

THE MIKE BOLHUIS FLAMINGO PROJECT PART 17

FEATURE OF TONIGHT'S: THE NEW BOLHUIS SERIES/ SEASON 2/EPISODE 5

On Thursday, 24 January 2019, Mr. Mike Bolhuis initiated the Flamingo rescue mission and as a result the Mike Bolhuis Flamingo Project was launched.

"It is particularly important to remember that any animal, in eminent danger of death needs to be rescued and even more so, if the situation arose because of human error. There should be, and we are steering towards that by way of legislation, clear procedures including the correct paperwork and administrative processes in place, to act immediately to save any animal in need of rescue. No time should be wasted if a rescue mission is underway. A multi-disciplinary collective group should assist with the rearing of such animals until



24 JANUARY 2019

- As a result of adverse climatic conditions, the Kamfersdam in Kimberley where a colony of lesser Flamingos breeds annually started to dry up.
- The decision to act by Mr. Bolhuis was taken after the severe drought effects of the El Nino-weather system drove the adult Flamingo's away from their nests, abandoning their chicks.
- Mr. Bolhuis, a bird-enthusiast, looking after and caring for his own extensive variety of birds, is first and foremost a private investigator, who saw the gross negligence of the Kamfers Dam-authorities and the other responsible parties, the municipality and the mining companies, as a punishable felony. The debilitating situation at the dam has been a constant concern since 2014, where the responsible parties neglected their duties in keeping this man-made infra-structure in a functioning condition.
- Hundreds of young chicks were in dire need of rescue.

- In addition to the above 900 chicks, over the next couple of weeks, more chicks were collected and sent across South Africa, to various hubs for specialized care and observation.
- Mr. Bolhuis assembled a multi-disciplinary collective group.
- This group consisted of Mr. Bolhuis, the originator and head of the rescue project as well as specialists in the field of nature conservation and many other animal groups and organizations.
- Strict rules and regulations were implemented with regards to the rescue operation, what it entails and procedures to follow if future rescue operations would be necessary.
- The transportation and accommodation of the birds and the rearing procedures inclusive of the medical needs of the birds were set out.
- General planning and reintegration of the birds back into nature were also discussed.
- The goal always remained to release the rescued birds back at Kamfers Dam, as soon as the birds were mature and strong enough and the infrastructure allowed it.
- An enormous database of information was created and kept from the beginning: micro-chipping, meticulous records keeping of all medical services, weighing and measuring of chicks, monitoring of behavior.



Herewith videos of a “feeding frenzy”, which will warm the cockles of your heart. It shows how these birds have grown and how eager they are to live! Their zest for life is still there and I am sure that if these birds could speak, they would all say: “Thank you, to an amazing TEAM!”



<https://youtu.be/XfGiLLzc7fl>

Videos of the Flamingos-Juveniles:

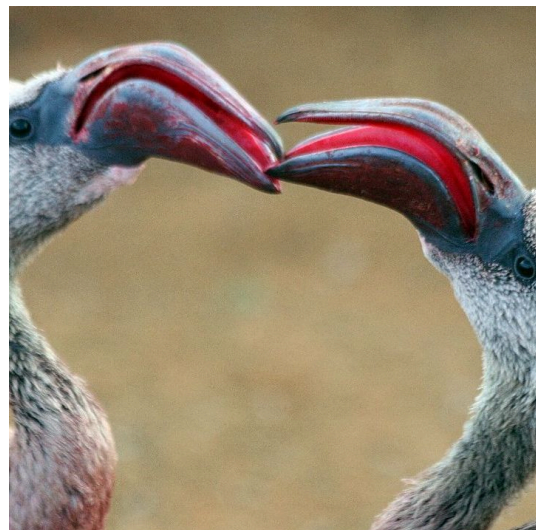
- <https://youtu.be/AaVy02SSw5o>
- https://youtu.be/_gzB1B1vyfg
- <https://youtu.be/npu6B94TQTs>
- <https://youtu.be/2a1w5xUDUQ0>
- <https://youtu.be/Z8umKIXRx38>
- <https://youtu.be/h5VQqQSAkew>
- <https://youtu.be/il2pxLqIdXg>

11 APRIL 2019

- Approximately 130 Flamingo-youngsters were returned to Kamfers Dam in Kimberley.
- The fostering of the almost 1 000 Flamingo-chicks has come full circle and the birds were returned to the dam in small groups, to acclimatize and to fully rehabilitate.
- They were released near the existing creches of Kamfers Dam, which brought the total to almost 5 000 wild Flamingo-youngsters.
- Before the release, each individual youngster was weighed, measured and ringed. Detailed statistics in electronic format was taken, whilst the

Kimberley successfully finalised this extremely demanding and responsible work and should be commended for their continued involvement.

- The dam, its infrastructure, and its sustainability of the Flamingos have been an ongoing issue raised by Mr. Bolhuis:
 - But with the tremendous work done by Kimberley Ekapa Mine and the Sol Plaatjes-Municipality, it seems as if the area has now become more adequate in sustaining the birds.
 - With much-needed rain, cleaner sewerage water being pumped into the dam, and proper functioning of pumps and other infrastructure, it is a matter of maintaining and improving the area for future Flamingo-colonies.



A trial release of 49 birds took place at Kamfers Dam, on 8 May 2019.

- It was with great anticipation that the youngsters made their grand entrance, chirping and flapping their wings.
- This initial release was necessary to sort out some operational aspects before the final public release of the returning birds, which is scheduled for the week of 20 May 2019.
- Most importantly, the long-term monitoring of the Flamingos was initiated at this time.
- It is a relief that the whole project did not end with the release of the birds but will continue through observation, to allow for the study and the preservation of the birds and their habitat.
- The process will be managed by the Sol Plaatjes University and BCRE, Nelson Mandela University as well as Onderstepoort.
- This is extremely important whilst the municipal sewerage facility is upgraded to facilitate a sustainable source of water, for the survival of the Flamingos.

This rescue and eventual release is a first-ever, historical occasion, and has never been attempted before, by anyone. We are therefore enormously proud of every milestone achieved and truly thankful for everyone's involvement and commitment.



The official release of 59 Lesser Flamingo-juveniles, took place on Tuesday 28 May 2019

- Mr. Mike Bolhuis was accompanied by Linja Allen from Saam-Staan Kimberley, Dr. Donovan Smith - veterinarian, officials from the Department of Nature Conservation and Environmental Affairs, local and international volunteers, Herbert Booth, who is the owner of the property, and Brian Culver, amateur nature conservationist- and photographer.
- Mr. Booth, the owner of the property, and the remaining volunteers will continue to monitor the surrounding area and ensure that the birds are

Videos from 28 May 2019 at Kamfers Dam

- <https://youtu.be/aPhADfjwk2M>
- <https://youtu.be/43TyzBcghnE>
- <https://youtu.be/iGuFDoia9vg>
- <https://youtu.be/ewkzv2-QsMM>
- <https://youtu.be/aMOXZn1u0CQ>
- https://youtu.be/3yl_I9HgOI



THE NPO

- It was and still is important to us that all the money donated throughout the project to various institutions, find its way back to the Flamingos.
- It is for this reason that Mr. Bolhuis created the non-profit organization, where all the financial donations were to be deposited.
- The bank account of the NPO, was open for scrutiny by the relevant authorities and made totally transparent for the wider public, who rallied behind Mr. Bolhuis, from the very beginning of the project.
- Every cent in this account has been accounted for and although Mr. Bolhuis requested similar audits from other institutions/organisations involved, not everyone has responded.
- This issue will be addressed soon.

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- Specialised Security Services is a specialist team of investigators, focusing on serious violent crimes and serious economic crimes.
 - The Kamfers Dam debacle was handled as a criminal offense and investigated in the same manner.
 - As appointed guardians of nature, it is imperative that mankind take responsibility for what they create.
 - The Kamfers Dam flamingos' infrastructure and habitat were created by the various authorities in and around Kimberley, mainly as a tourist attraction.

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- The investigation was a tremendous learning curve for everyone involved and should anything similar happen again in the future, Mr. Bolhuis and his team will act in exactly the same way.
 - **Immediate action** will be taken to save the flamingos or any other animal if the need arises, due to man's negligence and inability to take responsibility.
 - In this case, the situation at Kamfers Dam deteriorated for more than 7 years prior to Mr. Bolhuis's intervention.
 - Everyone, nature conservationists, the municipality, the mines, etc, stood idly by without interceding or taking responsibility.
 - It is only when Mr. Bolhuis took action, created awareness around the project, the habitat and the infrastructure and the dire plight of the Flamingos, that the relevant parties came on board to help with the rescue mission.
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OUR GRATITUDE

We thank the media for reporting the rescue since its inception and keeping the topic alive.

We thank the South African-public and some international companies for their support. The South African-public specifically, has constantly and vigorously supported us.

We were particularly overwhelmed by the support and interest of schools and children. Many schools, individuals and companies went out of their way, to support this enormous endeavour.

Our sponsors have been loyal and committed. We thank them sincerely. It is necessary to mention that each and every individual, every corporate entity, private firm, school, teacher, volunteer and the media as well, have made an extensive impact in not only the life-span of the project, but in the actual survival of the birds themselves.

The Mike Bolhuis Flamingo Project is approaching its end with huge successes and victories that it truly noteworthy. However, there are still some serious issues that must be addressed in the near future. The public will be informed of every step taken, the resolution and imminent completion of this once in a lifetime journey.

"I thank The Lord, God, our Creator, for constantly proving Himself to be the incredible designer of Nature, which He has created for us. I have had affirmation of the intelligent design and of God's Creation, over-and-over again throughout the duration of this project." – Mr. Mike Bolhuis

FORWARD THIS IMPORTANT DOCUMENT TO EVERYBODY.

Recent newsworthy articles

- <https://www.iol.co.za/saturday-star/news/feathers-flying-over-the-fate-of-flamingos-housed-at-gauteng-facilities--d1eed34c-26d1-4493-baeb-ba5ce43e4d32>
- <https://fourwaysreview.co.za/296808/departement-environmental-affairs-welcomes-rescue-flamingo-chicks-kamfers-dam-northern-cape/>
- <https://www.iol.co.za/capetimes/news/over-500-abandoned-lesser-flamingo-chicks-released-after-cape-rehabilitation-40628482>
- <https://maroelamedia.co.za/nuus/sa-nuus/byna-alles-flaminkkuikens-eersdaags-tuis-by-kamfersdam/>
- <https://www.netwerk24.com/Ontspan/Buite/die-hoeders-van-kamfersdam-20200702>
- <https://www.netwerk24.com/Nuus/Omgewing/milde-reen-laas-flamink-uitbroei-20200510>
- <https://www.netwerk24.com/Nuus/Omgewing/200-kleinflamink-eersdaags-terug-na-kimberley-20191120>

Previous documents

- <https://mailchi.mp/7f5641afb7d2/project-the-mike-bolhuis-flamingo-project-part-16>
 - <https://mailchi.mp/a0d5c4bf4114/project-the-mike-bolhuis-flamingo-project>
 - <https://mailchi.mp/2ef15a0e9a38/mike-bolhuis-the-flamingo-project>
 - <https://mailchi.mp/5c86741c58fe/mike-bolhuis-the-flamingo-project-part-13>
 - <https://mailchi.mp/903e65a76158/mike-bolhuis-the-flamingo-project-part-12>
 - <https://mailchi.mp/8faac2169188/mike-bolhuis-the-flamingo-project-part-11>
 - <https://mailchi.mp/321521dbe0c7/mike-bolhuis-the-flamingo-project-part-10>
 - <https://mailchi.mp/018186042b12/mike-bolhuis-the-flamingo-project-part-9>
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