

# AN EMBRACING COMMITMENT TO THE ENVIRONMENT OVER THE YEARS

Jwaneng Mine's mining footprint is considerably smaller than the total area for biodiversity conservation: the total mining licence area is 10 886 hectares, while the conservation area and game parks is more than 15 000 hectares.

Good environmental stewardship involves responding proactively to address and manage environmental issues through innovation. It also involves building competence and consistency as well as working in partnership with government and NGOs to address issues of local and national significance.

The area that was to become Jwana Game Park was initially a fenced mine lease area surrounding Jwaneng Mine, populated by limited numbers of hartebeest, wildebeest, springbok, ostrich and other smaller animals. During devastating droughts in 1985, large herds of hartebeest migrated towards this area in search of water and over 100 hartebeest managed to break through the fences into the lease area.

Several waterholes were built in 1986 and 1987 and the influx of animals resulted in an increase in poaching in the area. In late 1987 the external security fence was raised, both to improve mine security and to protect the wildlife.

In 1994 Jwana Game Park was established as a wildlife conservation area for education and conservation

exercises.

As the park developed, however, new wildlife was introduced and it was not beyond the scope of the General Manager's duties to assist in park activities. Former GM Dave Deacon, for example, assisted with off loading a gemsbok, delivered from Kimberley and was involved in introducing giraffe into the reserve.

Over the years the park has increased from 5 926 hectares to 17 006 hectares, and animals have been imported to introduce new blood and reintroduce animal species that previously occupied the area. The park has been fenced with electrified fencing and 12 waterholes fed with pipes from the mine's water system have been constructed.

Jwana Game Park accommodates about 1 700 animals including red hartebeest, impala, springbok, steenbok, duiker, wildebeest, gemsbok, kudu, eland, white rhino, giraffe, zebra, warthog, baboon, cheetah, ostrich, leopard, caracal and numerous smaller animal species. The development of Jwana Game Park disproves the traditional image of mining companies threatening conservation as Jwaneng Mine and Debswana actively work towards revitalising these areas for the benefit of all.

## PARTNERING WITH CHEETAH CONSERVATION BOTSWANA



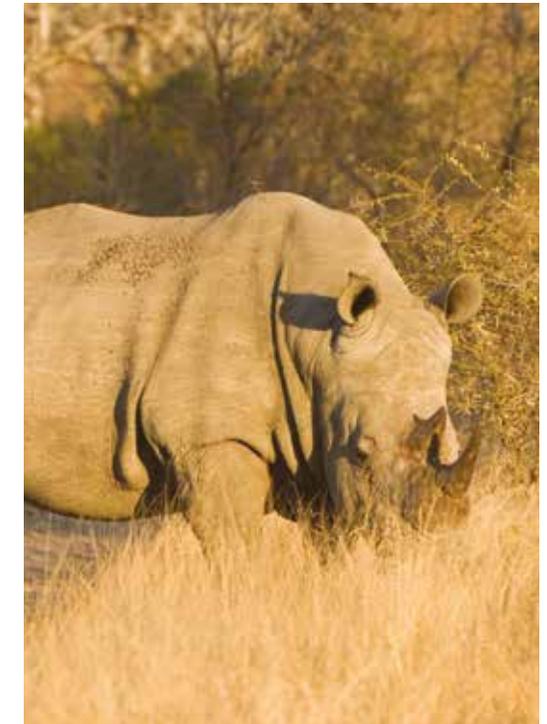
*Jwaneng Mine is heavily involved in conservation projects to preserve the natural wildlife and habitat of the area.*

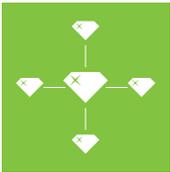
Jwaneng Mine places specific emphasis on the development of the Jwana Game Park Master Plan to address long term ecological, educational and social needs and optimise the use of this valuable resource.

The mine is also working on finishing a long term memorandum of understanding with the Cheetah Conservation Botswana Group to fully support their scientific and educational efforts. Through the Cheetah Project, the mine continues to educate surrounding farmers on the need to conserve wildlife, particularly cheetahs and other predators.

## DONATING ANIMALS TO KHAMA RHINO SANCTUARY AND MOKOLODI

Jwaneng Mine has donated 80 animals to both Khama Rhino Sanctuary and Mokolodi Nature Foundation as part of its commitment to conservation of natural resources. This includes 40 eland to the Khama Rhino Sanctuary and a number of elands, wildebeests, red hartebeests and zebras donated to the Mokolodi Nature Foundation.





# JWANENG: A BIRDER'S PARADISE

## RAPTOR DIARIES AND OTHER ADVENTURES

by Mike Soroczynski

I arrived in Jwaneng in November 1986 as a surveyor and immediately became involved in the Botswana Bird Club checklist census. This entailed monthly recordings of individual bird species seen in a 50 kilometre square grid. Records were submitted regularly and soon a comprehensive species list was starting to develop.

Among the spectacular bird sightings were Summer Palaearctic migrant waders, which were attracted to the irrigation dam at the golf club as well as the municipal sewage treatment plant. I even recall a rare recording of a south Atlantic sea bird called a Grey Phalarope (*Phalaropus fulicarius*) seen at the sewage ponds.

My greatest privilege in Jwaneng, however, was being able to photograph raptors, which enjoyed the safety of the mine's security area.

I was privileged to have been able to erect observation platforms (or hides) near several raptors' nests. In doing so, photographic and written breeding records were obtained and submitted to the Botswana Bird Club (now Birdlife Botswana) – part of a worldwide body of societies involved in the welfare and study of our feathered friends.

The most exciting of the observation hides was one that was erected close to a Martial

Eagle's nest. These eagles are the biggest and most powerful of all African eagles and to be able to watch them at such close quarters was indeed a thrill.

Photography started just after the solitary egg had hatched. Each weekend for the next three months was spent photographing the magnificent adult eagles as they tended to their chick. Decapitated mongooses were the main prey item, but guinea fowl and scrub hare were also on the menu. A later examination of the nest contents even revealed the remains of the hind leg of a steenbok!

*The Lappet-face Vulture is classified as vulnerable since only a small, declining population remains. This is due to poisoning, persecution and ecosystem alterations. Photo: Mike Soroczynski ©*



Nearby, a pair of Lappet-faced Vultures (*Torgos tracheliotus*) bred in the canopy of a low thorn tree about 3.5 metres above ground level. Sadly, each time I visited the hide the chick had already been fed and lay in the nest, crop bulging. Being opportunistic feeders, I never saw the adults at the nest. This was the pattern for the following four breeding seasons when observations yielded only a well fed chick. My fortune changed in my last year in Jwaneng, however, when I managed to see and photograph the chick being fed by the enormous adult.

Other favourite photographed nesting sites were those of the Black-chested Snake Eagle and Secretary Bird. It was easy to see why the former was so named. Snakes formed the bulk of prey brought in to feed the chick. On one occasion, an adult flew into the nest with a reptilian tail hanging from its beak. No sooner had it perched at the edge of the nest than a foot reached out to grab the tail. I was so surprised when the chick pulled out a one metre-long Cape Cobra from the adult's beak that I almost fell four metres from the hide. I did manage to get one solitary photo of the moment though.

As Chairman of the local Jwaneng Hunters and Wildlife Conservation Society,

I initiated a nest log campaign at Tholo Park. An activities day was organised to erect

the logs in suitable areas within the park. Hornbills, starlings and rollers readily occupied the logs the following nesting season.

So, although those were memorable highlights of birding in Jwaneng, there was much more to see. In the nine years I worked there, I recorded more than 250 bird species, including several "specials" or rarities.

## PARTNERING TO PRESERVE THE KORI BUSTARD

The mine is actively engaged with a number of environmental organisations and in 2008 partnered with Birdlife Botswana to preserve the Kori Bustard.



Kori Bustard