

NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY

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Dear clients,

In this newsletter you can read about a Namibian delicacy... the Omajowa! We also give some information about the PM and Animal Crime Scene and Evidence Handling courses – if you are interested, we still have space! The last topic is not for the sensitive persons amongst us... We give more information on a rather nasty fly, the Putzi fly. The larvae of this fly can penetrate skin, and cause quite some discomfort. We hope you enjoy reading the newsletter!
Kind regards, the Wildlife Vets Namibia team

OMAJOWA

A true delicacy many Namibians long for once it has rained... The Omajowa! The name Omajowa comes from the Herrero language. Funny enough, these mushrooms don't grow on every termite mound. They only grow on certain termite mounds in areas where the average annual rainfall is more than 350mm, thus central and northern Namibia, Angola and the DRC but also certain regions of northern SA and eastwards to Malawi and Mozambique. The Omajowa grows in symbiosis (a mutually beneficial relationship/interaction between different species) with a particular termite species, the '*Macrotermes michaelseni*'.

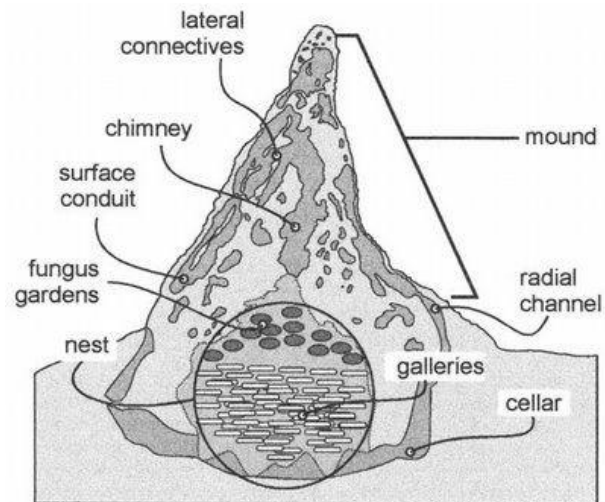
There are over 2500 different termite species, just in Africa alone there are already more than a 1000 different species. The '*Termitidae*' family are the ones making the big mounds which can be up to 5m high and 12m across. The termite colony consist of a queen, a king, soldiers and workers. Termites are important little creatures, who play a major role in the recycling of wood and plant material. They make tunnels in soil, loosening and aerating it, and then enrich the soil with nutrients and minerals. Our friends the '*Macrotermes michaelseni*', do all of this and, in addition, they practise fungiculture; they cultivate gardens of specialised fungi. The fungi '*Termitomyces*' are the ones the Namibians like, they eventually create the Omajowas.

Termite mounds also serve other animals where they are used as a look out (for food or potential danger), as a communication hub (animals mark them with faecis/urine) and the termites of course serve as an important food source for several species.

When you find Omajowas, consider yourself lucky and enjoy it to the fullest, but... don't be selfish.

Always leave the roots in place (the termites worked hard for this) and leave at least one Omajowa behind for animals to eat.

The Latin name of the Omajowa is '*Termitomyces schimperi*', here depicted on a Namibian post stamp. It is considered to be a symbol of growth and prosperity © [C. van Rooyen](#)



Here you see a cross-section of the *Macrotermes michaelseni* termite mound. It shows the locations of nest and fungus gardens, and a network of ventilatory tunnels. © [Turner](#)



COURSES

We still have space for the Post-Mortem and Animal Crime Scene & Evidence handling course. If you are interested, let us know and we sent you the more detailed course outline. We hope to see you there! 😊



POST-MORTEM Course

What do you do when you find one of your animals dead in the field...?

In an ideal world, the best thing would be to have a vet come out to the farm, and examine the carcass. But, that is not always possible... However, doing a Post-Mortem (PM) on a fresh carcass dramatically improves the chances of getting a correct diagnosis concerning the cause of death of an animal. This knowledge helps you to improve the general herd management, and possibly prevent a disease from spreading. Therefore, we designed this course, in where we teach the **basic principles** of doing a **thorough** and **systematic** PM.

WHAT?

Topics will include e.g. when to do (or NOT) a PM, an introduction to anatomy and physiology, sample collection, medical/forensic photography, lesion identification, and we conduct a PM examination together where we will assist you step by step.

WHO?

The course is meant for farmers, managers and other interested persons. The course focusses on wildlife, but is well suitable for livestock farmers, as many diseases/PM findings are the same. It will be an intensive 1.5-day course with lectures and a practical.

VENUES

Kifaru Bush Camp
(Outjo district)
07-08 April

Accommodation available at both venues.

COSTS

N\$1500.- (excl. VAT)
This is inclusive of lecture material (you will get the PPT's and extra useful material in a PDF form on a USB stick), the lectures itself, use of the facilities, and a practical PM demonstration.

If you want to receive the course outline with extra information, or if you want to sign up for the course, contact us on:

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WILDLIFE VETS
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ANIMAL CRIME SCENE & EVIDENCE HANDLING Course

One of the biggest threats to both wildlife and livestock is poaching. When an animal has been poached, it is important that the correct investigative approach is taken as soon as possible.

Here is where a few problems come in... Due to logistics, it sometimes can take days for an official to come out. However, in outdoor crimes it is important to quickly protect the crime scene and possible evidence. Another issue is that when a crime has been detected, people who are first on site often immediately start looking everywhere, thereby accidentally destroying important evidence, and possibly even contaminating the crime scene, making themselves a suspect! Therefore we designed this 2.5-day course, in where we will discuss the proper approach to, and handling of a crime scene and evidence.

WHAT?

In the mornings there will be lectures, topics include e.g. DNA, how to approach and handle a crime scene, types of evidence, forensic photography, documenting findings, maintaining the chain of evidence, body language, court cases. In the afternoons we do practical training on photography and evidence handling and collection. On the final day everything comes together, where we investigate a 'crime scene' from A to Z.

WHO?

This course is designed for people that may become involved in crime directed against wildlife and/or livestock, such as farmers, managers, anti-poaching units, game rangers, reservist police officers etc.

VENUES

ISAP Facility - Farm Ovita
(Okahandja district)

05-07 March
Course fee: N\$2750

Farm Kweekwal
(Aroab district)

19-21 March
Course fee: N\$2750

Kifaru Bush Camp
(Outjo district)

09-11 April
Course fee: N\$2500

Accommodation available at all venues.

If you want to receive the course outline with extra information, or if you want to sign up for the course, contact us on:

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Prices are excl. VAT and accommodation. The course fee is inclusive of lecture material (you will get the PPT's and extra useful material in a PDF form on a USB stick), the lectures itself, use of the facilities, and a practical PM demonstration.

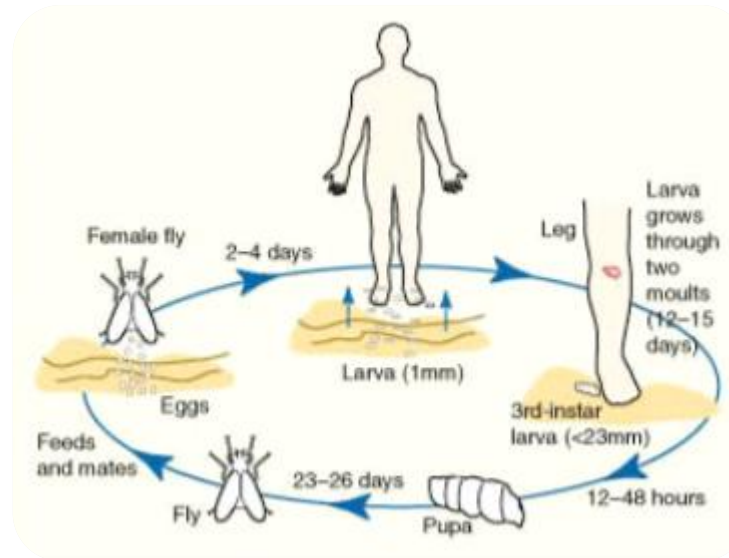
PUTZI FLY

With the rains, come the flies and insects... A particular fly that can cause issues in both animals and humans, is the so-called 'Putzi fly' (*Cordylobia anthropophaga*) also known as the Mango fly, Tumbu fly or Skin maggot fly. During the larval stage this creature is a parasite, and its Latin name refers to that... it was derived from the Greek word *anthropophagos*, meaning "human eater"...

Life cycle

The Putzi fly is an African blow-fly species, and in many of these species, the larvae are parasitic. The adult Putzi fly is not parasitic, and not that easily recognized. They are compact flies of about 6-12 mm long, light brown with blue-grey patches on the chest, and dark grey towards the back of the abdomen. The face and legs are yellow.

The female Putzi fly lays about 100-500 banana-shaped eggs in dry, shady sandy soil that is contaminated with animal or human faeces or urine. After about 2 to 4 days the larvae (0.5-1mm big) hatch, and wait for a suitable host to pass by. They can survive for about two weeks without a host. Once they have found a host, they burrow themselves into the skin of an animal or human. They can do this very fast, within just 25 seconds!



The life cycle of the Putzi fly. © Geary, M, Bernard, H, Russel, R, and Hardy, A. "Exotic myiasis with Lund's fly." Medical Journal of Australia 171 (1999): 654-655



A Putzi fly maggot leaving the breathing hole.

© Unknown

In the hole that they burrow, they leave a central breathing pore open. Here they feed on subcutaneous tissue for about 7 to 15 days. Then they emerge out of the breathing pore as fully developed maggots (1.3-1.5 cm long), drop to the ground, and are ready to pupate into adult flies. After 10 to 20 days the cycle starts again.

Usually rats and dogs are the definite host, but people, antelopes, leopards, mongooses, cats, goats, pigs, rabbits and chickens can also become infested.

Distribution

The Putzi fly is found in the tropical regions across sub-Saharan Africa. Due to climate change, their range has expanded. Over the past few decades the fly has been spreading southwards into Namibia and we now see quite a few cases annually around Windhoek and even further south.

How to recognize it?

A Putzi fly larvae/maggot infestation can be recognized by little bumps, it looks a bit like a large pimple, with an opening in the centre (the breathing pore). A bit of fluid can ooze out of this pore. The skin is sensitive around the bump, and it can be itchy and painful. In mild infestations, one often does not notice too much discomfort, but especially in heavy infestations, there can be a remarked swelling and fluid oozing, and when left untreated, an animal might die.



A puppy with Putzi fly maggots in his paw. © [Vet Clinic Gambia](#)

Treatment and control

In wildlife it will be difficult to control, but in pets one can close the breathing pore with a thick viscous compound, such as Vaseline, liquid paraffin, petroleum jelly or a sticking plaster. By closing the breathing pore, the maggot cannot breathe, and will pop out in his search for oxygen. Light pressure at the edge of the “ripe” lesion can help to remove the adult maggot. One must be careful however when pressing the maggots out, if the maggot ruptures in the skin, it can cause severe and possibly fatal anaphylactic shock (extreme allergic reaction)

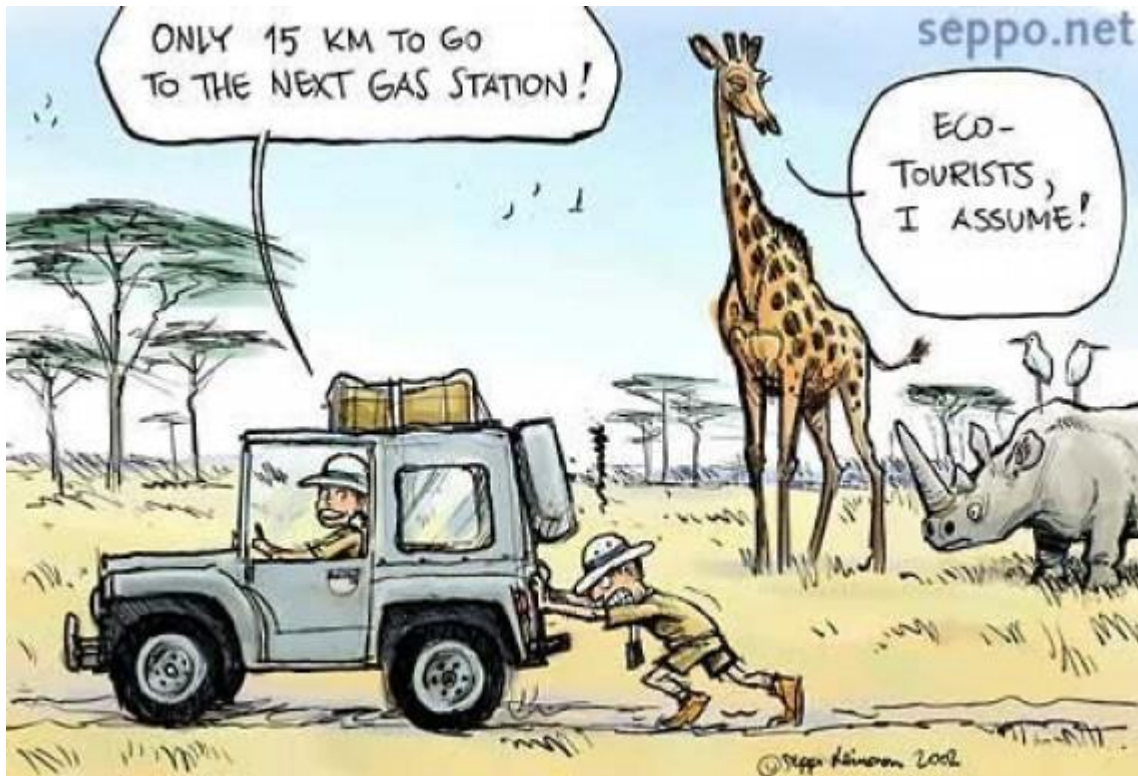
Prevention is always better than a cure, so fly control is important.

Pets can be treated with surface contact poisons such as Shoo-Fly. An Ivermectin injection at 1ml/50 kg subcutaneous is also effective against maggots. Hygiene is essential! Keep the sleeping area of pets clean, remove faeces on a regular basis, and cover urine with a layer of dirt.

In humans, an infection with the Puzti-fly maggot can be prevented by ironing your clothes, and never put your washed clothes on the ground. Flies are attracted by the smell of sweat and urine and will deposit their eggs into dirty, sweaty clothing – don't take off your T shirt while working outside and then put it on again later! If you get infested with this nasty Putzi fly maggot, cover the breathing hole as described above, then gently squeeze it out. Disinfect and cover the wound.



Severe infestations can lead to secondary bacterial infection © [Unknown](#)



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