



URBAN CONSERVATION AND BROWN HYAENAS IN SUBURBIA

27th September 2013

Start

In the past few weeks there have been several reports of Brown Hyaenas in and around Johannesburg. The vast majority of the time these reports have been welcomed by the public with awe and enthusiasm, but there have also been expressions of concern and fear, which are not unexpected as most people are not familiar with these animals.

This week's incident, where a Brown Hyaena had lost its way in the Randburg Central Business District in Johannesburg is unusual because the species prefers secluded, quiet areas and was likely driven into the CBD in a confused effort to escape the heavily populated area in which it found itself wandering. Over a period of two days, conservation organisations like the Endangered Wildlife Trust (EWT), the NSPCA and FREEME were trying to locate and monitor the animal's movements and to work with the public in ensuring both their, and the animals' safety and welfare.

The animal, a young female, was subsequently darted in Randburg and taken to the Johannesburg Zoo. She had injured her paws and will be treated at the Zoo and kept there until a suitable release site can be found. Funding also needs to be sourced for a satellite collar to fit to her so that her post-release movements can be monitored.

A few facts on Brown Hyaenas:

- Brown Hyaenas have been occasionally sighted in suburbia for many years. There was a Brown Hyaena shot on Allen's Nek in Roodepoort over 20 years ago and a Brown Hyaena was caught near Gilooleys Interchange more than 15 years ago.
- Brown Hyaenas are scavengers and eat mostly carrion. They will also eat eggs, fruit, insects and small mammals such as rodents.
- They do not pose a threat to humans or pets as they are shy and elusive.
- They live in small clans but forage alone and can move up to 60km in one evening in search of food.
- Brown Hyaenas can exist in an urban environment and go undetected for long periods of time. They can coexist with humans on the urban edge and this could become more and more common as humanity encroaches on their habitat.
- Brown Hyaenas are classified as Near Threatened, are protected by law and permits are required to trap, handle, transport or destroy them. Key threats to their survival include: killing as 'problem animals', traditional medicine trade and poisoning.

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The Endangered Wildlife Trust is a non-profit, public benefit organisation dedicated to conserving species and ecosystems in southern Africa to the benefit of all people.

NPO Number: 015-502, **PBO number:** 930 001 777, **Member of IUCN** - The International Union for Conservation of Nature
The Endangered Wildlife Trust is US 501(c)(3) compliant under **US IRS Registration number:** EMP98-0586801.



What to do if there are Brown Hyaenas in your neighbourhood:

- Do not harass or chase them.
- You do not need to worry about your safety as they will take pains to avoid you.
- Do not feed them or leave food out for them to access.
- Do not shoot, poison, trap or injure them.

If you have any concerns you can contact the following people:

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