

Another reptile translocation to a national park

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On 4 May 1988 a sub-adult (50 mm snout-vent length, 42 mm tail) Jones' girdled lizard *Cordylus tropidosternum jonesi* was collected in a pile of wood being off-loaded at the new restcamp in the Karoo National Park, Beaufort West. The wood had been transported by lorry from the Kruger National Park. The specimen is deposited in the herpetological collection of the Port Elizabeth Museum (PEM R 4584).

Jones' girdled lizard is a small, arboreal cordylid that shelters under tree bark and in hollow logs. It is common and widely-distributed in the Kruger National Park (Pienaar, Haacke & Jacobsen 1983, *The Reptiles of the Kruger National Park*, 3rd edition. Pretoria: National Parks Board) and adjacent lowveld, being replaced in northern Zimbabwe and East Africa by the nominate race.

Hewitt & Power (1913, *Transactions of the Royal Society of South Africa* 3: 147-176, 1913) reported a similar translocation of the species to Kimberley in association with timber brought to the diamond mining camps. One of us noted recently the ease and danger of the unwitting spread of commensal reptile species into conservation areas (Branch 1978, *Koedoe* 30: 165), and this is confirmed by this additional example. We recommend that should similar shipments of wood be considered essential, then they be fumigated to prevent the translocation of other alien organisms that may potentially have more dangerous consequences.

Striped weasel, *Poecilogale albinucha*, recorded from the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park

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A number of authors (Rautenbach 1971, *Koedoe* 14: 137-143; Rautenbach & Nel 1975, *Koedoe* 18: 195-198; Nel, Rautenbach, Els & De Graaff 1984, *Koedoe* (Suppl.) 27: 195-220; Mills, Nel & Bothma 1984, *Koedoe* (Suppl.) 27:221-227) have listed the mammalian carnivores occurring in the Kalahari Gemsbok National Park. None,

however, record the occurrence of the striped weasel, *Poecilogale albinucha* (Gray, 1864).

On 11 February 1989 an adult striped weasel was observed, as a road casualty, on the Dune Road, which connects the Auob and Nossob River roads. The specimen was photographed (one lodged with the National Parks Board) but not collected (Fig. 1).

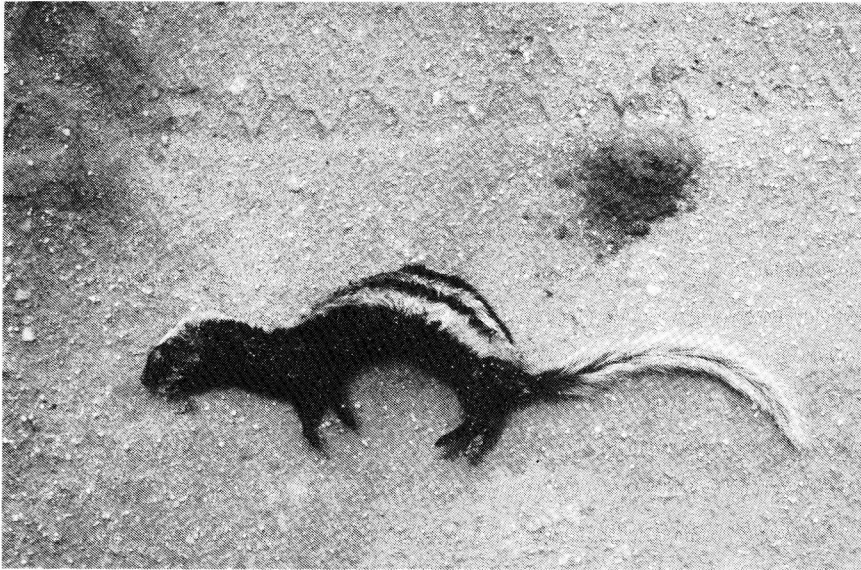


Fig. 1.

Unusually heavy rain had been falling over a period of several days and the sand dunes were well covered by a variety of grass and cucurbit species. Potential weasel prey, in the form of Brants's whistling rat *Parotomys brantsii* (A. Smith, 1834), was particularly abundant in the area.

Due to the nocturnal and secretive nature of this small mustelid it is easily overlooked and it seems likely that they could be widespread throughout most of the dune grassland in the park, as well as adjacent areas of Botswana. Although the striped weasel is widely distributed in the eastern areas of South Africa, records from Namibia and Botswana are scanty. This is, however, almost certainly an indication of low research levels, rather than just rarity.