

FREEME KZN WILDLIFE REHABILITATION CENTRE – APRIL 2019

STATISTICS

ADMISSIONS:

<i>Small birds:</i>	57
<i>Large birds:</i>	13
<i>Raptors:</i>	3
<i>Small mammals:</i>	12
<i>Large mammals:</i>	5
<i>Reptiles:</i>	4

RELEASES:

<i>Small birds:</i>	13
<i>Large birds:</i>	17
<i>Raptors:</i>	2
<i>Small mammals:</i>	4
<i>Large mammals:</i>	0
<i>Reptiles:</i>	2

NOTICES

COURSES:

20/04/2019 – Owl Rescue Course – R150 for Custodians – Bookings and info –

projects@freemekzn.co.za

15/05/2019 – Custodian Insight – Post Mortem on Caracal – no charge – Bookings and info –

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EDITORS NOTE:

The double rescues of Amur Falcons in Mooi River and then in Newcastle dominated the headlines at FreeMe KZN during March. With the hail storms that hit both roosts resulting in thousands of birds injured or dead, their numbers have not been added to the usual statistics in this newsletter, but have been given special mention here. 40 Birds still remain under our care at FreeMe KZN, with 1012 birds from Mooi River and 813 birds from Newcastle being able to be released again in time for their migration back to Russia. Sadly there was nothing that could be done for the 712 birds from Mooi River and the 1088 birds from Newcastle which had been killed by the hail. This double disaster followed closely behind the mass die off of Swallows and Swifts that took place earlier in the year in KZN, and we can only predict future disasters still to come due to the change in weather patterns and climate conditions across the world.



ADMISSION STORIES:

One of our baby animals admitted during March was a Bushbuck lamb that had been attacked by a dog. Thankfully the dog was a small breed and although the skin on the side of the little Bushbuck's abdomen had been torn, no internal damage was done and he is recovering well from his ordeal.

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THANK YOU:

To everyone who came to assist with the Amur Falcon rescues, and to those who donated funds and supplies to help with their continued care. We are very grateful for the overwhelming show of support we received.

The Bushbuck lamb was followed a few weeks later by a Waterbuck calf which had lost its mother. A farmer noticed the calf lying abandoned for two days, but was reluctant to interfere until the calf started following staff around, at which point he arranged for the calf to be brought through to FreeMe KZN.

Among our tiny mammal babies admitted was a family of Pygmy Mice which were discovered after their burrow was ploughed up in a farmer's field. The farmer took pity on the tiny babies and brought them through to FreeMe KZN for hand-rearing and release.

A whole bunch of White-faced Ducklings arrived to add to our baby numbers. They were handed in after being found wandering around without a mother. They have settled in well and thoroughly enjoy their daily excursions to the ponds to swim and forage.



RELEASE STORIES:



We got to say a happy goodbye to an adult Yellow-billed Kite which was admitted after being hit by a car. Thankfully it suffered nothing more than a severe concussion, and recovered fully after a few days of rest and care at FreeMe KZN.

A White Stork which had spent a few weeks recovering in the Water Bird Aviary at FreeMe KZN after being found stuck in a bush, was

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PROJECTS:

DNA research – the Amur Falcons which did not survive the hail storms are going to provide valuable data for research on the species.

Owl Box Project – up to date box installations include:

<i>Spotted Eagle Owl:</i>	113
<i>Barn Owl:</i>	72
<i>Wood Owl:</i>	32
<i>Bat:</i>	25

also ready for release, and flew off strongly from its release site in Karkloof.

A Black-winged Kite, which had been at FreeMe KZN for a few months recovering from a broken wing, was also finally fit and ready for release. She was taken back to her home territory in Fort Nottingham, where she flew off strongly, hopefully to find her mate.

OUTREACH AND EDUCATION:



As part of our FreeMe Wildlife talks during March, we gave a presentation to the PMB Rotary Club on the development of FreeMe KZN's Raptor Centre, as well as addressing the learners at Crest College in Hillcrest on World Wildlife Day.

We also ran an Introduction to Raptor ID Course at Kenneth Stainbank Nature Reserve, which included theory, lunch, and a walk to look for signs of resident raptors.

The educators and learners in our outreach program at Siyabonga Helping Hands spent March looking at 'Life Beneath our Feet', which involved understanding how important healthy soils are for supporting life.

Wetlands also formed part of the focus, and the educators spent some time looking at how essential clean water is for supporting life on earth, including our own.

CONTACT US:

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