



Rhino cows poached at Ghaub

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SAD LOSS: A reward of N\$50 000 is offered for information that would lead to the arrest of the poachers who killed two white rhino cows near Otavi last weekend. Photo: Contributed

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WINDHOEK

A game farm in the Otavi area is offering a reward of N\$50 000 for information that would lead to the arrest of the poachers who killed two nursing white rhino cows last weekend.

Both rhinos had young calves. One calf was found, but another remains missing.

Only one of the carcasses was dehorned. The other rhino escaped from the criminals, but died of her wounds in the bush.

Joachim Rust of the guest farm Ghaub Nature Reserve was particularly heart-broken on account of the loss of the white rhinoceros 'Zanna', which the Rust couple had rescued as a calf and raised with a milk bottle.

But he was also grieved by the loss of 'Große Kuh' (big cow), who died in agony of a gunshot wound to the abdomen.

"I'm not sure what to say about this, because no one would readily understand how much effort, time and money we put into preserving these animals – and that at a time when the Covid-19 pandemic has caused us so much damage," Rust said.

Zanna was rescued as an orphaned calf after her mother got stuck in deep mud after a heavy downpour at a farm near Waterberg in 2014. She was unable to free herself and died as a result of exhaustion. The calf was caught and hand-reared.

As a two-year-old animal, Zanna and other white rhinos were relocated to the privately owned Ghaub Nature Reserve, where she was killed on Sunday.

Her almost one-year-old calf has not yet been found.

Meanwhile, while searching for the calf, the other rhino, 'Große Kuh' was discovered dead in the bush.

"Judging by the tracks, the animal fled from the poachers, seriously wounded by a shot in her belly, and hid in the bush, where she died miserably and painfully after two days," Rust told NMH.

This cow also had a young calf, which has since been found.

The white rhinoceros is listed as "near threatened" on the Red List of Endangered Species of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). The black rhino is listed as "critically endangered".