

20.1.2021 Torra Bay

Springbokwasser is just a 30 minutes' drive from our camp. This little village is also the entry gate to the Skeleton Coast Park. As usual we have to register and pay the park entry fees. The lady at the check-in is very friendly and reminds very much of the young Whoopie Goldberg.



Torra Bay is 50 km away from the gate. Soon we reach the sea and feel the nice cool breeze.



The campsite in Torra Bay is managed by the state owned NWR (Namibia Wildlife Resorts) and is only open for two months per year from 1st December until 31st January. Mainly keen fishermen are here, they all have an impressive selection of fishing rods standing around their tents or attached to their cars. At the camp shop we can purchase the fishing permit and also bait. We settle down and Werner gets his fishing gear ready; he also has to find out about the local fishing conditions. Usually, the fishermen are very approachable and don't hesitate to give advice.

In the afternoon we have to break down our camp again as we find out that one has to drive to the good angling spots. In front of the campsite is a sand bank which makes fishing difficult. Like the locals we fix our rod to the front bumper of the truck and drive around with it. At least we have a fish for dinner.



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The next morning, fishing is not very successful and we hear that Sardines are obviously a better bait than mussels. Well, every fisherman has a different opinion. The jackals are patrolling the beach and look for fish or left behind bait, which is here at the coast their main food source.



In the evening we try our luck with Sardines instead of mussels and – are successful. Soon we have secured a bigger dinner.



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Only the early worm catches the fish, so we set our alarm for 6:00 a.m. and return to the same spot which brought us luck yesterday evening. Good that we got up so early, after 8.30 a.m. not a single fish is biting anymore on the bait.



After this successful fishing trip our fridge is filled with fish, we drive back inland. Today we return to the same camping spot where we already stopped on the way to the park.



23.1.2021 Huab River

Our next destination is the Huab River in the Desolation Valley, where we want to look out for desert elephants. From the C39 a 4x4 track leads south which is a short cut. We are adventurous and try out whether this track is drivable. Some parts are very rocky and we take our time, not to risk a side wall damage to our tires again. As the name suggests, the Desolation Valley is very remote, far from any civilization. It could take days until someone passes through this valley, in case we would need help.





We drive through desert landscape in all shades of brown, the entire day it stays overcast. Welwitschia and Namib Tsamma Melons grow here. The melons are sometimes the key to survival for the inhabitants of the desert, for animals and for humans alike, i.e. for the San men while on the hunt. In the afternoon finally the Desolation Valley opens up in front of us. The valley is huge and much larger than we expected.



In the distance we see a bright green spot glowing very intense. What could this be? Such an intensive green color has become an unusual sight for our eyes. Once we come closer, we find out that it is reed. Here, the underground water of the Huab river is forced to the surface as solid underground rocks block the water flow. Plenty of animal tracks lead through the reed, but we cannot detect any animals in the high grass.



We choose this spot, where the dry river bed suddenly becomes green as our camp for the night. The view from our elevated position is spectacular.



We enjoy the sight from our elevated position. A bit of drizzling rain falls in the evening; one feels more like being in Iceland than in Africa.



A few sand grouse keep us company.



24.1.2021 Vom Huab zum Aba-Huab

The cloud cover from yesterday has shifted away, we drive along the Huab Riverbed through the Desolation Valley. Out here we are again very careful about sharp rocks and rather remove a few dangerous looking ones by hand. A few times we pass elephant dung, but usually they are already quite old.



The Huab has created a phantastic looking green belt winding through the otherwise arid landscape. Up here on the cliff would also be a One-Million-Dollar-View-Campsite, we have to remember this spot for our next visit. Being so exposed can be very windy, but today the weather is good and it is relatively calm. After a break and good look around, we continue our drive along the Huab riverbed.



Also this area must have received some rain as the Huab river starts to run water. This means we cannot follow the normal track in the dry riverbed anymore, but have to cross the river. This new track is not on our navigation system anymore. The track and curves are getting narrower, let's hope there is a way through for us and we are not forced to turn around.





Slowly and carefully, we continue to drive further, as the track is getting wetter and wetter. We drive over very fine layers of clay which would - under wet conditions - immediately block up our tire threads and we would have no more grip. Was it a good idea to take this track? We haven't even finished this thought when we start to drift sideways towards the wet riverbed.



Once we come to a standstill, we get out of the truck. Dewi with wobbly legs due to the shock. The soil is very slippery, like on ice. We scout the riverbed and the hinterland above it to find the best option for us. Our plan is to back-track to be able to get out of the riverbed, then drive through the bushes until we reach a point not too steep where we can return into the riverbed. After all, we have to follow the riverbed to get out of here. It is so slippery, that even the elephants have slipped on the soil.



Everything works out as planned, we create a new track above the riverbed driving through the bushes and back into the riverbed. Now we are even more careful, before each curve or sections of darker hence wetter soil we get out of the truck and check the ground and where the track leads to. After an hour we have made it and are out of the riverbed.



Luckily, we left the wet riverbed behind us, but now we have to make our way again through sharp rocks. Our travel speed remains very slow. We pass the ruins of the former farmhouse “Slangpos”. It is hard to comprehend how one would seriously consider to settle here. We would love to know more about the story and history of the farmhouse and its inhabitants. The waterhole behind the farmhouse is filled with water from a spring, a few remains of the windmill are still standing. The elephants have taken over this waterhole, there are many elephant tracks leading to the water, but who knows if they would come today if we wait here.



The view is certainly one reason to build a house here...



The track is passing a few very interesting rock formations. Namibia definitely is a dream destination for any geologist. We see quite a few firepits, it seems at every nice corner someone has set up camp already.



The track is getting sandier again and we reach the riverbed of the Aba-Huab river. The wind is creating some large sand spouts which are almost as fast as we are.



We start to look out for a good camping spot. As we search for a place with the most shade we spot two desert elephants. Finally! In a safe distance we set up camp and start collecting firewood while always keeping an eye on our grey neighbors. Soon they start to move and walk straight towards us! We guess they are as curious about us as

we are about them. The leading elephant cow has a good look at us and then the two pass our camp. Meanwhile we have taken shelter in our truck and watch them from our roof top window. What a nice experience, this is what we came for.



All in all, we were on the road for the entire day, had to master some challenges and have covered less than 40 km distance. African roads... Today we have definitely earned our cold sundowner beer.

