



## VISIT TO NUWEJAARS SMA AND ELIM

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I must be the luckiest girl alive to go on a game drive with Whale Coast Conservation. I woke up at 5 am on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2017 and it was a wet and soggy morning. Mum and I drove to Elim, a small historic town, accompanied by WCC. I loved the view of the hills and mountains waking up at sunrise. It was raining most of the way but it looked pretty as the droplets shimmered in the sun.



Thankfully, it wasn't raining at our destination: Nuwejaars Wetland Special Management Area.



Eugene and Erica are the managers and they gave us a presentation about their work with the farmers in the area to protect and maintain the wetlands.

Invasive plants and trees have to be removed by cutting and burning them. We were shown on a map how large the Area is, including the rivers and vleis. The animals that are thriving in the wetlands are: hippo, buffalo, eland, bontebok and springbok. My favourite part of the talk was about The Quagga Project where they are trying to bring back the Quaggas by breeding them. Finally, I was most excited when we got to ride in a minibus across the veld.



We spotted many birds: African Fish Eagle, Pipit, Plover, Bustard, Lark, Crane, Blue crane, Guinea fowls, Sacred Ibis, Ostrich, Crow, Stonechat (what an unusual name), egret, Fiscal Shrike, Black Shouldered Kite, Long billed Agulhas Lark, Thick billed Agulhas Lark, Common Breasted Long Claw and Francolin. PHEW!!!!



My favourite sighting was the African Fish Eagle. I zoomed in on the magnificent bird with my camera. Click, Click!



At the Buffalo Camp, the small herd of buffalo interrogated me with their stares. A huge female...no... a vast female (probably with a calf) was sassing me around from the other side of the fence. Thank goodness it was an electric fence.



After we returned from the drive, we went into Elim town and we stopped and ate homemade samp and beans soup, homemade bread, and homemade milk tart at a homely coffee shop called Waterfront Coffee Shop (it was nowhere near the ocean.)



Aunty Chrissie is the motherly owner of the shop. She told us about the history of Elim because she has lived there all her life.



After lunch we went for a short walk around the town. I had taken photos on my camera and the batteries had run down, so Mum let me use her cellphone, yesssssssss .



I felt really tired after the long day, but I was ... satisfied. Thanks again Whale Coast Conservation!