

Faculty members perform health checks at Jane Goodall Institute SA's Chimp Eden

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Thabu, one of the chimps at Chimp Eden (Photo: Chimp Eden | JGI SA)

Situated within the beautiful 1,000 hectare Umhloti Nature Reserve, 15 kilometres outside Nelspruit, the Jane Goodall Institute (JGI) South Africa Chimpanzee Sanctuary, Chimp Eden, is home to chimpanzees that have been misplaced from their natural habitats in Africa.

Recently, staff members and students of the Faculty visited the sanctuary to perform essential health checks on its chimps. Chimp Eden, the first and only chimpanzee sanctuary in South Africa, has 33 chimps divided in three different family groups and housed in night rooms and large semi-wild outside enclosures. The sanctuary was established in 2006.

Chimps suffer from similar diseases as humans and due to the current Covid-19 pandemic no health checks have been done there since November 2019. Strict quarantine regulations are currently in place to protect the chimps from the virus.

During the course of three days the team - Prof Gerhard Steenkamp, specialist veterinary dental surgeon, Prof Katja Koeppel, veterinary wildlife specialist, Veterinary Nurse, Sr Murendeni Lalamani, and MSc student, Chantelle Greyling - performed general health checks on 13 of the chimps. As a result of trauma and injury, several of the animals also required dental work which was performed by Prof Steenkamp. The group was accompanied by Dr Liesel Docking from Wildlife Pharmaceuticals in Nelspruit.

The goal of the chimpanzee sanctuary is to rescue chimpanzees that have survived the bush meat trade, been orphaned, traded in the illegal pet market, or rescued from being traumatised for entertainment in circuses, beach resorts and night clubs. The JGI chimpanzee sanctuary also brings the world of chimpanzees closer to humanity through education and eco-tourism.

The chimpanzees at Chimp Eden are the lucky ones, living out their lives in a risk free environment and being provided with the necessary attention to recover from the trauma they have experienced. The chimpanzees spend their days in semi-wild enclosures, and show normal social interaction and behavioural patterns as group members.



The chimpanzee (*Pan Troglodytes*) is 'Endangered' under a strict application of the IUCN Red List Criteria (International Union for Conservation of Nature) and is listed in Appendix 1 of CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora). Chimpanzees in the wild may be extinct within the next 10 - 20 years if current trends cannot be reversed.

To read more about Chimp Eden and the Jane Goodall Institute, a global leader in the effort to conserve and preserve endangered species and habitats, in particular chimpanzees, click [here](#)

Additional Source: Chimp Eden | Jane Goodall Institute

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