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Poaching by snare on the rise in the Lowveld

It is suspected that setting snares in the Lowveld has increased by 20% from last season while the Kruger National Park has had an increase of 50%.

10 hours ago

Chelsea Pieterse 2 minutes read



A snare recently found by Jaco Klopper. > Photo: Saba

The pillaging of wildlife has become rife over the past few months with over 650 snares snagged from local reserves and wildlife estates this year so far.

According to South African Bush Warrior Association's (Saba) Jaco Klopper, the situation will only get worse going forward. However, it appears that it is not only free-roaming and protected wildlife getting caught in snares, but people's beloved pets as well. Klopper said he had been called out on at least seven occasions to Mbombela in the past month to help free dogs that had been caught and injured. "We were also called out for a dog in Kaapsehoop and two out in Sabie," he said.

Klopper said the number of snares being set up has increased by at least 20% from last season and suspects that the weakened economy is playing a roll in the destruction of local wildlife. "We are seeing a lot of snares being set up in local reserves and wildlife estates. It seems that there are snares wherever wildlife may possibly live throughout the Lowveld," said Klopper.



Saba's Jaco Klopper and Jess at the Nelspruit Reserve on Tuesday May 31. The animals most commonly caught in snares are duiker, impalas, bushbuck and servals. "We have, however, found kudus, wildebeest, zebras, giraffes, jackals, porcupines

and even a tortoise caught in snares. No animal is safe." Klopper said he himself had been caught in a snare while recently searching for the metal torture devices in some bush.

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Snares found by Saba > Photo: Saba

"It snapped around my ankle and actually pulled me back. It was really sore but at least I could remove it without much damage being done. An animal cannot do that for itself or other animals, so they will either kill themselves trying to escape, starve to death or get killed by the person who had set the snare up."



Saba's Jaco Klopper and Jess at the Nelspruit Reserve on Tuesday May 31.

Meanwhile, the Kruger National Park (KNP) has also seen a massive increase in snares. The KNP's Ike Phaahla said the park picks up around 200 snares a week and that snare incidents have increased around 50%. He said a snare trap any animal that walks through it and hundreds have had to be rescued as a result.



An abandoned camp at the Nelspruit Reserve.

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