

SPRING 2019

It has been a while since we published our Newsletter – so this one is a little longer than usual since there is some catching up to do.....

OUR LODGES

KUNAME LODGE

Recent room refurbishments at Kuname have brought in a lighter palette and green the rooms a more contemporary look without detracting from the warmth and intimacy that Kuname is known for. It remains the gem of Karongwe with its private and warm touch. Not to mention the fabulous cuisine.



CHISOMO SAFARI CAMP

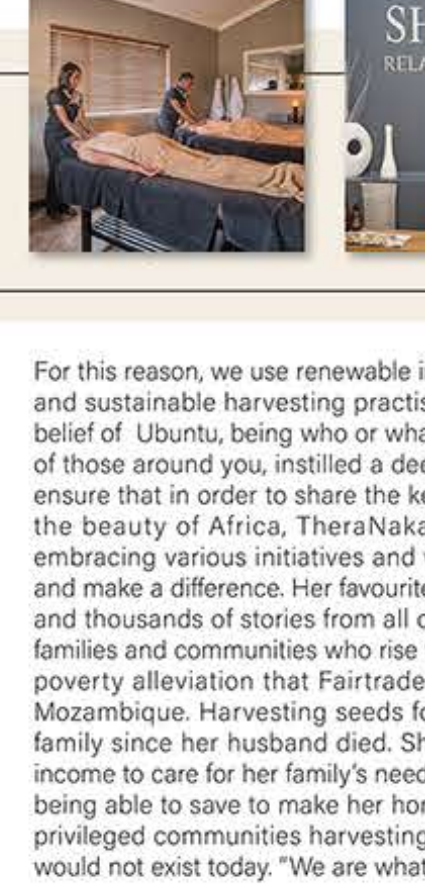
For a more authentic African experience – Chisomo Safari Camp offers you a luxury tented safari. The recent soft refurb has lifted the interior of the tents to a look and feel more reminiscent of the bygone era of African safari.



BECKS SAFARI LODGE

Becks Safari Lodge combines luxe living and innovative design with deep appreciation for the South African bushveld.

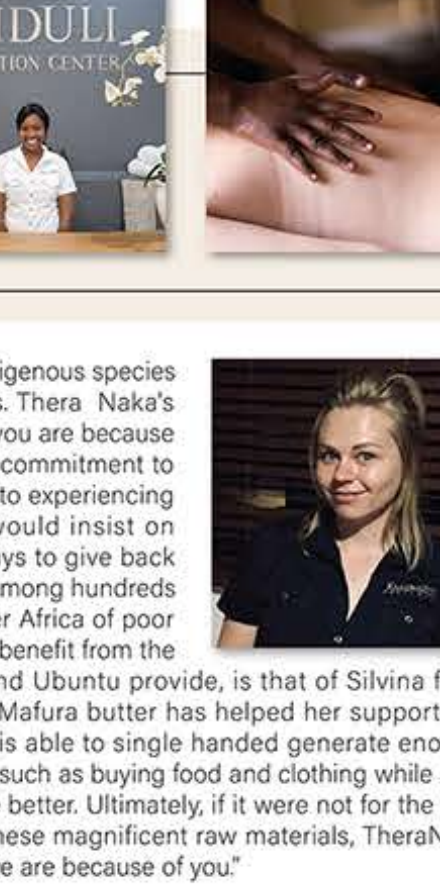
Join us for Gin tasting afternoons overlooking the beautiful Makuti River before you set off for your safari.



SHIDULI GAME LODGE

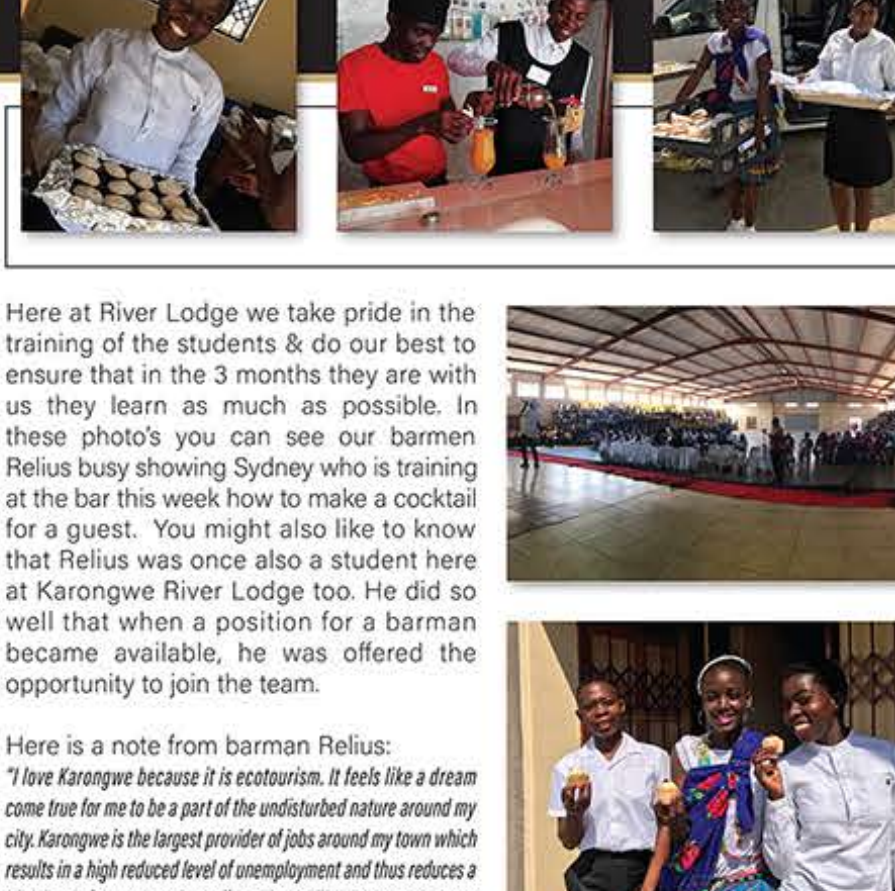
The warm lovely staff at Shiduli remains as dedicated as ever to make the safari experience one you will never forget.

The friendly is unsurpassed. This wildlife friendly lodge offers not only a family safari but the opportunity experience the heartbeat of Africa and its people



KARONGWE RIVER LODGE

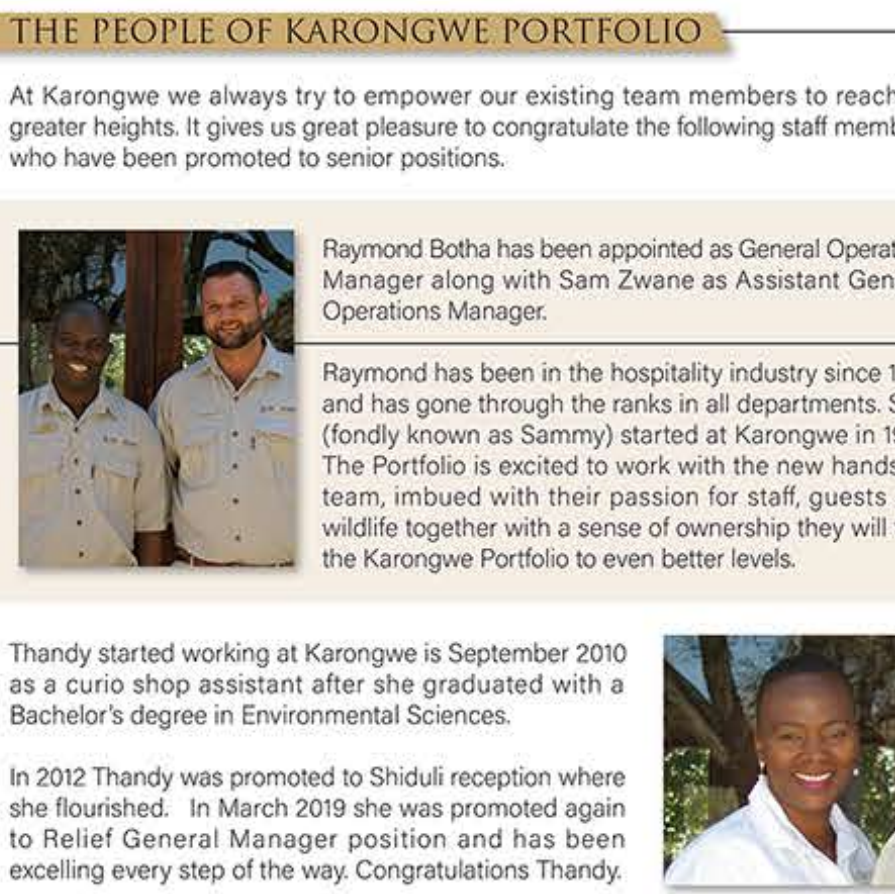
At Karongwe River Lodge, a delicious food experience awaits you. Dining under the stars has never been so romantic as you enjoy our Pan African cuisine in a rustic outside Boma or, on alternate evenings, in the beautifully appointed dining room.



SPA TREATMENTS

Karongwe Portfolio is proud to announce that during our Annual Training this year, we will be introducing the Poulitice Massage. Poulitice massage is a technique that involves special poultices made of herbs and spices that are wrapped in cotton and steam heated.

We hope to treat you with this incredible Massage in one of our Spas!



FUNDAMENTAL ASPECTS OF AFRICAN HEALING

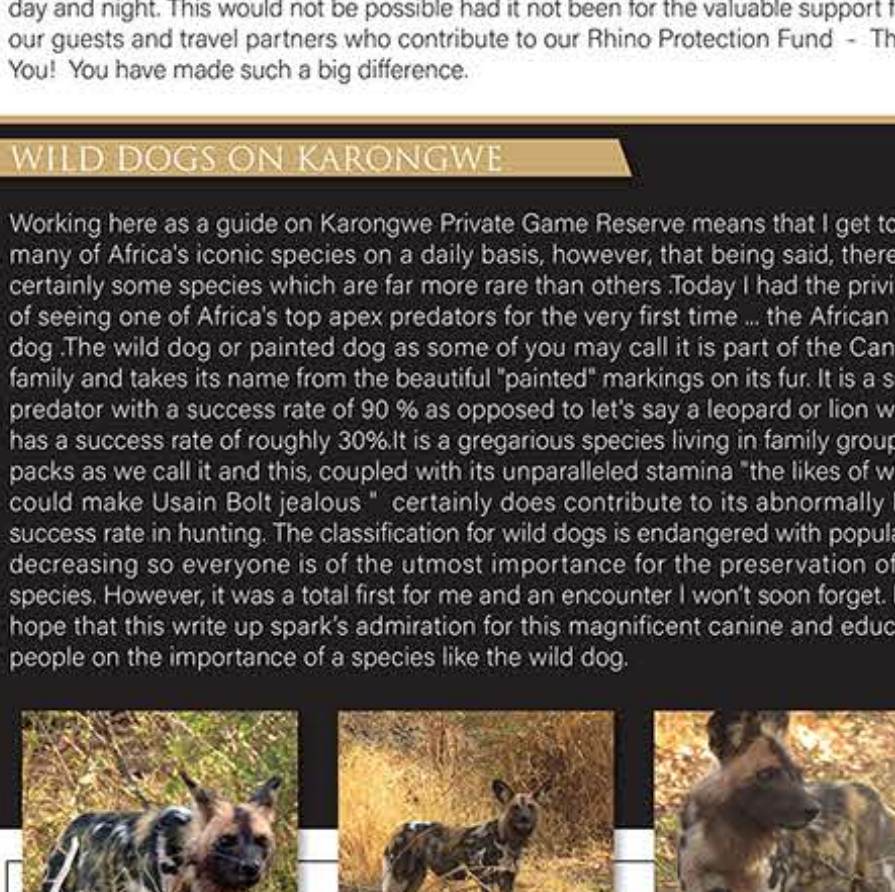
Using the finest natural ingredients available from nature while honouring the eco-system, Thera Naka products are produced with absolute integrity and do not contain harmful alcohols, artificial fragrances, colorants, harmful petrochemicals or mineral oils. Not only are we concerned about the wellbeing of the clients, but we are also committed to the wellbeing of the planet.



For this reason, we use renewable indigenous species and sustainable harvesting practices. Thera Naka's belief of Ubuntu, being who or what you are because of those around you, instilled a deep commitment to ensure that in order to share the key to experiencing the beauty of Africa, TheraNaka would insist on embracing various initiatives and ways to give back and make a difference. Her favourite among hundreds and thousands of stories who all over Africa of poor families and communities who rise to benefit from the poverty alleviation that Fairtrade and Ubuntu provide, is that of Silvina from Mozambique. Harvesting seeds for Mafura butter has helped her support her family since her husband died. She is able to single handed generate enough income to care for her family's needs, such as buying food and clothing while also being able to save to make her home better. Ultimately, if it were not for the less privileged communities harvesting these magnificent raw materials, TheraNaka would not exist today. "We are what we are because of you."

KARONGWE TRAINING PROGRAM

At Karongwe we offer a student training programme that enables the working world from the local community to acquire some skills before going into the youth world. The students rotate in the different departments gaining experience from the permanent staff working at Karongwe.

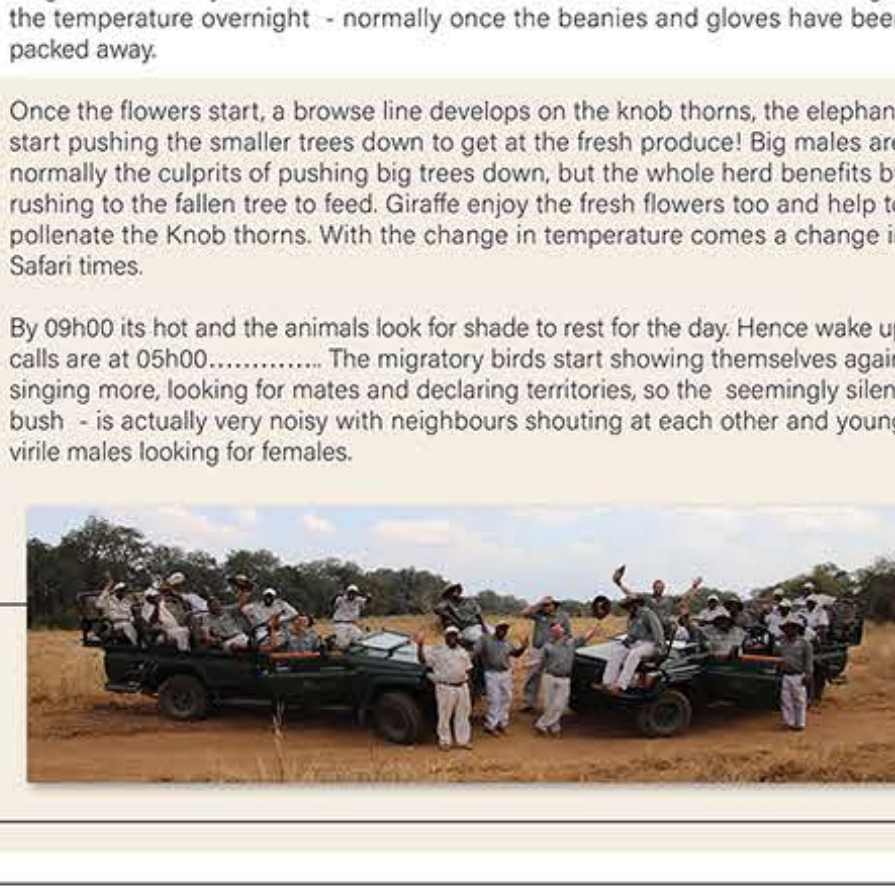


Here at River Lodge we take pride in the training of the students & do our best to ensure that in the 3 months they are with us they learn as much as possible. In these photos you can see our barman Relius busy showing Sydney who is training at the bar this week how to make a cocktail for a guest. You might also like to know that Relius was once also a student here at Karongwe River Lodge too. He did so well that when a position for a barman became available, he was offered the opportunity to join the team.

Here is a note from barman Relius: "I love Karongwe because it is ecotourism. It feels like a dream come true for me to be a part of the undisturbed nature around my city. Karongwe is the largest provider of jobs around my town which results in a high reduced level of unemployment and thus reduces a high level of poverty to the staff members. I like Karongwe because I'm working near home."

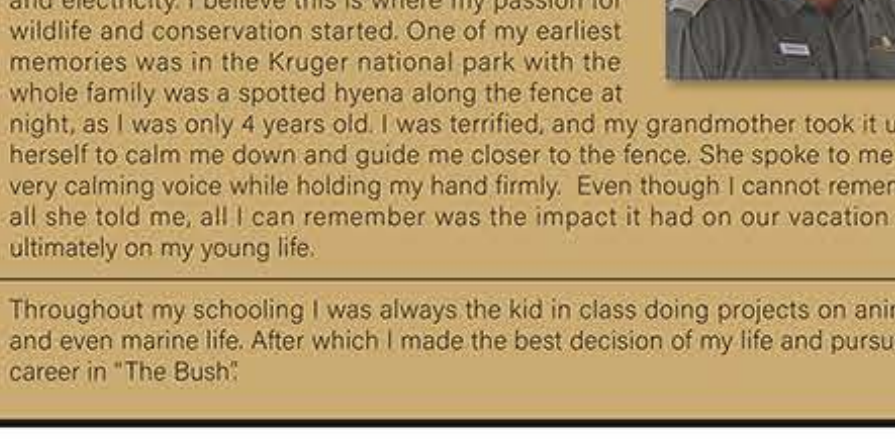
OUR COMMUNITY

Karongwe Portfolio places great emphasis in the empowerment and encouragement of our young people to further themselves with education. It was such a pleasure to be part of our Matric pupils reward ceremony – this time from Enable village.



THE PEOPLE OF KARONGWE PORTFOLIO

At Karongwe, it always try to empower our existing team members to reach for greater heights. It gives us great pleasure to congratulate the following staff members who have been promoted to senior positions.



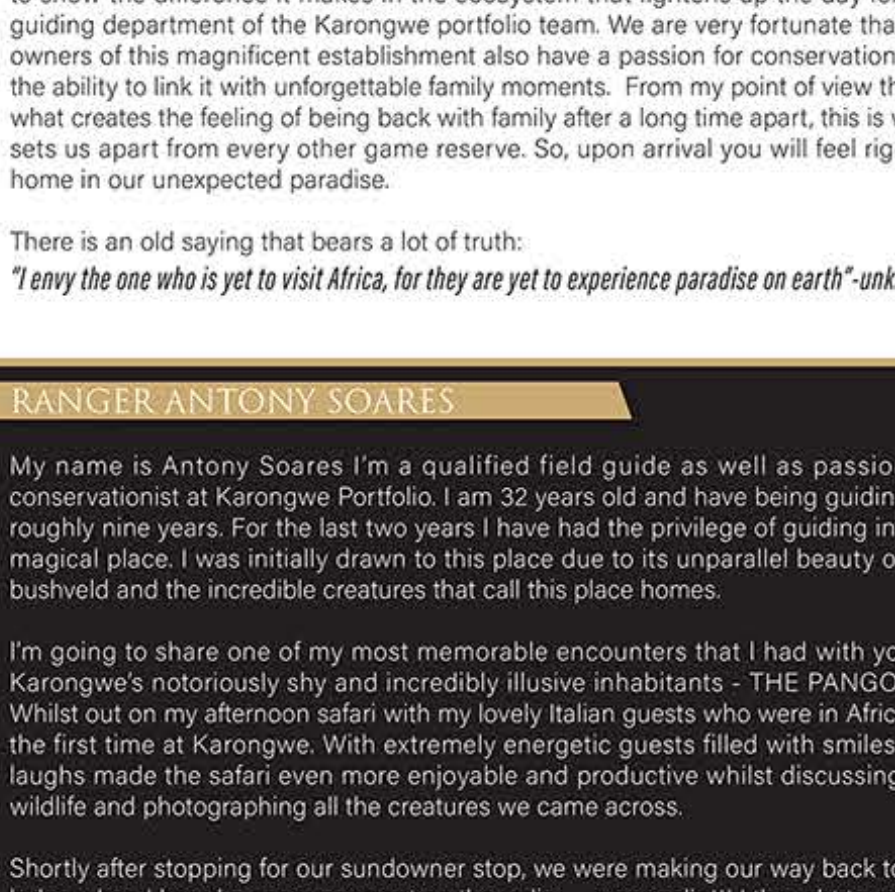
Raymond Botha has been appointed as General Operations Manager along with Sam Zwane as Assistant General Operations Manager.

Raymond has been in the hospitality industry since 1998 and has gone through the ranks in all departments. Sam (fondly known as Sammy) started at Karongwe in 1998. The Portfolio is excited to work with the new hands-on team, imbued with their passion for staff, guests and wildlife together with a sense of ownership they will take the Karongwe Portfolio to even better levels.

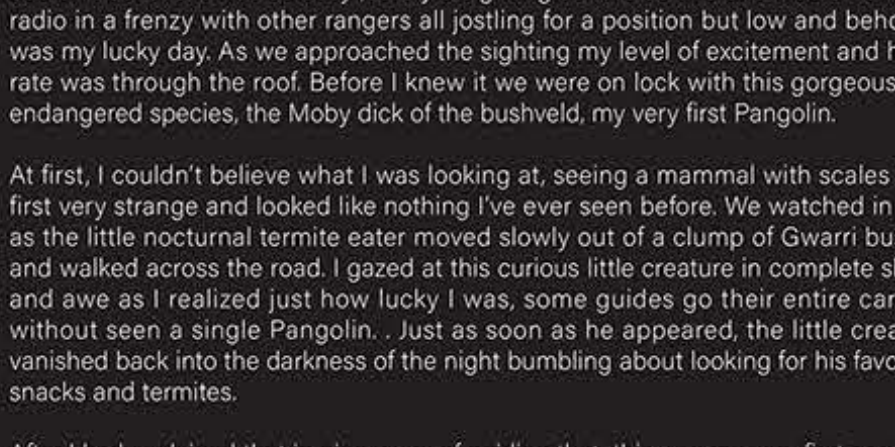
Thandy started working at Karongwe in September 2010 as a curio shop assistant after she graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Environmental Sciences.

In 2012 Thandy was promoted to Shiduli reception where she flourished. In March 2019 she was promoted again to Relief General Manager position and has been excelling every step of the way. Congratulations Thandy.

At Shiduli Lodge – the ever friendly and efficient Milly has been promoted to Duty Manager along with Rheni Mmola at Becks Safari Lodge.



WELCOME TO THE NEW FACES



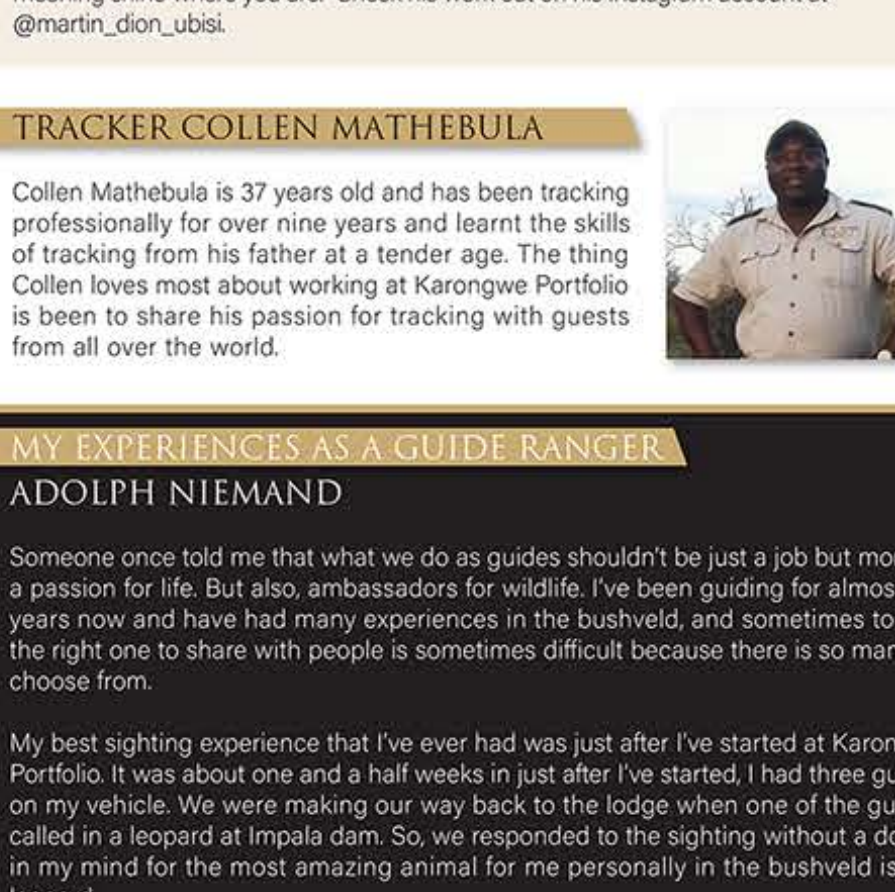
Chef Jason Raine, **Field Guide Joan Hattingh**, **Receptionist Pearl Skosana**, **Lodge Anchor Anadia With Head Guide Dohan Schepers**, **Relief GM Paul Putter**

PRECIOUS MOMENTS AT KARONGWE



CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

At Karongwe Private Game Reserve we not only deliver one of the most memorable safari experiences you could possibly imagine, but also do a great deal of conservation work as well. Before I get into the details, I want to make known just how important conservation really is not only to the species were trying to preserve, but also to us as the human race.

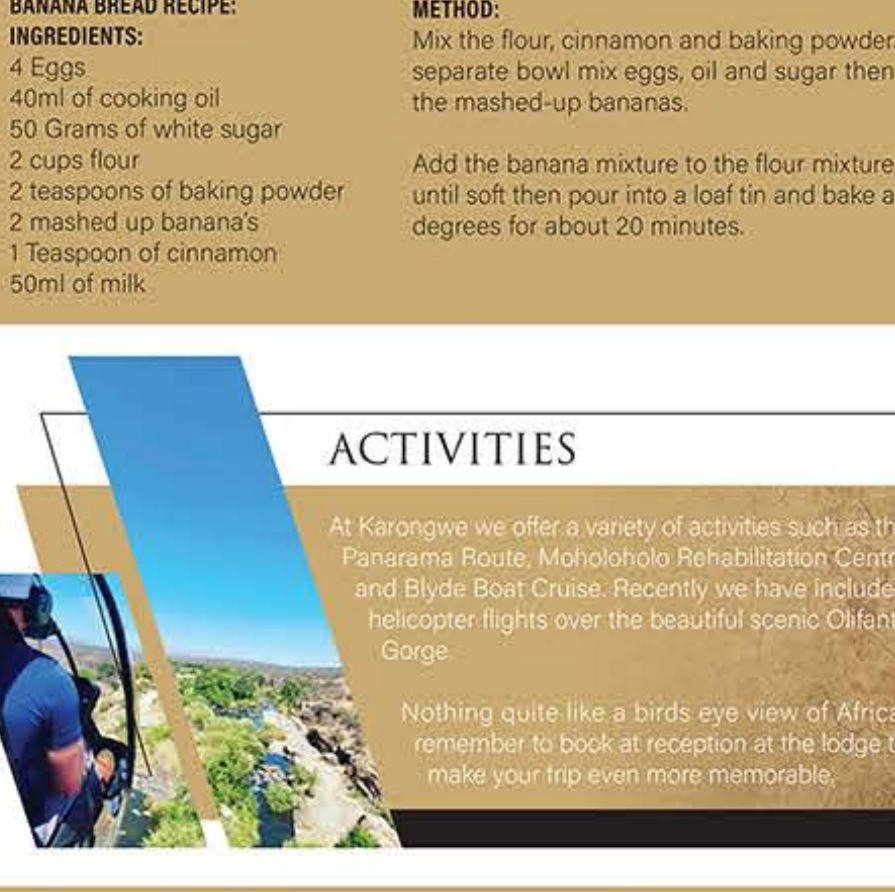


Over the past few years there has been a shocking increase in Rhino poaching which has forced Reserves like Karongwe to dehorn their Rhino to protect these vulnerable and defenceless creatures. Karongwe has experienced success with dehorning as a significant drop in poaching has occurred since it was implemented. The darting process also makes it possible to gather valuable DNA information regarding the Rhino.

Our valued Anti - Poaching Team also plays a significant role in patrolling the Reserve day and night. This would not be possible had it not been for the valuable support from our guests and travel partners who contribute to our Rhino Protection Fund - Thank You! You have made such a big difference.

WILD DOGS ON KARONGWE

Working here as a guide on Karongwe Private Game Reserve means that I get to see many of Africa's iconic species on a daily basis, however, that being said, there are certainly some species which are far more rare than others. Today I had the privilege of seeing one of Africa's top apex predators for the very first time... the African wild dog. The wild dog or painted dog as some of you may call it is part of the Canidae family and takes its name from the beautiful "painted" markings on its fur. It is a super predator with a success rate of 90% as is opposed to let's say a leopard or lion which has a success rate of roughly 30%. It is a gorgeous species living in family groups or packs as we call it and this, coupled with its unparalleled stamina - the likes of which could make Usain Bolt jealous - certainly does contribute to its abnormally high success rate in hunting. The classification for wild dogs is endangered with population decreasing so everyone is of the utmost importance for the preservation of the species. However, it was a total first for me and an encounter I won't soon forget. Let's hope that this write up sparks admiration for this magnificent canine and educates people on the importance of a species like the wild dog.



CONSERVATION IMPORTANCE

BY ANTONY SOARES

At Karongwe Private Game Reserve we not only deliver one of the most memorable safari experiences you could possibly imagine, but also do a great deal of conservation work as well. Before I get into the details, I want to make known just how important conservation really is not only to the species were trying to preserve, but also to us as the human race.

Did you know that we rely on bees for more than 40% of our total organic produce? And as you may or may not know, bee populations are steadily decreasing daily. This means that most of the fruit and vegetables we depend on for our survival will not be produced and if they are, they will be exponentially expensive. Some places like China have to hand pollinate all their apple and pear trees with a tiny feather duster and pollen on a saucer going from flower to flower, tree to tree just to pollinate them in order for them to produce fruit. A job usually taken care of by the bees. This is only one of many examples why conservation is so important both to us as well as the natural world. At Karongwe we offer a unique experience, walking with one of southern Africa's most endangered big cats, the cheetah.

Karongwe works closely together with E.W.T (Endangered Wildlife Trust) who monitor and work with the meta populations of the cheetah of southern Africa, we are proud to say we are working toward boosting the population of wild cheetah here on the reserve and working hand in hand with the good people of E.W.T.

OUR PASSIONATE GUIDES AND TRACKERS

It is always a delight to see the 1st Knob thorn flowers decorating the tree's – the only sometimes 38 degrees. It's a time when, if you get it wrong, you'll sweat in your longs or freeze in your shorts because mother nature can be fickle and changes the temperature overnight - normally once the beanies and gloves have been packed away.

Once the flowers start, a browse line develops on the knob thorns, the elephant start pushing the smaller trees down to get at the fresh produce! Big males are normally the culprits of pushing big trees down, but the whole herd benefits by pulling the fallen tree to feed. Giraffe enjoy the fresh flowers too and help to pollenate the Knob thorns. With the change in temperature comes a change in Safari times.

By 09h00 its hot and the animals look for shade to rest for the day. Hence wake up calls are at 05h00..... The migratory birds start showing themselves again singing more, looking for mates and declaring territories, so the seemingly silent bush - is actually very noisy with neighbours shouting at each other and young vulture males looking for females.

WHAT IT TRULY MEANS TO BE A KARONGWE FIELD GUIDE.

Starting from a young age I had a passion for the African wilderness. My parents and grandparents made a point for us to spend valuable family time in nature. We used to travel all over Southern Africa, even to the most Northern parts of Namibia to get away from the big city life and to get some peace away from internet and electricity. I believe this is where my passion for wildlife and conservation started. One of my earliest memories was in the Kruger national park with the whole family was a spotted hyena along the fence at night, as I was only 4 years old. I was terrified, and my grandmother took it upon herself to calm me down and guide me close to the fence. She spoke to me in a very calming voice while holding my hand firmly. Even though I cannot remember all she told me, all I can remember was the impact it had on our vacation and ultimately on my young life.

Throughout my schooling I was always the kid in class doing projects on animals and even marine life. After which I made the best decision of my life and pursued a career in "The Bush".

I started out my career in Kruger for only about 6 months before moving to Addo elephant park, 800 km from cape town. This was a gorgeous area with some of the most scenic driving in the country. As a young guide, the rest of the team at that stage took me under their wing and started a new passion for the wild in terms of botany as there was not a lot of high-profile game in that area.

After a few years in that region it was time for myself to make my way back to the savannah. I have been back here for the past 4 years and cannot imagine moving anywhere else in the world. The factor that allowed the savannah to hook its claws in me and keep me here would most definitely be the diversity this area has to offer. Not only the mammal species, but also the botany and bird life.

As it is still spring here on the Karongwe private game reserve we are still waiting on a lot of our migratory birds to come back. That being said, I recently had a bird watching family with me for 2 nights and we managed to identify 124 bird species including 7 migratory birds that have decided to come home earlier for the summer.

Having quite a passion for the trees and insects, my favourite part of the day would have to be being out on safari and hearing the birds start to wake up. Hearing the area go from absolute quiet to an orchestra of different sound in a matter of minutes with a mug of coffee in the hand and great company is something that would not easily be achieved anywhere else. Of course, that is not all the safari is about for us as field guides. Whether it is a lifelong dream of our guests or a return visit for the 8th time, we will go out of our way to make it an unforgettable experience that will never be forgotten.

With our highly experienced Trackers using all their senses in order to track down the illusive leopard or even unexpectedly coming across a herd of impala at the waterhole. Every second of every safari is unique. Weather it is the rangers will share with the guests at the campfire or our BOMA evenings, or just learning something new about astronomy, every day is special in Africa.

It is the opportunity to educate on the importance of conservation and the possibility to show the difference it makes in the ecosystem that lightens up the day for the guiding department of the Karongwe portfolio team. We are very fortunate that the owners of this magnificent establishment also have a passion for conservation and the ability to link it with unforgettable family moments. From my point of view this is what creates the feeling of being back with family after a long time apart, this is what sets us apart from every other game reserve. So, upon arrival you will feel right at home in our unexpected paradise.

There is an old saying that bears a lot of truth: "Every one who is yet to visit Africa, for they are yet to experience paradise on earth"-unknown

RANGER ANTONY SOARES

My name is Antony Soares I'm a qualified field guide as well as passionate conservationist at Karongwe Portfolio. I am 32 years old and have been guiding for roughly nine years. For the last two years I have had the privilege of guiding in this magical place. I was initially drawn to this place due to its unparalleled beauty of the bushveld and the incredible creatures that call this place homes.

I'm going to share one of my most memorable encounters that I had with you of Karongwe's notoriously shy and incredibly illusive inhabitants - THE PANGOLIN. Whilst out on my afternoon safari with my lovely Italian guests who were in Africa for the first time at Karongwe. With extremely energetic guests filled with smiles and laughs made the safari even more enjoyable and productive whilst discussing the wildlife and photographing all the creatures we came across.

Shortly after stopping for our sundowner stop, we were making our way back to the lodge when I heard an announcement on the radio... a pangolin!!! I thought to myself today is the day I might finally get a glimpse of one of Karongwe's most elusive residents. I Responding as quickly as humanly possible I was awarded a standby. I couldn't believe it was so easy, surely a sighting as rare as this one would have the radio in a frenzy with other rangers all jostling for a position but low and behold it was my lucky day. As we approached the sighting my level of excitement and heart rate was through the roof. Before I knew it we were on lock with this gorgeous and endangered species, the Moby dick of the bushveld, my very first Pangolin.

At first, I couldn't believe what I was looking at, seeing a mammal with scales is at first very strange and looked like nothing I've ever seen before. We watched in awe as the little nocturnal termitate eater moved slowly out of a clump of Gwarri bushes and walked across the road. I gazed at this curious little creature in complete shock and awe as I realized just how lucky I was, some guides go their entire careers without seeing a single Pangolin. Just as soon as he appeared, the little creature vanished back into the darkness of the night stumbling about looking for his favourite snacks and termites.

After I had explained that in nine years of guiding that this was my very first pangolin sighting and for my guests to be able to experience it on their very first safari is incredible and so lucky. My guests were over the moon and once again Karongwe never fails to impress me with her beauty and wildlife.

There is a certain magic here.... And for this reason, my heart will always be closely tied to Karongwe Portfolio.

THE PEOPLE OF KARONGWE PORTFOLIO

Johannes is a tracker that has been working at Karongwe Portfolio for 19 years now. He first started working at Karongwe Portfolio as a gardener in the lodges. As a young boy he used to watch over his father's cattle which were his most prized possessions. His father had many cattle, so he had to make sure they were well kept and looked after especially from predators such as leopards and lions, so as a young boy he was taught to read tracks from a very young age to keep the cattle safe. He never imagined that this skill would provide the income to feed his family one day. What Johannes loves most about Karongwe is being able to give back to the children in his community through charity and education programmes that Karongwe runs.

Martin Dion Ubisi has become one of our most talented photographers at Karongwe Portfolio. We are so proud to present his work on all our social media sites such as Instagram, Twitter and Facebook. Martin Ubisi is 23 years old and grew up in Mpumalanga in South Africa. From a young age he wanted to work with wildlife and decided to become a tracker. Working at Karongwe Portfolio as a tracker has allowed him to meet people from all over the world and has been given a platform to capture some of Karongwe's most precious wildlife on film and share it with the world. Martin always goes by the words "kganya moo a leng gona" meaning shine where you are. Check his work out on his Instagram account at @martin_dion_ubisi.

TRACKER COLLEN MATHEBULA

Collen Mathebula is 37 years old and has been tracking professionally for over nine years and learnt the skills of tracking from his father at a tender age. The thing Collen loves most about working at Karongwe Portfolio is being able to share his passion for tracking with guests from all over the world.

MY EXPERIENCES AS A GUIDE RANGER ADOLPH NIEMAND

Someone once told me that what we do as guides shouldn't be just a job but more as a passion for life. But also, ambassadors for wildlife. I've been guiding for almost ten years now and have had many experiences in the bushveld, and sometimes to find the right one to share with people is sometimes difficult because there is so many to choose from.

My best sighting experience that I've ever had was just after I've started at Karongwe Portfolio. It was about one and a half weeks in just after I've started. I had three guests on my vehicle. We were making our way back to the lodge when one of the guides called in a leopard at Impala dam. So, we responded to the sighting without a doubt in my mind for the most amazing animal for me personally in the bushveld is the leopard.

The reason why I say the leopard is because they are quite elusive and known as the ghosts of the bushveld, which makes them sometimes quite difficult to find no matter where you look, what fascinates me about leopards is how they stalk their prey.

I've once witnessed how a female leopard used her tail by brushing it gently over some grass as she mimated an impala who's busy feeding on some grass in order to blend in. Referring back to the sighting and what it extremely special is that when we arrived at Impala dam, the visual had been lost for this leopard. So my tracker and I, decided to go around and to see if we could be lucky enough to catch a glimpse of this illusive female leopard again, and much to our surprise she came running out of the bush and at that time we still hadn't noticed the Impala that she had been stalking.

In the midst of all the action and excitement all of a sudden, she ran after an impala and launched herself into the air and grabbed the Impala and pulled it down right in front of us it was truly one of the most memorable experiences I will always remember.

What one sees on documentaries of lions, leopards, cheetahs and is when these predators hunt they it usually takes a long time to film for it only one to see it happening in literally in a couple of minutes. So, to see something like this happening in front of you is a once in a blue moon experience. Through this experience one realises one's own passion for the African Bush.

Like someone once said you can take someone out of the bushveld but you can't take the bushveld out of the person and that I can say for sure that the passion I have for the bush will always be there in my heart whether I'm a guide or more. I hope to inspire people to gain admiration and love for the bushveld by sharing my experiences and passion with them.

FROM THE KITCHEN

BANANA BREAD RECIPE:

INGREDIENTS:
4 Eggs
40ml of cooking oil
50 Grams of white sugar
2 cups flour
2 teaspoons of baking powder
2 mashed up banana's
1 Teaspoon of cinnamon
50ml of milk

METHOD:

Mix the flour, cinnamon and baking powder. In a separate bowl mix eggs, oil and sugar then add the mashed-up bananas.

Add the banana mixture to the flour mixture, mix until soft then pour into a loaf tin and bake at 180 degrees for about 20 minutes.

ACTIVITIES

At Karongwe we offer a variety of activities such as the Panarama Route, Moholohlo Rehabilitation Centre, and Blyde Boat Cruise. Recently we have included helicopter flights over the beautiful scenic Olifants Gorge.

Nothing quite like a birds eye view of Africa, remember to book at reception at the lodge to make your trip even more memorable.

STAY IN TOUCH

Till our Summer 2019 Newsletter ... bye for now and remember the beautiful Karongwe is waiting for you. Remember to stay in touch with us onto experience our fantastic game viewing wherever you are in the world.

THERE ARE SOME FABULOUS SPECIALS FOR DECEMBER - SO BOOK WITH YOUR FAVOURITE TOUR OPERATOR AND COME BACK SOON.

GET IN TOUCH

+27 (0) 11 817 5560

+27 (0) 88 011 81560

reservations@karongweportfolio.com

Postal address: P.O. Box 3820, Springs, 1560, South Africa