#BeMoreRhino

Makhosi and Mpilo’s Journey back into the Wild
Makhosi’s Story

Makhosi is a female white rhino who was rescued as a newborn calf at just two days old in 2017. Rangers noticed that Makhosi was not feeding very well from her mother and her weight had dropped dramatically. She would not survive without human intervention and could not be left in the wild. She was transferred to the Zululand Rhino Orphanage.

On route to the orphanage, the team who were transporting Makhosi were approached by the Zulu Royal Family who were interested in the calf. Queen Zwelethini named and blessed Makhosi in the name of the Zulu Royal family. Her name means leader of royalty in the Zulu language.
Mpislo’s Story

MpiLo is a male white rhino, he was rescued in 2018 after his mother was killed by poachers. When MpiLo was found he was desperately in need of food and water.

He was taken to the specialist unit at the Zululand Rhino Orphanage where he could be cared for 24 hours a day.

MpiLo struggled to settle at first because he was desperately missing his mother, but gradually he settled down, started eating and drinking and grew stronger.

MpiLo’s full name is Ncengimpilo and this means ‘the one who fights for life’.
Makhosi and Mpilo became the best of friends at the orphanage and loved spending time together.

At the orphanage they would often be found together, enjoying a mud wallow or having an afternoon snooze.

When Makhosi and Mpilo first came to the orphanage they would be given milk to drink however as they grew stronger and older they were given less and less milk just like human babies, this is called weaning.

Eventually they stopped having milk but they still enjoy eating lucerne and rhino pellets.
Zululand Rhino Orphanage care for rhino orphans as well as two hippos. The goal of the orphanage is to release all the orphans back into the wild.

As Makhosi and Mpilo became older and stronger their friendship grew.

Makhosi is a year older than Mpilo and at 3 years old she could have been released into the wild. However due to their very close friendship it was agreed to wait a year so that they could take their next steps into the wild together.

This year Makhosi and Mpilo embarked on an adventure together, returning to live in the wild.

Before this the orphanage had released two other rhinos orphans back into the wild, this would make four rhinos that had been rewilded.
Why are the rhinos returned to the wild?

With so many rhinos being lost to poachers, over 7,000 in the last ten years, every rhino matters in the fight to save this iconic species.

By saving the rhino orphans and caring for them 24 hours a day, the Orphanage can support and aid their recovery. As they grow big and strong they can be prepared for returning to the wild.

Once back in the wild they can live the life they deserve back in the wild.

As they grow older and mature they might have their own rhino babies and help to increase the population of rhinos.

In trying to conserve rhinos every rhino counts and we have to do all we can to protect every individual rhino just like Makhosi and Mpilo.