



**VULTURE PROGRAMME MONTHLY REPORT
DECEMBER 2016**

MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Date	Meet with	Representing	Purpose	Project title/reference/purpose
01/12/2016	Caryn Sims	Private	Skype meeting to discuss Caryn assisting VulPro part time on fundraising and book keeping work	Part time employment
01/12/2016	Pieter Bezuidenhout	Tshwane Municipality	Site visit regarding a recent vulture electrocution and discussion to mitigate the structure	Vulture electrocution on municipal structure
06/12/2016	Cliff Saunders	Nooitgedacht	Site visit and discussion on the release enclosure to be constructed over-looking the breeding colony	Release enclosure at Nooitgedacht
08/12/2016	Maggie Hirschauer	VulPro	Discussion on the up and coming Design Thinking pitching session at RMB	Design Thinking

09/12/2016	Caryn Sims	Private	Further discussion on our part time job requirements	Part-time employment
12/12/2016	RMB	RMB	Pitching session regarding the Design Thinking prototype	Design Thinking
13/12/2016	Simon Gear and colleagues	BirdLife SA and Air Rally Pilots	Site visit and volunteer discussions around vulture collections	Site visit and volunteer vulture collection possibilities
29/12/2016	Tanith Jacobs	Private	Interview for bookkeeping and admin position	Employment

Media

Ongoing media, awareness and exposure through Facebook and Twitter, as well as other social media throughout October; with 5000 followers on Kerri Wolter's profile and 7103 on the VulPro Facebook page. We have 825 followers on Twitter and now 279 followers on Instagram.

Date	Media	Publisher	Purpose	Comment
07/12/2016	"Birds on a wire"	Brainstorm	Awareness and exposure	Promoting VulPro's new power line research project and trying to get support from the IT community with regards to tracking devices in support of this project.

CONSERVATION

A. DIRECT ACTIVITIES

Rehabilitation

Date	MR Ref*	Activity	Follow up	Comment
05/12/2016		Released the martial eagle that came in over a month ago from falling into a pool near Klerksdorp	Monitoring for re-sightings	The eagle flew into a tree and was seen a few hours later after her release.

06/12/2016	01.12	Collected an injured Honey Buzzard from Nylstroom	N/A	The bird came in extremely weak and emaciated and unfortunately died over night.
06/12/2016		Released 2 Cape Vultures (1 fledgling and 1 adult) at the Nooitgedacht breeding colony	Monitoring for re-sightings of both birds	Both birds flew off strongly and joined wild birds in a thermal.
07/12/2016		Martial Eagle from rehab taken to animal eye specialist in Johannesburg	Bird euthanized due to non-reparable retina damage making him blind	Bird flew into an electric fence after being released.
07/12/2016	02.12	Collected a Cape Vulture fledgling from Sondela in the Warmbaths area	N/A	The bird came in weak and emaciated and died 3 days later. We suspect the bird was just too weak to recover fully and gave up trying.
08/12/2016	03.12	Collected a CV with a broken wing from the Lichtenberg game breeding centre	N/A as non-releasable and will remain in captivity at VulPro for breeding purposes	The bird flew into a power line and the bone was exposed and already dry. Unfortunately, the wing had to be amputated in order to save the bird's life and he will now remain at VulPro permanently and join the other amputee vultures.
09/12/2016		Undertook health checks on all our flightable African White-backed vultures and moved them to their new designated White-backed vulture breeding enclosure	N/A	A total of 15 African White-backed vultures were captured, assessed, dusted for parasites and blood taken for sexing and then moved to their new breeding enclosure at VulPro. The reason behind this was to move them out of the general rehab enclosure allowing this species room and space to breed without interference by the non-breeding, rehab and young CVs.
11/12/2016	04.12	Collected a CV fledgling from Vergenoeg which is below the Skeerpoort breeding colony	Monitoring for re-sightings	The bird was unable to fly off due to the area she had landed in. She was tagged, released and fed up before being released a week later.

11/12/2016	05.12	Collected a CV fledgling from Rietfontein	N/A	Unfortunately, this bird flew into an electric fence above a wall surrounding a house and broke both his legs. We tried pinning the one leg as a starting point and the actual operation was a success however the bird succumbed to his injuries and died 3 days after the operation.
12/12/2016	06.12	Collected a sub-adult CV from the Pilansberg game reserve area	Monitoring for release	The bird came in with suspected poisoning. He has not regained flying height and thus he is being kept in our rehab enclosure until he gains height and the ability of flight.
15/12/2016	07.12	Collected a common buzzard from Rustenburg which had a broken leg	N/A	Unfortunately, the bone was exposed and dry already which could not be fixed. The bird was humanely euthanased.
15/12/2016	08.12	Collected a CV fledgling from the Blouberg Nature Reserve	N/A as the bird will remain in captivity due to permanent wing damage	The bird came in with a badly broken hanging wing with the fracture in the joint. Due to the nature of the break, the wing cannot be pinned but we are still trying to save the wing from being amputated.
16/12/2016	09.12	Collected a Lappet-faced vulture fledgling from Vryberg which was grounded in the Northern Cape, 65 km west of Upington	Monitoring for release	The Lappet-faced vulture appears to be recovering from a wing injury but no fractures. He has put on weight and is showing some nice wing stretches which we are monitoring. We are hoping he will start flying shortly at which time we will release him with a tracking device.
16/12/2016	10.12	Collected a CV fledgling from Le Godimo in Skeerpoort	Monitoring for re-sightings	The bird was grounded due to weather and gained sufficient weight. He was released a week later with wing tags for monitoring purposes.

20/12/2016	11.12	Collected a grounded CV inside the VulPro hide	Monitoring for re-sightings	The bird was found inside the VulPro viewing hide and when released, decided to not take off. So he remained inside our rehab enclosure for a few days until he got stronger and was then released with some of the other rehab cases.
21/12/2016	12.12	Collected a CV fledgling from Ifafi Aquatics Club which was found inside the Harties Dam	Monitoring for re-sightings	The bird was tired, water logged and remained at VulPro for a week before being released. Tags were fitted to both wings for monitoring purposes.
21/12/2016	13.12	Collected a CV fledgling from the Magalies Golf Park	N/A	The bird has a broken leg which we tried to pin. Again the pinning was a success but the bird was not able to breathe again on his own after the 3-hour op and we had to let him go.
22/12/2016	14.12	Collected a White-backed Vulture fledgling from Kuruman, originally found in the Kalahari Trails Nature Reserve	N/A	The vulture was extremely weak, had a broken leg and very dehydrated and emaciated. We kept him alive with a drip for 24 hours but he was just too weak and we lost him.
25/12/2016	15.12	Collected a CV fledgling from the Ifafi Aquatics Club again	Monitoring for re-sightings	The CV was water logged and could not take off. She has since been released with wing tags.
28/12/2016	16.12	Collected a CV fledgling from across the road to Leopard Lodge	N/A	The bird has a broken leg, possibly from flying into power lines running along the road. Unfortunately, the break was too close to the joint making pinning impossible. We had no choice but to euthanise this young girl.
28/12/2016		The CV which was collected from Thabazimbi weeks ago and which was extremely emaciated, was released today i.e 28 December. In addition, 2 African White-backed vultures that have been at	Monitoring for re-sightings	All three birds were released inside our open top enclosure, thus allowing them time to adjust to the open spaces and giving them the choice to leave on their own free will.

		VulPro for months recovering from their injuries were also released at the same time.		
29/12/2016		Palm-nut vulture was collected for loan by Monte Casino Bird Gardens	Monitoring for stress and any signs of unhappiness whilst at the bird gardens	VulPro has loaned one of the tame Palm-nut vultures to the Monte Casino Bird Gardens for vulture educational purposes. As this bird is already semi-imprinted, we thought it best that he be used at the bird gardens where he can interact with people as he misses the human contact which he was not getting at VulPro, being with the 3 other wild Palm-nut vultures.
29/12/2016	17.12	Collected a CV fledgling from Kameeldrif Wes.	Monitoring for re-sightings	Bird was grounded inside a landowner's garden and could not fly out given the high walls. He was strong and in good condition and thus tagged, sampled and released straight away.

Research and monitoring

Date	Project title	Project centered at	Comment
01/12/2016	Skeerpoort colony hike	Skeerpoort breeding colony	Search for fledgling carcasses, other remains, or interesting findings at base of breeding cliffs
14/12/2016	Ptilochronology study	VulPro	Bhekinkosi Sibanda starts to collect data on Cape Vulture fledgling feathers.
December 2016	Calcium study	VulPro	Continue to provide and collect samples for our calcium study
December 2016	Biological sampling and head measurements	VulPro	Continued to take samples for the BioBank from all vultures coming into the Centre or wild caught birds for tagging purposes.
December 2016	Re-sighting database	Southern Africa	Ongoing updating of the re-sighting database. We are now sitting at over 18 000 re-sighting records.

December 2016	Vulture restaurant database	Southern Africa	Ongoing updating of the vulture restaurant database
December 2016	Vulture tracking	Southern Africa	Ongoing monitoring of all vultures fitted with tracking devices and monitoring their movements throughout southern Africa.

Education & Training

Date	Activity	Project title	Project centered at	Comment
14/12/2016	Educational tour	Educational and awareness	VulPro	A small group of 3 toured the Centre and learnt about the work we undertake to save vultures.
16/12/2016	Educational tour	Educational and awareness talk	VulPro	A group of 12 Nigerian visitors came through to VulPro where they were given a power point presentation and a tour of the facilities. They have offered to assist our future up and coming work in Nigeria and were super keen to get involved in any way they can.
17/12/2016	Educational tour	Educational and awareness	VulPro	A small group of 6 people toured the Centre and had a close-up experience with some of the captive birds at VulPro.
21/12/2016	Educational tour	Educational and awareness	VulPro	A small group of 2 guests toured the centre and learnt about our work.

Hide booking:

- 08/12/2016 Niel Oberholzer (4 people)
- 23/12/2016 Desiree (4 people)

Administration

- Collection of donated carcasses
- Collection of permits in Rustenberg and Mahikeng
- Maintenance of VulPro vehicles
- Ongoing treatment and care of vultures and birds of prey at VulPro.
- Fundraising
- Report writing
- Press release writing
- Updating rehabilitation and captive breeding records
- Draft manuscripts for publication (rehabilitation manual, head morphometrics, intra-specific competitive behaviours, and homosexuality)

- Ongoing GPS ranging data collection
- Administration
- Vulture restaurant feeding at the Vulture Centre
- Facebook, Instagram and Twitter updates
- Website 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
- Continue to organize and market the Avian Incubation Workshop for January 2017
- Maintain updated captive breeding and rehabilitation records