

Wild Jobs

13 x 30'

EPISODIC BREAKDOWN

1. Elephants

We start with a brief look at the plight of elephants in Namibia - the decline in their numbers and the reasons for it, like farmer-elephant conflict situations. In an effort to track their movements and thereby try to reduce human-animal conflicts 6 radio collars have been donated and these have to be fitted. Rudie and Marlice join officials from the Department of Environment and Tourism, and others in the Kunene region of Namibia to dart and collar six elephant cows. Rudie's fly's the spotter plane to look for elephant herds, once he finds a herd he radios a helicopter that flies in. The vet darts a cow from the helicopter and Marlice who heads the ground crew rushes to the location to assist the vet with the collaring. We follow the ground crew, the helicopter and Rudie in this exciting adventure.

2. Cheetahs

At Naankuse the conservation of cheetahs involves researching them in the wild, managing them in captivity, rehabilitation back into nature and managing conflict situations with farmers. In this Episode Marlice joins Stuart Munro, one of the resident scientists at Naankuse as he measures cheetah footprints for a database. Rudie darts three young cheetahs in a relatively small enclosure at Naankuse, he then flies them to Neuras, a private game reserve where he releases them in a much bigger enclosure. He is then joined by Marlice at Kanaan, another game reserve where they inoculate four cheetahs against rabies.

3. Rhino's & Zebra's

As elsewhere in Africa, Namibia's rhinos are under severe threat from poaching. Rudie and Marlice join conservationist and officials from the Department of Environment and Tourism at a secret location that is thought to be unsafe. Here they dart a black rhino from a helicopter for translocation to a safer area. While the animal is sedated it provides scientists with an ideal opportunity to collect samples and data. Part of its horn is also cut off to discourage poaching attempts. For Marlice it is a special moment to be so close to one of these magnificent animals.

Marlice and Rudie then meet up with Kenneth Uiseb who is doing research on Zebras in the Etosha National Park. Two species of Zebras occur here, The Hartmann's Mountain Zebra and the

Plains Zebra and it is thought that the two may be interbreeding. As part of the study into this one individual from each species is darted, collared and data on specimens are collected.

4. Wild Dog & Hyena

The African Wild Dog, also known as Painted Dogs, is one of the most threatened animal species in Namibia, listed as critically endangered by the IUCN. Therefore every effort is made to conserve every individual dog that might be in danger. When Marlice gets a call from a farmer who has two young wild dogs that he keeps in an old farm dam she and Rudie waste no time in flying to the farm to collect the pups. At the farm Rudie sedates the dogs and load them into the aircraft for the short flight back to Naankuse. On arrival at Naankuse it is found that the one dog is ill - he is treated by Naankuse's resident vet, the other one is released into their new enclosure.

Rudie and Marlice then flies to Neuras, a private game reserve where the resident biologist has caught a brown hyena in a capture cage. According to reports the numbers of brown hyenas in the south of Namibia are on the increase, the captured hyena provides Rudie and Marlice with an ideal opportunity to study these elusive carnivores. The animal is sedated, measurements taken, specimens collected and fitted with a radio collar.

5. Marlice & her mother

For Marlice, a visit to Harnas, her mother's Wildlife Sanctuary where she grew up, is a trip down memory lane as well as an opportunity to reconnect with old friends. She and her mother Marieta, start the day by visiting the band of mongooses and feeding them on the lawn. Then the troop of young baboons is taken for a walk, in this way they get exercise and get rid of their frustrations. Marieta then shows Marlice the pond with crocodiles, including some babies. A female cheetah that was released back into the wild from Harnas four years ago recently gave birth to two cubs and against all expectations she brought her offspring back to Harnas - she obviously feels safe there. In an emotional moment Marlice and Rudie show their two sons Zacheo and Nicklai the wreckage of a plain in which her father and brother crashed many years ago. Fortunately both survived the crash.

Rudie shows us where he secretly built a tree house for his and Marlice's honeymoon. In a very special moment Marlice meets up with an old friend, a brown hyena that slept in her bed when he was still a pup - and he still recognizes her.

6. A Day in te Life of Rudie

Rudie has his job cut out for the day. In order to move Jupiter, a caracal that arrived at Naankuse 6 months ago to a bigger enclosure Wild Dogs have to be moved to a cheetah enclosure, the cheetahs into a caracal enclosure and the caracals into another wild dog enclosure. After collecting some volunteers to help Rudie goes to the two cheetahs where he puts out capture cages with bait inside - hopefully the cheetahs will go into the cages.

They then set up capture cages in the Wild Dog enclosure to try and catch the two wild dogs. Back at the cheetah enclosure the cheetahs show no interest in the bait so Rudie darts them and puts them into capture cages.

In the mean time the Wild Dogs have gone into the capture cages and they are taken to their new enclosure. Then it's off to the caracal enclosure where 3 caracals are easily lured into capture cages and taken to their new enclosure. Finally, all that's left for Rudie to do is to move Jupiter to her new enclosure, but there is a problem - she seems to have difficulty walking and they take her to a vet in Windhoek where they find that one of her legs is broken. Pins are inserted and she's taken to Naankuse to recover.

7. Tommy Collard

When it comes to tour guides in Namibia Tommy Collard is a legend. Based in Swakopmund his area of expertise are the surrounding sand dunes of the Namib Desert, the oldest desert in the world. He starts his tour by showing the kids Zacheo and Nicklai the so-called desert newspaper - tracks left by insects and reptiles in the sand the night before. He and Zacheo follow a track up a dune and where it ends they dig out a little lizard that they immediately release. Tommy and one of his guides find a Peringuy's Adder or Sidewinder and scan it for a microchip put in by researchers. When they find another Sidewinder Tommy shares his knowledge of the reptile with Rudi, Marlice and the kids. Digging deep in the soft sand Tommy finds a Palmetto gecko to the astonishment of Marlice and the kids. Next they find a Namakwa chameleon that runs down an insect and catches it with its long tongue. Tommy then catches a Parabuthus scorpion, one of the most venomous scorpions in the desert and Zacheo is brave enough to let it sit on his hand. In the beautiful final scene Tommy calls a Damara chat-chat that eats from the kid's hands.

8. A Day in the Life of Marlice

Marlice often gets calls from members of the public who have animals that they can't look after any more - she then fetches these animals and take them to Naankuse where they are cared for. Today is such a day. She and the kids drive to a farmer in the North of Namibia who has 9 porcupines, 7 adults and 2 babies, that he keeps in an old farm dam - its time for them to move to a new and better home. Catching a porcupine is easier said than done but all goes well and the porcupines are put into transport cages and loaded onto the back of a vehicle. They leave the farm and drive to Windhoek where they fetch three tortoises from a member of the public, Marlice shows him how to determine the age of tortoises by counting the rings on their shells. The last stop for the day is at a lady who has a baby baboon and a small-spotted genet that she feels need a better home. It is always sad when people have to say goodbye to their pets. Back at Naankuse the porcupines are released into their temporary shelter, for some of them it is the first time that they feel grass under their feet. The tortoises are put in an enclosure with lots of lucerne for them to eat and the baby baboon joins the baby troop where he soon makes new friends. The genet is released on Naankuse into the wild and as night falls everyone seem to be happy in their new homes.

9. Costal Conservation

Marlice, Rudie and their kids visit the Walvis Bay region on the West coast of Namibia to explore this desolate shoreline and meet some of the people who are experts in the fauna and flora there. First they visit Sandwich Harbor a saline wetland that was declared a wetland of international importance by RAMSAR in 1995. Near the wetland their guide shows Rudie and Marlice how to find fresh water in this seemingly dry terrain. Rudie and Marlice travel further north and meet up with Frikkie van Solms who shows Marlice the fascinating *Welwitschia mirabilis* plant, some of the specimens here are more than 2000 years old. Frikkie then takes them into the Messum crater, a massive geological feature caused by volcanic action, where he shows them the ancient and delicate lichen fields that occur on the Western slopes of the ridges inside the crater. Their last stop is in Walvis Bay where Pieter Pretorius, a tour guide and conservationist, takes them out on a boat to learn more about the marine life there. For Marlice and Rudie the West coast is definitely a place worth visiting.

10. Harnas

Marlice's mother, Marieta needs some assistance with two animals at Harnas - her wildlife sanctuary, and Marlice and Rudie offer their help. One is a wild female baboon that comes into the semi-tame baboons enclosure in search of food. Because she is not part of the troop they are bullying her to the extent that she may die - she has to be taken out of the enclosure and be put in her own. The other animal that Marieta needs help with is a young leopard that has to be moved to a bigger enclosure. Rudie starts by sighting a dart gun, it is not his gun and he has to make sure it is accurate. Rudie and Marlice move into the baboon enclosure in a vehicle since it will be too dangerous to go in on foot. Marieta and some helpers try to lure the troop away from the female with food. Rudie misses on his first attempt to dart her but his second shot is successful and as soon as she is asleep they take her out of the enclosure and to the clinic where Rudie has a look at her injuries. They then put her in a large cage and leave her in shade near the baby boons. The young leopard is darted in his cage, put in a transport cage and Rudie and Marlice take him to a big enclosure where he is released.

11. Baboons

The one animal species that Marlice gets the most of in at Naankuse is baboons. The episode starts with her arriving at Naankuse with a baby baboon. She tells us his story and gives him a bottle of milk before she takes him to the baby baboons where she introduces him to the leader of the troop. To her relief the leader immediately adopts the baby. Marlice then takes us to the juvenile group where she explains the hierarchy of a baboon troop in captivity as well as why baboons groom each other. She then takes the juvenile group for a walk in the veldt during which she explains more about their behavior and introduces us to a few individuals. To end the outing the troop is taken for a swim. The next day and Malice takes the juvenile and the baby troops for a walk together and explains how the hierarchy within the groups changes when they're put together. We then visit the adult troop with Marlice and she explains the plight of baboons in Namibia to us.

12. Lions

Rudie and Marlice fly to Hobatere, a concession area on the Western border of the Etosha National Park. Here they meet with Mesag Saal - a farmer, land owner and conservationist. They go on a game drive and stop at a waterhole where they watch a pride of lions. We are then introduced to AfriCat, a non-profit organization whose aim is to conserve and protect Namibia's large carnivores within their natural habitats. Rudie and Marlice go with some of their rangers and lion monitors to the carcass of a kudu that had been killed by lions. They then visit a rural farmer. One of her cows was attacked and injured by lions, fortunately the cow survived the attack.

Rudie and Marlice then talk to Mesag Saal on how the concession works, local people become landowners, they conserve the fauna and flora and generate money through tourism. Marlice and Rudie then fly to Harnas, Marlice's mother's wildlife sanctuary to fetch a lion that must go to Naankuse. The lion is a big male that forms part of a group of 3 in an enclosure. Rudie drives into the enclosure with his dart gun while Marlice tries to lure the other 2 lions away with food. The darting goes without a glitch and once the lion is asleep the other 2 are lured into another enclosure and he is loaded onto a vehicle and they drive off to Naankuse. The episode ends with a beautiful sequence of lions roaring at dusk.

13. Kids in Conservation

Marlice brings her kids up in the way she grew up - with a love and respect for animals. Her sons Zacheo and Nicklai and their friends are fortunate to be on a place like Naankuse where they are in constant contact with a large variety of wild and domestic animals. In this episode Marlice, her two kids and a friend start by feeding and playing with 2 baby warthogs, a baby porcupine and a kitten in her lounge. She and Zacheo then take the little porcupine outside where she explains the importance of sunlight and Vitamin D for animals to Zacheo. They then make balloons covered with paper mache in which they are going to put treats for the little baboons. While the mache dries Marlice takes the kids on a short field trip during which one of Naankuse's rangers tells them more about caracals. The kids return to the mache and fill it with snacks, they take these to the little baboons who really enjoy the treats. After that it is playtime and the kids and the baboons jump on a trampoline. It's time for another outing and Marlice and the kids head off into the veldt on horseback - the trip is interrupted by a rainstorm though, but everybody is grateful for the rain and cooler weather. A honey badger that has recently been brought to Naankuse has a problem with one of its legs and Rudie needs to have a look at it. Zacheo and Nicklai help him to dart it and inspect the leg. The episode ends with a beautiful scene of Zacheo and his friend playing with cheetah cubs at a waterhole.