



Khomas Environmental Education Programme (KEEP)

UPDATE
March 2023



@giraffe_conservation



@giraffeconservationfoundation



@Save_Giraffe



Our Khomas Environmental Education Programme (KEEP) continues to be a platform for an outdoor environmental learning experience for many young Namibians and their teachers in the Khomas Region. The aim is to reconnect our future decision-makers with nature and equip them with the necessary knowledge and skills to make informed and environmentally wise decisions now and in the future. As we are heading into the seventh year of implementing this successful programme, we are looking forward to finding out what the year 2023 has in store for us, but we also have a level of confidence now that it will be another successful year for KEEP.



Our appreciation goes to all the schools and groups that have made KEEP part of their annual calendars and regularly allow their students and teachers to participate in this amazing programme.

This year, schools in Namibia resumed early, and while they are often also busy with their athletics programmes, many schools prefer to join us in the field during this time when the bush is still lush and green during the summer rains. This is the perfect time to go for an educational bush walk and experience the local biodiversity at its best with many creatures around that only appear after or during the rains. In the past, we often struggled to book groups early in the year, but this year we already hosted groups in January and were almost fully booked during February and March. This quarter, KEEP provided an adventurous learning opportunity to a total of **862** students and **40** teachers from **seven** different schools. Five of these schools were KEEP regulars and their Grade 4 students join us in the field every year.

KEEP continues to be the largest environmental education programme in the country with regards to participation numbers, and we are excited to host as many students as possible to ensure a high impact on young Namibians.

After last year's excellent rainy season, rainfall is only just below average this year, however, participants were still treated to some amazing sightings in the field. While some groups spotted smaller animals such as grass snakes, stick insects and tortoise, bigger animals also made an appearance for some, including giraffe, eland,



oryx, kudu, baboon, wildebeest, hartebeest, zebra and black-faced impala. We even spotted tracks of elusive leopard and brown hyena and a plethora of baby giraffe, zebra and wildebeest.



For our KEEP team, no two days are the same. We are always excited to take advantage of unusual sightings or interesting encounters in the bush as they give us something to talk about with the children. And we had lots to talk about when we came across a recently killed baby zebra – not a pleasant sight and quite distressing for some of our young participants. However, as it had obviously been killed by a predator, what better opportunity to talk about the food chain/web and how different things in nature depend on each other. So, we were able to turn this sad moment into something positive – and what a great discussion starter and illustration of this topic that forms part of the school curriculum.





In other news, we are spreading our conservation message even further in Namibia at the moment. We always receive great feedback on our KEEP Workbook and the Nature Workbook that we developed, however, we are limited in our ability to distribute these resources beyond providing electronic copies. However, we have listened to Namibian schools and their request and found a generous donor who has provided funding to print and distribute 5000 copies of the GCF Nature Workbook. We have already distributed over 600 copies to schools in the Khomas Region and are hard at work shipping the remainder of the books to other regions in the country. Many schools have requested copies, indicating that they will use the Workbooks as an additional teaching and learning resource in the classrooms, make them available in their school libraries or using them for their environmental clubs. We are looking forward to receiving updates from these schools and will make sure to share these with you in future update reports.



While our calendar is already fully booked for the first school term, there are still a few open spots in the second term and we are also still taking bookings for groups that would like to join us during the upcoming school holidays. If you are interested in bringing a group to our KEEP programme or you know of any group that might be interested in joining, please get in touch.



As always, we would like to use this opportunity thank all our generous donors for their continued support.



GALANTHUS FOUNDATION



Wilhelma
Zoologisch-Botanischer Garten
Stuttgart



IDWA'S WILDEST ADVENTURE