

WILDEBEEST COUNTS: 1977

- 1. Dates : 21 - 31 March 1977
- 1.1 Areas : Entire plains area of Etosha
- 1.2 Persons : H. Berry  
R. Kyle  
N. Maritz  
M. de Jager
- 1.3 Aircraft : "Hughes 300" helicopter, carrying 2 persons.
- 1.4 Total count time : Approximately 30 hours
- 1.5 Total wildebeest counted : 3059<sup>+</sup>

<sup>+</sup>Table I gives the detailed counts.

Table I: Aerial census of Blue wildebeest in Etosha during March 1977

AREA	BULLS	ADULTS	CALVES	MIXED HERDS
Beisebvlakte	1 + 1	58	7	
	11 + 1 + 1			
	12	25	5	
	1	30	5	
	1 + 1	26	5	
		27	5	
Poacher's Point to Andoni (between islands)	9 1			
Northern boundary of Andoni	2 + 1 1°			
Andoni	3 + 3 1 + 1	16	6	
Aroe	44 + 1			
North of Fischer's Pan	17 + 1	23 15 4	6 4 3	

AREA	BULLS	ADULTS	C. LIVES	MIXED HERDS
Twee Palms to Namutoni	1 + 1			25
		37	13	
		11	3	
	1			38
	1			36
	1 + 6	33	12	
	1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1			
20				
1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 3	10	1		
1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1	94	21		
Namutoni airfield	1 + 1 + 1	15	4	
	1	41	11	
Namutoni airfield to Doringdraai	1	3		30
			15	100
				15
			30	
Doringdraai	1 + 1	11	4	
	1	45	5	
	1	12	2	
Klein Namutoni	1			
Chudop	1 + 1 + 1	33	?	
	1	175	25	
N'gobib	1			
Leeunes	2 + 1 + 1			
Leeunes to Namutoni	2 + 1 + 1			
Batia	1			
Gobaub		17	6	
Gobaubvlakte	1 + 13 + 3 + 3	0	2	
	1			
Halali plains	1 + 1			

AREA	DULLES	DULLES	CATTLE	MIXED HERDS
Charite sub	1 <sup>+</sup> 1 + 1 + 1 + 1	13	5	
Honob	1			
Kapupuhedi	1			
Broken Tree		16	1	
Gensbokvlakte	1			
Gaseb	1			
Pen	1			
Ombika Eastern loop	1 + 3 + 3 + 1	10	3	
Ombika Western loop	1			
Eindwal	1			
Okulungojo airfield to Wolfmes	10 <sup>++</sup> 4 + 3 + 1 15 1 <sup>++</sup> 1 + 2 <sup>+++</sup> 1	19 10 221 4 2 5	3 2 71 2 1 1	4
Okondoka - Logan's Lule - Idmax Pen triangle	1 + 1 + 1  2 + 1  1 + 1 + 1 + 1  1 + 3 + 1  1 + 1 + 6 2 + 5 + 1 1 + 3 + 3	55 1 28 20 2 3 5 10 17 3 3 5	7 2 1 3 1 3 1 3 2 5 3	6 13 5 4 4 + 3 6 9

AREA	BULLS	ADULTS	C IVES	MIXED HERDS
Okondaka - Logans Isle -		9	4	12
Adamar Pan triangle		21	3	6
	2 + 1 + 1 + 1	3	2	
		4	2	
	9 + 2 + 1 + 1	10	3	
		16	3	4
		54	9	5
	1	30	6	30
		1	1	
		3	1	5
		4	3	
		3	1	
		6	1	3
		3	1	2
	1 + 1	3	3	4
		5	1	
	1	2	1	
		5	2	
	1	2	2	
		2	4	
		4	1	
		3	1	
		3	2	
		50	16	
		110	21	6
		50	6	
	1		2	3
	2 + 1 + 1 + 1	2	2	20
	1	1	2	67
	6	1	3	11
	1 + 1 + 1 + 1 + 1	14	3	2
	1 + 2	8	1	4
		3	1	2
	6 + 1 + 1	4	1	5 + 4
	2 + 2	5	2	4
	1 + 1	5	1	

AREA	BULLS	ADULTS	CALVES	MIXED HERDS
Leeubron to Adanax	1 + 1 + 2 + 1 + 7	2	1	5
	4 + 4 + 1 + 2 + 1	15	2	
		7	1	
Okaukuejo - Leeubron triangle	1 + 1 + 1			
	1 + 1 + 1			
Grootvlakte	1 + 2 + 1 + 1	41	1	
	1 + 1 + 1 + 1			
	2 + 1 + 1			
Stark's Pan	1 <sup>++</sup>			
Ekuma Mouth	1 + 1			
Ozonjuitji M'Bari	1			
Onangombati	1			
Onantinda	1			
Totals :	142	1720	402	519

- ° = on the Owambo side
- + = 1 red neck-band
- ++ = 1 yellow neck-band
- +++ = 2 yellow neck-bands

2. DISCUSSION

2.1 Percentage calves aged 1 - 2 months in a sample of 2540 animals (83% of the total population) which included bull herds and mixed herds = 19%.

2.2 Percentage calves aged 1 - 2 months in a sample of 2122 animals (69% of the total population) which consisted of mixed herds only = 23%.

2.3 Solitary, territorial bulls comprised 4.6% of the total population (142 out of 3059), of. 1.2% in December 1976, 1.7% in July 1976, 3% in May 1976 and 2% in July 1974.

2.4 79% of the population comprised herds of 10 or more animals, of. 96% in December 1976, 89% in July 1976 and 88% in May 1976. The largest herd encountered was 292 animals (370 in December 1976).

2.5 The March 1977 count shows an increase of 19% (2659 to 3059) in the total population, but it should be remembered that 19% of the population were very young calves which will almost certainly have a high mortality during the year.

Nevertheless, it is possible that the population is stabilising after a steady decline in the past 10 years (from c. 5000 estimated by Ebedes, 1970).

Supplementary to the 1977 game census report for Etosha.

*H. H. Berry*

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Okaukuejo

13 April 1977