

Vol. 7, No. 2

# THE GOLDEN MOLE

NADEET's Endemic Newsletter



December 2009

## NaDEET Continues to Strengthen Connection with Schools and Communities



Girls from JR Camm and Rooiduin schools visit NaDEET for the first time.

*"If [NaDEET hasn't] laid a cornerstone in the ecological consciousness of our children, nobody else will ever manage."* - Mr. von Koenen, teacher

Encouraging statements like these from teachers give evidence of the long-lasting impact of NaDEET's sustainable living education programme on children. More and more visiting groups take what they learn at NaDEET Centre home.

In September, Dr. Frans Aupa Indongo Primary School from the informal settlement of Babylon in the northern Windhoek suburbs, returned to NaDEET Centre with their grade 6 learners. Principal Lewin aims for these children to be environmental role models during grade 7, when they will be the oldest at the primary school. As part of this strategy, the teachers incorporated ideas from NaDEET to display in their "Back to School Open Day" for parents. The students wore their NaDEET t-shirts while they baked snacks in the school's own solar cooker and solar oven, and made recycled fire bricks and fuel-efficient stoves.

The day was a celebration of what the children learned at NaDEET as well as an educational session for parents. One of NaDEET's aims is to encourage environmental action, and involving the community in environmental learning is necessary. We commend Dr. Frans Aupa Indongo PS for their efforts to share their knowledge and experiences with their community.

Since July, eleven other school groups have also participated in our week-long environmental education programme. Many of these groups were repeat schools who have made a visit to NaDEET Centre an annual trip for their classes. We are pleased that eight of these schools were from the Hardap region, as we aim to work with children from our local area. New groups included Onyose Trust, a non-profit organisation for people with disabilities who we hosted in November, and JR Camm and Rooiduin schools who were brought to the Centre by Peace Corps volunteers.



Frans Indongo PS children displaying the fuel-efficient stoves, recycled fire bricks, solar cooker and solar oven they demonstrated to parents and community members at their "Back to School Open Day"

With every programme, NaDEET either reinforces its relationship with a returning school, or creates new ties to a school or community that wants to know more about sustainable living. Many of our regular schools

return to their home community and tell others about their NaDEET Centre experience. This networking is an effective mechanism for spreading environmental awareness on the ground.

One of our regular schools, WJD Cloete JSS, has recognised NaDEET's contribution to their school with a certificate of merit for our "Excellent Contribution to Environmental Education in schools in Namibia." during their annual class trip in August. WJD Cloete JSS has brought 10th grade learners to NaDEET Centre for four years, thanks to the sponsorship of Sossusvlei Desert Lodge's "Ostrich Egg Project" ongoing support and this year's &Beyond Foundation support.

We look forward to our final school group of the year in mid-December and continuing our ties with schools both old and new in 2010.

*Alanna Pardee*

The Golden Mole is produced using solar and wind powered electricity

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NaDEET is a registered non-profit trust in Namibia.

Trust Certificate #: T168/ 2003

Trustees: C. Berker, E. Dürr,  
U. Nakamhela  
Director: V. Keding



## With NaDEET's Help, Secondary School Learners Take Environmental Action

Since the beginning of the year, NaDEET hosted an exciting, new project for secondary school learners, thanks to the generous sponsorship of the NedBank Namibia Go Green Fund. Entitled "Promotion of Environmental Research and Inquiry Skills of Secondary School Learners," the project involved over 40 learners from schools in Windhoek, Rehoboth, Gibeon and Mariental. The goal of this project was to encourage environmental action by youth in their home communities through developing research skills. NaDEET is pleased to announce the completion of the project, which saw many successful young leaders improving both the lives of those around them and the natural environment of Namibia.

This group was comprised of bright and strong secondary school learners, recognised as leaders by their teachers and peers. In two week-long programmes, these learners first came to NaDEET Centre in June 2009, to learn about environmental problems and develop the skills necessary for independent research. After visiting the Centre, the learners returned home and began writing proposals for environmental research projects. NaDEET staff assisted the learners throughout this process. With the guidance of their teachers, the learners submitted their findings in a final report, submitted to NaDEET in October.

The projects include a wide variety of environmental topics, including ground pollution in Mariental, re-use of newspapers and water use in Rehoboth, and biodiversity conservation and eco-friendly transportation in Windhoek. In November, NaDEET staff carried out the final phase of the project by visiting and evaluating the learners at their schools. The learners presented their respective projects and we collectively developed further ways to make their ideas a reality. NaDEET and the NedBank Namibia Go Green Fund are thrilled to help the next generation of Namibian environmental leaders gain the valuable experience and skills they need to bring positive change to the country's people and environment.

NaDEET staff also awarded first, second and third place small cash prizes to the exceptional projects. Empelheim JSS's ground pollution project took first place. These awards will further enable these young leaders to carry out environmental projects in their communities. Congratulations to all the learners, for a job well done! Continue the good work!

*Benjamin Burghart*



Rehoboth HS learners make their own newspaper fire bricks (above) and use them to cook a traditional chicken stew (below).



Viktoria Keding (left) with first place winners from Empelheim JSS.



Learner modeling his 'super adapted desert creature' clay.

### Art Therapists Add New Element to NaDEET Programme

Two volunteer art therapists, Cheryl Walpole and Christen Meyer, joined the NaDEET team for two months in September and October. They brought with them two large suitcases full of donated art supplies from the US which enabled schoolchildren at NaDEET Centre to try out a large variety of art mediums. Cheryl and Christi worked with five school groups at the Centre and added several new art activities linked to our existing sustainable living programme. These included using nature to make environmental art and air-drying clay to make models of the children's own 'super-adapted desert creatures'. For many children this was the first time they had participated in a formal art class. We intend to incorporate the environmental art activity into our upper primary programme on a regular basis. Check out Cheryl and Christi's art therapy blog at: [www.arttherapyinamibia.tumblr.com](http://www.arttherapyinamibia.tumblr.com)

*Viktoria Keding*



## Newest *Bush Telegraph* Draws Attention to Links Between Women and the Environment

In September, NaDEET staff produced the second issue of the *Bush Telegraph* in 2009. Entitled "Women for a Sustainable Environment," the issue focuses on the important role women play in creating a sustainable environment in Namibia and elsewhere around the world.

By showcasing strong female role models, this issue bravely rejects common gender stereotypes and inequalities. The highlight is the on-site research of three Namibian NGOs, run by and for the benefit of women. These case studies explain the work of these organisations, and how they contribute to a more sustainable Namibia. Many children might question the relevance between women and the environment, but this issue dispels any uncertainty. Through diagrams and activities, readers encounter women role models, with versatile talents and careers. They also grasp the subtle, yet crucial, connection that empowered women lead to a stable population and sound physical health, which is a sustainable environment.

The theme of this issue (as well as the previous one) appropriately aligns with its UNESCO sponsorship by explaining, in a language children can understand, the UN Millennium Development Goals, including gender equality and environmental sustainability. To check out "Women for a Sustainable Environment," download a free copy of the *Bush Telegraph* from our website at [www.nadeet.org/educationalMaterial.html](http://www.nadeet.org/educationalMaterial.html). *Benjamin Burghart*

### NaDEET Wins Another ecoMedia Award

For the second year in a row, NaDEET won an ecoMedia Award in the "media house" category for its work on the children's magazine, *Bush Telegraph*, and the new activity book released in June, *It's Time to Change: Living and Learning for Nature*. NaDEET staff were in attendance at the annual Hospitality Association of Namibia gala dinner in Windhoek to receive the third place award, sponsored by Namibia Breweries Limited. ecoMedia Awards are given to those working in media whose work encompasses excellent environmental reporting and information sharing. NaDEET is thrilled to again receive this recognition for its environmental education work. To read these award-winning publications, you can download them from our website at [www.nadeet.org/educationalMaterial.html](http://www.nadeet.org/educationalMaterial.html).



### NaDEET Director Gives Talk to Rotary Club Windhoek

Rotary Club Windhoek invited, NaDEET Director, Viktoria Keding, to give a talk during their weekly luncheon at NICE restaurant in November. For the past two years, they have sponsored P.J. Tsaitaib Primary School's visit and transport to NaDEET Centre. After a successful talk, the Club has again pledged to sponsor another school group however this time they will fund a new school from the South that has not yet attended our programme. We appreciate this continued support and are excited for this assistance to reach our goal for all schools from the Hardap region to participate in a NaDEET Centre programme. Thank you to Rotary Club Windhoek!

### Partnership Between NaDEET & NATH Improves Understanding of the Desert

In early November the Namibian Academy for Tourism and Hospitality (NATH) Desert Guiding Course took place at NaDEET for the third time. The course, which provides certification in desert guiding, focuses on the Namib dune sea, which is found around NaDEET. During eight days of lectures, walks and presentations even newcomers to the desert became quite knowledgeable of the wonders of the dunes.

Thanks to the ongoing partnership between NaDEET and NATH, two participants from NaDEET, Elizabeth, our Sustainable Living Kitchen Manager and myself, a year-long "Weltwärts" volunteer, were able to take part in the course in exchange for the use of NaDEET Centre for the course. Marc Dürr and Peter Bridgeford, the facilitators of the course, had one message that was crucial to the participants, "Guiding is about passion, go out, stand on the dunes – if you then feel the passion, it is the right job for you".



White Lady Spider

Grown up guides were as eager as small kids to see the dune cricket dig a hole. They were asking as many questions as our kids at the Centre and they were studying the animal and plant identification guides in a way that could only be topped by a kid lost in passion about nature and its wonders. This passion is what the kids and the guides at the end of a week all have in common. Even for experienced guides this week provided surprises. For some it was to find a white lady spider and its predator, the spider wasp, together at the same time, while for others it was to catch and examine a Koch's barking gecko. Most importantly, it was an opportunity to understand the specialized role of every single animal and plant in this highly sensitive ecosystem.

*Samuel Pfenning*

## Continuing to Close the Gap: Improvements and Maintenance at NaDEET

Even in the maintenance department at NaDEET, we try to 'practice what we teach' as much as we can. Sometimes living far out in the desert pushes innovation as there are no stores to buy new supplies.

We had one case where this led to a great recycling idea. After having several bucket showers at NaDEET Centre break due to wear and tear (6 years of kids took their toll), we had run out of the relatively expensive shower heads and desperately needed one more before a group arrived. After trying to fix the broken shower head unsuccessfully, we started to listen to voices saying "just build one yourself." Putting heads, minds and hands together we came up with a great recycled tin shower head. As waste seems to be always present, we are very grateful that this worked out well because we can now find an old tin and make a new shower head as needed. As we continue to build more shower heads, I am sure that we will improve on this design.



NaDEET Centre's 'new' recycled shower heads

We also had a mysterious water problem at the Centre at night as the taps of the solar hot water geysers (where kids fill their buckets for showers) were opened. After several unsuccessful attempts, it was clear that the culprit was an injured male oryx that had learned to open but not close the taps for a good drink. He was probably injured during a territorial fight and pushed away from the normal water sources. As it was an enormous water waste to us, we were grateful when the Reserve allowed putting an end to his suffering.



New solar deck, mural and information signs in front of the NaDEET office.

NaDEET Base got a brand new solar deck in front of the communal kitchen which makes solar cooking much easier for the base staff. This is a great feature especially as visitors now often walk by and see bread baking or a roast in the pot and realise with amazement that "one can actually cook on those things!"

We also installed information boards around our front yard for visitors to read and learn. These direct and explain about sustainable energy technologies that we use at NaDEET and provide general information about their use in Namibia. A new mural about solar cooking painted by Cheryl and Christi, our volunteer art therapists, also now graces the north side of our office building.

A great deal of effort was put into landscaping and improving the general appearance of the base yard and buildings. New succulent plants were planted into our rock gardens and new indigenous trees were planted next to our expanded kitchen drain.

Our vehicles also needed some tender loving care; especially our reliable Nissan 2x4 bakkie. It needed a new fuel pump and carburetor kit and we now hope for another problem free 170 000km. A long-needed, lockable outside storage space for our fuel depot was also finished this year.

*Andreas Keding*

### Welcome to Marlene Keding!

Viktoria and Andreas Keding became proud parents on 12 August 2009 to another girl. Marlene is a healthy and happy baby and has quickly become a favourite member of the NaDEET Team.



Viktoria and Marlene Keding

### THE MOLE FILE Fact No. 8: "2000"



Two thousand is the number of termites that it is believed a golden mole needs to eat on average per night.

NADEET thanks  
our  
on-going  
donors and supporters



Our 1 July-30 November 2009 donors were:

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Brian Atkinson  
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A special thank you to:  
Sarah Bittenbender and Monika Diehl



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# Yes, I would like to support NaDEET!

## NaDEET's Holiday Wish List

After seven years of intense Namib Desert weather, the accommodation area at NaDEET Centre desperately needs to be renovated. Please support this initiative with the following donations:



### Showers:

Renovation of one shower block: N\$2000 (€200, US\$250)

All six shower blocks: N\$12,000 (€1,200, US\$1,500)

### General:

General maintenance and improvements for Centre for 2010: N\$5,000 (€500, US\$675)

### Mattresses:

One mattress for one child:

N\$320 (€32, US\$45)

All fifty mattresses for NaDEET Centre:

N\$16,000 (€1600, US\$2,250)



### Houses:

One house: N\$30,000 (€3,000, US\$4,000)

All six houses: N\$180,000 (€18,000, US\$24,000)

## Donations can be made directly to NaDEET as a cheque or bank transfer to:

### In Namibia:

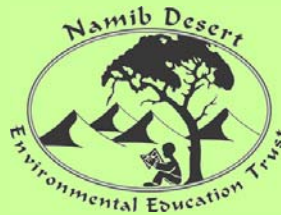
NaDEET

First National Bank Windhoek

Branch Code 280 172

Account No.: 620 451 071 68

SWIFT: FIRNNANX



### In Europe:

NaDEET

Bankhaus Lampe KG

Branch Code: 480 201 51

Account No.: 3013812

SWIFT: LAMPDEDD

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Please send your contact details together with your donation to receive your donation receipt , our bi-annual newsletters and annual report to:

NaDEET, P.O. Box 31017, Pioniers Park, Windhoek, Namibia

Fax: +264-63-693013

E-mail: [admin@nadeet.org](mailto:admin@nadeet.org)

Webpage: [www.nadeet.org](http://www.nadeet.org)

## Sind Sie in Deutschland zu Hause?

Was Sie tun können, um die Arbeit von NaDEET zu unterstützen, wenn Sie Ihren Wohnsitz in Deutschland haben.

Im April 2009 hat Reinhard Keding mit anderen zusammen den gemeinnützigen Verein "Freundschaft mit NaDEET e.V." gegründet. Er dient dem Zweck, Entwicklungshilfe für namibianische Schulkinder durch ideelle und finanzielle Förderung der Arbeit von NaDEET zu leisten. Wir laden Sie ein, Mitglied zu werden für €12 pro Jahr und/oder eine Spende ihrer Wahl zu machen. Alle Mitglieder und Spender bekommen eine steuerabzugsfähige Spendenbescheinigung.

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### Bankverbindungen:

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