
Book review

The Sable Antelope as a Game Ranch Animal published by the Wildlife Group of the South African Veterinary Association, P.O. Box 12900, Onderstepoort, 0110, Republic of South Africa. Pretoria. 1992. Pp. 138. Price (including postage and packaging): R40-00 (RSA), R45-00 (southern Africa), U.S. \$40-00 (elsewhere). No ISBN number.

This is the second publication by the South African Veterinary Association's Wildlife Group on game ranch animals. The first was devoted to the African elephant *Loxodonta africana* (see *Koedoe* 35(1): 130 (1992) for a review). This new volume is devoted to the sable antelope *Hippotragus niger* and the data collated are the proceedings of a symposium on the *Sable Antelope as a Game Ranch Animal* held at Onderstepoort on 24-25 September 1992.

The volume consists of some 25 contributions (seven in Afrikaans) by a number of prominent veterinarians, nature conservationists and mammalogists active in southern Africa with one or other facet pertaining to the survival of this magnificent antelope. I find it a pity that the Afrikaans articles have not been supplied with English abstracts. If this had been done, it would have enhanced the dissemination of information to those not able to read or understand Afrikaans.

A balanced variety of topics are addressed, ranging from the bloubok *Hippotragus leucophaeus* (an extinct relative of the sable and the roan), distributional data, habitat selection, absence of chromosomal variation, management implications to census techniques, parasites and disease, non-surgical recovery of embryos, population dynamics and topics addressed by the Letaba Sable Study Group. Some six contributions are in abstract form only and this tends to lessen the intended impact of the published proceedings. However, any abstract is preferable to no information at all.

I particularly liked Penzhorn's treatment of the bloubok, Nel's article on status, distribution and management of sable in the Transvaal (with a very useful table indicating previous and present distribution patterns in southern Africa), J.G. du Toit's discussion of the sable antelope as a game ranch animal, Viljoen's census techniques for sable and Kriek's translocation and boma management of sable antelope. Anna Verster's contribution on parasites is very useful, as are Meltzer's contributions on laboratory parameters and diseases which occur in sable antelope and R.F. du Toit's report on this species in Zimbabwe. As was indicated earlier on, the origin, aims, functions and achievements of the Letaba Sable Study Group are also placed in perspective by *inter alia* Scholtz, de Beer, Schabort and Ebedes.

All in all, a worthwhile publication. The Wildlife Group of SAVA is to be congratulated on the fact that they had the publication ready for the opening of the symposium. The articles are all provided with proper reference lists while J.G. du Toit and B.L. Penzhorn compiled useful bibliographies on both sable antelope and roan antelope (the former with 145 entries and the latter with 90 entries). Both bibliographies are provided with cross-indexes. If the Wildlife Group of the SAVA continues to bring forth publications of such a useful nature, its existence will be more than justified.

G. de Graaff.