



ENDANGERED WILDLIFE TRUST

The Endangered Wildlife Trust and GDARD monitor the safety of the “Fourways Hippo”

25 January 2021

Start

The Endangered Wildlife Trust is lending support to the Gauteng Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (GDARD) with the continuous monitoring of a Hippopotamus seen moving in and around residential areas in northern Johannesburg since December 2020. As a registered Remote Pilot Aircraft Systems (RPAS) operator, the EWT is in a unique position to offer aerial imagery services using RPAS (drones), so that the authorities are better able to monitor the movements and safety of the Hippo. The EWT is in direct contact with Northern Farm MTB, where the Hippo was last seen, and they are providing support for the monitoring effort on the ground.

The Hippo is suspected of having moved up the river system from the Hartebeespoort Dam area and, when water levels are high enough, it is not uncommon for hippos to cover great distances in their pursuit of food. This particular Hippo was sighted in the Chartwell area several times in December, and seen after that moving back towards the Lanseria and Hartebeespoort area. There is, therefore, every expectation that the Hippo will move back in its own time, and in the meantime, the EWT is providing aerial monitoring support to the conservation authorities, to ensure the safety of the Hippo, and that of all the communities along its journey.

We urge residents to assist by **reporting sightings and signs of the Hippo to GDARD Law Enforcement official, Mr Erasmus Nkabinde on 071 257 7481 or EWT Senior Manager, Constant Hoogstad on 082 334 4176.** It is vital for their own safety that the public do not approach the Hippo, which will put further stress on the animal and increase the risk of injury to both Hippo and human. Please do not put food out or approach the Hippo and stay as far away from it as you can.

The EWT is committed to the legal, safe, and responsible use of RPAS (drones) technology in the conservation sector, and has obtained all required authorisations and approval of the flight plan by the Civil Aviation Authority.

End

About the Endangered Wildlife Trust

The Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT) has worked tirelessly for nearly 50 years to save wildlife and habitats, with a vision to promote a healthy planet and an equitable world that values and sustains the diversity of all life. The EWT's team of field-based specialists is spread across southern and East Africa, where committed conservation action is needed the most. Working with our partners, including businesses and governments, the EWT is at the forefront of conducting applied research,

supporting community conservation and livelihoods, training and building capacity, addressing human-wildlife conflict, monitoring threatened species, and establishing safe spaces for wildlife range expansion. A beacon of hope for Africa's wildlife, landscapes, and communities, the EWT is protecting forever, together. Find out more at www.ewt.org.za.

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