



EXPEDITION DIARY Namibia 2010

By Jenny Kraushaar & Matthias Hammer

20 August

Dear Namibia expeditioners

This is the first diary entry for the 2010 Biosphere Expeditions projects to Namibia. My name is Matthias Hammer and I am the founder & Executive Director of Biosphere Expeditions, and I will also be your expedition leader for the first group of this, our new Namibia expedition. I don't get to do that much expedition leading any longer, so I am excited about dipping my toe in again as well as the whole new Namibia set-up & of course the expedition itself.

It's an early entry because I am about to leave for Namibia well in advance of the expedition to help with sorting out lots of things, seeing our research camp having its finishing touches put to it (I hope), and generally trying to make sure that we are ready for you when the first group arrives on 3 July. I am sure there will be lots of running around like headless chickens to do before the trailblazers arrive, so this is just a quick one to say that I am off and will be reporting again soonish with an update on the weather (of course), camp construction, Land Rover repairs and other disasters ;)

One point of admin, before I go: the expedition leader mobile phone number in Namibia is +264 81 6208673. This number is for emergency calls only, such as being late for assembly due to late flights, etc.

That's it for now. More in a few days. I hope your preparations are going well & I look forward to meeting some of you soon.

Dr. Matthias Hammer
Executive Director
Biosphere Expeditions

24 August

It's good to be back in Namibia, where not much has changed. Life still proceeds at a different pace, the sky is large & blue, and the kudus still have the same incredulous stare on them when you drive past.

I met up with our chief scientist Ulf and his wife Michaela and our field scientist Kristina. Our first visit was to our research camp building site.

And a building site it still is (see pictures), albeit a very picturesque and beautiful one. It's going to look great with a thatched central building (called a "lapa") and 10 large safari tents dotted along the river. It's going to look great and Ulf assures me it's also going to be ready by 3 September, not 3 July - that was just my wishful thinking ;)

We'll only have 10 safari tents this year, so we will rely on the cooperation of some of you to make friends and share a tent, two persons to a tent. We'll also rely on your co-operation and charity to let our poor expedition leaders and assistants, shoved into small dome tents on the side of camp somewhere, to have a shower in one of your fancy showers every now and then (navy showers only, of course - we'll explain what that means when you get here). The tents are spacious and comfortable, so you won't be treading on each other's toes. Snorers have to sleep half a kilometre away in the riverbed and act as bait anyway ;) Talking about bait, we now have one leopard collared for the start of research activities. Of course we hope to add more while you are here, but please don't arrive expecting animals galore in the traps. It takes time and patience and your help to trap and collar more, and it may take days, but it also may take weeks until we are successful - such is the life of a field biologist, which you are about to become part of. Anyone still there thinking they have booked on a safari holiday?

More admin: the research activities have been set and we have enough sleeping bags to go round for the night activities, so if you want to save some luggage space, there is no need to bring yours any longer.

I'll probably send another one or two updates and I'll see slot 1 soon.

1 September

Our camp is coming along in leaps and bounds and I am hopeful that everyone on slot 1 will have a place to sleep when you arrive, even though there will definitely not be double beds, Marty.. I'll send another picture or two a few days prior to slot 1 arriving.

Our research activities plan is also coming along (see attached). As you can see, it's a pretty packed schedule, so please make sure you arrive rested and perhaps book a week's holiday after the expedition to recuperate (www.acacianamibia.com).

Enough scaremongering! The days are beautiful and warm, but the nights are chilly (down to single centigrade figures), so please make sure you bring at least one set of warm clothing.

5 September

Good news - Ulf still thinks the camp will be ready in time. Even better news, especially for Marty - there are some single beds that clip together into doubles! Thanks for sharing tents, Marty & Julie, Serge & Catherine, Jean-Francois & France, Klaus & Peter in slot 1. Any more takers for slot 1 and beyond? More brilliant news - your field scientist Kristina & her assistants Jenny & Dany know how to use a GPS (more about them and their skills when you get here ;). There is also a picture of them on our Facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Biosphere-Expeditions/132594724471>.

Admin: update on phone numbers. +264 81 6208672 is the expedition leader phone (Ronald, etc.) and +264 81 6208673 is my personal number in Namibia.

Remember these are for emergencies only. Attached is the updated day-to-day plan, a sample datasheet and the kit list, just so that you can get mentally prepared...

See you in a week, slot 1.

26 September

Just a quick note from the new team of Ronald (expedition leader), Jenny & Dany (expedition leaders in training) to say that slot 2 has arrived safely and survived the first day of training. With Ronald busy as expedition leader and Matthias having left Namibia, it falls to us (Jenny & Dany) to keep this diary from now on. We look forward to working with you all and thanks again slot 1.

P.S. A picture of the new team is also on www.facebook.com/pages/Biosphere-Expeditions/132594724471.

P.P.S. Slot 1 (and everyone hereafter), please do not forget to share your photos on www.biosphere-expeditions.org/pictureshare.

27 September

Surprisingly everyone was at breakfast on time in their first morning and tolerated the datasheet sessions in a good humour. With only 3 NON drivers in this group we will all get the chance to be on the back of the Land Rover spotting leopards, so thanks to all the drivers!

I want also to thank Jane who couldn't stay in the tracks during the driving course so we could spot fresh hyaena tracks close by the camp and which brought the lesson to an abrupt halt.

We also activated the box traps and changed the places of camera traps so hoping that the first activity day may be successful. The whole team also likes to thank Philippe and Francoise for bringing all the Swiss chocolate.....

28 September

We had our first rain during the night so we can watch out for new tracks. Two groups moved the box traps and activated it at a new place where group number 1 found leopard and hyaena tracks the day before. Both telemetry groups found strong signals of Lucy in the morning and in the afternoon but Lorraine, Steffen, Susanne and Ronald got confused with her as she seemed to play a game with them as she seemed always walking around them in a circle....Well, and the next waterhole observation should be on a hole filled with water ;-)

29 September

The second box trap was moved with "women power" to Davidsposten where we hope to catch the leopard, which was on the camera trap picture. Our resident leopard Induna made the day for group 1 when we spotted him lazying about in a tree at sunset. In the evening groups 1 and 2 had to make a presentation about a study animal each and all team members had to learn how to spit "Eland" poo...thanks for this experience... good shot Melissa. We ended the day sitting around the camp fire talking and watching the thunder and lightning the distance....

4 October

As our school visit with the first slot was very successful, we visited the local school in Katutura again, which was founded by the Family of Hope Services (FHS). After they showed us around, we then took 12 excited kids to the farm and put big smiles on their faces by showing them animals they just had seen in books so far. The afternoon was spent counting whatever moves through the bush (vehicle game count). Melissa was lucky spotting an almost newborn giraffe baby and finally got to see the zebras.

5 October

Because one Land Rover was on strike and had to see the mechanics, we split into three groups. Two groups went with Kristina to move a box trap to a spot where we had seen a brown hyena on the camera trap pictures quite regularly. Just before they got there, the groups ran into two honey badgers (the ones we had seen on the camera trap pictures??) But this was not the only encounter with rarely seen animals. Just after moving the trap, our girl group (Jane, Melissa and Anja) spotted three bat-eared foxes on the road, which now increases our encounters with mammals to 21 different species.

6 October

At 6.30 am it was already 24 degrees Celsius and everyone prepared themselves with tonnes of water to get through the morning activity. One group put some fresh bait into our second box trap and had a good opportunity to visit and to gain more information about the Boma.

7 October

Half a day of activities we inactivated the box traps, finished data entry, found strong signals of Lucy and discovered new waterholes in a canyon. In the afternoon there was the big clean up before we all listened to the final presentation and results. We spent the last team sundowner on "Elephant mountain" laughing, enjoying and taking funny shots. The BE staff would like to thank slot 2 and hope you all had a good time.

17 October

Welcome slot number three! 12 team members and one journalist were picked up this morning. With nine German and four English speaking members we still have nine different languages. If you think African time is running slow, you haven't met Peter, our journalist from Ireland, yet.

The special of the day was from Festus, our local cook! Vanilla ice cream on hot raspberries for dessert!

18 October

After yesterday's campfire and Ulf's welcome drink for everyone, all team members met on time at 6:30 for breakfast. But the Irish clock was still behind. Today we had the hottest day with 36C, so everyone was happy that we had the Land Rover introduction early in the morning. This afternoon seven team members took the Land Rover driving training with Ronald, Jenny and Dany, while Kristina took Christian, Brigitte, Heike, Uwe and Angela for a walk, finding leopard tracks and scats.

19 October

First day of activities and "getting ready and prepared". Anne and Heike took it very seriously and tested our fire extinguisher properly, so one of the Land Rovers turned white! After cleaning up, two groups went together to put out and activate our box traps. As we have continued to capture leopards on the camera trap photos at Davidspost, Jackie, Uwe, Karin, Jesaja and Dany were instructed to build a proper hide there in the afternoon.

Warning! It's not only amongst the animals that you see scavengers. Watch out for your dessert everyone!

20 October

Leopard party! What a day. After another restless night for a few team members, observing kudus at their tents, we found four different fresh leopard tracks on the farm. It seems that the big leopard male is back, inspecting Induna even during the daytime. Another surprise was a caracal, an African wildcat and honey badgers on the camera trap pictures.

In order to detect the noises around the tents (or maybe in the tents?) at night, the staff have decided to set up a camera trap at camp. Sleep well everyone!

21 October

Again a day full of laughs. One group followed the famous "scat boulevard", while the other group sat in the "waterhole castle". Brigitte was surprised to discover just how much she gets excited about "scat" and "desert". After dinner, we all learned that the aardwolf can defecate 10 % of its body mass.... Thanks to group two, three and four for their very funny, active presentations.

22 October

For a few team members the day started early in the morning, at 03:00 am, when they decided to observe Davidsposten at full moon. Anne was desperate to see an Aardvark, which unfortunately appeared on the spot 10 minutes after they left (seen on the camera trap afterwards) In the afternoon Thomas, Conny and Katie turned our vehicle game count into a night drive and were rewarded by spotting a genet on their way back.

23 October

Day off! Everyone decided to stay at Ongos and explore more of the beautiful countryside. A few team members went for a bushwalk in a canyon and spotted parrots, black stork and lovebirds. In the evening two groups had a lovely sundowner at sunset with our leopard.

24 October

Up early again, but it still took team members more than one hour to get prepared (the tyres of all four Land Rovers had to be pumped up). Thomas wanted more exercise so he really got into cutting thorny bushes for the new "Kraal" for the removed box trap. The camera trap group was very happy to see the male leopard near Induna's enclosure, plus hyaenas on two different camera trap pictures. We are all looking forward to seeing these animals face to face.... Stay tuned!

25 October

Another lovely education day with our school kids from the Family of Hope Services. All the team members went early to pick the children up from their school in Katutura and spent 2.5 hours in the bush with them. A few of the kids enjoyed their first time swimming and jumped into the waterhole just next to the lapa. The kids left at lunchtime with smiling faces and new impressions.

26 October

We are getting closer! In the morning the telemetry group found signals of Lucy very close to the farm and they even found fresh tracks around Induna's (the tame Leopard) camp so we all decided to set up more camera traps next to Induna's fence. After the foot game count in the afternoon most of the team had glowing faces :-)

27 October

Excitement! In the morning Anne, Uwe, Heike and Daniel went to find signals of Lucy and while they were getting a strong signal next to Induna's camp, Daniel spotted Lucy INSIDE Induna's enclosure! She seemed to have jumped the electric fence. We also caught her on the newly set up camera trap pictures a few times, so now we have to cope with two leopards in one enclosure, a tame male and a wild female.... will have to make a plan.... to be continued....

28 October

Last half day of activities. The telemetry group with Karin, Ulli and Jackie found out that Lucy is still in Induna's enclosure and the waterhole group with Conny, Thomas and Katie finished the hide at waterhole number six. In the afternoon Ulf showed all team members the boma and for our last sundowner we all drove up to the elephant mountain where we had a cold beer and a wonderful sunset :-).

29 October

Happy Birthday Katie! Last breakfast with chocolate cake! Everybody got ready to leave and on the way to Windhoek was the big surprise: fresh leopard tracks around Induna's enclosure...incredible! Two leopards in and one leopard out.

Thank you slot 3, team 'unglaublich'. We have had a great time with you. (Thanks also for the Nutella :-).

31 October

Welcome slot number 4. This morning we picked up 12 new team members from the UK, US, France and Germany. In the afternoon (while we were explaining the compass and GPS) we spotted some baboons at our waterhole close to the lapa. So we decided first of all to take some pictures and after that Ronald chased them away with stones.

After dinner we rounded off the day with a glass of champagne at the lapa.

1 November

Land Rover driving day! After receiving instructions about the vehicles in the morning, nine drivers were ready to take the practical driving lesson in the afternoon. And what a surprise... all of them passed the driving test. Jennifer, Chris and Barbara bravely went with Kristina to put a baboon with stinky rotten meat water in the box trap.

2 November

Activities! After all the theoretical instructions three groups head out for collecting data in the field. Annick who actually checked the box traps with Bernard and Susanne, spontaneously joined the anti-poaching-unit on horse. The data entry group in the afternoon found two leopards on the camera trap pictures in areas where they have never been spotted before!

3 November

Big news this morning! Last night Kristina stumbled across a leopard just a few hundred meters away from camp! After the feedback from the morning activities it was clear that this was not the only leopard around. Tracks of at least three individuals have been recorded. The telemetry group also discovered that the leopard Lucy has left Ongos. Leopard Party number two. We must catch one soon!

4 November

The teams performed a foot game count in the morning. David had announced at breakfast that he wouldn't come back until he had seen an oryx. Well, he did come back for lunch but slightly disappointed. After his telemetry activity he was happier because he saw a "demi" oryx far far away. For their sundowner beer, David, Barbara, Chris and Adam enjoyed meeting Induna in his enclosure.

5 November

Fresh hyaena tracks were found by Group 1, close to the box trap in the south. What a pity there was no animal inside the trap. However, by putting some rotten meat water above the bait, Adam, Chris, Dave and David are confident they will catch something very soon. After dinner two groups presented their animal ID presentations: A great 'waterbuck-drama' and a cool 'wildcat-rap' Well done!

6 November

Today was spent with the children from the Katutura school. We went to pick up 16 kids... well nearly all of us did. Dave was left behind. Even his wife didn't notice his absence. After meeting Induna, the children went on a game drive where they spotted all sorts of animals, including a new species – a 'hot-dog' (warthog). After dinner we had two active animal ID presentations: A mongoose-questionnaire and a honey badger-pantomime.

7 November

Day off relaxing. Our birders particularly enjoyed the day off, spending their time near the river. While staff went out to get a new box trap in the afternoon, some of the team members headed off for a game drive and spotted giraffes, which came close to the vehicle.

8 November

Susanne, Bernhard, Barry and Adam set up our new box trap at Davidsposten and enjoyed building the Kraal with all the thorny bushes! The chance of catching a leopard or hyaena is increasing now. The telemetry group figured out that Lucy is back at Ongos and there were big surprises on our camera trap pictures: A caracal at Nordpass, Aardvark at Davidsposten and a leopard at Ochsenposten. Exciting!

9 November

Saint Christopher day:-) It turned out that Jennifer had her personal travel saint during the foot game count in the morning also called Barry :-). The tracks and scats group checked the famous 'scat boulevard' and discovered hyaena and leopard tracks and scats! After dinner a few of our team members enjoyed playing 'Jenga'... fits of laughter.

10 November

Leopard party – the third! Camera pictures of last night showed FOUR leopards drinking at Davidsposten. Incredible – never have so many been seen at the same time. And more news on the pictures: one leopard again at Nordpass and another one at Induna's enclosure. The box trap group is looking forward to seeing what surprises await them tomorrow :-).

11 November

Leopard in the box trap! Everybody is so excited...and guess where? Again Davidsposten! It was a female leopard approximately 8 months old. Unfortunately she is too young to put a GPS collar on, but during immobilisation we took some blood and hair samples and ID pictures. Thanks Adam for being the infusions holder :-). We rounded off the day with a camp fire and heard a poem from Dave who wrote a few wonderful lines for each team member and staff. That was amazing, thank you so much Dave.

12 November

Last day. After all the excitement of yesterday everybody is so sad to leave our camp today! And also the staff...thank you to all team members, you did a great job. As a momento we took a group picture in front of the Land Rover. We had good fun with Bernhard and the timer on his camera... the timer was too fast and he was too slow :-).

Thank you slot 4.

To see the leopard during immobilisation have a look at the Facebook entry - <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Biosphere-Expeditions/132594724471>

17 November

Hi, this is Jenny. I am taking over as your expedition leader for slots 5 and 6 and Dany will be my assistant. Ronald has done a great job training us over the last few months, so I think we are well prepared and ready to catch some more big cats. A big thanks thanks to Ronald. It has been great working with you and we will miss your expertise.

As it has started to rain heavily out here, it would be great if you could come prepared for rain by bringing some appropriate clothing.

Looking forward to meeting slot 5 on sunday.

23 November

Our first day of activity. Manfred, Sascha, Melissa, Juan, Jutta and Lauren set up the boxtrap at Davidsposten and built a new Kraal. Michael, Wolfgang and Shawn drove through the farm to check the camera traps. In the afternoon came the big surprise of the day - a leopard on the camera pictures near Davidsposten.

24 November

A honey badger was found in the box trap, so we radioed everybody in to release the animal. What excitement! Two groups also set up a new boxtrap along the fence at Nordpass, so we're ready to catch a big mammal. In the afternoon Fiona, Mike and Rod enjoyed doing the questionnaires in Katutura. They found out that in one area of the township, dogs are disappearing and sometimes found killed in the field. We'll keep an eye on it, so stay tuned.

25 November

Yippie! Finally after a week of silence we heard the familiar "beep" sound. Lucy is back on the farm and Juan, Lauren and Jutta excitedly followed our collared leopard. After dinner we had two presentations: a questionnaire about porcupines and a shadow puppet show about blue wildebeests. Thank you for entertaining us.

26 November

What a day! In the morning Fiona, Rod and Mike checked the boxtraps and found a porcupine in the trap at Nordpass. Thanks Rod for releasing it. Right before our afternoon vehicle game count we received two "little" visitors. The rhinos suddenly appeared at our camp and really enjoyed a massage by team members.

27 November

Today we had a wonderful morning with the Katutura kids. 14 children between 13 and 16 years old enjoyed the game drive with our team members and meeting Induna.

In the evening Jutta, Lauren and Juan checked the boxtrap in the north and found a baboon inside. Juan was brave enough to release it. We also had two more great presentations. Fiona, Rod and Mike gave us a short interesting talk about the African wildcat and Shawn, Michael and Wolfgang presented us their exclusive, selfmade Ongos production about the bat-eared fox: a movie. Stay tuned...you'll find it on youtube soon :-)

Check the website of FHS: <http://www.familyhopenamibia.org/kids-participate-in-biosphere-expeditions-experience/>

28 November

Day off. Some of the team members drove to the mountains in the morning, where Ulf showed them a wonderful canyon. While the guys decided to come back for lunch, Jutta, Fiona, Lauren and Melissa enjoyed their picnic at the canyon. Team members had a good day off with a walk to the bushman paintings, relaxing and game drives.

29 November

We created a new route for the foot game count because the river current is too strong to cross on foot. All groups had a great bushwalk, but there were only a few animals around today. It seems that someone released the wild animals just after picking up our team members :-)

In the afternoon Rod, Mike, Fiona and Jutta found another strong signal of Lucy near Ochsenposten, while and Wolfgang, Shawn and Michael found some old scat of the brown hyaena in the mountains.

30 November

After checking the box traps Rod, Mike, Fiona and Jutta went off in search of tracks and scats and found leopard and aardwolf tracks near Induna's enclosure, plus a snare in the north. Meanwhile the waterhole group built a hide at Ochsenpostdamm. They say that 10 people plus a minibar will fit inside :-).

In the afternoon all groups headed off for the vehicle game count. A thunderstorm started just towards the end of the game counts, but luckily all came back safe and sound.

1 December

Our box trap group consisting of Sascha, Melissa, Lauren and Manfred first checked the box traps, then set up a new camera trap between Davidsposten and Roiberg and after that walked a 4 km route searching for tracks and scats. Well done!

In the afternoon the Katutura group enjoyed interviewing and chatting with the locals and marvelled at one of the houses at the edge of the township which was decorated with colourful metal sculptures made by the owner.

2 December

Everybody enjoyed the final activity in the morning, but were also a bit sentimental, knowing that it will be the last time driving around Ongos and helping us with our research. We celebrated with a sundowner at elephant mountain and took a great group picture as a memento.

3 December

In the morning we had another task for our boys group - Shawn, Michael and Wolfgang. We carried the box trap at Davidsposten back to the farm where Frederick, one of the farm workers, will build another box trap for the next slot. Thanks guys.

So now it's time to say goodbye...thank you so much slot 5, we will miss you. We would like to say a special thank you to our A-team (Wolfgang, Shawn and Michael) who supported us with chocolate :-)

5 December

Welcome slot number 6! Sunny blue sky and 10 happy team members were picked up in town...but where was team member number 11? James was delayed at Frankfurt airport, but luckily arrived at camp during lunch time.

Everybody had a great time on our first introduction day. Thanks guys for being so much fun.

6 December

Second day of introduction and training. While going through the vehicle checklist in the morning, we observed two big eagles in the sky at the camp. It seemed that these Marshalls were actually watching us.

Today's timetable also included datasheets, GPS, equipment table, presentation of the brown hyaena and an overview of prey animals, driving course and setting up the box traps.

7 December

What a team! First day of activities and everyone was ready even BEFORE they had eaten breakfast. While out on the activities we tested the team member's orientation - GPS and compass skills that were taught yesterday - and we promptly observed team one heading south instead of north. However after four wrong turns even Group 3 learned how to read a map.

While checking camera trap pictures we were happy to find "Genet Jackson" just behind the camp.

8 December

Box trap number 3 is back in place. A big thank you to George for checking the fluid levels in the vehicle. This is a repetitive job but an essential one. After lunch group 3 (Johannes, Rob, Chrstine and Lindsey) was sent to find waterhole 6. Well done, they found the water but they set up their chairs in the open plains just on the edge of the water. They sat there for ages wondering why there were no animals, until they finally spotted the hide which they were supposed to sit in :-). On their way back they encountered a snake, but Johannes protected his females just as the zebra stallion they had seen before had done.

9 December

Today our adventurous group 3 had to manage a foot game count without a GPS (they brought empty spare batteries) and if that challenge wasn't big enough, they also managed to lose the radio on their way. So they split up and Johannes got lost, breaking three rules all in one morning. In the evening we couldn't stop laughing at our convincing acrobatic demonstrations of African wildlife. Kristina and I were used as buzzers in a springbok quiz and we know now how to sound like elephants, frogs and baboons.

10 December

In the morning James, Regine and Candida (our birthday girl) went to look for Lucy by telemetry. Soon after they left the camp they found leopard tracks next to Induna's enclosure, that were then identified as Lucy's. In the afternoon we had vehicle game counts and after a lot of diurnal animals were seen, eight team members decided to go on a night drive to spot the nocturnal ones as well.

11 December

Day off for almost everyone. The whole group decided to stay at the farm and split up into different groups. Our "girlie group" seemed to have lots of fun when not being surrounded by the guys.

Marina spent eight hours at Davidspost watching red dragon flies and observing their behaviour. Later on, lightning struck Elephant mountain and set it on fire, so Kristina and Jenny had to help out firefighting together with several Ongos workers and neighbours. Luckily some rainfall helped and after a while our first fire of the season was extinguished before sunset.

12 December

After yesterday's 57° C in the sun, this morning started with nice overcast weather. Everyone was rested and by lunchtime two groups had already found two fresh leopard tracks. Morena, Leslie and George went on a search for Lucy this afternoon and were lucky enough to find a fresh kill by her, in between some rocks.

13 December

School holidays didn't prevent us from picking up school kids from Katutura. 18 kids and three supervisors kept us busy with questions and excitement in the morning. Luckily we had James with us who is an expert in mimicking aardvarks.

Coming back from our vehicle game count in the evening, Regine, James, Marina and Candida had seen 137 animals in only three hours! And our smart group 3 at least found 11 animals, but Johannes always tries his best :-)

14 December

Incredible morning for Group 2: they spotted fresh blood in the bush and found a place where a warthog had been injured by a leopard just moments before. They decided to follow the blood trail and came across a baby hartebeest, which was very recently killed and only half eaten. The leopard must have been here minutes before and probably felt disturbed by the approach of the group. So they promptly left and on the route home discovered the injured warthog; they must have almost been on top of the leopard.

15 December

Our leopard group 2 was sent to check the box traps in the morning and they again found very fresh leopard tracks in the north... even without a tracker! Well done.... all the community interviews went well and our team members got a positive impression about social life in a township. In the afternoon our famous group 3 had another flat tyre and neither radio nor mobile reception... so in my opinion they should stay back at camp tomorrow doing data entry. At least there they are under supervision and can't break anything :-)

16 December

Cleaning day. Thanks to everyone for your great help collecting the box traps and giving them a wash. Candida and Morena did a great job cleaning the cars and everyone else was busy helping with the inventory.

17 December

Last day. Thanks everyone over the past four months for having been so supportive in so many ways, for the work done in wildlife conservation, the fun we had, for the lovely goodbyes..just thank you for everything, you have been fantastic! The Biosphere Expeditions staff in Namibia wishes every team member a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We hope to see some of you somewhere again, some day. Farewell and thanks again.

Jenny Kraushaar
Expedition leader