MARLOTH PARK HONORARY RANGERS/EREVELDWAGTERS
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Leopards in Marloth Park - Myth or Fact?

Fact! Marloth has leopards living inside its boundaries, including one in Lionspruit. It is solitary, but more than one is called a leap or lepe. There have been many sightings, mainly at night, confirmed by Security Companies and security cameras. Estimates range from one or two to five or six. They are often seen early in the morning or late afternoon, but are basically nocturnal and hunt at night.

The leopard is a large, strong cat with blue-grey eyes, sometimes green. It has two lines of black spots across the throat resembling a necklace. Spots on the forehead and either side of the nose and muzzle are a reliable guide to identify individual leopards. The whiskers are long and white.

The leopard is the only large predator found living in the vicinity of people due to its adaptability, but it is shy and furtive, avoiding people if possible.

They are excellent tree climbers but are mainly terrestrial. They are often seen relaxing in trees and larger prey is often hauled up to prevent other carnivores from stealing it. Smaller prey will be eaten in thick bush. The diet consists of medium size prey such as duikers, bushbuck, impala, warthog and some develop a special fondness for porcupine!

It is the most successful hunter of the big cats. In the event of an unsuccessful attack, it will only chase the prey for about 50 metres and then abandon the hunt.

Leopards are good swimmers. They purr when content or after having eaten.

At least 50% of cubs do not survive their first year.

They are the most difficult of the big cats to raise in captivity due to their independent streak from a very young age.

Regulation is in place that one should not walk between sunset and sunrise. Should you encounter a leopard the best thing to do is to remain motionless and avoid eye contact. Experienced trackers say if you have to move away do so in a side way direction and not backwards in a straight line. Remember all our animals are wild!

Luiperds in Marloth Park - Mite of Feit?

Feit! Marloth het luiperds wat binne ons grense lewe, insluitende een in Lionspruit. Hulle is alleenlopend, maar meer as een word a “leap” of “lepe” in Engels genoem. Direkte vertaling sal “sprong” wees. Daar was al baie waarnemings, veral in die nag, wat bevestig is deur Sekuriteits Maatskappye en sekuriteits kameras. Beramings wissel van: een of twee tot vyf of ses. Hulle word dikwels vroeg in die oggend of laatmiddag gesien, maar is basies naglewend en jag in die nag.

Die luiperd is ‘n groot, sterk kat met blou-grys, partykeer groen oë. Hulle het twee rye swart kolle oor die nekarea wat aan ‘n halssnoer herinner. Kolle op die voorkop en weerskante van die neus en snoet is ‘n baie betroubare riglyn om individuele luiperds te eien. Die snorbaard is lank en wit.

Die luiperd is die enigste groot roofdier wat steeds naby stedelike ontwikkeling voorkom. Hulle is baie aanpasbaar maar sku en geheimsinnig en vermy mense waar moontlik.

Hulle is uitstekende boomklimmers maar is hoofsaaklik grondlewend. Hulle word dikwels gesien waar hulle op ‘n tak rus. Hulle trek graag groter prooi in bome op om sodoende te vermy dat ander karnivore dit steel. Kleiner prooi word gewoonlik in ruigtes gevreet. Die dieet bestaan uit medium grootte prooi soos byvoorbeeld duikers, bosbokke, rooibokke en vlakvarke en party ontwikkel ‘n voorkeur vir ystervarke! Hulle is die mees suksesvolste jagters van al die groot katte. Indien ‘n aanval onsuksesvol is, sal die prooi net vir ongeveer 50 meter gejaag word voordat die jag begewe word.

Luiperds is goeie swemmers. Hulle spin as hulle tevrede is of nadat hulle gevreet het.

Ten minste 50% van kleintjies oorleef nie hul eerste lewensjaar nie.

Van al die groot katte is luiperds die moeilikste om in gevangenskap groot te maak omdat hulle van kleins af ‘n onafhanklike houding het.

Regulasies is in plek dat mense nie tussen sonsondergang en sonsopkoms mag stap nie. As mens ‘n luiperd teëkom is dit die beste om doodstil te staan en oogkontak te vermy. Ervare spoorsnyers sê dat indien jy wel moet wegbeweeg, doen dit stadig in ‘n sywaartse rigting en nie direk agteruit nie. Onthou dat al ons diere wild is!