



**SNARE FREE**  
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Cape of Good Hope



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**For immediate issue**

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# **MOVE TO PROTECT WILDLIFE FROM SNARES IN THE WESTERN CAPE**

## **Organisations launch collaborative Snare Free initiative**

CAPE TOWN, 1 August 2023 – Several leading conservation, animal welfare and volunteer organisations have joined forces to launch a project aimed at providing a coordinated response to snared wildlife incidents, as well as improved training, data collection and awareness about snaring in the Western Cape.

The illegal practice of setting snares to hunt animals is a serious and widespread problem in the Western Cape. A snare is a simple piece of wire, cable, rope, or nylon tied into a noose. The noose is then anchored and positioned in a way to catch animals either by the foot, head, or body.

Snares are often set to catch game meat species like small antelope and porcupine, but are indiscriminate and take a huge toll on the entire ecosystem, also impacting predators like caracals and leopards. Preliminary research suggests that bushmeat is the main motivation for setting snares in the Western Cape, although the illegal trade in animal parts is also an important factor.

The method is exceedingly wasteful as set snares are often not checked, resulting in captured animals dying and simply rotting away. Caught animals are sometimes able to break the snare off from its anchor, following prolonged struggle to escape, leaving the animal severely hurt or maimed. Snaring can also have negative consequences for people, as consuming bushmeat may cause serious illness, and pets and livestock may be trapped in snares.

Increasing incidents of animals discovered alive in snares prompted the Cape Leopard Trust (CLT) to initiate the development of a coordinated response strategy to ensure quick and efficient reaction to snaring incidents through a network of key partner organisations. Together with [CapeNature](#), [Kogelberg Biosphere](#), [Wildlife Forensic Academy](#) and the [Cape of Good Hope SPCA](#), the [Cape Leopard Trust](#) has developed the Western Cape Snare Response Plan – the first ever comprehensive snare response plan for the region.

On 1 August 2023, this response plan was officially launched as a fundamental component of the overarching 'Snare Free' initiative. The launch was held at the Old Mutual Conference Centre at Kirstenbosch Botanical Gardens and attended by policy makers from provincial government and district municipalities, stakeholders from several environmental organisations, nature reserves and conservancies, as well as various media, and project supporters.

Cape Leopard Trust Research & Conservation Director Katy Williams said: "The launch is the culmination of twelve months of work by the task team to design and develop Snare Free as an integrated project with its own logo, a dedicated website, an email address, and a hotline phone number."

“It is our hope that the Snare Free project model will be shared widely, as we envision that this type of initiative will be replicable elsewhere.” she added.

Snare Free consists of several components, including a response plan with a reporting hotline and dedicated support vehicle, and a suite of resources to share with landowners and stakeholders to raise awareness and education. In addition, the initiative aims to streamline reporting and improve training and data collection, alongside a social science research project working with communities to better understand the drivers and potential solutions to snaring.

Helen Turnbull, Cape Leopard Trust CEO commented: “Snare Free is merely a first step in a coordinated effort to investigate and respond to the increasing snaring threat, and a lot of work still lies ahead as the plan evolves. Given the number of snares uncovered in targeted areas, we are certain this is just the tip of the iceberg. This will be a time of learning for the partners, but it is also an exciting opportunity for us to step up as a collective and take positive action.”

The Snare Free project is supported by the [International Fund for Animal Welfare](#) and the Rolf-Stephan Nussbaum Foundation. The launch event was graciously supported by ORMS Print Room & Framing, Dish Food & Social, Kitchen Gypsies, Mountain Falls Mineral Water, Bos Ice Tea, Leopard’s Leap Wines, Regina Mundi Global Advisors, Down to the Wire and SANBI.

### **CALLS TO ACTION**

If you discover a live wild animal caught in a snare in the Western Cape, call the Snare Free hotline for assistance on **076 127 8485**.

Keep your distance from the animal, keep noise to a minimum, and advise other people to refrain from entering the area. Have the following information available for the hotline operator:

- Location (GPS coordinates/pin preferable)
- Animal species/description (if known)
- Your contact number

If you discover empty snares or a dead animal caught in a snare, please take a photo and report it to the Cape Leopard Trust’s online Data Portal ([app.capeleopard.org.za](http://app.capeleopard.org.za)). You will need to provide the location and a photograph. Then carefully remove and dispose of the snare/s responsibly to ensure that they cannot be used again.

Visit [snarefree.co.za](http://snarefree.co.za) for more information and resources.

### **Contact**

Further information about Snare Free and the Western Cape Snare Response Protocol: [info@snarefree.co.za](mailto:info@snarefree.co.za)

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