliminate the causes of displaced animals.

The Vervet Monkey Foundation has been a verified GFAS Sanctuary since March 2010. GFAS is a Washington, D.C.-based organization that is the only internationally recognized body providing standards for legitimate animal sanctuaries.
Luka
The Year Ahead

The 2012 year is assured to provide continued progress for the Foundation with the staff and volunteers offering their services to make it possible.

The Foundation proposes the following objectives to be attained during 2012:

- Raise enough funds to make a release of a troop viably possible
- Secure a release site and start an action plan for a release of a troop
- Design a more suitable food storage area to reduce the amount of waste accumulated
- Strive to continue the integrations of more monkeys into social groups

We trust the volunteers arriving during 2012 will provide the Foundation with unprecedented services to assist in completing the goals outlined for the year.
Annual Report 2011

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