

EXTRAORDINARY JUMPING ABILITY OF THE RED FOREST DUIKER *CEPHALOPHUS NATALENSIS*

V. DE VOS

Division of Research and Information

Private Bag X402

Skukuza

1350

While catching game in the northeastern coastal area of Natal near False Bay, Lake St. Lucia, Republic of South Africa, we were forced to keep red forest duiker *Cephalophus natalensis* in a holding corral for short periods before translocation commenced. For this purpose small corrals were constructed with the aid of woven plastic sheeting. Initially they were made 1,6 m high. When two adult (♂ and ♀) red duiker, however, cleared the corral fence and escaped immediately after being released, the sides were raised to 2,3 m. To our astonishment, however, two adults (♂ and ♀ again) that were placed inside promptly also escaped by jumping up, hooking their forelegs over the upper border of the sheet and sliding over.

The red duiker's jumping abilities were further admirably demonstrated on a few occasions when it was witnessed how easily they cleared 1,3 m high drop nets which were placed in position during the actual catching operations.

If taken into account that the adult red forest duiker weighs only 12 kg-14 kg and is about 30 cm at the shoulder (Astley Maberley 1963, *The game animals of southern Africa*) the jumping feats as described, must be considered as truly remarkable. For its size this animal must be considered one of the most prolific jumpers of all ungulates.