GONDWANA KALAHARI PARK GAME COUNT 2024

The Gondwana Kalahari Park's annual game count was conducted on 29 June 2024. Windhoek-based staff, Kalahari Anib Lodge staff and guests participated in the count.
The most notable results from this year's count revealed a decrease in springbok and giraffe numbers while gemsbok and blue wildebeest numbers increased.
Gemsbok estimated number is 151 (124 in 2023, with a 22% population increase), springbok estimate stands at 812 (1285 in 2023, with a 37% decrease), wildebeest estimate at 59 (53 in 2023, with an 11% increase), eland estimate at 38 (38 in 2023, population has remained stable) and zebra estimate at 21 (31 in 2023, with a 33% decrease). The total animal population stands at 1276 animals in 2024, which is a 26% decrease from 2023 (1723 in 2023).
With only 58 mm rainfall received this year, following on 116 mm received in 2023, the carrying capacity of the park has dropped from 11.8kg/ha to 4.7kg/ha (more than halved). This drop in carrying capacity calls for a decrease in the stocking rate, which we'll have to manage in the coming months with game take-offs and supplement feeding.

Count Methodology

The purpose of the game count is to determine the density and distribution of game, using a combination of road strip census and game distribution maps. This information is then used to get the total estimate number of game in each area.

Road-Strip count:

During the game count, 5 count routes are driven and the animals on each side of the road are counted. The number of animals that were recorded and the total distance travelled on that route are then used to calculate the population estimates.

Game Distribution Maps

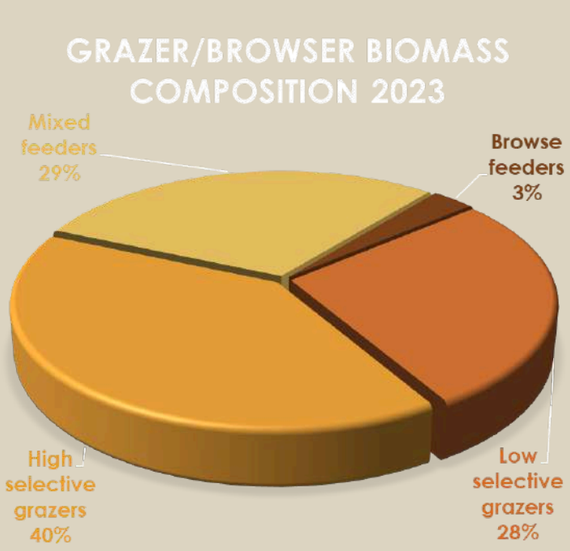
Each route is supplied with a map containing a monad grid, which is used to determine and show the distribution of game in the various zones of the count.

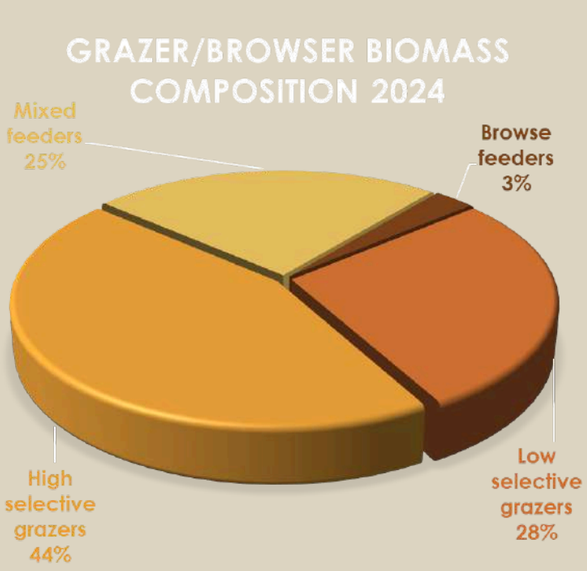
Objectives of the Game Count

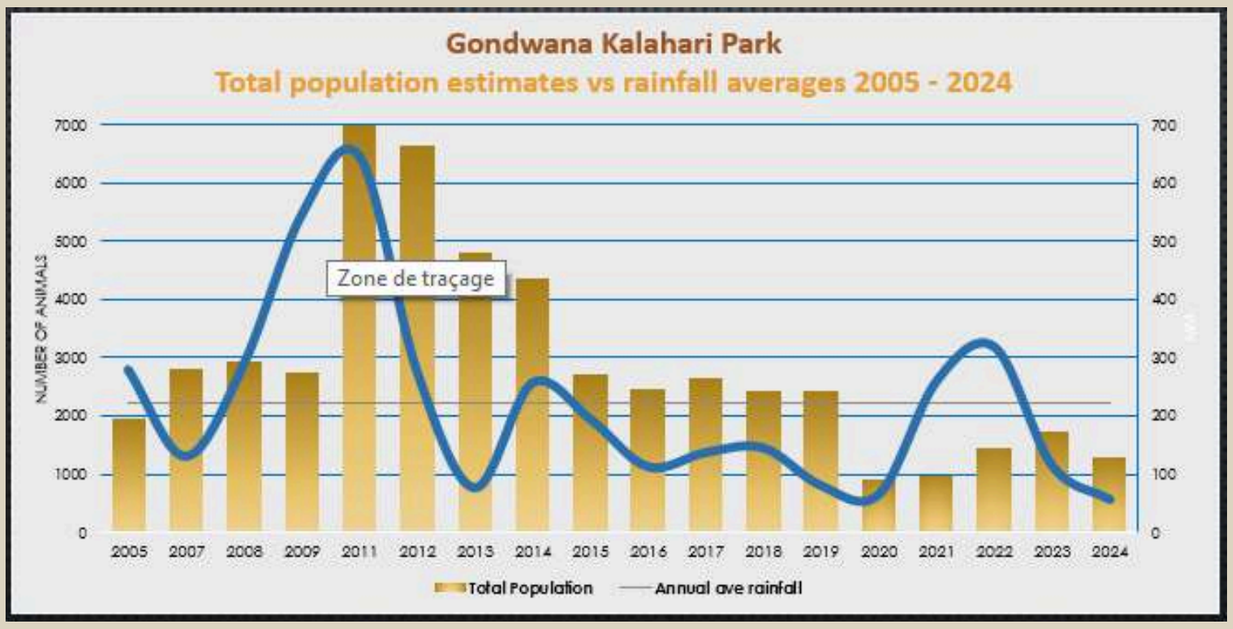
1. Determine total game population and biomass estimates, where the population estimate for individual species in the entire count area is derived from the actual number of animals seen during the count. Additionally, area correction-factors are applied to these totals. The biomass estimates are important for managing habitat conditions and inert-species competition.
2. Determine wildlife density and distribution, to aid in resource management purposes. This gives a better reflection of where the animals are and how densely populated each count zone is.
3. Determine population changes, where the total number of game species and individuals counted comparative to numbers of historical counts illustrates the population changes throughout species.

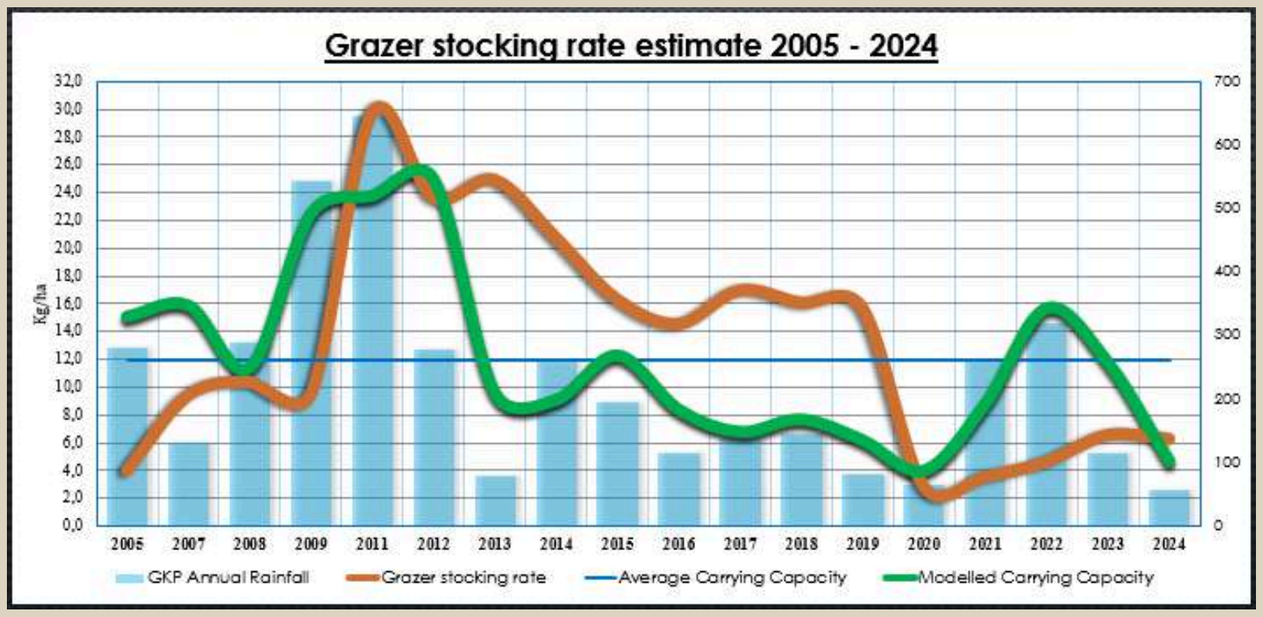
Total estimated numbers of game 2023 vs 2024

Species	Ave No. Counted 2023	Ave No. Counted 2024
Gemsbok	80	92
Springbok	715	338
P Zebra	30	23
Blue Wildebeest	40	7
Eland *	37	25
Ostrich	42	40
Kudu	15	16
Giraffe *	25	30
Steenbok	7	8
Total	**989**	**577**









Species population estimate change 2016 - 2024

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	
Gemsbok	172	279	255	180	24	55	56	124	151	22%
Springbok	1478	1519	1317	1032	683	741	1188	1285	812	-37%
P Zebra *	72	80	89	*90*	7	25	30	31	*21*	-33%
Blue Wildebeest *	222	230	247	*220*	7	35	43	53	*59*	11%
Red Hartebeest *	109	121	118	*120*	0	0	0	0	0	
Eland *	*92*	*100*	*88*	*90*	18	18	24	38	*38*	1%
Ostrich	219	228	123	421	58	60	39	63	69	11%
Kudu	70	67	79	87	28	32	24	37	35	-3%
Giraffe *	*13*	*15*	*16*	*18*	22	23	25	30	*25*	-17%
Steenbok	251	144	101	168	53	18	21	73	65	-11%
Total	**2697**	**2782**	**2433**	**2426**	**899**	**1007**	**1450**	**1733**	**1276**	-26%
Total population change	-0.3%	3.2%	-12.5%	-0.3%	-62.9%	12.0%	43.9%	19.5%	-26.3%