



## Hawaan Forest Conservation Trust Monthly site inspection report:

Summary:

20 01 2022

- i. The monthly site visit to the Hawaan Forest conducted by A. Starke took place on the 21.01.2022
- ii. Items checked during the visit are detailed below. Fauna and security monitoring was achieved by setting up trail cameras. One of the trail cams picked up a poacher during early January. This mobilised Marshall security who have conducted risk assessments and also bought in their canine dog unit. The camera traps have now, in part, been handed over to Mr Thulani Biyela. AS has been training him during January and will work closely with Marshall in support on this. The camera trap located on the Western boundary (an armoured unit) was also stolen during early January. We have now asked a carpenter to provide a prototype forest stump in order to conceal the cameras in high risk areas.
- iii. The waterpoint camera trap on the Bushshrike trail showed a lot of beautiful wildlife activity, including a juvenile crowned eagle in January.
- iv. A second population of ground nesting grass bees have been observed, this time at the grass area on entrance pond.
- v. Life landscape have quoted the HOA to prune back and clean up the forest verge on Herald drive. Once this has been done, I suggest that the HFT assist with monitoring and cleaning the leaf litter and debris on the two storm water drains which are adjacent to the forest gate.
- vi. An interesting insect observation in the forest during January has been of Geometrid moth larvae (looper caterpillars) defoliating forest fever berry (*Croton sylvaticus*). In their hundreds, these larvae, if they have survived being eaten by birds such as Forest weavers, drop to the forest floor. They then attempt to escape other insect predators such as pugnacious ants, and one can hear them moving through the leaf litter!! See items 5 & 6.



Figure 1. Path covered during site visit (white). Numbers on the map refer to items below.



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(1)



At the forest management zone, we will need a simple outdoor shower with an electronic geyser. This can be piped into a soak away behind the shed.

(2)



Vegetation at the forest gate has been cleared away.

(3)



Life landscapes have quoted to clean up and remove the vegetation from the verge on Herald drive. The staff can help to attend to checking leaf litter which has built up on the storm water drains.

(4)



Forest pathways have been cut back since the return of staff after the December break.

(5)



Looper Geometridae larva after dropping to the forest floor after defoliating forest fever berries.



(6)



A forest fever berry (*Croton sylvaticus*) denuded by Geometridae moth larvae during January 2022.

(7)



Rubble on the pathway will be cleaned by the end of February 2022.

(8)



Yellow bells (*Tecoma stans*) have emerged in the grassland during early summer.

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(9)



Yellow bells (*Tecoma stans*) regeneration in the grassland will be dug out.

(10)



The pathway at plot 191 to be mowed so that the road can link with the grassland pathway network.

(11)



The Yellow bells (*Tecoma stans*) at plot 191 are to be sprayed with herbicide.

(12)



Signs not yet replaced. We are of process of compiling an inventory for taking to Umhlanga signs for quotes.

(13)



So far so good for the khakibos slashing programme this summer as growth has been minimum.

(14)



Grassland pathways and the picnic spot have been nicely cut.

(15)



Khaki bos on the western grassland section has been hand pulled. Monitoring will be ongoing during summer of 2022.

(16)



Noted on the grassland trail were colony of sand wasps (*Bembicini*). Unlike the ground nesting bees, these guys predate host specific flies (diptera) which they hunt and feed to the developing larvae with the chamber of the ground nest.



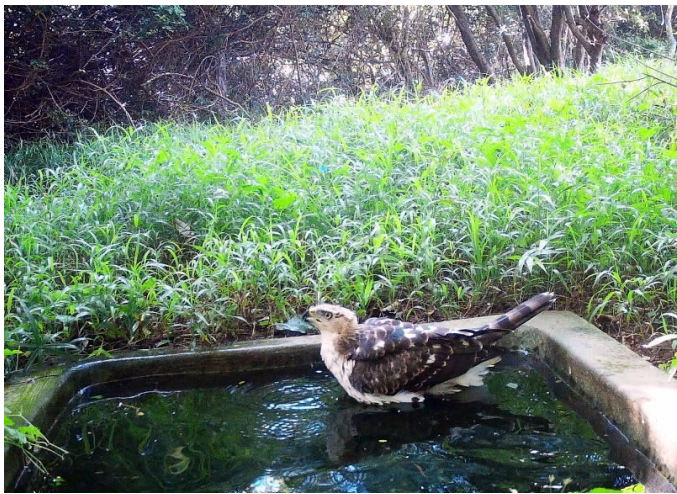
Camera trap observation Jan 2022. Due to the heat in January the most notable camera trap observations for Jan 2021 focused on the water trough at Bushshrike trail. An exciting observation was a juvenile crowned eagle having a drink and cooling off in the water.



Crested Guinea fowl



Purple crested turaco



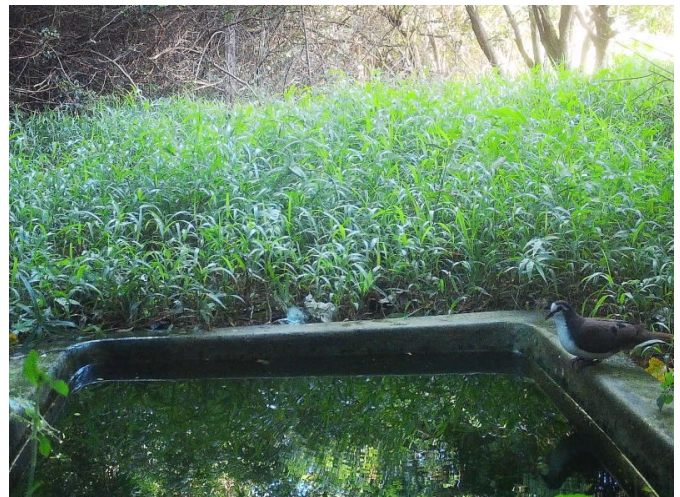
Crowned eagle (Juvenile)



Female bushbuck



Wood owl



Tambourine dove



Operations: Tasks 2022															
Category	Item	Task	Schedule	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Trails	1.1	Clearing away vegetation that is growing over, repairing washaways	Weekly	x											
	1.2	Repairing washaways	Weekly	-											
	1.3	Resetting concrete sleeper treads on steeper parts of the trails	Weekly	-											
	1.4	Cut the trails using a brush cutter once every two weeks in summer and check for overgrowth in winter	Weekly	x											
	1.5	Trails should be maintained because they function as fire breaks or tracer breaks for fire-fighting when annual burn is done each year in July/August.	Weekly	x											
	1.6	Check trails for over-hanging branches and other vegetation.	Weekly	x											
	1.7	Clearing litter on the trails and in the forest twice a week as not much pedestrian traffic if usage increases then checking daily will have to be done.	Weekly	x											
	1.8	Check fuel and oil for machines and report.	Monthly	x											
	1.9	Snare management – check hot spot sites for re-applied snares on a weekly basis	Monthly	x											
Water points	2.1	Check if waterpoints are soiled by animals	Weekly	x											
	2.2	Fill waterpoints along the trails	Weekly	x											
Infrastructure	3.1	Observe and report to Management where signage needs to be cleaned or replaced due to vandalism or fading	Monthly	x											
	3.2	Check signs and clean signs and benches weekly	Weekly	x											
	3.3	Check exclusion plot for fallen trees or branches damaging the wire.	Monthly	x											
	3.4	Keep tools and equipment clean and serviced daily for hand tools.	Weekly	x											
	3.5	Clean and service machine tools after each session of use. Chainsaw, Brushcutter.	Weekly	x											
	3.6	Service of machinery at Berries	Yearly	-											



[illegible]



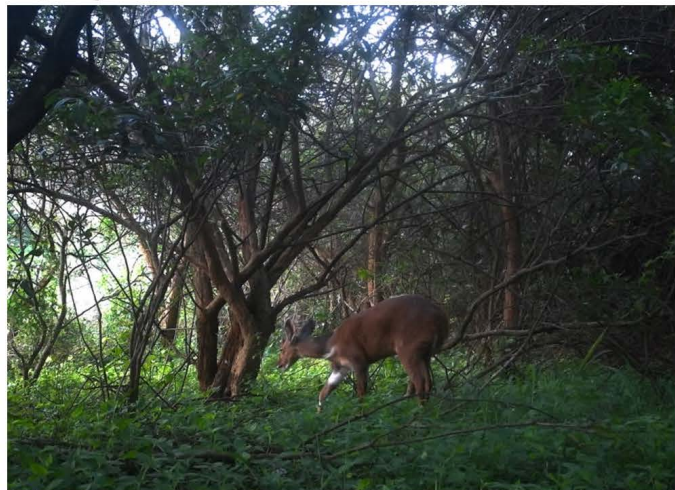
Six of the seven camera have been in operation during November-December. The Seventh camera is due to be installed within the next week. Camera batteries appear to last between 3-4 four weeks, while each camera used between 500 mb and 1gig of data. The data budget for each camera should be in the order of R 50-75 per month. Importantly no non-resident 'humans' have been noted on the cameras. AS will continue to monitor the camera in December but the way forward in January will be garner support from the HOA security to help with monitoring. Some interesting new species were observed over the Nov/Dec period, for example: on Camera V, a Steppe Eagle. Other observations in the images are : i) = Large spotted Genet ; ii) & vii) Female bushbuck; i) Water mongoose i) Male bushbuck.



⌚ v)



⌚ i)



⌚ iii)



⌚ vii)



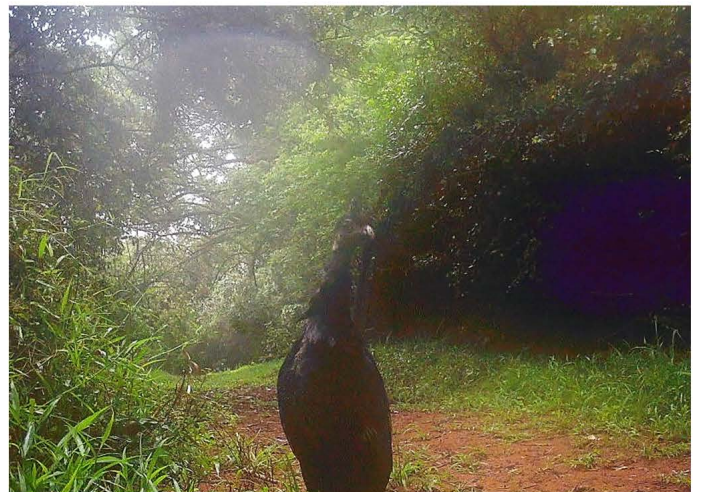
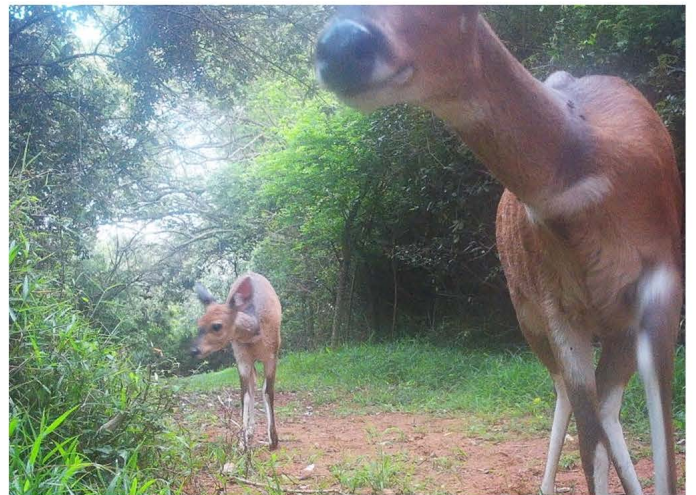
⌚ i)



⌚ i)



Camera trap images October-November 2021. New species observations in November were Water Mongoose. Other sightings include: Bushbuck family activity, Blue Duiker pairs and Crested Guine fowl.





## Camera trap images September /October 2021

Given that we are still working out how best to deploy the camera traps in the nature reserve, some of the images received so far have been beautiful. Species noted below are as follows: Crested guinea fowl, spotted Genet, and female, male and juvenile bushbuck. Other forest antelope noted have been both red and blue duiker. Four cameras have now been deployed. Their locations have been sited in Fig. 1.

