

SKYDIVE FOR RHINOS 2012

OCTOBER NEWSLETTER



How does one sum up the last three months of the **Skydive for Rhinos** campaign in one newsletter – and keep it to a reasonable length? The answer is - with difficulty!



This campaign has become more than just a fundraising and awareness drive: it has changed lives, channelled thousands of South Africans' passion for the rhinos' survival in meaningful ways and shown people that their efforts DO make a difference. It has forged friendships and partnerships country-wide, reached tens of thousands of people, given birth to innovative new ideas and become one of life's great adventures for many of those who've taken part.

And yet, this is happening in a dark time. It seems that no matter what is done, the greedy slaughter of this iconic species continues. Over the weekend of World Rhino Day alone, 9 carcasses were discovered in KwaZulu-Natal and 4 rhino were killed in the Eastern Cape. To say we were devastated to receive the news, whilst we were skydiving for their survival in Robertson on 22-24 September, is putting it mildly.

At 15 October, South Africa is mourning the loss of over 463 rhino this year, surpassing 2011's figures.

"We stand to lose more than 1300 rhino over the next three years and according to calculations by Rowan Martin (an expert in behavioural ecology and conservation at UCT and formerly from the Zimbabwean Wildlife Services), the entire wild population of white rhinoceros could be lost by 2021," says Dr Herman Els, manager for conservation at SAHGCA (South African Hunting and Game Conservation Association) in a recent statement. "This loss, which takes into account the annual increments to the population through breeding, and the annual losses from poaching, equals US\$ 6 billion (R48 billion)."



If anything, the anger and outrage that erupted over the slaughter that took place over the World Rhino Day weekend, has re-ignited the Skydive for Rhinos community's drive and motivation to continue to protect and conserve rhinos. Horrific as it is, we CANNOT give up.

The funds raised by this campaign are already being put into action and we've decided that our final event in Rustenburg in November will be in memory of those rhinos we have lost but more importantly it will be a reminder that while there are still rhinos in the wild, there is still hope.

Whilst this campaign has arguably become known as the biggest fundraising campaign for SA's rhinos and has certainly put the passion of the South African public onto the front pages of national newspapers and on national TV – it also does a huge amount of work behind the scenes. Things that we don't publicise often enough include the strategic partnerships that are being forged, the dialogue we're having with conservation leaders in SA and beyond, about the best ways to distribute funding, the uncomfortable questions we're asking (and in return, trying to answer) about whether we are doing enough – and are there better ways to respond to the crisis.



This campaign is fermenting new ideas of what needs to be done and thanks to your participation, relationships are forming between sectors of society that a year ago, no-one would have dreamed of – bringing people from different backgrounds together, united in a common goal. The business sector is waking up to the impact that the loss of a wild animal will have on the country's economic prospects, thanks to the Rhino Skydivers who have alerted their colleagues, bosses and shareholders to the crisis. You have made the international community sit up and take notice that ordinary South Africans are willing to do something extraordinary not just once– but again, and again. Ex-South Africans in the UK are asking us to bring Skydive to Rhinos to London next year, and international rhino conservation groups are following this campaign, making contact and initiating conversations. One of the most heartening results is the growing number of schools that are using Skydive for Rhinos as a way of capturing the attention of their pupils and using this campaign to educate the generation that will be inheriting the world in 10-20 years' time – a world that may not include rhinos, if WE don't stop the slaughter.

The momentum continues to grow, and it is all thanks to you.

Perhaps we should take a leaf out of Digs Pascoe's book. Digs is the Founder of the Space for Elephants Foundation, a legendary Rhino activist and strong supporter of Skydive for Rhinos: he prefers to count the number of rhinos that are born and all those we have saved – not those lost to poachers.



A giant kiss from Dulcie Oliver for her dad, Digs Pascoe after her jump at the Eston event

In that light then, this newsletter is dedicated to all the rhinos that remain. And we are NOT going to stop fighting for them.

Rhinos in the News

1. [MEDIA RELEASE by the South African Hunters and Game Conservation Association \(08/10/12\)](#)
2. [Ian Player's plan to save Rhino - Sunday Tribune 30 September 2012](#)
3. [Funding shock for KZN Wildlife](#)
4. [Accused Rhino Poacher dismissed](#)
5. [More rhinos killed in KZN parks](#)
6. [Big guns to probe rhino slaughter](#)
7. [Horn Sounds for War on Poachers](#)
8. [World Rhino Day video](#)

Overall Fundraising

The Skydive for Rhinos Campaign has raised **R6.5million** to date. This includes:

- Corporate pledges and partnerships that will run for the next year with funding coming in on a quarterly basis
- Over R3million in cash donations into the ACT Rhino Fund

No administration fees are deducted from the funds raised. The cost to facilitate the skydiving is at a reduced rate. The more efficiently we've operated, the more funds have gone into the ACT Rhino Fund.



We're still aiming for R10million - donate now!

Direct Deposits & EFTs

Account Name: ACT Rhino Fund

Bank: Nedbank

Branch: Musgrave Centre, South Africa

Branch code: 1301 26

Account No: 1008662976

Please use your name as a reference and email the Proof of Payment to funding@projectafrica.com

To donate via VISA, MasterCard or Maestro debit card please use our GivenGain account:

<http://www.givengain.com/cause/3213/projects/10849/>

Event Round-Up

Rustenburg 28th & 29th July

What a start! We Rocked Rustenburg!

It was a festive beginning with Bakwena Platinum Corridor and Bridgestone SA both sponsoring teams to jump. Springbok and Blue Bulls rugby player Juandre Kruger (Ambassador for Cameron Pet Foods's Rhino campaign) joined Elise Daffue of StopRhinoPoaching.com (strategic partner of Skydive for Rhinos 2012) and Cito from rock band WONDERboom. Cast members of MNet's 'The Wild' also took part - our campaign Ambassador Michelle Bradshaw persuaded Josette Eales, Faye Peters, Tyrone Keogh, Keenan Arrison, Cameron McEwan and Executive Producer Bobby Heaney to join her in a 10,000ft leap for SA's rhinos.

Every 'Rhino Skydiver' brought something special to this event and the buzz of energy at Rustenburg Skydiving Club was a superb start to the national campaign. We made the front pages of the Rustenburg Herald and Platinum Weekly, Juandre's jump was covered by Die Beeld and 50/50 showcased the event.

Rhino Skydivers: 64

Funds raised for the ACT Rhino Fund: R301 116

Top Quote:

"From way up there you can see forever and I couldn't help but get very emotional, knowing that the rhino reserves and their security staff in the areas below us are being constantly challenged by poaching gangs. The huge significance of this campaign, each and every one of us facing our fears and taking a giant leap for rhinos, really struck home. What an amazing day with such inspiring people! – Elise Daffue (StopRhinoPoaching.com)"



Eston (KZN) 18th & 19th August

A homecoming and the busiest event of the year!

A year after our first Skydive for Rhinos in August 2011 we came back to where it all began - Angel's Way in Eston – and the second time round was even better than the first. Saturday 18th saw our friends in conservation join us with Project Rhino KZN members, Wildlife ACT, Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife, Wildlands Conservation Trust, Phinda, Thanda and Zululand Rhino Reserves joining the campaign. The ZRR team raised over R60, 000 and the entire leadership of the African Conservation Trust also skydived for rhinos.

Founder of the Put Foot Rally, Daryn Hillhouse, flew in from Cape Town; not only to participate, but he also announced a R300, 000 donation to Project Rhino KZN from the 2011 Put Foot teams.

It was high energy from dawn to dusk on both days, overflowing the hangar onto the lawns where friends, family members (children, grandparents and 4-legged supporters) had gathered to watch, armed with picnic baskets and portable braais.



International skydiving celebrity Olav Zipser also joined the Skydive for Rhinos campaign, treating the first-time Rhino Skydivers to a melody of free-flight manoeuvres.

Highlights from the weekend included:

- Project Rhino KZN partner, Crown National sold boerrie rolls and donated the proceeds
- Rawdons Hotel presented a cheque for R15 673 from their on-going fundraising campaign for Project Rhino KZN
- Nottingham Breweries sent their 'Pig Rig' and donated the proceeds from many litres of home-brewed lager!
- A surprise aerobatic display from the Ecko-sponsored YAK team
- The Bateleurs – volunteer pilots who have been patrolling Project Rhino KZN reserves for a year (funded the 2011 Skydive for Rhinos) - raised a further R2,000 by auctioning off a simulated 'rhino anti-poaching patrol'
- Oldest participant to take to the skies: 77-year old Rhoda Butler
- 6 KZN schools participated: teachers and pupils from Chelsea and Virginia Preparatory Schools, Russell High, St Anne's, Cordewalles and Pietermaritzburg's GHS took part.

Rhino Skydivers: 75

Funds raised for the ACT Rhino Fund: R426 937.47

Top Quotes:

"Thanks to you guys for everything, I think I'm still up there somewhere- thought I was flying like Superman!!"

*"You guys are doing such a great thing for SUCH a good cause that is close to all of us. Looking forward to raising even more money next year for the cause and will keep our thinking caps on for other ways that we can raise money and awareness." **Don & Kelly Airton (Zululand Rhino Reserve)***



Port Elizabeth 2nd September

The Windy City lived up to its name and we had one casualty – a boot!

Port Elizabeth was our smallest event but it certainly didn't lack energy. The Eastern Cape is very passionate about their rhinos and we had people sign up a week before the event and do some incredible last-minute fundraising!

The E. Cape Rhino Skydivers take the prize for the best team spirit and most innovative fundraising efforts: from organising rock-band evenings to Rhino Bingo and getting the iconic Grey High School behind the campaign!

Even though we had to push the event forward by a day due to wind and rain, spirits were not dampened. Highlights included SABC presenter Jurie Bignaut taking part and finishing it off with an awesome interview that was broadcast on national SABC news and mom and daughter Lea and Glyn celebrating their birthdays in the skies.





The energy didn't stop after the TV crews left 2 hours later – and a further highlight was the three guys who took their kit off and skydived naked. Chris, Dene and Steve did it with a serious message and our thanks to them for going commando in front of a large group of strangers! Thank you have to go to their tandem masters - Fred, Craig and Timothy - who had the (un)fortunate experience of being strapped to the campaign's most daring Rhino Skydivers.

Windy weather postponed the rest of our jumps until the Monday, perhaps fittingly as it was Heritage Day. The terrible news of the mass rhino poachings back home in KZN and also in the Eastern Cape was heavy in our hearts, as the core organising team made up the last load of Robertson's Skydive for Rhinos. But the day was another success – blue skies, beautiful views and like-minded people. And of course...we made the front page of the Sunday Times!

Rhino Skydivers: 44

Funds raised for the ACT Rhino Fund: R121 719

Quote of the event:

With thanks for what you have all done the amazing journey and challenge you have undertaken and will continue to conquer for the sake of our rhino. Your message has been heard... With deepest respect and gratitude. – Shannon Fletcher, Nomad Africa Trust

Fletcher, Nomad Africa Trust

The Ranch SkyDiving Boogie and Symposium (9th – 12th August)

The Ranch Skydiving Boogie and Symposium in Polokwane – a professional skydive event adopted Skydive for Rhinos. 77 Sports Skydivers participated and raised funds. Digs Pascoe from Space for Elephants (KZN) gave a presentation on the rhino crisis to the sports skydiving community of SA.



Africa Aerospace and Defence Airshow (19th -24th September)

StopRhinoPoaching.com teamed up with Skydive for Rhinos and Project Rhino KZN and raised R20 000 for rhinos at the Africa Aerospace and Defence Airshow at Waterkloof, Pretoria. Gaynor Anderson, Menno Parsons, Anthea Smith and Lynch Jordaan all did tandem 'Skydives for Rhinos' with Graham Field out of the branded PAC 750 XSOL flown by Chris Briers. We owe a big thank you to Anthea Smith - one of the Rustenburg Skydive for Rhinos participants who organised this important exposure for us.



TOTAL NUMBER OF SKYDIVES FOR RHINOS: 215 tandems + 165 Sports = 389



Rustenburg Round 2



We just keep coming back for more...and we hope you will too!

It's true: we are going back to Rustenburg for a second event on the **10th & 11th of November**. A minimum of R5000 will allow you to participate.

Rhino Skydivers - challenge your friends – you've done it, now it's their chance!

Email micah@projectafrica.com for registration info.

Media Coverage

- Skydive for Rhinos has made it into **national, provincial and local newspapers** including: Sunday Times, Sunday Tribune, Mercury, Star, Daily News, Witness, Die Burger, Die Beeld, Maritzburg Sun, Maritzburg Fever, Escourt and Midlands News, Village Talk, Isolezwe, The Citizen, Durban North News, Platinum Weekly, Rustenburg Herald and the PE Herald.
- **Radio stations:** huge thanks to the following stations who have faithfully followed the campaign: 5FM (high fives to Gareth Cliff and DJ Fresh's teams), SAFM, Highveld Stereo, Jacaranda FM, Radio Pretoria, Capricorn FM, Radio 702, Cape Talk, Algoa FM. Also East Coast Radio, Heart FM, Ripple FM and Two Oceans Vibe.
- **TV** – Top Billing, Expresso, 50/50, Morning Live and SABC News (x3)
- **Magazine support:** Africa Geographic, Getaway, Wildside and African Pilot. Africa Geographic's Judy and Janine also skydived for rhinos at Robertson.
- Numerous online news sites, magazines and blogs: Google 'Skydive for Rhinos' to see just how far the online news community has followed, supported and promoted this campaign.



Sheelagh's interview with Sam Marshall on Morning Live the day before World Rhino Day



Morning Live Presenter, Vaylen Kirtley on the front page of the Sunday Times with Tandem Master Fred Potgieter – 23/09/2012



Jumpers' Liaison, Micah van Schalkwyk featured in the Witness on Women's Day (9th August) ahead of the KZN event. The article listed the amazing women who had joined the campaign.

Funding Distribution

We have started channelling funding into the four priority areas we identified at the beginning of the year. We'll keep you informed on the progress of this in the coming months.

- 1. Equipment for APU members** – from basic (e.g.: sleeping bags), to advanced (e.g.: APU tactical vests) to high-tech (e.g.: GPS tracking units);
- 2. Skills training for APU teams** – we have chosen to focus on funding advanced training for game reserve managers and APU leaders. The reasons for this are three-fold:
 - 1) With the increasing sophistication of poaching syndicates, existing game reserve staff and APUs urgently need to be up-scaled in near-paramilitary skills and crime scene investigation techniques;
 - 2) There is a sustainability and job creation element;
 - 3) It negates our concern of training 'raw' recruits who may have ulterior motives for wanting to get to close to rhinos.
- 3. Aerial surveillance** – Funding has already been channelled to aerial security programmes that are benefitting a range of rhino owners in specific areas. The campaign has helped fund the purchase of two light aircraft for KZN and the Eastern Cape. The Project Rhino KZN group has now created a permanent aerial surveillance programme (the Zululand Anti-Poaching Wing) and a Cheetah will soon be flying daily patrols covering +100,000ha of rhino-bearing reserves. In addition, we've assisted StopRhinoPoaching.com fund the costs for a Foxbat that will be soon be on patrol duty in the Eastern Cape.
- 4. Buffer community interventions** – unemployment, poverty and food insecurity often drive desperate people to join poaching syndicates: we have to stop this by implementing educational/income generation projects linked to game reserves in communities bordering game reserves that will boost relationships between poor communities and rhino-bearing reserves.

"If we have the poorest of the poor living on the other side of the fence, you can hardly expect them to work with you if they receive no benefits. It is these communities who must become the eyes and ears, the informants." – Dr Ian Player

"Local communities have to be invested in and benefit from rhino conservation and management. Poor, vulnerable and uninformed communities living near rhino conservation areas are easily penetrated by poachers and illicit trade syndicates. Thus, more needs to be done to make these communities full-fledged partners in, and beneficiaries of, rhino conservation." – Minister Edna Molewa, Department of Environmental Affairs

The Team



Sheelagh Antrobus

Skydive for Rhinos
Campaign Leader



'Mad' Mike Rumble

Skydiving Logistics
Co-ordinator



Micah van Schalkwyk

Jumpers' Liaison



Gerrit Olckers

Video editing and
production



John Gilbert

Volunteer &
Photography



Olav Zipser

International
Campaign
Ambassador

From small beginnings in 2011 to an EPIC national fundraising adventure in 2012. Each person has brought their own unique passion and energy to this campaign and whether it was a donation, a few words of encouragement, another crazy idea or even just a hug or a smile – your support has given this campaign its wings.

See you in Rustenburg – it's the last chance this year to take that leap of faith and make the sky-high statement that rhino poaching must stop.



Wild and horny –

let's keep them that way!

Our deepest thanks for all your support...

Special people and thanks...

Thank you to: Angel's Way Trust and the Skydive centres for having faith in us; the tandem masters who landed everyone safely; the camera flyers for their incredible footage; our pilots for keeping Lucifer in the sky; the packers who worked tirelessly and ALL the support staff: from managing the manifest to lending a hand or a pen, offering hugs and encouragement – you have all been crucial to making the Skydive for Rhinos events a success.

A rhino-size thank you to our partners and sponsors – you have been critical in pulling this campaign off.

Angels' Way Trust	Camera Flyers	Sahkile Mundisi	Nikki Tilley
Skydive Rustenburg	Dale Jowett	Sean 'Monkey Boy' Schook	Olav Zipser
Durban Skydive Centre	Dave Ladell	Small Tukulula	Pamela Russell
Skydive PE	James Williamson	Solomon	Quintis van Wyk
Skydive Robertson	Karen Fourie	Tjon Thatcher	Ru Viljoen
Tandem Masters	Lance Darwent	Willem van Tonder	Sharon Ilett
Carel 'Callie' v Beursekom	Marcel Vliegenthart	Support Staff	Wanita Black
Corne Myburgh	Nico Vorster	Andre D'Argent	Zeta McClelland
Craig de Villiers	Pilots:	Andrea Fuidge	Partners
Donovan 'Tuck' Crearer	Brett Dugdale	Andrew Diets	EISH! Rhinos
Francois Kros	Duran Forder	Anire van der Walt	Cameron Pet Foods
Fred Potgieter	Graeme Gordon	Alister 'Barney' McQueen	Crown National
Graham Field	Parachute Packers	Brandon	StopRhinoPoaching.com
Joos Vos	Adam Adimu	Charmaine Wild	Project Rhino KZN
Laurel Thatcher	Anthony Amos	Danelle Barnard	Ecko Unltd
Martin Wegerle	Ernest Muchuchu	Digs Pascoe	
Rainer Backer	Jackie Schoeman	Dylan Owen	Thank you to all the Sports
Rogan Brent	Justin Fuidge	Gerrit Olckers	Skydivers who joined us at
Roy Steemson	Kezi Adimu	Herman Grobler	every event!
Timothy Hutchings	Lloyd Teveta	Hildi Coetzee	
Tony Martin	Mairos Adam	John Gilbert	
Trevor 'TQ' Harvey	Rasta Teveta	Josie Coetzee	
Vernon Kloppers	Reginald Dladla	Melanie van Biljon	

Sponsors	Ghost Mountain Inn	Rawdons Hotel
ABHI Photography	Global Travel Alliance of South Africa	Redlands Hotel, Pietermaritzburg
Adventures with Elephants	Gooderson Leisure - Natal Hot Springs Resort	Robertson Tourism
Artist - Brian Harmer	H&R Catering	SAB
Artist – Sheena Arnott	Hampshire Hotel, Ballito	Sign Solutions
Bakwena Toll Concessions	Hides for Africa	Southern Sun - Garden Court Durban
Beautiful You Port Elizabeth	I-Cube	StopRhinoPoaching.com
Brian Harmer	Jason Els	Tala Game Reserve
Cakesations	Kendall & Strachan printers	Tembe Elephant Park
Cambist	Kim Steinberg Photography	Thanda Game Reserve
Cameron Pet Foods	KZN Ambulance Services	Tsogo Sun - Garden Court Durban
Cold Press Media	Meyer Productions	Umlilo Brands
Crown National	Nambiti Hills Private Game Lodge	Yamaha
Dermalogica	Nottingham Road Breweries	Zulu Nyala Game Reserve
Ecko Unltd	On Design	
Ezemvelo KZN Wildlife		