



The Okonjima Story

OUR STORY IN SHORT ...

OKONJIMA, THE HANSENS AND AFRICAT.

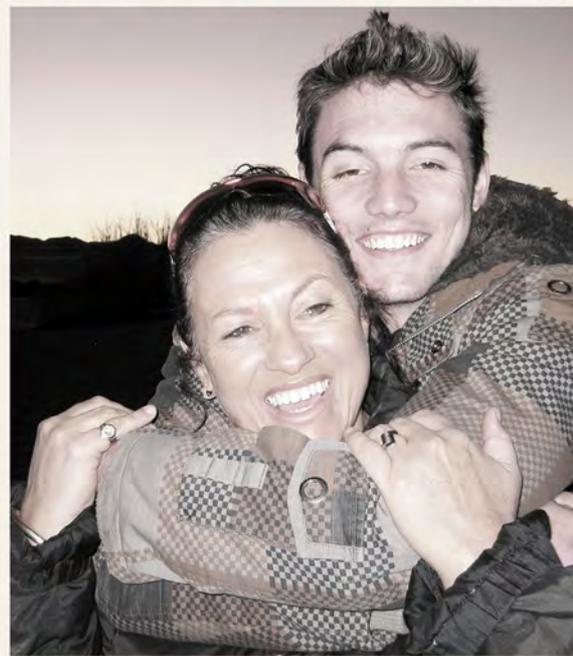
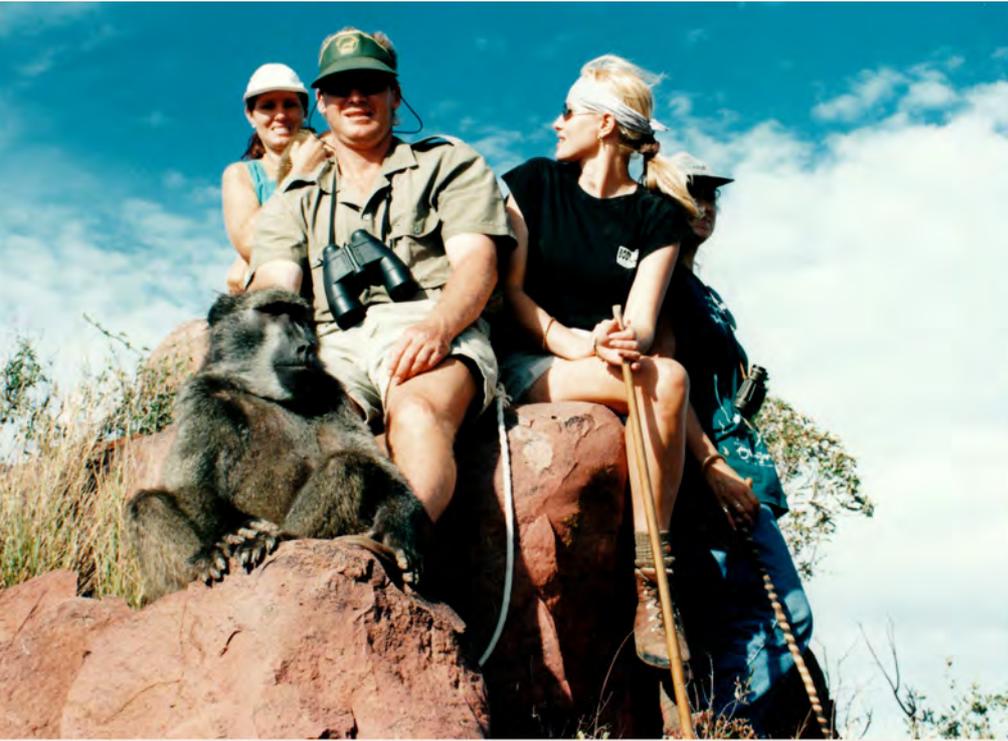
Okonjima, home of The AfriCat Foundation, was established as a small 'guest farm' in 1986. For many years, Val (VJ) & Rose Hanssen had been avid cattle farmers until the need for solutions to increasing livestock losses and post-independence interest in Namibia as a tourist destination, changed the face of Okonjima, as well as that of Carnivore Conservation.

With the family still at the helm (now the next generation), Okonjima now encompasses a dedicated team and a variety of accommodation facilities, offering you, our guest, a truly Namibian stay...

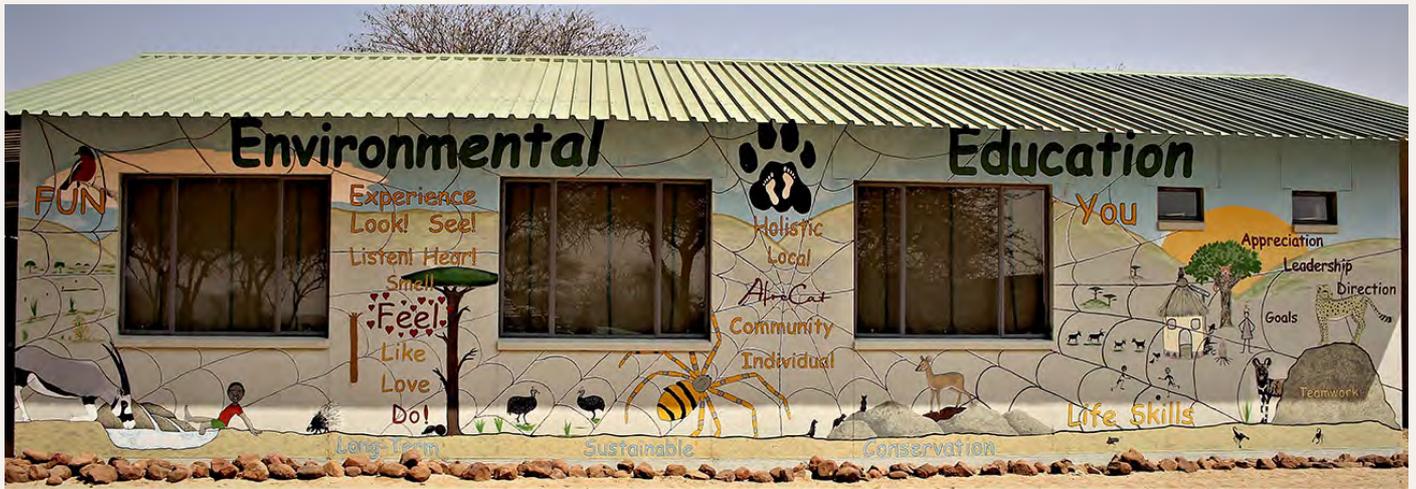
Established in 1993, The AfriCat Foundation started off as a sanctuary for Cheetah and Leopard rescued from irate, livestock farmers.



The Next Okonjima Generation



Today, AfriCat is dedicated to the protection and long-term conservation of all large carnivores in Namibia and has since become renowned for much-needed; “Environmental Education, Carnivore Research, Rescue, Release & Rehabilitation programmes, and Carnivore Welfare, Human Wild-life Conflict Mitigation and Community Support projects – throughout the whole of Namibia”.



The AfriCat Foundation is based in the private, 200km² Okonjima Nature Reserve (central Namibia) and along Etosha’s south-western boundary (northwest Namibia). AfriCat North, strives to mitigate Human-Wildlife Conflict on farmland especially with regards to the lion (*Panthera leo*), by educating the youth, encouraging adapted livestock management and conducting essential research & monitoring of wild lion populations.

Okonjima and AfriCat HQ: A symbiosis @ work: This mutually beneficial relationship allows for interested visitors to experience, first hand, the works of The Project, gaining valuable insight into carnivore conservation and, at the same time, creating the platform for donating much-needed funds to The Project and its Programmes.



OKONJIMA CONSERVATION VISION:

Our dream is to turn our 55 000acre private Nature Reserve on Okonjima – that was once denuded farmland, back to it's natural state, last seen 200 years ago. This dream must be sustainable and a benefit to local communities for it to survive the tide of change in Africa.

This ongoing project headed by the Hanssen Family has nearly removed all internal fences and the management of water resources, hides, the removal of undesirable bush encroachment and new bush roads is ongoing.



VJ Hanssen always quoted the following words...

*God will not seek thy race
Nor will he ask thy birth
Alone He will demand of thee
What hast thou done with the land I gave thee?
An Ancient Proverb*

NEED TO KNOW . . .

Okonjima is a family run business. Wayne, Donna and Rosalea Hanssen who co-own and live on the property, bought Okonjima from their parents in 1993 – turning, what was then a cattle farm, into a 22 000ha private conservation project.



Tammy Hoth – nee HANSSEN joined the AfriCat family by merging her foundation AFRI-LEO with The AfriCat Foundation in April 2010.

Her human-wildlife conflict project is now called – AfriCat NORTH. AfriCat North borders the south western boundary of ETOSHA NATIONAL PARK, (northwest Namibia)

AfriCat North is based along Etosha National Park's south-western boundary and strives to mitigate human-wildlife conflict thereby reducing poverty, to keep lions in their natural habitat, to prevent the exploitation and inhumane treatment of lions and to ensure that captive populations are well cared for.

The programme's projects focus on medium to long term workable solutions through education, improved livestock management and protection, and research and monitoring.

AfriCat on OKONJIMA will focus on – ISLAND-BOUND rehabilitation & research in the 22 000ha Private Nature Reserve; rescue and release, carnivore welfare and environmental education.

