

NSO/7/23.

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REF. NO.: NSO/7/1
ENQUIRY: J.S. du Preez
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Ecologist (Etosha)
P.O. OKAUKUEJO,
Via Outjo.
9th May, 1973.

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

AERIAL CENSUS OF THE GAME OF ETOSHA: 24.4. to 1.5.1973

1. The Super Cub, with M. de Jager as pilot and myself as observer, was used for approximately 30 hours flying time. As I was urgently required in Windhoek I could not complete the census of the Namutoni area and this area was done partly by N.C. Theron and T.O. Vorster (during his day off). As the pilot was also requested urgently in Windhoek on the 2.5.1973, arrangements for the completion of the count had to be cancelled. However, all the main concentrations areas were covered by the census and the previous census' figures for the 19th Latitude and Otjovasandu areas have been included, as shown in the table, in this census results.

2. The last of the rains fell during this period. The grazing appeared to be quite good, but a ground inspection will no doubt prove this to be optimistic as there is not much length in the grass. Much of the grass had already died. Few rainwater pools were left: mostly in the Salt-pans - Ekuma area and a few in the southern areas.

3. The zebra started their movements on the 27.4.1973 and were observed moving past Okaukuejo towards Ombika, Gaseb, Gemsbokvlakte and Kapupuhedi. Whereas no zebra were seen at Gaseb on the 27th, approximately 300 were observed there on the 30th. There were also movements by zebra from the Adamax area towards Grootvlakte. Thus for these censused have shown no animals moving from the Poacher's Point area past the Ekuma towards Okondeka. Judging by tracks only small numbers of animals, mostly gemsbok, have be used this route. The main movement away from Andoni took place along the edge of the pan towards Leeunes from where some proceeded to Okerfontein and the others to Fischer's Pan before moving west.

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4. Results:

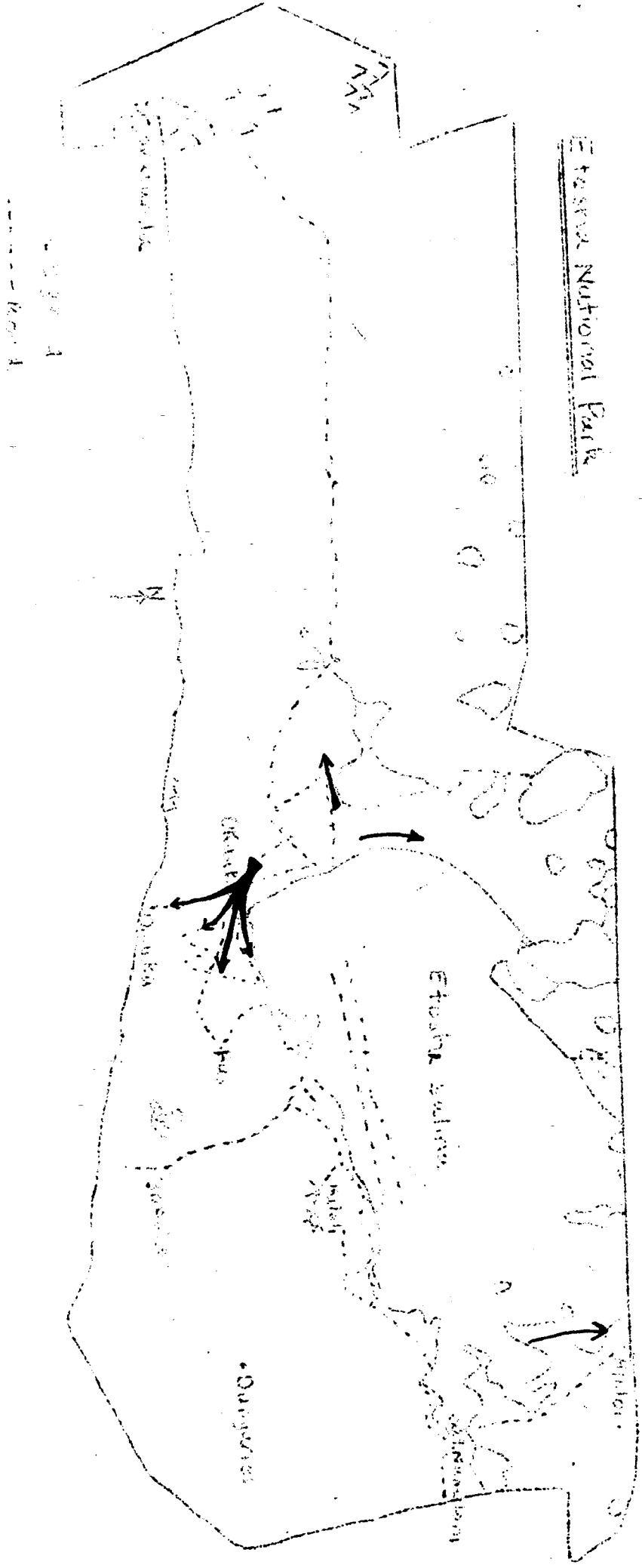
	24.4.73	Uncounted Area	Total	19.3.73
Zebra	9560	150	9710	7,760
Wildebeest	2570	20	2590	2,528
Springbok	6317	100	6417	4,445
Gemsbok	1165	330	1495	1,743
Hartebeest	98	70	168	160
Giraffe	234	50	284	404
Kudu	96	40	136	129
Eland	126	50	176	222
Rhino	3	5	8	11
Elephant	81	200	281	477
Ostrich	814	200	1014	1073
Lion	8	4	12	45
Cheetah	3	-	3	0
Impala	4	-	4	3

5. From the attached distribution maps it is clear that large numbers of zebra, wildebeest and springbok occurred in the same area. Local movements by zebra and springbok probably caused the differences shown above, both having increased by 2000. A census utilizing a helicopter becomes imperative to determine once and for all what our exact numbers are.

6. I have been informed by the N.C.'s that zebras are moving to the Ekuma (and then to Andoni?). N.C. van Vuuren reports counting 1,400 wildebeest on Andoni on the 8.5.73. Obviously zebra and wildebeest are now moving back rapidly to Andoni. He also reports fresh signs of hunting activity on Andoni (3 zebra intestines, 1 shot springbok, 1 wounded zebra). As the fence is still some distance from Poacher's Point it is advisable to leave that section and give the Andoni - Beiseb section top priority before the large herds return to Andoni. Speed is essential if the work is to be simplified: delay can cause direct confrontations with the Owambos, especially if it becomes necessary to (chase) game back to the Park side.

J.S. DU PREEZ

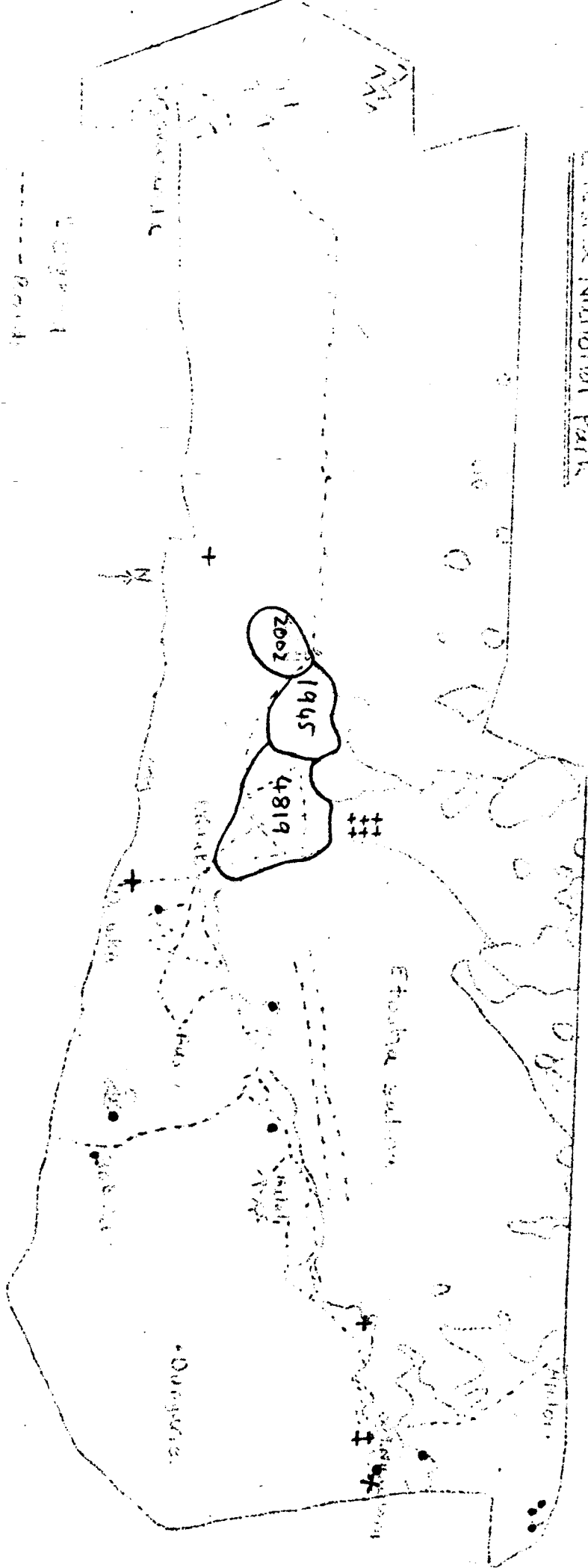
Movements of zebra (27th April) 1973



Distribution of Zebra 24/9/73

(Counted area only)

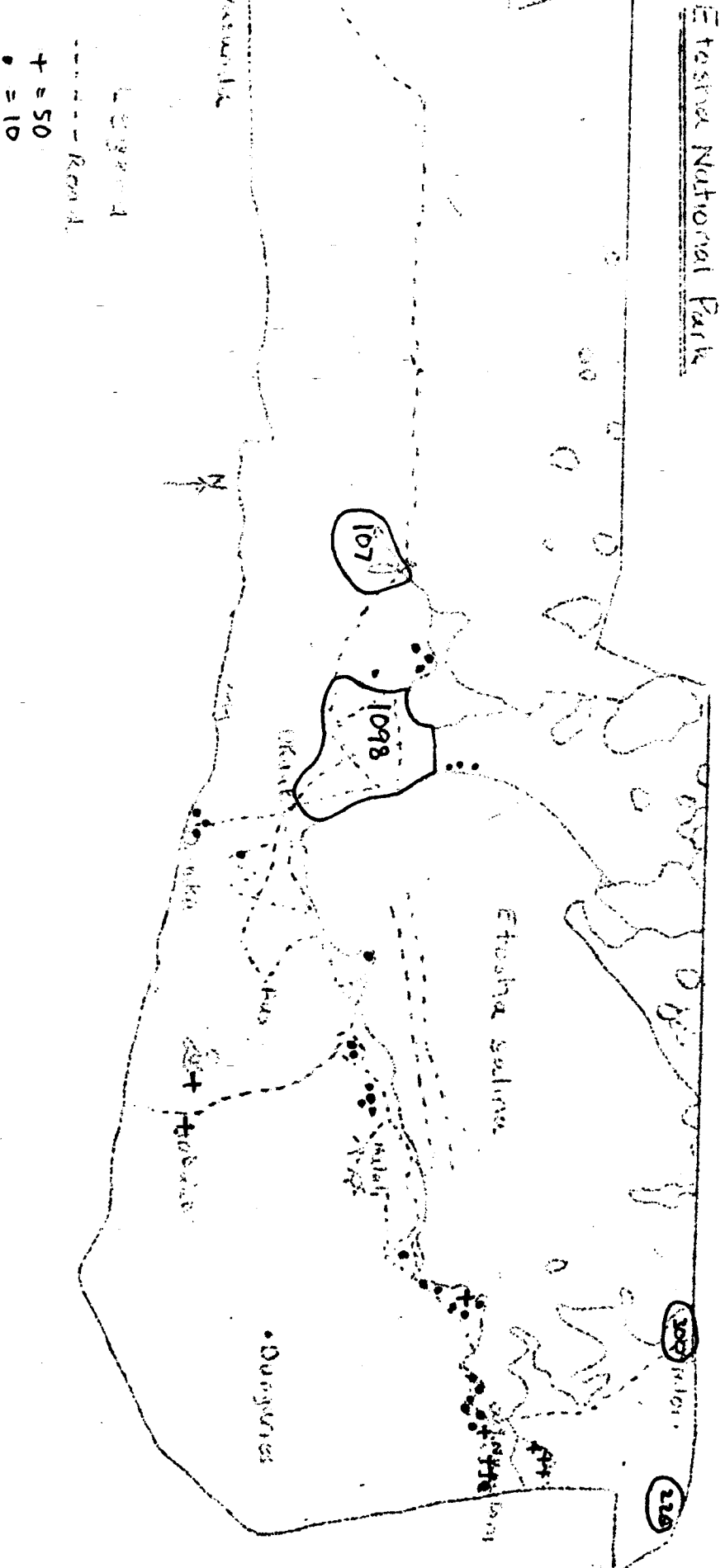
Etiopia National Park



+ = 50 } zebra.
• = 10 }

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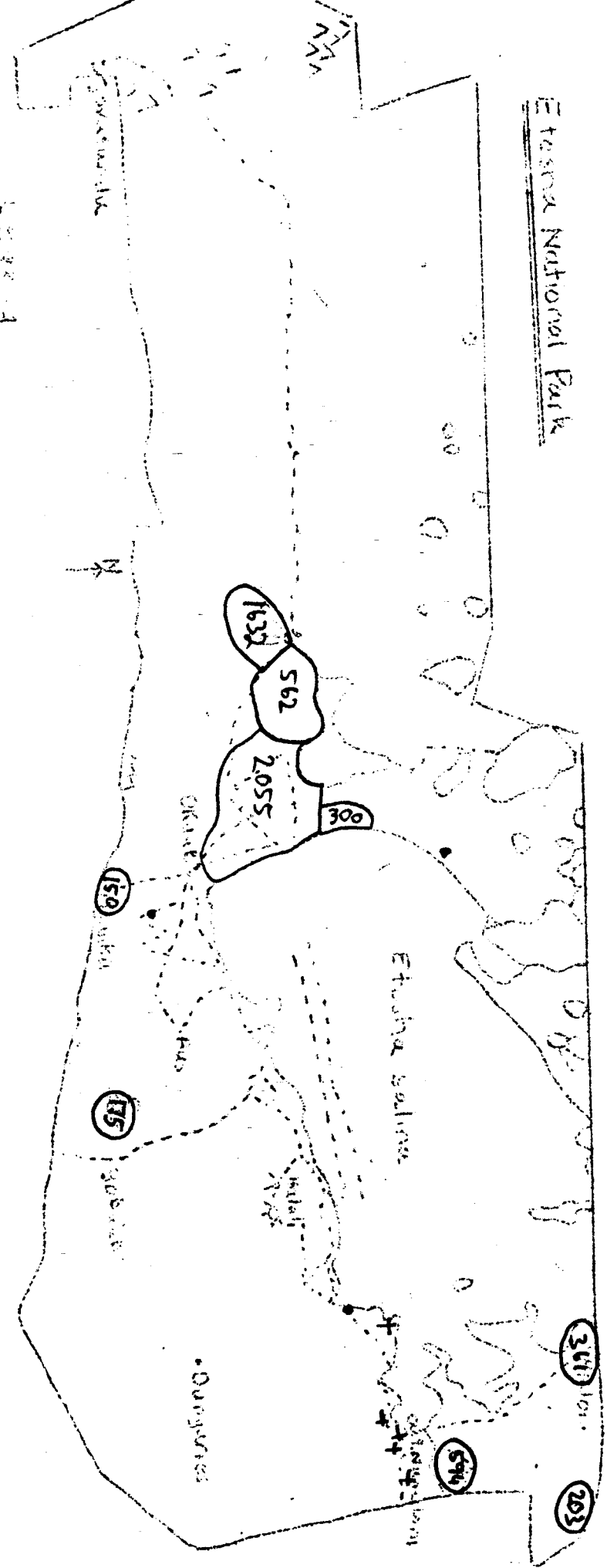
Distribution of Wildebeest 29/9/72
(Counted area only)



Distribution of Spl. fish
(Counted area only)

Etosha National Park

Legend
+ = 50
o = 10.



Distribution of *Gerrhosaurus* 4/19/73.

Counted area only

