

KNITTEX REACHES OUT TO CARE FOR WILD RHINO ORPHANAGE AND SANCTUARY

The world in general has become grimly accustomed to the slaughter of Africa's great game. When fresh footage of butchered rhinos or elephants hits the television screens it is all too easy to assume the atrocities are just another chapter in a long-running saga and that the threatened species will survive. A recent visit to Care for Wild has opened us up to a new perspective on underground wildlife trading.

Things are different now. The rhino is facing its second existential crisis of the past 50 years - a critical state where their death rate is higher than the birth rate.

If you look back to just a decade ago it was a haven - poachers killed an average of 14 rhinos a year in South Africa between 1990 and 2007. The number rocketed to 83 in 2008, and 1,215 last year, about five per cent of Africa's total population. Each year between \$7bn and \$23bn of protected species are butchered and traded, according to a report by the Royal United Services Institute. Rhino horn is particularly enticing as it is easily smuggled and commands more per kilo than gold.

So how can we make a difference in a world where men like this exist? The Care for Wild Rhino Sanctuary NPC was founded by Petronel Nieuwoudt (PN) 15 years ago. It is a rehabilitation centre and stronghold for more than 30 orphaned rhinos, whose mothers were killed by poachers. Due to their expertise, they are the only centre that the National Parks Board of South Africa uses for any rhinos that are orphaned in their parks including the Kruger National Park.

"Looking after baby rhino's is a challenge, but we love every one of our orphans, and we're dedicated to the goal of rescuing and rehabilitating them, before being able to release them again in safe places as viable breeding populations."

To rescue, preserve, and rehabilitate the indigenous wildlife of Africa, Care For Wild Rhino Sanctuary rely on donations of all kinds. Knittex donated 150m of shade net to help shelter their orphaned rhinos from the harsh lowveld sun and also lended a financial supporting hand. The Care for Wild team were extremely grateful, but they still have much to do at the sanctuary and every bit helps.

How you can help?

Visit the facility as a paying volunteer and get your hands dirty by helping to design, build, clean and maintain their wildlife enclosures.

Help out with habitat management in the wildlife reserve surrounding Care for Wild Africa (or in your area!).

Provide animal care and husbandry to orphaned rhino ("adopt a rhino").

Donate fees and much needed resources to Care for Wild.