

N50/7/23.

IS + ISa.

72/10/25 - 11/02 Park

73/01

Kaross + Khoabendes

AIR CENSUS ETOSHA NATIONAL PARK 25-10-72 TO 2-11-72

1. This census was carried out by R.C. Reid and J.S. du Preez. N. Maritz was the pilot. Map 1 shows the order in which blocks were covered.

2. The totals for this count are included in this report, as well as a comparison with the totals for the last 3 counts. Note that there was a mistake in the rhinoceros total for the September count, which should be 34, not 56. The totals from the helicopter census of Kaross and Khoabendes in September are repeated in this count, since that count was more accurate than a count from the Piper Cub and the camps are restricted areas.

3. ZEBRA:

The drop in numbers is probably insignificant when compared with the accuracy with which these animals can be counted. The concentrations were:- Otjivasandu area including Kaross and Khoabendes 550; Ombika 850; Southern pan's edge 1900 plus Charitsaub vlakte 750; Gobabeb area and scattered over the south-east sector 550; Fisher's Pan 450; Andoni 3,200. The latter is as usual the best estimate possible. Many of the groups seemed to be moving east from the region south of Halali.

4. WILDEBEEST AND ANTONI PLAINS:

The total is much the same as that obtained in September. The main concentrations were:- the pans edge from Charitsaub to east of Batid 1,100; Fishers Pan and surrounding area 500; Beiseb 100; Andoni about 1,200.

It can be seen that almost half the Park's Wildebeest are on Antoni plains (39%). They are concentrated exclusively around the waterhole, close to the border, where they are known to be subject to human predation. In addition, one waterhole just outside the reserve contains abundant water; two on the northern edge of Andoni also contain abundant water, one of which is too salty to be useable; and one on the northern edge just east of the aforementioned has been opened and is now also supplying water. At the time of the count, there were only 22 Springbok north of the border, 18 at the southern waterhole.

5. SPRINGBUCK:

Distribution follows that of Wildebeest quite closely, main concentrations being Andoni, Pan's Southern edge including Charitsaub, and Fisher's Pan area. There were a few round Okondeka, Leeubron, Ozonjuitji m'Bayi and Grootvlakte. Apart from this Grootvlakte was conspicuously bare of game. Springbuck are tending to form large herds now.

6. GEMSBUCK:

As before, they are mainly scattered in small groups or individual animals. The drop in numbers is probably largely due to normal observer error.

7. KUDU, ELAND, HARTEBEEST AND GIRAFFE:

Numbers are all down, in the case of eland and hartebeest, drastically. This is probably due to the increasing of the changing condition of the veld. In addition, hartebeest and eland are now widely scattered in small groups. One group of 8 eland included 3 calves, seen on 1.11.72 at the old Namutoni gate.

8. ELEPHANT:

Concentrations were:- north-east of Otjivasandu, the Onaiso and northern border area 250; Northern border and 19th parallel east of Onaiso area 150; Kameeldoring area over 100; south-eastern sector around Dungenies over 50; Elandsvlakte under 50.

9. RHINO:

The rhino recently released at Ombika was seen to be in good condition, about a mile west of Ombika waterhole and a mile ^{Red ear tags} north of the southern border. Another animal was seen about 5 miles west of this one, and a third 3 miles south-east of Okaukuejo.

10. OSTRICH:

This is the breeding season for Ostrich, and five nests were seen. (As opposed to 2 during the previous count) 5 Groups of young chicks were seen and one nest in the process of hatching; 4 chicks were already hatched and both parents were standing over the nest shading it. 6 Large flocks of adults or subadults were seen, comprising 15, 22, 8, 10, 9. ?

11. Though warthog are not counted, conspicuously fewer were seen than on previous counts.

12. Two marked wildebeest were seen on 31/10 at 10:00 am. in a group of 65 on the Pan's edge east of Etosha. One had a white and the other a yellow neckband.

13. 3 Spotted hyena were seen, 2 drinking at Aroe about 09:45 am. and one at Ombika waterhole about 08:20 am.

14. In the area of the southern dolomite hills, several large rainwater pools were scattered in the veld. A significant number of animals were present, including eland and hartebeest. Pools were found north-east of Dungenies, north of Dana-op., south-west of Logan's island and large quantities of water west of Homab. In each case small groups of animals were present.

15. The following carcasses were seen:-

- a young wildebeest calf at the tip of East loop of Ombika, 30/10. Vultures were present, but the carcass had not been eaten.
- subadult wildebeest on the east loop near the main road 6/11 in the same condition i.e. not a sign of predation on the carcass.

- rhino carcass near the northern border in Otjivasandu area.
- 2 gemsbok outside the Park next to the fence, also in the west; dogs and goats were in the vicinity.
- a young elephant near Onangombati. The tusks were present, not much had been eaten from the carcass, but it was at the time covered with vultures, 26/10.
- a young elephant on the northern border north-east of the previous case. Tusks were present and the animal was quite freshly dead. The herd of about 20 had surrounded the body and were standing there hiding it until frightened off by the aircraft. 26/10.
- a wildebeest 200 yards out on the Pan at Springbokfontein 31/10 - extensively eaten 10:10 am., probably killed the previous night.

16. The following waterholes were dry, but had significant concentrations of animals present:-
 Aus, ? } *Please check*
 Dugaries, } *again!*
 Elandsvlakte }

- 17. The pan near Springbokfontein was heavily marked by animal tracks going NE - SW.
- 18. At least one springbok lamb was seen in a herd near Okondeka.
- 19. A herd of goats and a dog were found inside the Park north-east of Kowares.
- 20. A large herd of cattle were found at Dolomietpunt waterhole. 3 male lions were in the vicinity.
- 21. Patterns of concentrations and movements of animals are emerging which should permit meaningful delineation of counting blocks by early next year.

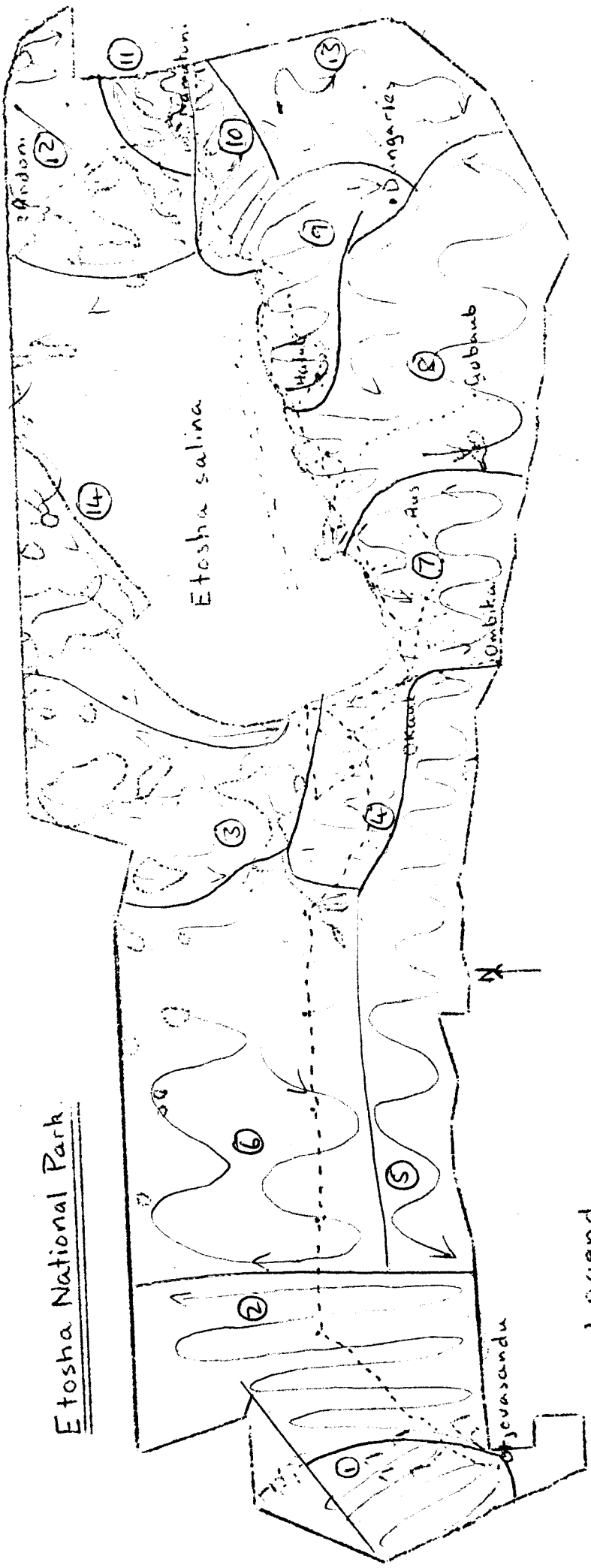
TOTALS FOR AERIAL CENSUS 25.10.72 - 2.11.72:

Plains Zebra	8468
Wildebeest	3078
Gemsbuck	1719
Springbuck	2969
Kudu	821
Hartebeest	128
Roan	114
Impala	199
Mountain Zebra	396
Giraffe	461
Eland	224
Elephant	686
Ostrich	468
Rhinoceros	31
Lion	43

COMPARATIVE TOTALS FOR THE 1972 4 COUNTS:

	June '72	Difference	July '72	Difference	September '72	Difference	October '72
Zebra	11,508	- 950	10,558	- 1747	8811	- 343	8468
Springbok	3,612	-1159	2,453	+ 466	2919	+ 50	2969
Gemsbok	1,725	+ 70	1,795	+ 15	1810	- 19	1719
Wildebeest	3,432	+ 86	3,518	- 459	3059	+ 176	3078
Hartebeest	3,282	+ 12	294	+ 10	304	- 111	128
Kudu	218	+ 287	505	+ 427	932	- 140	821
Giraffe	523	- 36	487	+ 114	601	- 177	461
Elephant	433	- 14	419	+ 444	863	- 105	686
Eland	250	- 40	210	+ 119	329	+ 58	224
Mt. Zebra	200	- 22	178	+ 160	338	- 20	396
Impala	153	-	153	+ 66	219	-	199
Roar	107	-	107	+ 7	114	-	114
Rhino	30	- 15	15	+ 19	34	- 3	31
Ostrich	648	- 113	515	+ 56	459	+ 9	468

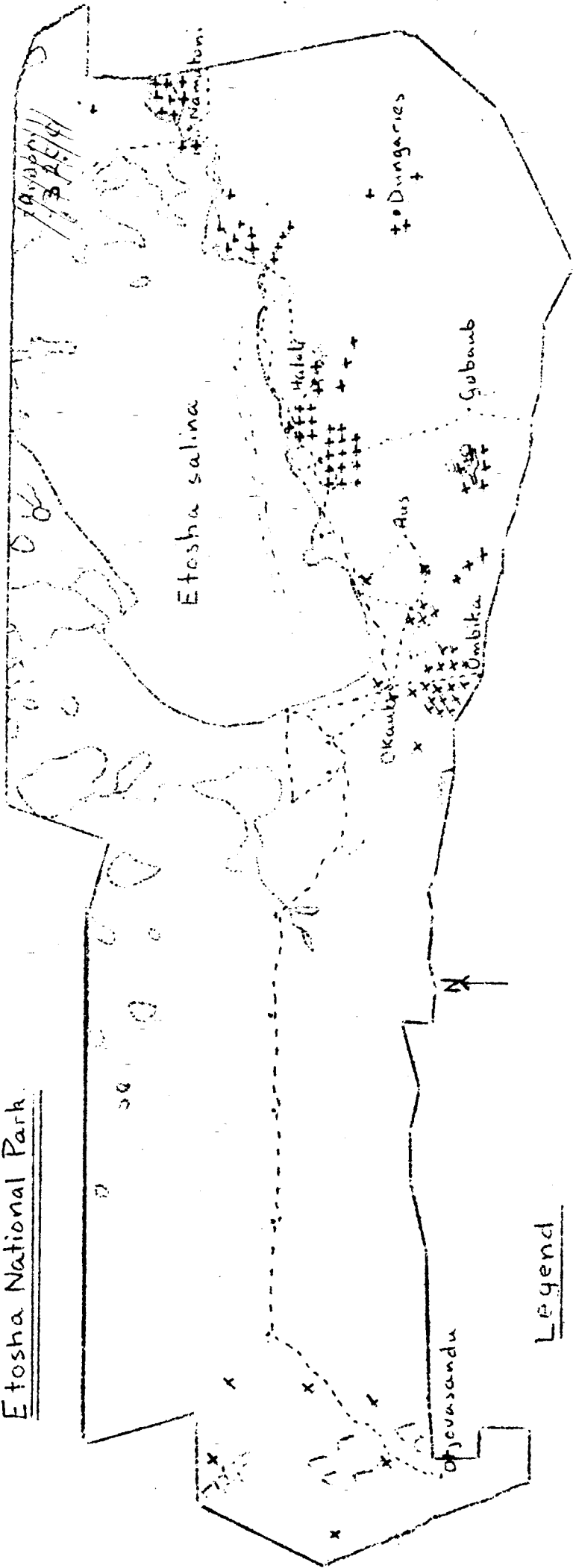
Etosha National Park



Legend
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Map 1 - Counting Sequence

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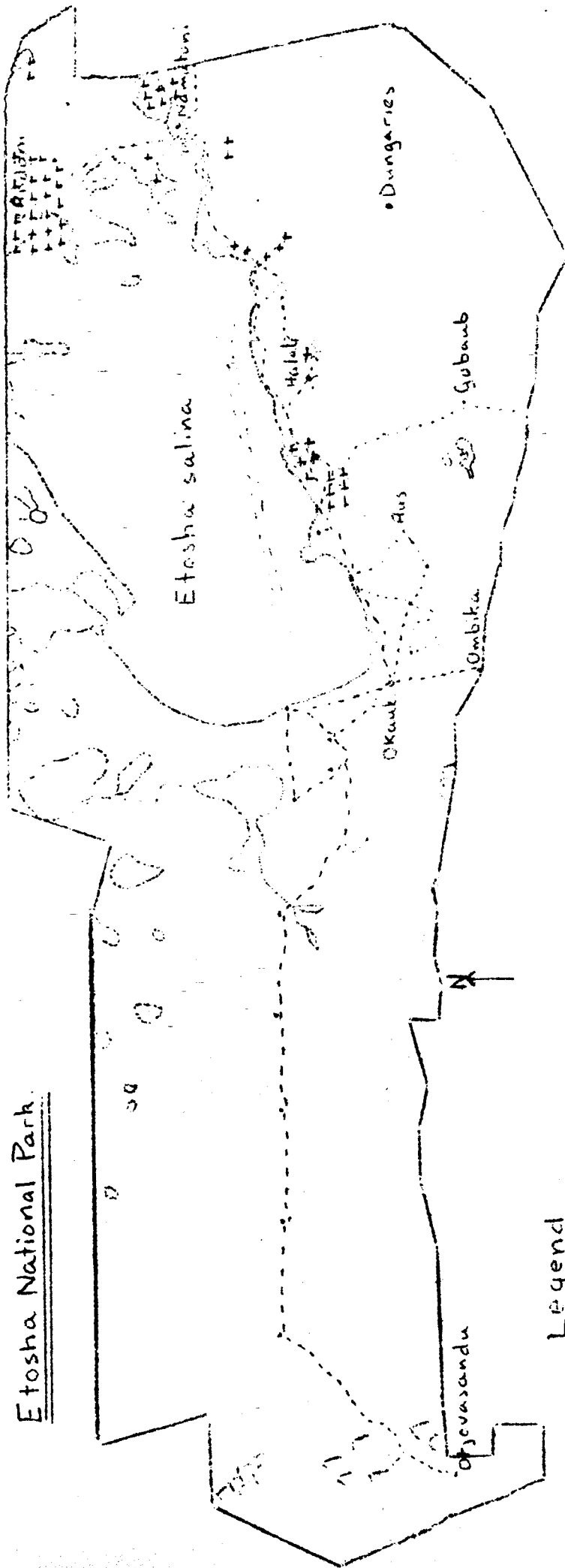
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MAP 2 - Zebra distribution

x = 1 50 ANIMALS

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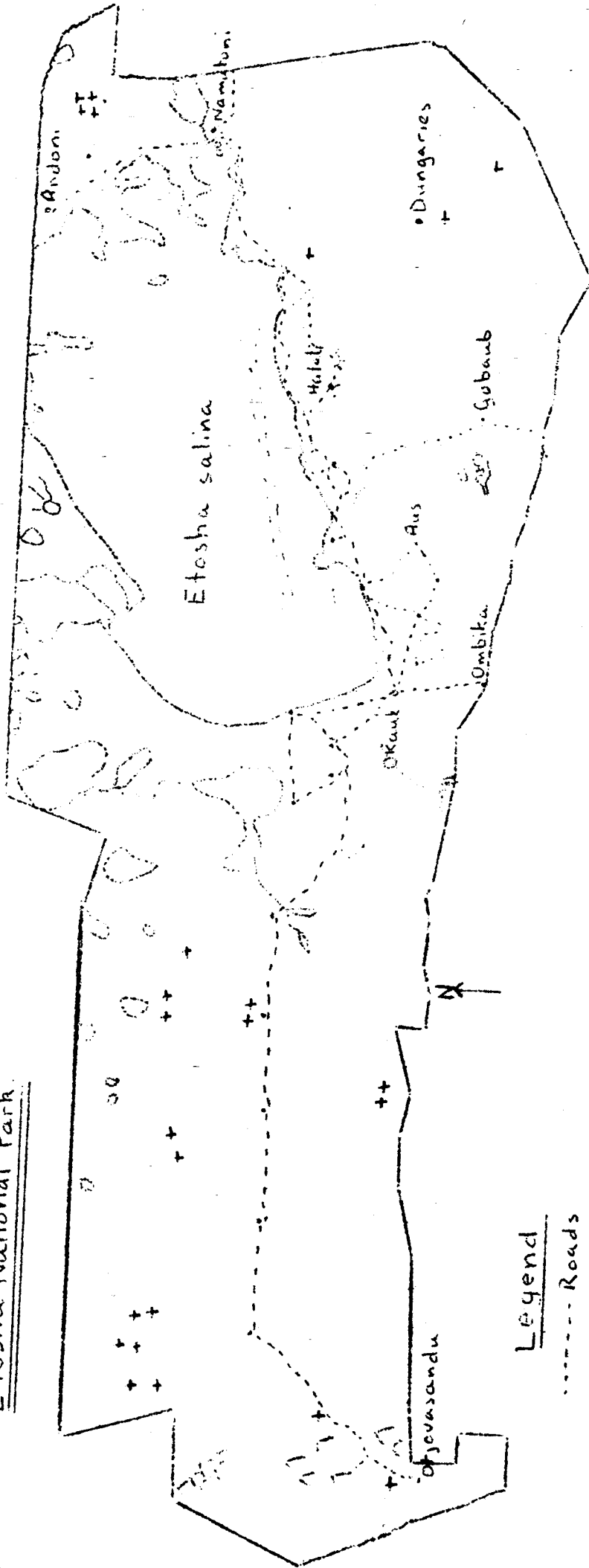
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Map 3 - Wildlife Disturb.

+ = ± 50 Animals

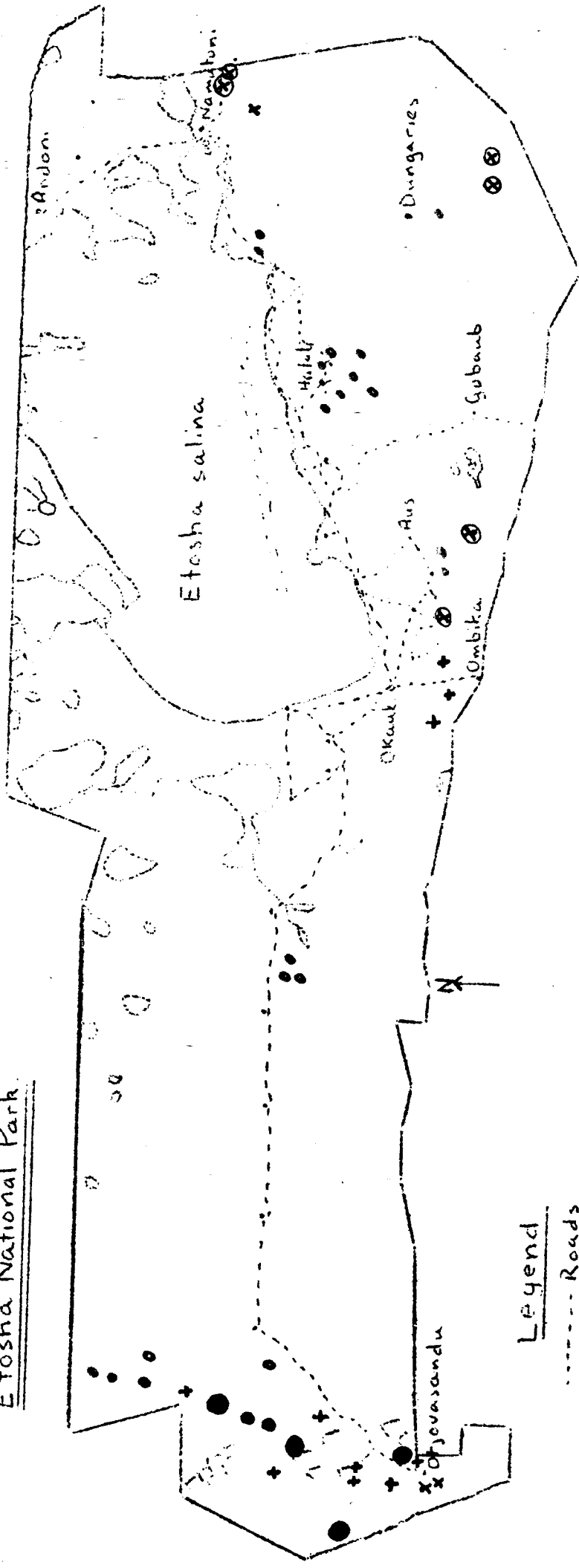
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Map 4 - Elephant Distribution

x = ± 25 animals.

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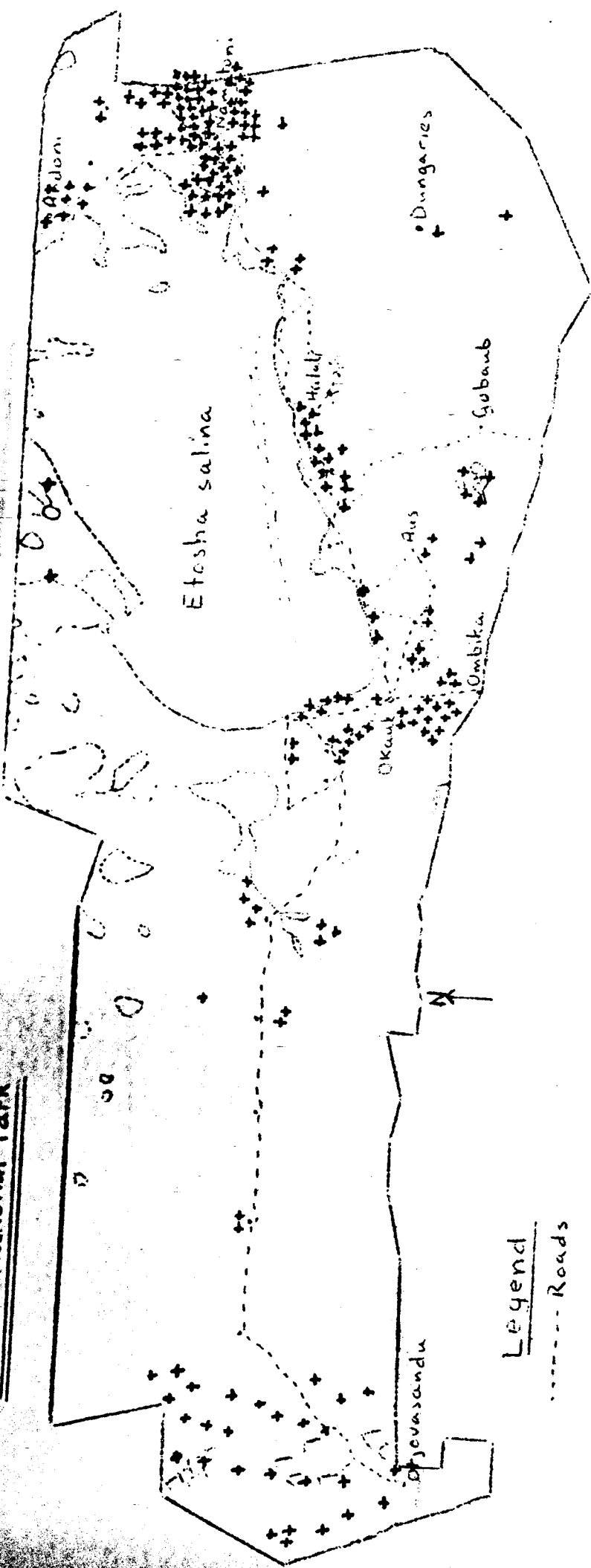
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Map 5 - Rhino distribution, Etosha National Park

- + Rhino = 1 individual
- ⊗ Etosha = 5 animals
- Hartbeest = 5 animals
- Mt Zebra = 20 animals
- x Impala = 15 animals

Etosha National Park



Legend

----- Roads

Map 6 - Kudu & Springbuck distribution

Kudu + = 5 animals.

Springbuck += 30-50 animals.