



## Giraffe emergency

Good day

We hope you are well. It seems like winter is on us without any warning. The grazing and vegetation in most areas look great, after good rains. Hopefully the good grazing will carry all the animals through the winter months ahead.

It's been a while since our last newsletter. We are working all over a large area, trying to keep up to our schedule. During our work we encountered a very interesting case in the Lime Acres area. Someone phoned in about a sick Giraffe, Dr. Kriek took the call and went out to investigate. The owner did not request helicopter support; therefore the Giraffe was examined from the ground. The Giraffe cow seemed fine but struggled to eat. We suspected that a thorn was stuck in her mouth. After a week, the client phoned again, this time the Giraffe had blood coming from her nose.

We suggested that the Giraffe be darted from the helicopter, because she was too wild for a vehicle darting. We flew there as soon as possible and darted the Giraffe. Once the Giraffe was down, Dr. Kriek checked for something in her mouth because there was a severe smell coming from there. The cause of the smell was a Duiker skull stuck in the top palate.

He struggled to get the skull out, and eventually succeeded. He treated the Giraffe with antibiotics and then woke her up. The Giraffe cow is now eating again and gaining weight rapidly. She was chewing bones as a result of a phosphorous deficiency (This habit is called Pica). When she chewed the Duiker skull, the horns stuck right through the upper palate. It must have been really painful. We also heard of another case where a Giraffe died of hunger in the Kalahari, because it had a Duiker skull stuck in the mouth. The person sent us the photograph below.



**Duiker skull stuck in the upper palate – Giraffe**

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