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VERVET MONKEY FOUNDATION

REHABILITATION • EDUCATION • SANCTUARY



Vervet Monkey Foundation

Annual report 2024



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Vervet Monkey Foundation

Annual Report 2024

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Vervet Monkey Foundation 2024

Introduction

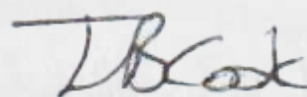
This past year at the Vervet Monkey Foundation has been one of resilience, growth, and absolute dedication. We are incredibly grateful to everyone who stood by us during the challenges we faced. The respiratory outbreak that swept through the foundation was one of our toughest battles of the year, but thanks to the tireless efforts of our team and the support from our community, it came to an end with minimal lives lost. Your encouragement and generosity made a real difference, and we can't thank you enough.

As always amidst challenges, there were also many moments to celebrate and give gratitude. We were so proud to see Lucas Maluleke win the first-ever Norm Rosen Leadership Development Grant through PASA, an incredible achievement that reflects his growth and commitment. Further education included teaching local student chefs about plant-based foods and a bit about the monkeys as many cultures here can be afraid of them.

We also made improvements to our volunteer accommodations, now providing bedding and fans to make stays more comfortable for those who give their time and energy to help the monkeys.

As the year drew to a close, we faced yet another challenge — a heatwave. While temperatures were lower than the previous one with lots of shelter and vegetation, we still had some heartbreaking losses as we did everything possible to protect the monkeys. Climate change is shifting the seasons, and each year reminds us of the importance of adapting and preparing for these extreme weather events.

Through all of this, our mission remains as strong as ever. We continue to learn, grow, and do everything in our power to provide the best care for the monkeys who call the foundation home. Thank you for being part of this journey with us, your support means the world.



Dave Du Toit (Founder, Director) & Josie Cook (Director, Rehabilitator)



International and

Local Management Team



Arrivals

In 2024, the VMF welcomed 45 new arrivals (15% more than the year before), many of whom required specialised care:

- 28 vervet orphans (same as the year before)
- 4 wild rescues who returned to their wild home troop (Maddie, Rokk, Jazzbo, Franky)
- 12 rescues who stay at the sanctuary (Chef, Basil, Ouida, Toru, Big Samango, Shahil, Serena, Laser, Zouzou, Angel, Claire and Ace)
- 1 baboon baby (handed over to C.A.R.E. Baboon Rescue Sanctuary)

In early 2024, baby season slowed down significantly, only receiving another 7 orphans until March but this didn't mean less work. In March and April, we welcomed SPCA-confiscated Chef and hit-by-a-car juvenile Rokk. In May, Ouida and Basil arrived at their forever home at the sanctuary, while Jazzbo just took a short recovery break before returning home. In July, little blind Toru arrived after being attacked by a dog. We also received two wild samango monkeys. Franky was about a year old and hit by a car. The older male was likely also been hit by a car, but unfortunately succumbed to his wounds shortly after. In August, 9 months old ex-pet Basie joined us to get a fostermum, Shahil arrived after being confiscated and Laser was handed in by Johannesburg Wildlife Vet after she got separated from her troop and stranded alone on a farm. In October, Serena was confiscated and able to join Shahil as a friend. The very first baby of the season was the 'wrong' species - a little baboon girl of about 4 weeks old. She only stayed with us for 6 hours, before Sam from C.A.R.E. Baboon Sanctuary picked her up to raise her amongst her kind.

On the 12th October, baby season 2024/25 officially started with two-week old Nova arriving. 19 more babies followed her by the end of the year.

Mazikeen & Miri



Sophie, Sam &
Baboon Baby



Basil



Foster Mums

The VMF foster mum programme was first established in 2011. Since then, we enabled 280 vervet orphans to live with groups of up to 50 monkeys and from as young as 3 months old in enclosures rich in indigenous bush, simulating their natural habitat surrounded by electrified fencing. As early as 6 weeks old, the orphans have no human interaction after they have learnt how to use the milk feeding cage, all the care is given from monkey foster mums. The success speaks for itself; more than 99% of all orphans in the foster mum programme are now living a happy life with a new family. Rehabilitating orphans this young into social troops enables them to maintain their inherent fear of people and ensures the best possible outcome for them to live in a wilder state.

In 2024, 30 orphans were integrated through the foster mum programme to live a more natural life into 11 troops (Skunkey, H&B, Koko, Global, James, SAAV, Goliath, Skrow, Engeltjie, Gismo, and D&D).

In January 2024, Duimpie arrived. She was kept as a pet until she was three months old. As she was kept away from other monkeys since her birth, she was terrified of the furry creatures. Together with Remy, who had been in baby care for a while due to a broken arm, Duimpie was introduced to fostermums at Engeltjie in February. Sadly, they didn't bond with Molly. When Fritzi and her fostermum Aer were released to the troop in March, Duimpie and Remy stayed behind. They were adopted by granny Gladys instead. Duimpie connected with the elderly female deeply and now they are strongly bonded and happy troop members.

After Supermum Mrs Gold from Goliath mysteriously disappeared (just like she appeared many years back), other females had to step up to her standard. In November, Ellie adopted her second baby Nova, and Claudette-Marie showed her talent as big caring sister to her and baby boy Rudi. Unfortunately, Rudi didn't get the memo when release day rolled around and adult female Mirabelle took her chance to adopt a baby herself.

Goliath Family with Wiz, Nugget & Ellie



Claudette-Marie
with Nova



Chimichouri &
Panacur



Integration

The foundation integrates individual monkeys into social groups for their own benefit, as social enrichment is necessary for primates. With troop integrations, the individual monkey gets acquainted with the troop through a large introduction cage on the side of the enclosure, monitored closely by the integration team. Once the monkey is confident with individuals in the group, they are then released into the troop enclosure. The team continues to monitor the monkey until they demonstrate that they are comfortable within the troop. In 2024, 37 monkeys were successfully integrated into social groups. 32 vervet orphans were successfully integrated in troops through the foster mum programme and another 7 babies were adopted by their foster mums.

Rexie, miracle rescue from last year, was introduced to his 'big sister' Cuddy and brother Floki at Groomingdale's. On Valentine's Day 2024, he fully moved in and has enriched their three lives tremendously. Days are filled with playing and grooming.

Juvenile boy Chef arrived in April after he was confiscated by the SPCA. He was kept in horrendous conditions, tied up on a leash without access to water and food. Despite this trauma, Chef was eager to start anew. He befriended matriarch Polar in the Skrow introduction cage and in July, he joined Skrow troop. He immediately signed up for the boy's club to play, run, jump, chase and play tag all day long with juveniles Chaim, Pepe, and Yonds.

In early July, adult female Jaintjie joined H&B troop. She already knew Count and Harmony from living together with them in introduction cages. Thus, her integration was very smooth and quick. Now, Roman from Royal troop has moved into her introduction cage to get familiar with the troop before he joins next year.



Chef



Cuddy with Rexie



integration team

Releases

Whenever possible and appropriate, the VMF releases injured wild monkeys back to their own troops in the wild after recovery. When wild monkeys are brought to the VMF, we record the day, time and exact location they were found so that the team can eventually return to find the family troop. We are unable however to release orphans back to their wild troops as they require their mother's milk to survive.

The last wild rescue in 2023 arrived in late October and was called Derek 'Merensky' as he was found at the Merensky school just outside town. His background is unknown, but the large bruising on his abdomen indicated that he was possibly hit by a car. In March 2024, he was finally able to return to his family in the wild after a long recovery. Being an adult male the length of time was still ok for him as males also change troops every 2-5 years.

Maddie was found in a body of water at a mine. After she was rescued, she was handed in to receive care at the VMF. She was hypothermic, but luckily otherwise unharmed. After a short visit, she was able to return to her home troop in the wild.

Rokk was found concussed after he was hit by a car. After his recovery, he was ready to be released - unfortunately, his troop wasn't aware that we were looking for them. The monkeys evaded detection for several weeks and when we were just ready to give up, Dave received a call with the location of Rokk's troop. Racing out, the release team just arrived in time on the scene and Rokk was able to rejoin his family.

Franky was a little samango monkey of about 1 year who was found alone close to dogs. He had a concussion and healed very well, very quickly. After 3 weeks cautionary waiting time in case any neurological symptoms would appear, we gladly released him back to his family living in the mountain forests of Magoebaskloof.



Jazzbo



Rokk



Franky

Veterinarians

Local vet Dr. Sarah at the Serala Animal Clinic once again gave us a reduced fee to perform vasectomies. In total, 32 vasectomies were carried out. This procedure allows males the full range of natural behaviour while preventing reproduction.

In January, the medical team at the VMF was still fighting to save lives from the pneumonia outbreak caused by the bacterium **Klebsiella pneumonia** that had started in December 2023 and had taken several lives (see Annual Report 2023 for more details). Very sadly, in 2024 we lost Luxi from H&B and Dobby from Koko troop to this disease. To our relief, the outbreak slowed down and disappeared in the following months. So far, we can't predict yet, the long-term consequences such as possible lung scarring, thus we are still cautious and quick to treat any respiratory disease.

In October, top section primate carer Camilla noticed adult female Ricky from Gismo troop not being able to move properly. Ricky was rushed to the vet and there a puncture to her lumbar spine was detected that had paralysed her legs. Very concerned with Ricky's health and life quality, we gave her the best treatment, including the assistance of Animal Healer Ellie De Silva from Indigo Rhythms. After two weeks, Ricky was able to do her first steps. After a total of 5 weeks, Ricky had regained most of her mobility and was able to rejoin her troop. By now, we are delighted to see Ricky enjoying her full recovery.

Another special case was rescue boy Toru. Find more about him on [page 16](#).

Big thank you to Serala Animal Clinic and Tzaneen Animal Clinic for their fantastic work throughout the year. We appreciate the close teamwork and the easy communication with them. With their help, we can offer treatment for the monkeys beyond our scope.



Ricky back in Gismo troop

Toru

Toru arrived on the 15th of July and he had rather bad luck in his life up to this point. He was rescued from a dog attack, that left him with several large wounds. The reason, why the dog was able to get him, was that unfortunate Toru couldn't see - and didn't know where to run to, when the dog came for him.

Once at the sanctuary, Toru had to endure daily wound cleans and amongst the many meds also a course of antibiotics. Sadly, besides all of this, one of his cracked ribs developed a bone infection and the little boy needed even more antibiotics and wound cleans. Brave as he is, he endured it all.

Once his wounds healed up, we started to introduce him to the special needs group at Calypso's Corner - including Shasta (fully abled fostermum), Jay-Bee (blind adult male), Bell (blind young adult female), and Zach (juvenile with a slight coordination disability). At first, Toru stayed in his sleeping crate in the airlock, close enough to the fence, that Zach & Shasta could see Toru, while Toru would be able to hear them. They were very limited in actually touching in each other as a form of safety precaution while they didn't know each other yet. After a little shyness, Bell showed slight interest, but possibly due to not being able to interact with him, it didn't blossom into more. This changed as soon as the sleeping crate was placed in Calypso's Corner and the monkeys were able to touch each other. Now, it was Zach and Bell who couldn't get enough of Toru.

Just when we thought Toru was doing fantastic progress and he would be able to move in with the group, he developed a glaucoma in his eye. Despite all efforts, in the end, the eye was unable to be saved and it had to be removed by the local vet.

Late October, it was finally time for him! Toru joined Calypso's Corner and Bell adopted her first juvenile, with experienced granny Shasta helping her at any corner.



In December



Toru with Shasta



Another Heat Wave

5 years ago, the VMF had its first deadly encounter with heat. It had been in late-40s° Celsius with air temperatures reaching up to over 50°C (105-115°F with air temperatures up to 125°F) for a week, with less shade due to late rains and drought. That October, we lost 21 monkeys in two days, mainly young adult males in troops.

As a response to this horrible event, the VMF reviewed all protocols and implemented many new procedures in order to prevent a day like that again. All troops now have additional shelters providing extra shade, resting boxes in the trees, kalahari or sea salt for electrolytes, more automatic water taps in addition to extra water bowls, large swimming pools in shade and a heatwave emergency kit in sickbay in case of any new incidences.

Sadly, in December 2024, this emergency kit was needed again. After some late rain, the sanctuary was lush green with thick foliage on bushes and trees. Despite that, temperatures in the mid-40s°C for several days in a row, combined with high humidity, seem to have caused severe accumulated heat in - again - mostly young adult males. Over a stretch of several days, a total of 12 monkeys passed away. Thanks to the dedicated efforts by the entire team, we were able to save 3 monkeys' lives. Squeezie, Hardy and Chief Long Hair were able to make a full recovery.

Reflecting back, the biggest issue seems to be the inability of the monkeys to reduce body heat quick enough before it reaches dangerous limits in addition to the climate heating up over the years. Therefore, the VMF team is now thinking about new ways for further preventative measurements.

The VMF expresses our sincere and heartfelt gratitude to the entire team, all volunteers and anyone onsite on these days. The help and support were immense and without it, we wouldn't have been able to provide the care to the monkeys in need as we did. Experiencing a day as such is always very difficult, and the pain of the loss of so many monkeys is felt by everyone. Despite that, everyone did everything they could to be there for the monkeys. We truly appreciate the dedication and love.



Hardy



Squeezie



Chief Long Hair

Staff and Interns

The VMF routinely recruits new voluntary staff and interns due to the limited time on volunteering visas from overseas. We aimed to overlap the time new staff members could spend with leaving members to ensure detailed training. Unfortunately, this is not always possible due to delays or declines in the visa process which has been an ongoing challenge.

We welcomed 10 new voluntary staff members and 3 interns. Sadly, many applicants were rejected in their visa application, which led to 7 voluntary staff coming out on 3-6 months short-term visas. On the other side, we are happy to say we were able to recruit 3 South Africans into our voluntary team. Michaela had been a volunteer since she was 15 in 2019. Now, she is taking responsibility of sickbay and ensuring that all monkey patients get the best care possible.

Animal Manager Becky Easter returned home to her family in May. The VMF thanks Becky for her hard work and the one or other miracle (Shallan, Rexie...) and wishes her all the best for her future.

Becky's place took newly hired meds Staff Claudia Stork. Just 3 months after starting as meds staff, she was promoted to Animal Manager overseeing health, critical care, meds and orphans. Claudia has an impressive resume and worked with different types of primates in multiple sanctuaries in Europe. We are very happy to welcome her into the management team.

Our Local Staff team continued to be led by the ever-smiling Local Staff Manager Innocent Mahuwa. He is joined by Lucas Maluleke as second manager onsite. **Learn more about Lucas on page 38.**

Further big thank you to Innocent, Solly, Godfrey, Kletter, Mossassa, John, Phaniel, Thabo, Nhla Nhla, Gloria and Suzan. They are the backbone of the sanctuary and keep the place running from behind the scenes.



local team manager Innocent



Animal Manager
Claudia



Michaela

Volunteering

The VMF believes in ethical volunteering and aims to continue developing the volunteer experience at the foundation. Thank you to all the ethical volunteering organisations ensuring there are always people to help the VMF continue its work.

The VMF welcomed 78 volunteers this year of which 10 are returning volunteers. Many volunteers expressed their great joy working with the monkeys and the babies and are keen to come back.

We are excited for the increasing numbers, yet we are still not back at our normal volunteering numbers of 150 volunteers per year. To spread the word even more, we are now partnering with another organisation called **The Great Projects**. We hope to attract many more volunteers across the world.

We work continuously on improving the volunteering experience at the VMF. All volunteer cabins are now equipped with full bedding (rather than the need for a sleeping bag). All private cabins and voluntary staff cabins have desks and drawers for more comfort. And we are not done yet. More upgrades are lined up.

Our US American volunteers profit from our charity status in the US. Any volunteer who would like to visit us and work with us can now claim up to 60% of the volunteering fee for tax reduction through the US based charity **Friends of the Vervet Monkey Foundation**. Please email info@vervet.za.org for more information.



Visitors

Just like previous year, in 2024 we had 48 mostly local and some international visitors visited us for guided tours to learn about the monkeys. A total of 12 day-volunteers experienced themselves as animal care givers for a couple of hours. They prepared milk for the orphaned babies, created enrichment parcels and collected fresh berries for the monkeys. After a full day of fun, all volunteers returned home with a new understanding and appreciation for vervets.

Security

Fires – in 2024 was a bad year for the area. A massive wildfire raged around Magoebaskloof Area for several weeks, and Tzaneen had to struggle with 10 cases of suspected arson. Despite a backburning gone wrong on a neighbour's plot that luckily was back under control quickly, the VMF was safe throughout fire season.

Security – there was no instance of theft in 2024. It seems like the sanctuary wide alarm system is working well. Besides the panic buttons all staff members carry at nighttime, perimeter light beam detectors are installed that send alarms to Dave and local staff SD Victor.

Guard Dogs – In May, Dave welcomed new guard dog Bentley into his life. As a Belgian Malinois Puppy, he is very active and full of energy. Bentley arrived at the tender age of 3 months with severe social anxiety. Dave's love and care allowed him to come out of his shell. In return, Bentley dearly loves Dave and takes his duty to protect his house very serious. Big Brother George makes sure, the fun doesn't get forgotten and shows Bentley how to swim in the dam. Rocky comes over for playdates on a regular basis and teaches Bentley all the mischief.



Media

The VMF emphasises the importance of public awareness of the monkeys' situation and threats. We continue to do so through social media, YouTube, interviews and articles.

A big success with the Youtube series. It is now in its 8th season, raising awareness with an ever-growing audience. Since the beginning of the year, the subscriber numbers have risen from 69.6K to 75.8k subscribers. The channel has a total of 4.2M views. If that is not an impressive success!

Dave's informative yet compassionate way of narrating the footage taken by voluntary staff and volunteers makes the series special as it comes straight from the Founder. Many viewers wish to see more of the monkeys, and we see an increase in the youtube memberships.

A new feature VMF fans around the world can enjoy are the weekly livestreams on Youtube. Every weekend (Saturdays), we stream live from Disneyland nursery area and several different introduction cages and enclosures. This has become a weekly ritual with many regulars enjoying a relaxed, monkey-filled start to their day where they can also ask questions on the live chat.

We are excited not just to be featured in the IPPL Christmas Edition, but we are also on the cover! Cover girl Cuddy introduced the reader to the history of the VMF over the past 30 years and some more details about the ongoing renovation projects.

IN THIS ISSUE:

- ♦ Vervet Monkey Foundation
- ♦ Long-tailed Macaque Project
- ♦ C.A.R.E. Orphaned Baboons



New Arrivals
Season 8



35:01

VERVET MONKEY FOUNDATION

⋮

Season 8 Premiere: Meet Our Three Adorable Baby Orphan Monkeys! 🐒 ...

Social Media

We are continuously very active on our social media platforms to further increase the engagement and outreach. Our aim is to educate people around the world and spread awareness for the monkeys' situation in South Africa and our work as a primate rehabilitation sanctuary.

Jazzbo went viral! The reel about Jazzbo getting her bandage changed hit an amazing 2.3 million views within a week. Since then it is still raising and we are excited about the popularity of our intstagram channel. We are close to 95k followers. Michaela Venter took on the task of creating daily engaging content, spreading the word about the sanctuary, the work the VMF is doing and the help the monkeys need. Thank you for your consistent and fantastic work!

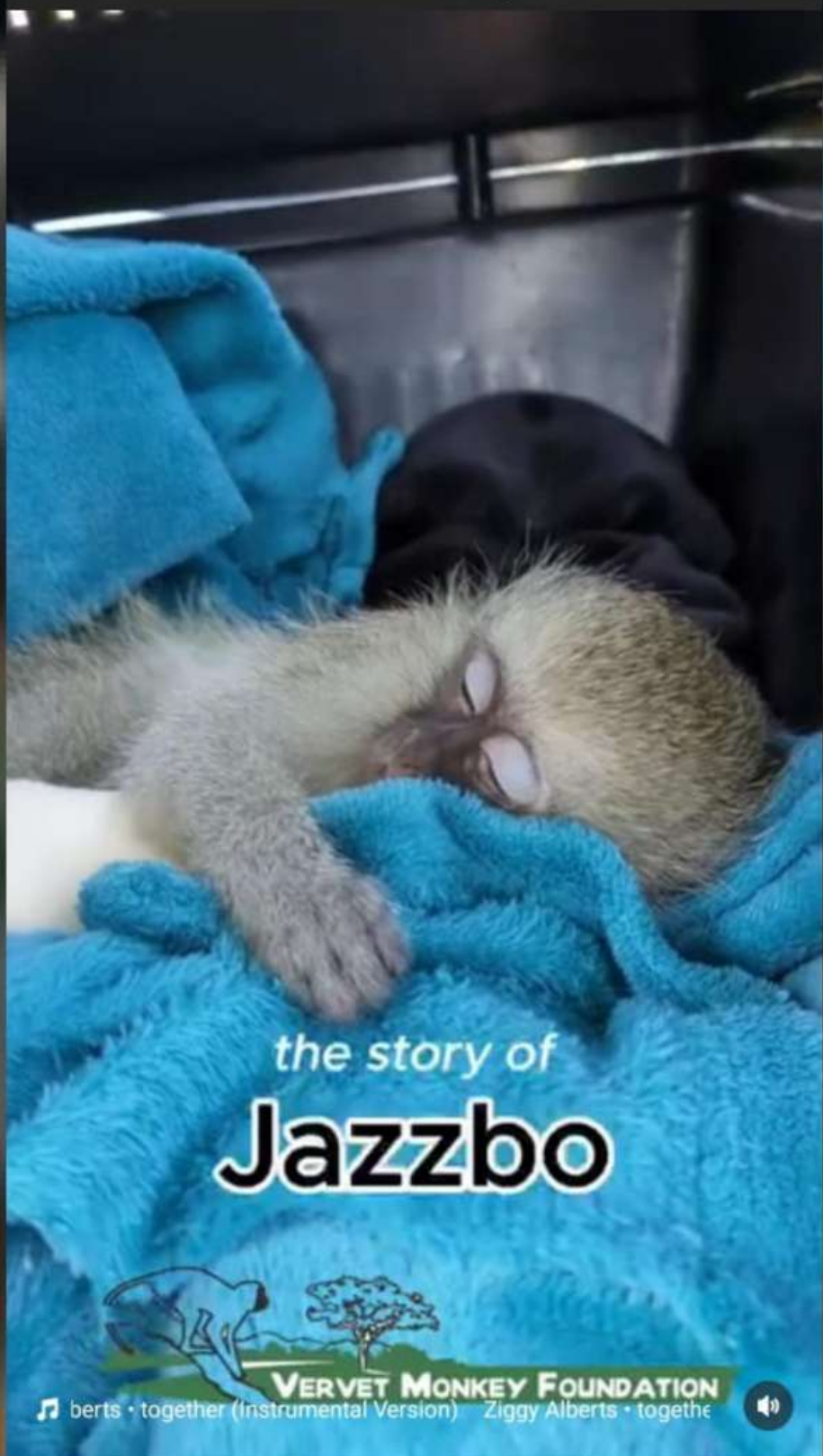
In 2021, the VMF created a tiktok account to promote our work to a new audience. Josie along with the help of others continued to spoil the audience with little funny videos of monkeys and educational messages about the rehabilitation of vervets at the VMF. We now have 6.5k followers. Thank you, Josie for another year of winning attention of the younger generations.

Thanks for the volunteer team posting regularly on our facebook pages, we have now about 45k followers across the Vervet Forest page and the Vervet Monkey Foundation, South Africa group page. Here, we usually are able to reach a slightly older population compared to tiktok and instagram.



vervet_forest

Jazzbo Reel



Michaela - the face behind the instagram



Education

As the previous year, the VMF was excited to welcome the students from the Belgian university VIVES and Tshwane university, department of Nature conservation in Pretoria. The first group of 30 students visited in March, and in May a second group of 25 students followed suit. After a short presentation on the threats monkeys are facing in South Africa and reasons why orphan babies are handed in to the VMF, we discussed the importance of rehabilitation work. During a tour, the students learnt about the foster mum programme and its benefits to traditional concepts. Embracing the idea, that a vegan lifestyle is helping to protect wildlife by taking up less habitat space, the students enjoyed a plant-based lunch. Thank you very much to Ella Engels of Vives University for this wonderful collaboration.

In September Elcsa Turfloop Children Service visited with 37 children between the ages of 2 and 12 years old. They enjoyed an afternoon watching the monkeys' behaviour, learning about their fantastic motherly instincts and eagerness to adopt, and most importantly, the monkey version of tag. Students small and big had plenty of questions, showing their deep interest in the monkeys. Thank you very much for your visit, it was great to have you here.

Since August, we have been welcoming 2 students at a time from a local culinary school for 4 weeks to learn about the vegan cuisine and to dip their hands in the first practical experience.

local chef students Hlayisani, Glecia, Shalon
and volunteer Diane



Visit of Elcsa Turfloop Children Service

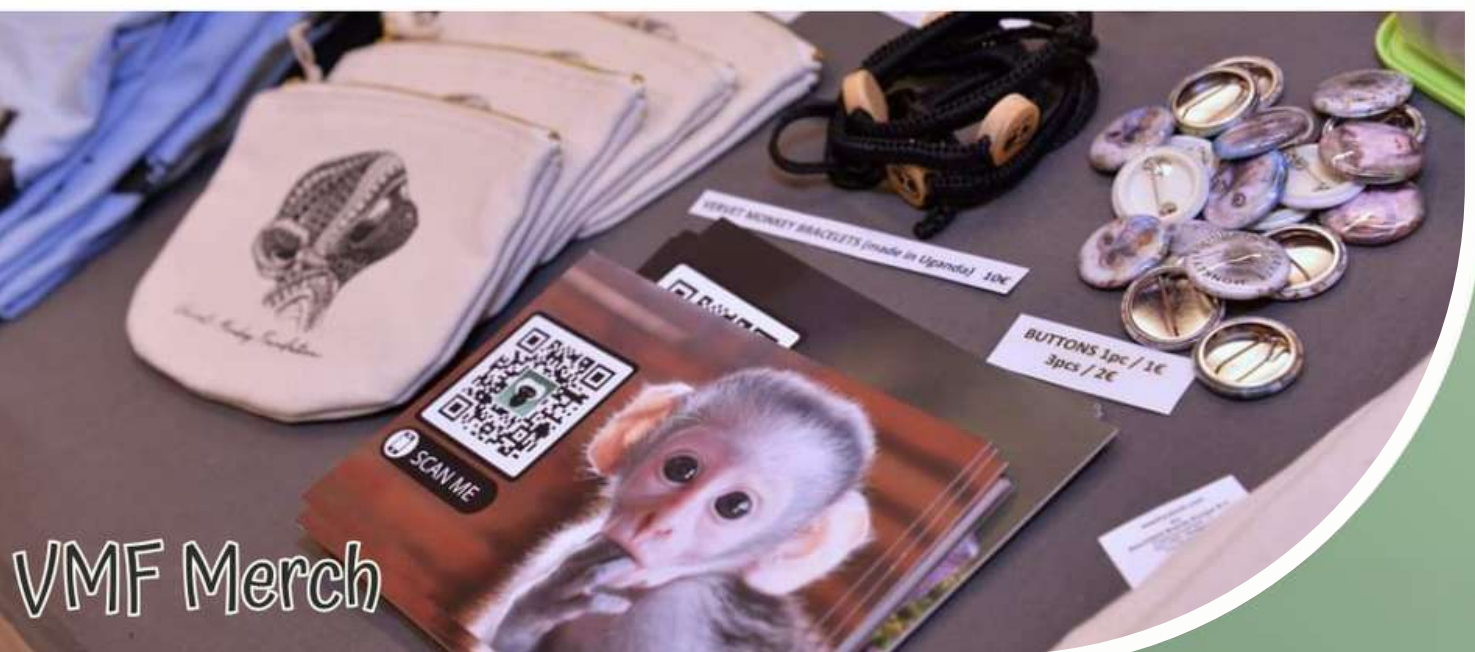


European Events

Last year the VMF participated in 5 events in Belgium and Luxemburg. In February the VMF was present at Veganworld in Hasselt (Belgium). Although it was a first time event, the turnout was quite good. In September there was the IARC2024 (International Animal Rights Conference) in Esch-sur-Alzette (Luxemburg), a 4-day conference and always a great opportunity for animal lovers to get to know the VMF and to speak to people who might be interested in a volunteering experience in South-Africa. In October, the VMF was represented at 2 events, AMA-Fest (Action Movement for Animals) in Genk (Belgium) and Vegan A'Fairs in Bruges (Belgium). AMA-Fest was a first time experience for the VMF, and it was a good one! As this event got organized in an area where we had not been before, it was great to see there are still people who don't know the VMF yet. The last event of the year was Veganworld, the Christmas Edition, organized in Hasselt (Belgium), which was quite a successful event with a lot of good presentations, workshops etc.

For 2025 we are already aiming again for IARC Luxemburg, AMA-fest and Vegan A'Fairs. In the meantime we are also looking for other, new events that might come up throughout the year.

Big thank you to Hilde Olbrechts for organising and coordinating all these events in Belgium and Luxemburg and her hard work behind the scenes!



UK Events

2024 was a busier year for UK events, with our first stall at the Portsmouth Vegan Fair in September, followed by the Birmingham Vegan Fair in October. These fairs provided a fantastic opportunity to engage with visitors and share information about the sanctuary and its work. During the festive season, we took part in two charity fayres, one supporting animal welfare and the other focused on mental health. Both events were well-attended, and our monkey-themed merchandise proved to be a popular choice for Christmas gifts. Our final event of the year was the London Christmas Vegan Fair in December, where there was significant interest in our volunteer opportunities. We look forward to welcoming some of these new faces in 2025!

As we head into 2025, we are excited to finalise the launch of the Vervet Monkey Foundation UK charity, which will help us raise more funds within the UK to support our important work. Additionally, we will continue to promote our vegan recipe book, Prime-eats, which features a variety of delicious recipes alongside stunning photos of the VMF monkeys.

Big thank you to Shellie Robinson for representing the VMF in the UK at events.



PASA/GFAS

The Vervet Monkey Foundation has been an active member of Pan African Sanctuary Alliance (PASA) since February 2006. Proudly, the Vervet Monkey Foundation was yet again re-accredited in 2022 for the excellent care provided to all monkeys.

The PASA code of conduct requires all members and staff to exhibit:

a) a concern for the primates, b) integrity, c) transparency, d) fairness, e) conscientiousness, f) professionalism, g) personal and institutional commitment to conservation.

The Global Federation of Animal Sanctuaries (GFAS) is dedicated to the sole purpose of strengthening and supporting the work of animal sanctuaries, rescues, and rehabilitation centers worldwide. The VMF is accredited member since 2015 and was re-accredited in 2021.

In September, Dave & local team manager Lucas joined the PASA Strategic Development Conference in Johannesburg. Claudia visited the Education & Outreach Conference. Once the conferences have come to a successful end, the members of the different PASA sanctuaries made all the way to Tzaneen to visit the VMF, learn more about our foster mum programme and enjoy a delicious braai.

VMF would like to thank PASA and GFAS for their support for sanctuaries through training, and peer discussions to improve the animal's lives in Africa and worldwide.

PASA Visit at the VMF



Norm Rosen Award

We are delighted to announce, that local team manager Lucas Maluleke won the Norm Rosen Leadership Development Award 2024. PASA decorated nominees with this award for the very first time this year and its goal is to support aspiring team leaders on their journey to greatness. To understand the true extend of his achievement, let's get to know Lucas a bit better.

Lucas started at the VMF in 2015 as a temporary seasonal worker assisting with brush and grass cutting. Coming from construction and ground keeping, he showed proficiency and professionalism. Furthermore, he showed a keen interest in the monkeys and wanted to learn more about them. This enabled him to secure a position as in animal husbandry.

His dedication for the care of the monkeys showed and he became one of the most trusted team members. Thus, when a second manager on the ground was needed to cope with the respiratory outbreak, Lucas was the perfect choice. His potential as calm and reflected leader showed and he led the team with enthusiasm and dedication. Knowing when to be assertive and when to be compassionate, he ensures the best care for the monkeys. His main role is to oversee the maintenance team, keeping stock of material, organising and delegating tasks and guarantee that all enclosures are up to the standard. As driver, he is an essential corner stone to securing food and water supplies for monkeys and humans at the sanctuary.

The Norm Rosen Leadership Development Grant comes with a prize of \$1000 for development and leadership courses and the invitation to the PASA Strategic Development Conference. Lucas and Innocent have worked closely with Lana Bru in learning more about the LEAN method and how to implement it at the sanctuary.

His inspiring journey from an unskilled worker to the local team leader is impressive. Our heartfelt congratulations to Lucas!



Lucas



his favourite monkey
Jasmine



maintaining a feeding cage

Grants

Volunteering fees are the biggest income source for the sanctuary. As volunteering numbers are still lower than pre-lockdown, the VMF is still very reliant on grants and financial support from other sources.



Gratefully we received a grant towards general funds from International Primate Protection League (IPPL). \$7,5000 was granted to be used where needed.

The grant has been used for general running costs as well as to cover the costs for food, medical costs and to secure the basic needs of the monkeys on site. Without this generous grant, we wouldn't be able to provide this level of excellent care for the monkeys. Thank you, IPPL!

Awards

The year 2024 has been fantastic in recognising the incredible work our team is putting in every day to ensure the best care for our monkeys.

Lana Bru, returning volunteer since November 2019, won the Reyerhaeuser Volunteer Award for her dedication and engagement for the monkeys. The award meant that \$5,000 was donated to the sanctuary.

Thank you to Lana for being a role model to anyone passionate about making a difference in the monkeys' lives.

Lana won the Weyerhaeuser Volunteer Award (here with Mark & Hana)



Facility Upgrades

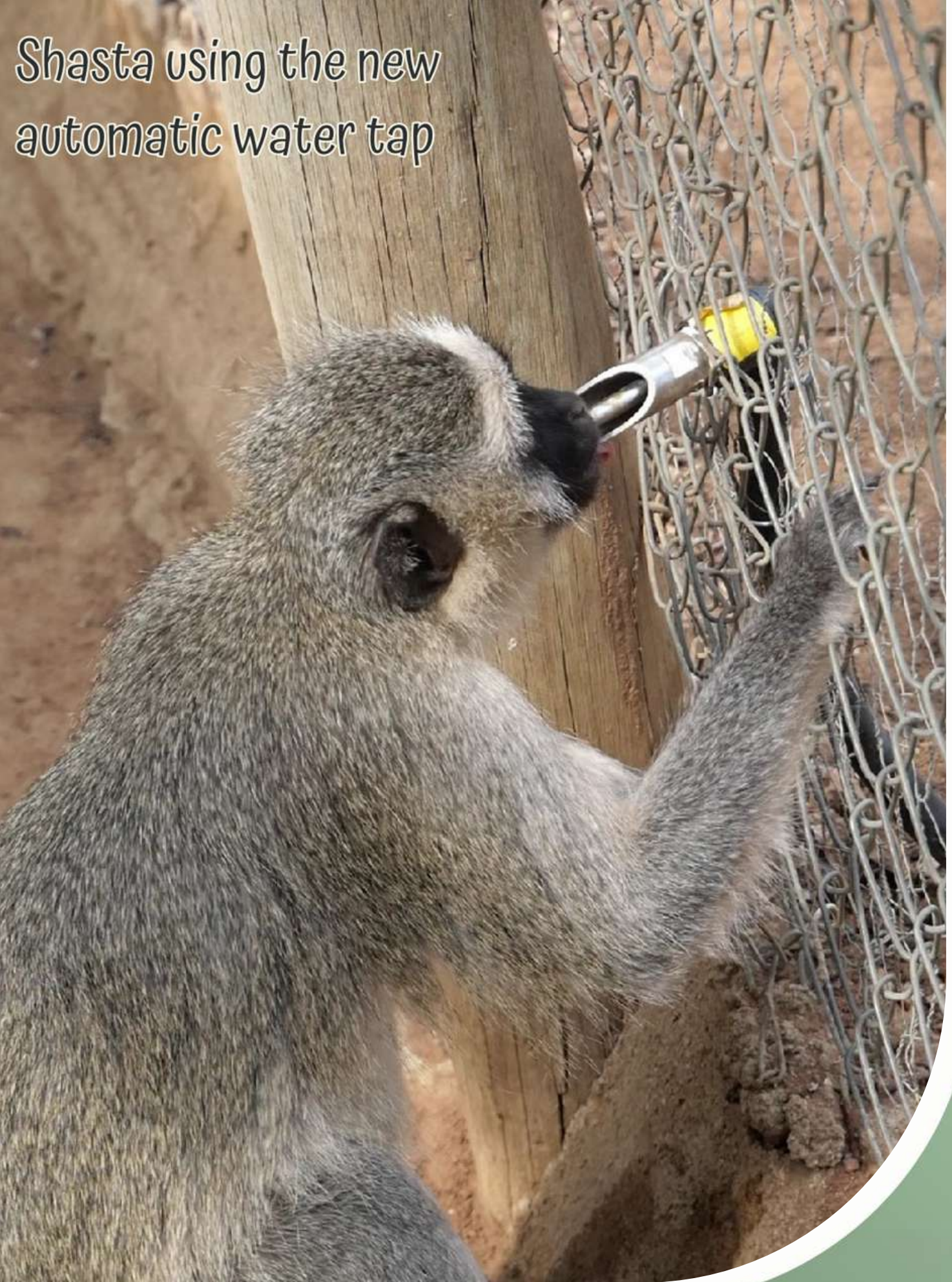
The VMF seeks to always improve current facilities and practices, considering the monkeys' and volunteers' needs. Most projects are constructed by the skills of the local team under Local Team Managers Innocent and Lucas's guidance, paired up with Director Dave's supervision.

Keeping a sanctuary running means there is always a lot of small and large jobs to do to maintain functionality. This year, our focus was on improving accessibility to cooler water for the monkeys due to the risen heat stress. All water pipes providing the sanctuary were relayed to avoid leakage. With a long, dry and hot winter (June-August), it became clear that all introduction cages needed automatic water taps to have a second reliable water source, even when the monkeys flipped their water bowls or when the water warmed up. And while we were on it, we also installed additional ones in the troops.

In addition, we repainted the introduction cages to protect them from the weather, including refurbishing and rebranching them.

In the mainfeed area, a new toilet was built for easier access for the local team and less waiting time at the sickbay one.

Shasta using the new
automatic water tap



The Year Ahead

We are proud of our accomplishments of last year. It took many helping hands in a dedicated team to achieve them. We are grateful for everyone supporting and assisting us on the way. For the coming year, we have some more ambitious plans, always in mind to make the life for the monkeys and volunteers the best possible.

- Further improve the sanctuary to protect monkeys from increasing rise in temperatures
- Set up VMF as a UK registered charity
- Local outreach to protect monkeys in the wild
- Modernise fencing for the older enclosures
- Dedicate more time towards socialisation and integration of single housed monkeys

A huge thank you to everyone who supported the VMF throughout 2024. It had been a rollercoaster of events, with the tragic tail end of the respiratory outbreak that started in 2023, and the heartbreaking helplessness during the heat wave. But also the joyful life for Rexie with his friends Floki & Cuddy, and Toru's wonderful healing journey and the outpouring love from his new family. There was the connecting visits of Vives University and the inspirational come together with PASA sanctuaries. There were the frustrating visa declines and the hopeful rescue reunions with their families.

All these big and little up and downs make working and living at a sanctuary so special. Thank you to all the supporters, donors, volunteers and staff for their dedication and passion. Thank you for the heart-warming thoughts during the low times and the shared celebrations during high times.

Eva, Gobo and Billie Bre



When Monkeys Dream...

The Vervet Forest

The VMF is grateful for having witnessed miracle after miracle happening in the hands of our dedicated team. Yet, today's world still gives monkeys reasons for nightmares. But we can change it. We can create a little heaven for monkeys in which dreams come true.

The Vervet Monkey Foundation envisions creating a safe space for the rehabilitated monkeys to be released in. We call this forest the Vervet Forest and it should encompass about 300-500ha of indigenous bush. This land will be a protected forest for rehabilitated orphaned and abused vervet monkeys who will be free from hunting, culling and human conflict. In addition to providing a sustainable home for the released monkeys, this land will also maintain a whole thriving ecosystem that benefits indigenous plant and animal life, as well as creating dozens of local jobs.

New attention was brought upon the Vervet Forest in January 2023. For the first time, the Vervet Forest Documentary by Kyle Salazar premiered on youtube and is now available for free. Since then, it has been seen over a quarter million times.

In April, our new website www.vervetforest.org launched along with the Vervet Forest Project Plan (created by Operations Manager Hana Bruger). It explains in great detail and with stunning pictures the steps we need to take in order to make the Vervet Forest vision a reality.

Strap on your shoes and follow us on this whimsical journey.

Make Monkey Dreams Come True



Mara and Tufty



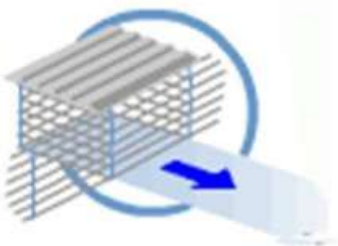
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VERVET MONKEY FOUNDATION
REHABILITATION • EDUCATION • SANCTUARY

Vervet Monkey Foundation

Annual Report 2024

Friends
of the
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