

MEDIA RELEASE - 15 August 2003

<< back >>

Leopard kills boy in KNP

A leopard killed a nine-year-old boy in Skukuza Staff Village this afternoon. The boy, Tshikani Nobela, was on his way home when the incident happened at around 15:45.

Rangers saw the boy being dragged by a leopard and went into immediate action, shooting the feline in the hindquarters. Other armed rangers appeared on the scene and recovered the boy's body.

Rangers then found the leopard and shot it in the head and neck, instantly killing it.

The boy's body was taken to the doctor's rooms but was pronounced dead on arrival. His body has been taken to Hazyview Mortuary to establish the cause of death. South African Police Service (SAPS) will proceed with a death inquest.

Tshikani was the son of two senior employees of the Kruger National Park, his father Phineas Nobela is the Advisor Wildlife Management and his wife Helen Mmethi is the head of Social Ecology.

A post mortem on the leopard has already revealed that the animal was a post-prime adult male in reasonable condition.

Kruger National Park Acting Director Mr Josias Chabani expressed his sincere grief after he learned of the incident.

"Our thoughts and prayers go out to both Phineas and Helen and the rest of that family. Their grief is our grief," he said.

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