

N50/7/1

J.S. du Preez

9

73/03/19-27 Park

Ecologist (Etosha),  
P.O. OKAUKUEJO,  
Via Outjo.  
29th March, 1973.

The Director,  
Nature Conservation and Tourism,  
P/B 13186,  
WINDHOEK

AERIAL CENSUS: 19 - 27 March 1973

1. Attached please find the distribution maps.
2. This census was undertaken by myself with N. Maritz as pilot. Approximately 44 hours were spent flying.
3. General:  
Since the last census the whole of Etosha had had varying amounts of rain: Otjovasandu having had the least. Rainwater pools were numerous from the eastern boundary to the Onnaiso Omuramba with a few scattered pools in the Otjovasandu area. The grazing has responded according to the rainfall. The pan is covered with a thin layer of water from the Oshigambo river to Namutoni. Approximately 200 each of the two flamingo species are present; some on the Ekuma and the rest of the pan.

As usual the Halali area has very little game - most being in the Okaukuejo - Lceubron and north of Okondeka area. Namutoni has a fair number of game, especially on Fisher's Pan.

A flight was made from Otjovasandu towards Palmwag. Recent rains in this area was responsible for some valleys having good grazing. The indications were that many of the rivers in this area had recently come down in flood and numerous rainwater pools were observed. During this flight, which lasted nearly one hour, 25 gemsbok, 63 elephant, 14 giraffe, 1 kudu and 593 mountain zebra were counted. As this flight was not an extensive survey of the area, it can be assumed that many animals were not counted. Should something not be done to preserve at least a part of this area with its mountain zebra?

Flying along the new fence from the Ekuma to the end of it (just west of the salt pans) it was seen that elephants had pushed it over at odd intervals without appearing to break the fence. Owambos were also seen slaughtering and eland bull next to the fence but outside the Park.

2/ .....

4. Totals:

	March 1973	Feb. 1973	Difference
Zebra	7,760	5,281	+ 2,479
Springbok	4,445	3,167	+ 1,278
Gemsbok	1,743	713	+ 1,030
Wildebeest	2,528	2,737	- 209
Hartebeest	160	110	+ 50
Elephant	<del>300</del> 477	292	+ <del>185</del>
Eland	222	52	+ 170
Impala	3	-	-
Giraffe	404	206	+ 198
Kudu	129	151	- 22
Rhino	11	22	- 11
Ostrich	1,073	359	+ 714
Cheetah	0	4	-
Lion	45	36	-
Mountain Zebra	45	-	-

5. Reasons for differences:

**Zebra:** Many more foals were seen, suggesting a shift in peak foaling time. However, it is clear that we have lost many zebra, conservatively estimated at around 4,000. At R80 per skin this represents a loss of R320,000.00. On the brighter side it represents a decrease in grazing pressure but it is still poor management in so far that we have gained nothing from this "culling" method. As most of this loss took place in the Andoni area, it becomes imperative that his part of the fence be completed as soon as possible before poor grazing forces them back to Andoni.

**Springbok:** With the rains these animals have formed several large herds on the plains, facilitating spotting and counting.

**Eland:** Three large herds were found. It is most encouraging to see an increase in their numbers since they were last seen.

**Giraffe:** As a result of rain these animals have dispersed into the bush but have frequently formed large herds, thereby making counting and spotting easier.

**Ostrich:** Same as above.

**Gemsbok:** Same as above but they have formed large herds on the plains.

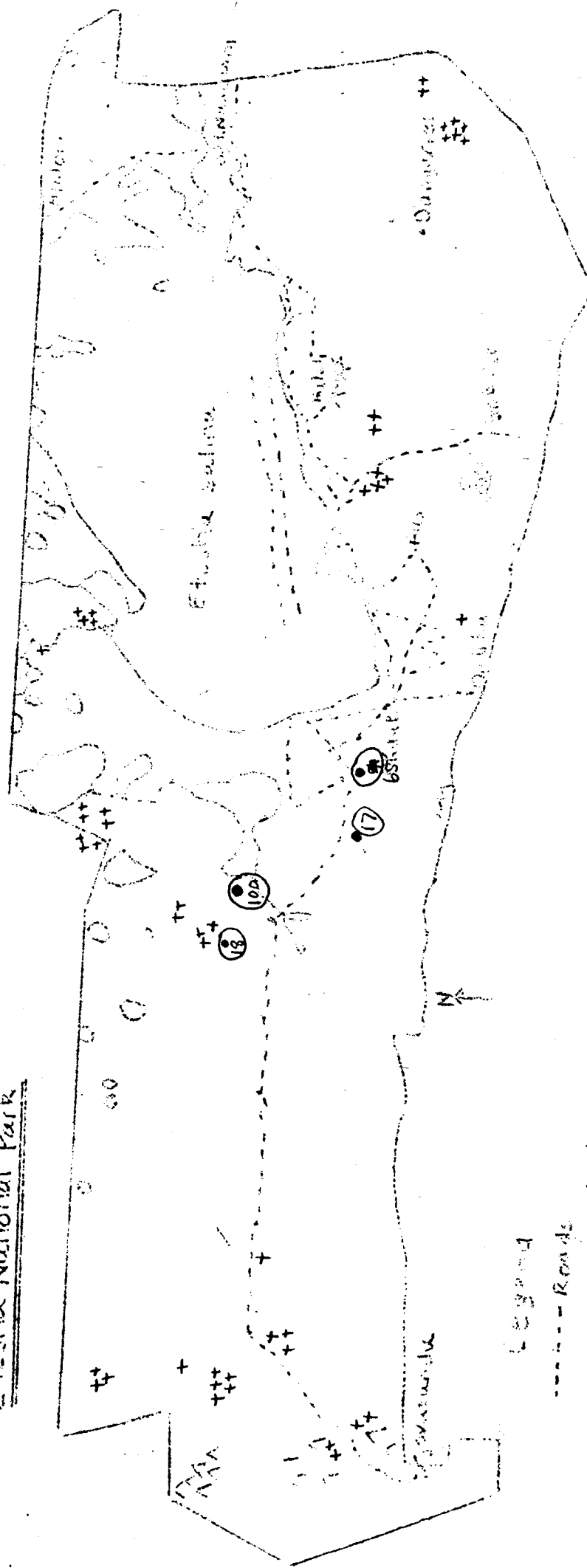
6. Kaross:

Many of the animals which were chased out of Kaross were seen along the northern fence, notably giraffe, gemsbok and zebra. A large concentration of these animals was found in the area where they were chased through the fence. It is expected that these animals will gradually disperse.

J.S. DU PREEZ

Distribution of Elephant, Eland : March 1973

Etosna National Park

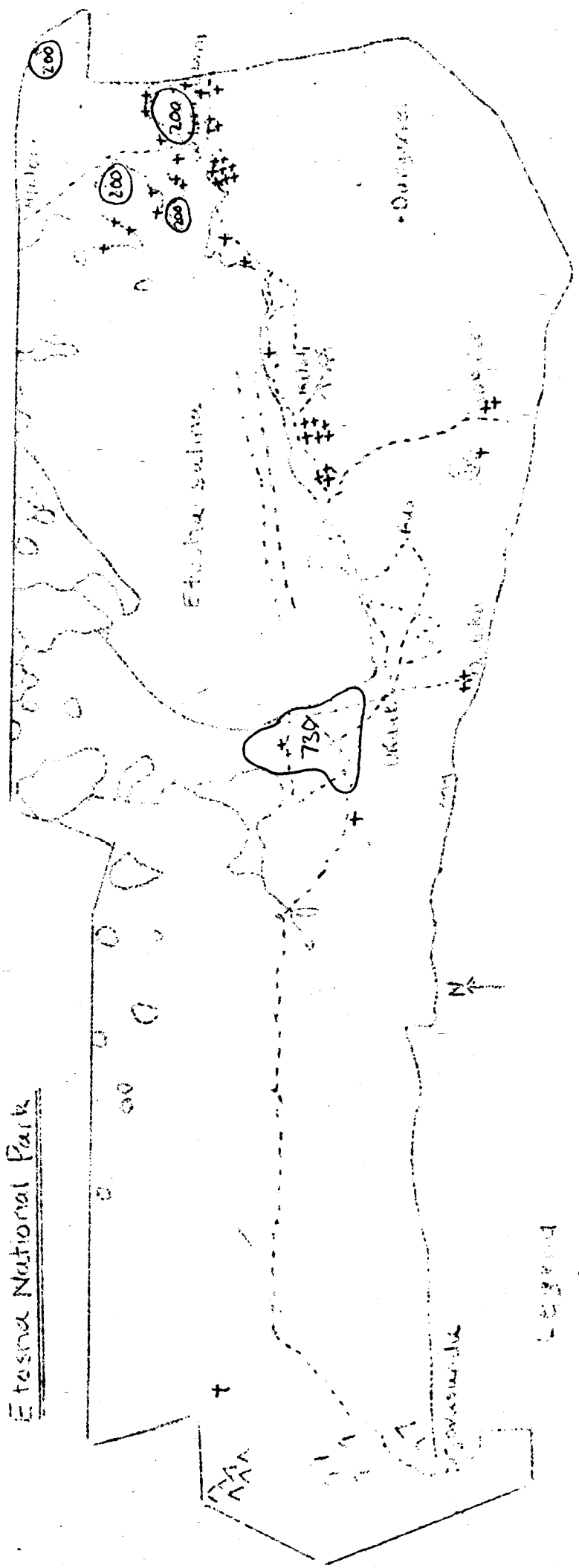


Legend

- - - - Roads
- + = 10 Elephant
- = 10 Eland.

Distribution of Wildebeest: March 1973

Etosha National Park



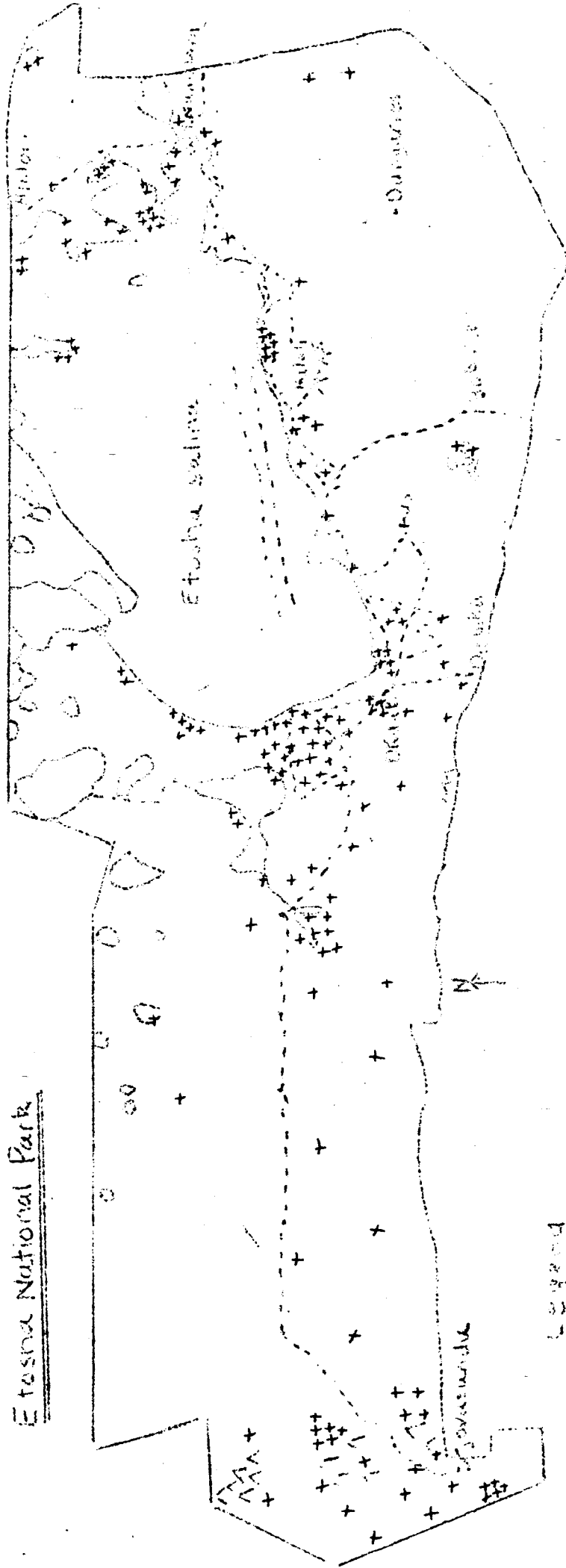
Legend

--- Roads

+ = 20 Wildebeest

Distribution of Gemsbok: March 1971

Etosha National Park



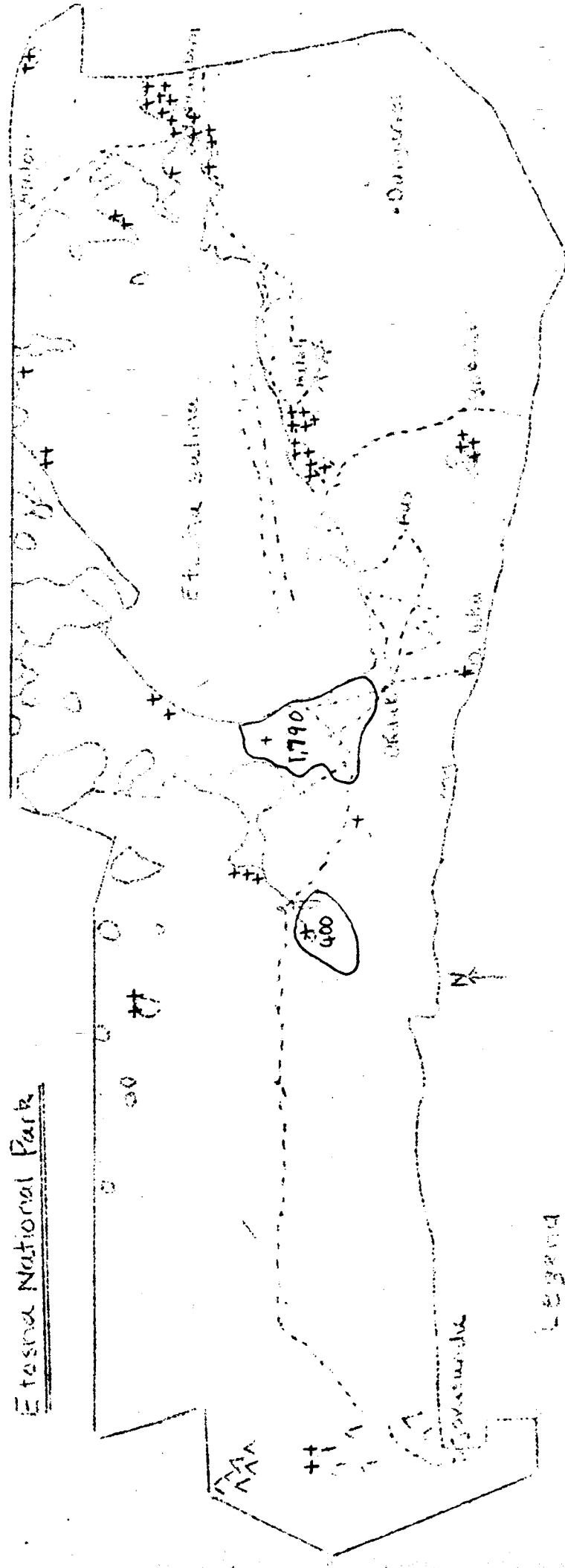
Legend

----- Road

+ = 10 Gemsbok.

Distribution of Springbok: March 1973.

Etosha National Park

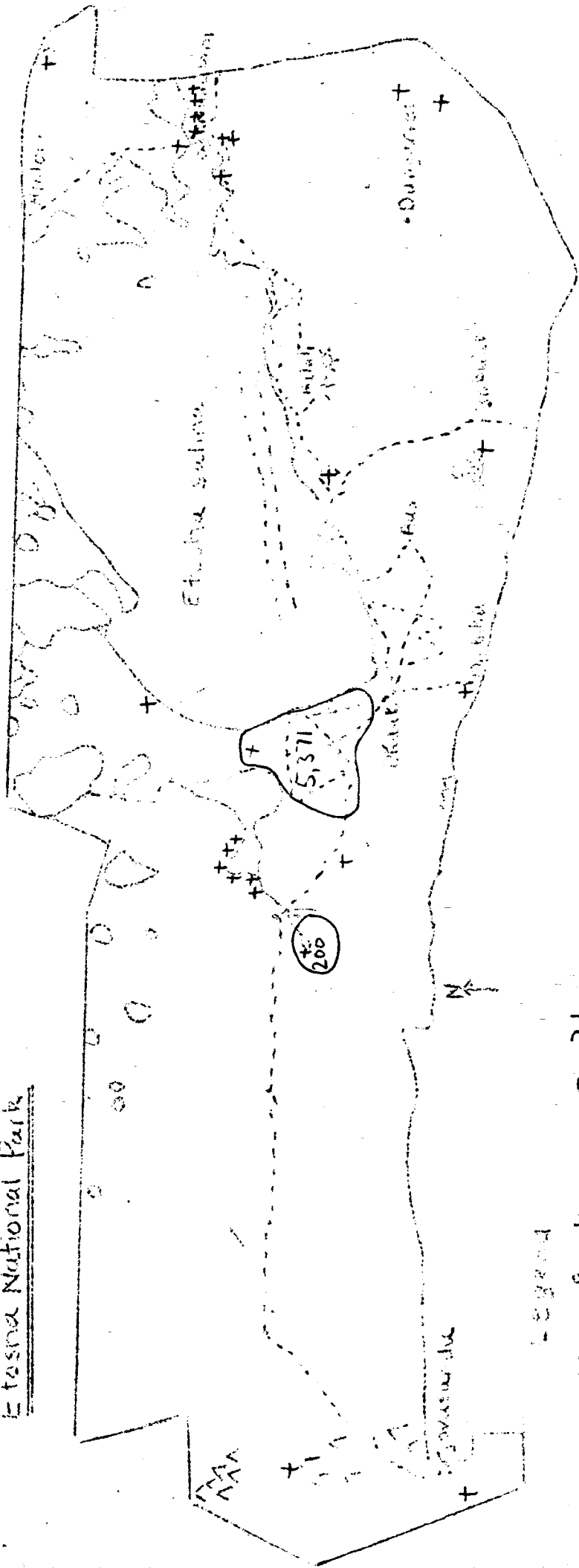


Legend  
----- Road

+ = 50 Springbok

Distribution of Zebra: March 1973

Etosna National Park



Legend

----- Road      + = 50 Zebras