

7.1.2022 Messum Crater

It is another beautiful morning as we continue our drive through the Ugab dry riverbed without any major issues.



Soon we have to exit the riverbed, drive around the Brandberg mountain massif on the western side and set course for Messum Crater. The track is getting very rocky again but fortunately we do not encounter another hair rising pass.





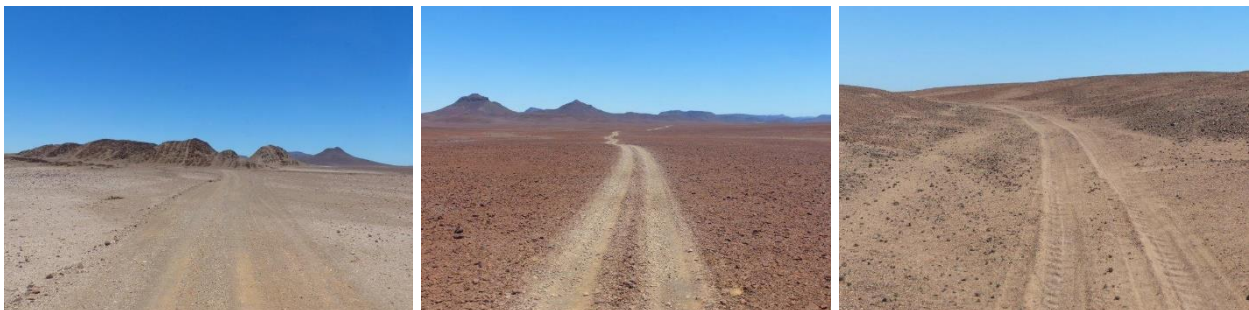
In the middle of nowhere we discover a tented camp, in which two men are cutting up meat and hanging it up to dry. They can't be poachers as poachers would definitely hide somewhere much better. The camp looks like the typical setup of anti-poaching units and they maybe got supply of fresh meat which they now must dry in order to make it durable. But we haven't seen many marks of animals, who would need protection. We would have loved to find out more, but remain with only unanswered questions and many assumptions.



Further down we discover a water hole. The windmill pump looks well maintained and is still working. The waterhole however is not frequented very well, there are too few animals around.



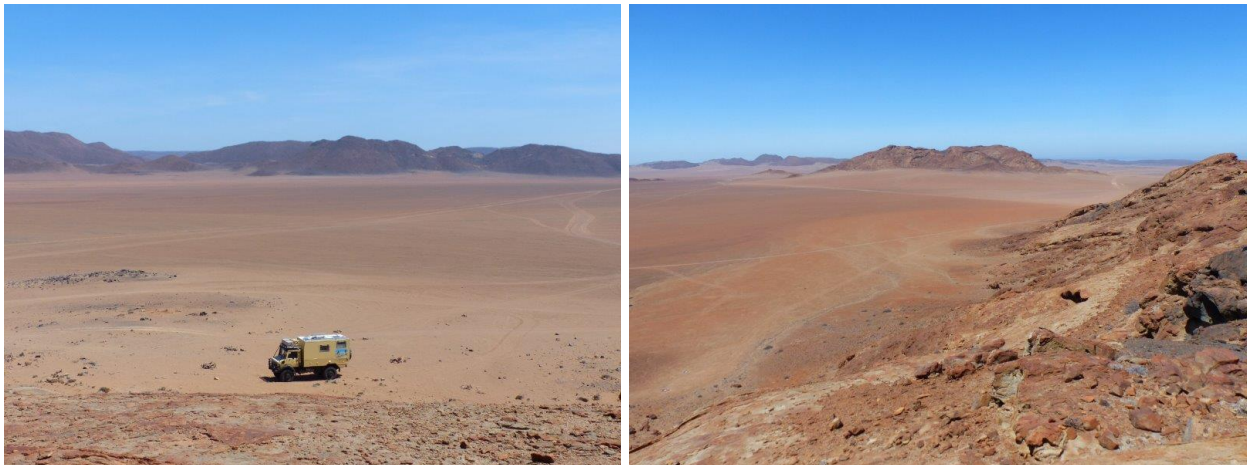
Soon after we head towards the Messum Crater, this time we approach the crater from the north. The tracks are in a bad shape, heavily corrugated and everything including us is shaken well and thoroughly. We park at the same camping spot where we stayed last year. Unfortunately, a strong and cold wind blows and we neither can sit outside nor set up a barbie. This is very unexpected, we assumed in the crater the wind would be calmer.





8.1.2022 Hooringbaai

We climb around the large rocks one last time before heading to the coast through the Messum dry riverbed.



We pass through a field of huge Welwitschias and the Overhanging Rocks, then the river valley widens and we are out of the Messum riverbed. These very distinctive rock formations must be a paradise for geologist. We however are rather clueless and can only make wild assumptions about how these rock formations have been formed.





Since it has been mostly very windy inland, we expect it to be much worse at the coast and are mentally prepared for coastal storms. However, in contrary, no spray is blown from the waves and the sun is shining at the beach. Unfortunately, at the NWR managed campsite „Mile108“ we can't purchase a fishing permit, which means that we have to drive to Hentiesbay. The local caretaker does not even know when low or high tide is, despite living next to ocean. But it shouldn't come as a surprise, he is the whole time only looking at his mobile phone.



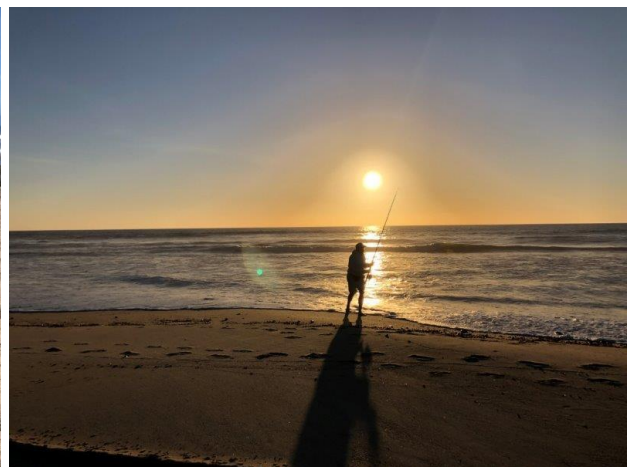
9.1.2022 Hentiesbay

The Ministry of Fisheries in Hentiesbay issues fishing permits even on a Sunday. The fishing permits are nowadays printed out by computer and are no longer handwritten, all anglers and their permits are recorded in the system. The responsible officer looks first into his computer, then looks at Werner and says very sternly that there is still an outstanding fine for using illegal bait. For a second it all goes quiet, until the officer bursts out laughing blaringly. We bet he is playing this prank on every innocent angler requiring a fishing permit.



Thereafter we return north of Hentiesbay to the more productive angling spots. The fishing bays carry names like Hooringbay, Adri se Gat, Predikants Gat, Canopy, Boesmangrafte and many more.

The weather at the beach is beautiful, the dolphins are swimming past, flamingos are flying gracefully along the coastline. A small single engine aircraft is flying so low that he almost touches the tip of the rods. Only the many seal carcasses scattered all over the beach are disturbing this idyllic scenery. The dead seals of mixed age are swept onto the beach and are eaten by seagulls, hyenas and jackals or are just decomposing slowly. The mortality rate of seals of the nearby seal colony of Cape Cross stands at 30%. Werner catches its first Elephant Fish, which has tasty white and firm meat.



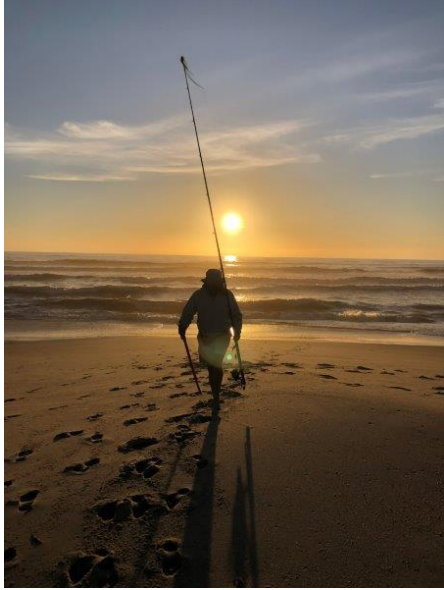
We have to drive back to Hentiesbay one more time to stock up on fresh supplies and



bait in Hentjesbay. At this opportunity we visit „Excalibur Tackle“. Jeri is by profession manufacturing fishing rods and Werner lets him check his fishing rod. He also teaches Werner better casting technics in order to be able to cast out further. What a sight: Casting exercises in the middle of the desert and this just opposite of Jeri’s shop.

Afterwards we drive again back north to the fishing spots. As Werner catches the first Silver Kob (Kabeljou) and not much later we enjoy the freshest Sashimi.





Some days there are so many anglers at the beach that the rods stand almost back to back. Especially, when the local anglers report in their chat groups that the fish are running, the anglers flock to the beach and soon there is a forest of rods. This results in quite a few entangled lines. Some anglers do not respect the spot another has already occupied and cast quite impolitely just in-between. Semi-commercial anglers from HAFA („Hanganeni Artisanal Fishing Association“) are fishing here regularly as well. They sell their catch to the fish factory to make a little extra money. Some retirees also earn a bit by selling their fish to the factory.



Some anglers come with a hired „Fishing Butler“ who baits the hooks and casts the rods for the more lazy anglers. The latter then only have to hold the rod and wheel in the fish, without getting dirty fingers or having to cast far.



18.1.2022 Henties Bay

In the morning we notice very clear hyena footmarks. According to her marks, she has been strolling a very long distance along the beach, most likely in search of food. The signs along the road are warning for a reason, that hyenas are present in this area.



Back in Hentiesbay we want to visit our favorite coffee shop „Misty Bay Cafe“, but unfortunately it is closed. However, at the parking place in front of the café we bump into Francine und David, whom we spent Christmas with. Namibia is a village...



While we prepare our own coffee in the cabin, we hear a hissing sound. Unassumingly, we think these are cicadas partying after the rain. But not much later a passing pedestrian informs us that our tire is losing air! It turns out, that the problem is an old side wall damage which was patched up already. There is no truck tire repair shop in Hentiesbay and we have to drive with the damaged tire to Swakopmund to get it fixed at "Trentyre". Luckily, we can inflate the tire with our build-in system.



In Swakopmund we meet again Chris and Detlef from „Team Red Bull“ and enjoy a beautiful sundowner together just before the weather changes. We also meet the two bikers Mike and Stefan, who have of all items to fix on a bike chosen to mount a barbeque.

