

A Study of the Nocturnal Behaviour of the Greater Kudu

Fuleni, Nomthuthuzeli

The Greater Kudu, *Tragelaphus strepsiceros*, a large African antelope, which tends to move around its home area at night. In a specific area in South Africa, it had been observed that the pattern of kudu nocturnal movement intersected with a commonly used subsidiary road. The purpose of this project was to observe behavior of kudu in this home area and to predict when the kudu were likely to move across the road with a view to reducing car accidents. An infrared motion detector camera was installed near the subsidiary road in an area which was 1km away from a national road and 10km away from the nearest town. Photographs were taken when kudu moved, the camera also recording date, time and phase of the moon. Footage also revealed aspects of kudu behaviour. Observations revealed that kudu were mostly photographed moving at night during the new moon phase when they were less visible to predators and during the winter nights when they were looking for food near the roads. Female kudu tended to forage in herds whereas male kudu tended to be solitary individuals. The conclusion of the study was that most kudu movements were between 17:00 and 04:00 during the new moon phase. A second conclusion was that grass next to the roads should be mown to reduce kudu caused car accidents.