

VIICIFE CAMPUS LEARN PROTECT SAVE

# Magazine

Rabbits or Hares? By Stuart on Nature

## Never miss an opportunity By David Batzofin

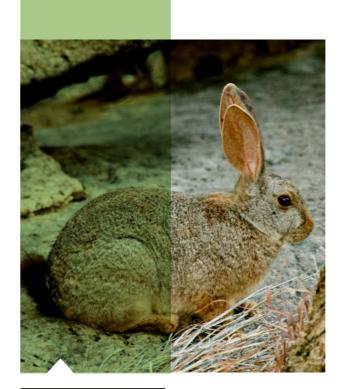




WildlifeCampus Magazine - January 2023 - Volume 01 - FREE

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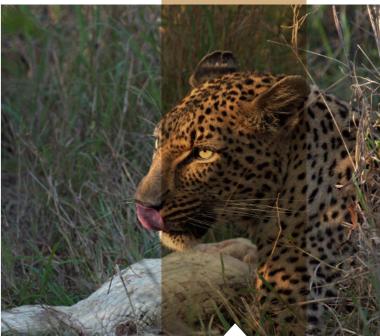


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## y Stand out from others!

e is In this article by Wild Dreams Hospitality, Angie Galante shares 4 valuable tips on how to make sure you stand out from other job seekers on the market.

## Never miss an opportunity

David Batzofin describes it as "another day, another game drive" though the first story for 2023 turns out not to be that ordinary of a game drive.

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## The show must go on!

The origin story of WildlifeCampus

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By co-founder of WildlifeCampus and **Anchor CEO** 

**Peter Armitage** 



Missed the previous parts of this story? Click here to open the WildlifeCampus magazine where this exciting journey starts.

There was an extremely good vibe at AfriCam. People enjoyed working for the company as they felt it combined work and a greater good. There was some purpose to what we were all doing and we were making a difference. The quality of people that AfriCam attracted never ceased to amaze me. People who have an affinity and passion for wildlife also tend to have a passion for life and high principles.

I squeezed into a corner desk in a room with four other people and started my work. I first set out to evaluate the business and the facts looked something like this:

• Six live cameras: Djuma, Gowrie Dam, Sabi Sabi, Sabi Sabi Mobile, Satara, Orpen, Kwa Maritane.

- 16 million page impressions per month.
- There was, on average, two cameras working at any one time.
- Money spent to date: Around R400 000 (US\$60 000).
- Costs of R145 000 per month (US\$25 000).
- No revenues (US\$ nil!).

• Immediate revenue opportunities: Not apparent.



• Balance sheet: zero cash in the bank. Shareholding: Peregrine Consortium 50%, Paul 22.5%, Graham 22.5%, Peter 5%.

At any other time in history, a business with these fundamentals should have considered closing down. But AfriCam had just begun and in the internet era, the investors were telling me that the short term target was a value of US\$100m. The big value in the business was the concept and the TRAFFIC. If this many people from all over the world were watching, there were clearly enormous revenue opportunities.

One aspect of the business troubled me greatly right from the beginning: the lack of capital. The way that internet businesses were operating globally was to finance expenditure by selling equity to propel this growth phase. The growth phase was the period immediately prior to the phase in which profits were generated. Unfortunately, for 97% of internet businesses, they never progressed to this second phase.

Now, a lack of capital was fine, but I was going to have to raise capital to finance the business. However, the founders (Graham and Paul) had already sold a large portion of their stake in the business and any new investor would further dilute their interests.

I was very sensitive to this and I felt a little cornered from the start. It was seemingly a little clearer to Paul: "Part of the deal was for Peregrine to finance the business." "You mean they will pay for the running

of the business until it makes money?" "That was the deal," he replied emphatically.

It was midway though the month and the staff needed to be paid.

In the interests of harmony, I paid the salaries out of my own bank account in the first month. Not exactly what I had expected and clearly not sustainable.

Some heated debate ensued between Paul and Graham and the Peregrine consortium. JB had already started to withdraw from the nuts and bolts. For him, the deal was what it was all about. Then his "workers" would take care of the detail. In addition, he had significant business interests elsewhere in the world. In real businesses.

www.AfriCam.com

A story of making a difference, A story of fortunes made and lost, A story of greed, A story of commitment, A story of passion, A story of the animals of our planet.

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### "The Show Must Go On by Peter Armitage and the AfriCam community."

I phoned Sean Katz at Peregrine, who had a very different understanding of the deal: "The business must finance itself. Peregrine has paid its capital already."

Eventually it was agreed that the Peregrine consortium would be prepared to sell 20% of the business in order to raise capital. In other words they would be left with 30% and the business would be adequately funded.

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Raising money was not too difficult for a sexy enterprise like AfriCam and a value of R100m (US\$16m) was considered reasonable and agreed upon at a Board meeting. The suspects were two other South African merchant banks, Real Africa Durolink and African Harvest. They were comfortable with the valuation and after some convincing from myself, they each wrote out cheques for R10m apiece; a total of R20m.

But the Peregrine consortium smelt opportunity, and after all they were selling a portion of their stake. R10m of the R20m was injected into AfriCam as a loan from themselves and they kept R10m. Only a few months after investing it had already got all of its money back, made a R4m profit and it owned 30% of AfriCam and the shareholders loan for free. The only problem was that, at some stage, further capital would have to be sold to pay back the loans. It also gave Peregrine an unbalanced power over the business.

But we had what we so desperately needed: R10m (US\$1.6m), which was considered sufficient ammunition to make the business worth US\$100m. The petrol tank was "full" and we could begin the journey.

The shareholding was now as follows: Peregrine Consortium 30% (plus a shareholders loan), African Harvest 10%, Real Africa Durolink (RAD) 10%, Paul 22.5%, Graham 22.5% and Peter 5%.

### "An urgent business plan" - August 1999

David de Bruin was arriving at the AfriCam offices in a few days time for a due diligence. He was the African Harvest representative who would look after the AfriCam investment. I sensed that the deal for them to inject capital was already concluded at a higher level with Ethan Dube, but we needed to give David comfort.

This forced us to think carefully about our revenue model. At this stage, the business was clearly more content and trafficorientated than being concerned about revenue. Developing projections for AfriCam was going to be more of an art than a science and it was more about getting David excited, rather than being able to prove the notional revenues to him. It was all about vision, mission statements and passion. This is what David would ultimately buy. But the reality was that they would invest in AfriCam because Nasdag valuations were so high and AfriCam had an opportunity to participate in these irrational valuations.

First we had to project advertising revenues. Shannon was starting to make some headway in the South African advertising market. She was a fighter who would not take no for an answer and if she got through the door, there was a pretty good chance that she would conclude a deal.

From a US advertising perspective, we had a deal concluded in principle with Xoom.com in the US. It would pay us US\$1 for every 1000 page impressions we delivered on the dot.com site. Xoom was selling advertising across a number of sites at a higher rate and making money off our traffic. In addition, it would provide us with hosting services out of San Francisco. This was important because the bandwidth from South Africa was very expensive and slow for US viewers. What this meant is that if we served 10m impressions in a month on the dot.com site, Xoom would pay us US\$10 000 per month. That was US\$10 000 more than we were generating.

Next on the income statement came the additional revenue

streams. What were the other ways to generate revenues from our vast global user base that had the common thread of an interest in wildlife?

The truth is that we made it up as we went along. There were no international precedents, no business plans to emulate. We were pioneers.

The ideas that found their way on the initial business plan were: e-commerce, travel, wildlife education and wildlife imagery.

We forecast spreadsheet millions for each of these revenue ideas. If AfriCammers were prepared to spend hours on end consuming our content, surely they would buy a calendar and a T-shirt, pay for a game-ranging course, visit South Africa and buy some of the best photography that our talented photographers had to offer. At the time, the theory seemed sound.

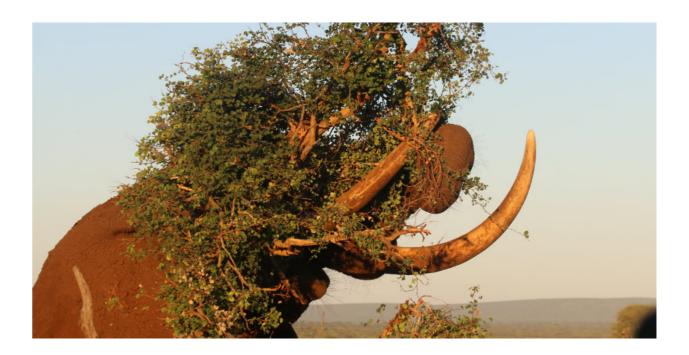
David was relieved to see that the business would make a sizeable spreadsheet profit in the second year of operation. The R10m of capital looked sufficient to finance the growth of this business into a valuable global entity.

"Is this 100 000 e-commerce customers in year-two?" David questioned, as if he could not read a spreadsheet. "I think that is reasonable," I replied.

"Mmmm, that assumes that about 10% of the customers will buy one product every year. Seems reasonable."

"It could also be 33 000 viewers buying three products each, which arrives at the same total."

"Yes. I am more comfortable with that."



David and I both knew that my spreadsheets were total conjecture, but neither would admit to it. I desperately needed his investment, so he had to believe the numbers. We were in a corner and if David did not invest I would probably be paying salaries again in September. How would I explain that to my wife and why should I? I only owned 5% of the business. I did what I had to do.

David wanted to believe the numbers and the assumptions were very palatable. In the absence of any history, David took the approach of checking each assumption at least five times. The more he heard it, the more justified he felt in believing it. Graham and Paul patiently repeated themselves.

Shannon stormed into my office: "He is driving me mad. I have said the same thing ten times."

"You are not alone," was my only defence. "He is doublechecking everything."

"Am I supposed to project higher numbers?"

"No, stick with the plan. Those are good enough."

Eventually David signed it off. There was no point in checking again. They were mostly assumptions after all.

Peter Schlebush from RAD thankfully was more pragmatic and relied on David's hard work. He was honest about the reason they were investing. He wanted to buy in at R100m and sell his stake with the company valued at R1bn. It did not seem to matter what happened between those two benchmarks.

Contracts followed and a week later we had our R10m. And Peregrine had their R10m, and their shareholders' loan.

# S Wonders of the ocean

### **By WildlifeCampus student**

**Amy Holt** 

Feared by most, sharks, the monsters of the ocean, face an uncertain future due to global overfishing. Of the 1000+ known shark and ray species globally, nearly one-quarter are classified as threatened with extinction.

South Africa, with one of the largest populations of great white sharks, became the first country to totally protect them in 1991.

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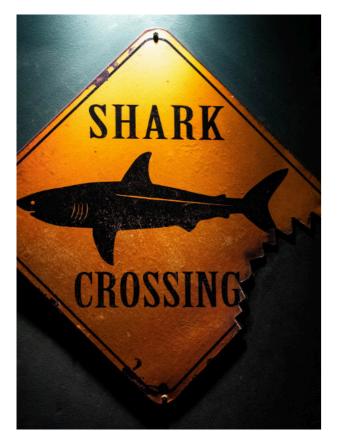
### The estimated total of the South African population of great whites is only between 353 and 522 individuals, making them far more scarce than the country's well known rhinos.

Sharks keep our largest and most important ecosystem healthy. They have sat atop the oceans' food chain, keeping our seas healthy for millions of years. The oceans produce more oxygen than all the rainforests combined, remove half of the atmosphere's manmade carbon dioxide, and control our planet's temperature and weather. Our existence is largely dependent upon theirs. Furthermore, sharks keep other populations in check and prey on the sick and old. This prevents spread of disease and improves the gene pool-sharks ultimately maintain the overall genetic fitness of prey populations. Also, sharks are important to the economy with shark fisheries providing jobs and income for communities but, only if this is managed sustainably can we ensure these livelihoods in the future. The rise of ecotourism is further placing a financial value on the presence of sharks.

South Africa is home to one of the world's most diverse shark faunas, with about 185 shark species found here. Limited information on shark population sizes and their life cycles makes it almost impossible to sustainably remove sharks from our oceans. Sharks are slow growing, slow to mature, have long gestation periods and produce relatively few young, making them very vulnerable to fishing. To the point where populations simply cannot replenish at the same rate to meet demand.



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Further, the loss of smaller shark populations will have a ripple effect for the larger shark species, which in turn, would lead to the collapse of entire ecosystems-this would be detrimental to us and future generations. Restoring sharks is key to improving the resilience of water bodies to climate change-one of the biggest challenges of our time. Marine protected areas are vital for conserving marine life, including sharks. South Africa has a total of 42 marine protected areas which allow sharks to safely mature and the opportunity to

reproduce. This helps ensure shark population numbers don't drop to critical levels.

The controversial topic of shark-cage diving has raised the debate to whether 'chumming' (feeding/baiting the sharks) for human entertainment is ethical? It is believed that offering food to sharks will lead to them losing their natural survival instincts. In 2012, shark cage diving was outlawed in Western Australia after scientific studies along that coastline showed 'chumming' caused significant change in great white shark behaviour. It was also, made illegal in New Zealand in 2018 after pressure from the public to do so. If too many cage diving operators work simultaneously in one area, it could alter the behaviour of great whites causing an impact on prey populations and so disrupt the delicate balance of marine ecosystems.

Although, there is a huge demand for cage diving from thrillseeking tourists and it creates jobs in the tourism industry, the experience is often inauthentic due to the fact that sharks, often timid animals by nature, are repeating an unnatural situation over and over again. There are options to dive with other shark species without a cage that involves no 'chumming' which makes for a natural, ethical, authentic and sustainable experience. Also, there's the possibility to catch a glimpse of a great white if you look across False Bay on a sunny day, or cruise by a seal colony. But, the pressure to make money with nature will always push the limits of nature.





Awareness and education are crucial to change the public's perception of sharks from one of fear, to one of appreciation and respect for the benefits that sharks provide to ecosystems and economies. Despite the unwholesome reputation that great white sharks have acquired since 1975's Jaws, they pose very little threat to humans. Statistically you stand around a 1 in 3,700,000 chance of being killed by a shark. Likely now lower still when considering that shark numbers are falling globally every year.

South Africa was the first country to protect great whites yet, there is a loophole allowing KwaZulu-Natal Shark Board (KZNSB) to kill the protected species. KZNSB is an organisation that maintains a 'shark control' programme using 37 shark nets and 107 drum lines that stretch along the coastline-Richards Bay to Port Edward. In a 30-year period, more than 33,000 sharks have been killed in the KZNSB's shark killing programme-during the same 30-year period, 2211 turtles, 8448 rays, and 2310 dolphins were killed. There is no scientific support for the concept that culling sharks in one particular area will lead to a decrease in shark attacks or increase ocean safety. Not only should the practice be stopped with immediate effect and changed to eco-friendly sustainable practices, the great white shark should have the full protection that it was supposedly guaranteed in 1991 to ensure this vulnerable species isn't lost to South African waters forever. Since March 2013, the Fish Hoek shark exclusion net (eco-friendly shark barrier) has proven to be a cost effective, environmentally and socially responsible, non-lethal shark attack mitigation measure with strong public support. While, in Cape Town, the Shark Spotters programme has people watching the ocean, ready to alert swimmers to the presence of sharks.

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This is a non-invasive way to keep sharks and people separate.

Fins from up to 73 million sharks end up in the global fin trade every year. The demand comes from the traditional Chinese delicacy — shark-fin soup which dates back over a thousand years. It is popular as a prestigious dish served to impress guests, eaten at wedding celebrations and at New Year. Hong Kong is the shark-fin trading hub—accounting for more than half of the world trade where, they consume an estimated three million kilograms of shark per year. The practice of shark finning occurs far offshore, away from reaches of enforcement vessels. Fins are cut off the sharks, often while they are still alive and the rest is thrown over board. Unable to swim properly, they suffocate or die of blood loss from their huge wounds - marine equivalent of elephant or rhino poaching.

Having the privilege to swim with white and black tipped reef sharks was a phenomenal experience and it has allowed me to truly appreciate sharks. So many of us are afraid of sharks, when really we should be afraid of what will happen if they were gone. Do not allow movies or stories to cloud your judgement, as one would be a fool not to realise how precious these wonders of the ocean are!

So I ask you, are sharks the real monsters?



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# a b b its or har



When is a rabbit a rabbit and when is a hare a hare? Convention has it that hares are larger, have longer hind limbs and the ears are longer than those of rabbits. In southern Africa there are three species of hare and five rabbit species. In this article we will only concern ourselves with the red rock rabbits that are all in the genus *Pronolagus*. Some geneticists and taxonomists believe these rabbits should in fact be called hares, so instead of red rock rabbits we should be using red rock hares. Despite this evidence, to us they look more like rabbits and therefore rabbits they shall remain.



Jameson's Red Rock Rabbit, Namib-Naukluft Park

Smith's Red Rock Rabbit, Goegap NR, Springbok.

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Despite them being quite widespread in suitable habitats, rocky mountains, hills, isolated outcrops, often in arid areas, we know surprisingly little about these fascinating and attractive leporids.

It was always thought that these rabbits were generally solitary and anti-social but our observations of three species indicate that this is not the case. We have observed loose sociality in Jameson's Red Rock Rabbit (Pronolagus randensis) on an isolated inselberg in the Namib, as well as in the western Soutpansberg. This rabbit occurs in two disjunct populations, one along the Namibian escarpment and flanking it, extending into Iona National Park in Angola, with the other extending from north-east South Africa into Botswana and Zimbabwe.

Hewitt's Red Rock Rabbit (Pronolagus saundersiae) occurs across the south of South Africa from the west coast to Swaziland. This species is abundant in the vicinity of our base village of Loxton in the Upper Karoo on the inner escarpment and in the isolated dolerite hills. Although they do not seem to shelter together they often sun themselves within a few metres of each other. And then we have Smith's Red Rock Rabbit (Pronolagus rupestris) that occurs in a relatively narrow belt from the Richtersveld, eastwards through the Free State, Lesotho and almost reaching the eSwatini border.



Smith's Red Rock Rabbit, Augrabies Falls NP

This is another species that also has a separate population range far to the north in eastern Zambia, extending into East Africa. We know this species mainly from Augrabies and Goegap in the Northern Cape where solitary animals are usually sighted but occasionally two or three rabbits can be seen in close proximity.

Then the fourth species, the Natal Red Rock Rabbit (Pronolagus crassicaudatus), about which we have the least experience having only had a handful of sightings over many years. Not that they are particularly rare but we have not done much work in the Drakensberg and Zululand hills in their rocky homes.

Apart from sightings of several individuals in close proximity it seems that a number of individuals make use of, often large, dung middens, which would also indicate sociality. These middens sometimes cover several square metres with their typical lozenge-shaped pellets. In areas where they coexist red rock rabbits and Klipspringers may "share" midden sites, often on exposed flat rocks.



A typical hare, Scrub Hare, Greater Addo Elephant NP

We have also encountered midden sharing of red rock rabbits with Damara Dik-dik, Rock Hyrax and the Noki, or Dassie Rat.

We return to our casual observations of Jameson's Red Rock Rabbits on isolated inselbergs on the Pro-Namib plains. At one site individuals were mainly active at dusk and at night but we sometimes saw them during the day. This group was made up of what we presumed was an adult male as he was somewhat larger than the other three rabbits and appeared to be dominant over the others. An interesting comparison of this species in the Namib and the Soutpansberg, was that the ears of the Namib rabbits were considerably larger and longer than those of the rabbits occurring in the Soutpansberg. Presumably an adaptation to a hot desert environment and the need for more effective thermoregulation.



Hewitt's Red Rock Rabbit, Mountain Zebra NP

Unlike most rabbit species the red rock rabbits do not excavate burrows but shelter amongst boulder clusters, in rock crevices and occasionally amongst dense vegetation growing within boulder clusters. Young are dropped in a nest usually lined with the belly fur of the female but in the Karoo they will also make use of sheep wool that is found in abundance on fences and in bushes.

Especially after a cold night they will sun themselves on sheltered ledges or at mid-level rocks but never on the skyline like the hyraxes (dassies) that share their rocky homes.

Although we acknowledge the need to do research on larger species, most funding and interest centres on the big and hairy, and not so hairy. To obtain funding and interest for behaviour studies of these fascinating leporids is nigh impossible as most given the choice will follow the funding to the Savanna Elephants, Lion, Cheetah and African Wild Dog. We have contemplated doing the research ourselves but sadly time has not and will not allow it. So, there is a challenge for budding students or civilian naturalists to get out there and study these fascinating creatures.



## **Interest sparked by the Shark article on page 8**?

Our marine biology course is the benchmark course for those who wish to greatly enhance their marine-related activities. Whether you're active along the coast, inter-tidal zone or submerged on a coral reef, this course provides you with an in-depth knowledge of the habitat, ecology and organisms you're encountering. Irrespective of whether you're a professional marine guide, recreational diver or ocean enthusiast - this course is aimed at you.

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# 41105 How to stand out from other job seekers?

ith the start of a new year, there is no better time to make an exciting change towards a better career and a better life. Whether you're looking for a new job or reached the interviewing process, one of the most important things you can do is stand out from the crowd. Competition for jobs is incredibly fierce these days, and getting noticed takes more than just having a stellar CV and cover letter. Here are some tips on how to make yourself stand out from the rest of the job seekers:

### 1. Network.

You need to network. The best way is through LinkedIn, but you can use Facebook or Twitter as well.

Use your network to find out about job openings and see what jobs are available, you might even end up with a job that isn't advertised. Also, ask for introductions and referrals. You want to get to know people at places where you want to work - reach out! Keep in touch with people you've met through networking events, volunteer opportunities, etc. too - they might be able to help you down the road when it comes time for a job search.



### 2. Have a killer LinkedIn profile and use Twitter.

**By Angle Galante** 

LinkedIn is an extremely powerful tool to use to network with other professionals in your industry, but it's also an excellent resource for learning more about the companies you're interested in. You can search for company pages, check out their employees' profiles, and see how they demonstrate their skills. If you want to increase your chances of getting an interview after applying online, it's worth checking out how these people use social media as well (because who doesn't love following along with what their potential future coworkers are doing?). They may even be active on Twitter or Facebook posts that could give you insight into what life at that company would be like!

Twitter is another powerful tool for job seekers-especially if you're applying for a position that requires customer service or sales skills! Check out any hashtags associated with the company name; this will usually lead back to other people tweeting about the same thing. By doing so, you might learn more about what kind of work culture exists within this organisation; and if there seems to be enough interest from other potential employees who share similar interests as yours then maybe think twice before turning down an offer!





### 3. Work with a recruiter.

If you want to land a job, work with a professional recruitment agency. Recruiters work closely with clients that are hiring and you will have the upper hand If you're looking for work at a specific company. Follow and do research on the recruitment company - you can identify who's responsible for hiring for your dream job by looking at their feed or following them on social media.

If there are several people who fit the profile for the position, go ahead and send a direct message, If you get lucky enough to find someone who is currently hiring, they could even give you some advice on how best to present yourself in an interview! What makes Wild Dreams unique, for example, is that we always respond to every single candidate that reaches out to us. We always try and prepare our candidates and provide support and advice throughout the hiring process.

Be consistent. You don't have much time to get your foot in the door when applying for jobs these days as it is such a competitive industry, so make sure that any social media profiles or websites where people can see your work are upto-date, professional and accurate at all times. If something changes in your life (a new job title or position), update those profiles immediately! It's also worth spending some time making sure all of your information is correct on each site. If someone checks out one page on LinkedIn and sees incorrect information there, it could cost them some trust in you as an employee or potential candidate later down the

line when they find out about what happened before moving forward together professionally.

### 4. Be a problem-solver and show your personality.

Be a problem-solver. You know what the world needs? Problem-solvers. You know what the job market needs? Problem-solvers. So be one!

Be someone who can step in and get stuff done, make things happen, and bring about change for the better-and do it all with a smile on your face and some good old-fashioned teamwork!

If your personality shines through compared with the rest of the candidates who applied for a specific job, you will definitely be the one who will stand out from the rest.

Be personable, friendly, and professional while networking online. When communicating with potential employers or recruiters, it's important to remember that they want someone who is professional and also someone who is genuine, enthusiastic and easy to work with. Showing your personality in your communications shows that you're a great potential candidate who will be able to fit well into the workplace culture.

Do all these things and you'll be at the top of the candidate list

Finally, don't go around applying for jobs without trying to get them from the source first. If there's a recruiter in your network who is working closely with your dream company that they can help open some doors or give you an inside scoop on what they're looking for - ask them! We love connecting with people and being able to help them land their dream jobs.

So there you have it. The top four ways to stand out from the crowd in your job hunt. They're simple, but effective -s o don't underestimate their power! If you want to get ahead, these are the kinds of things that will help you do it. Connect and reach out to us!

Good luck with your job search!



# Never miss an opportunity

**By David Batzofin** 



**T** have to preface this article with the fact that I detest the beginning of a new year, as my full diary from any previous year gets to be replaced by a diary whose pages are still virgin white and waiting to be filled with work and travels that will keep you entertained, informed and perhaps even educated about topics you know nothing about. And yes, I do still utilise a paper diary.

But, let me start off in the accepted manner...May I wish you and yours a very happy and fruitful 2023 and may all your resolutions come to fruition.

In the November 2022 edition of this magazine, I shared a croc story that did not end well for a female impala.

But, dear reader, Karma, as they say, can be a b\*tch. And this fact was reinforced while I was still in the Sabie Sands.







Another day and another game drive in a reserve that is What lesson does this teach, if there is a lesson to be learned? known for its regular sightings of leopards, some of which we It shows that in nature every animal can be both predator or had already seen while out on drives. prey, given a set of circumstances that favours either one or the other. And once again, we, the humans, were able to But post the croc incident, it was almost ironic that the very witness this unusual event from the safety of our vehicle.

next leopard we would find would be EATING a small crocodile. Nothing near the size that had taken the impala, I look forward with anticipation to more unusual sightings in 2023 and being able to share them with you. but big enough to make a statement to the resident crocodile population. Happy New Year, everyone.



I have seen images of jaguars in Brazil catching and eating caiman, but I had no idea that our local leopards were partial to the taste of Nile crocodile.

That being said, given the look on the leopard's face, this would not have been his first choice. But obviously, an opportunity had presented itself and like any self-respecting predator he had not turned it down.

It was interesting to see that two predominantly predator species were now perceived as predator and prey. I suppose that if the roles were reversed, the croc would have gladly accepted the leopard as a meal.

Our guide said that the last time he had seen a recorded incident of this kind was in Zambia in 2017. Closer to home, there have been sightings in the Kruger National Park, although the local leopards, unlike the jaguars who see caiman as part of their staple diet, only eat croc occasionally. Leopards, unlike house cats, are not fussy about what they will eat. From aquatic inhabitants such as fish and frogs to large hoofed prey like antelope and zebra, depending on the size of the croc.

For an opportunist feeder like the leopard, a less than attentive croc was, in this case, ideal prey.

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