

Newsletter – June 2018

A few weeks ago I read a column in the Daily Maverick – an eNewspaper with a significant circulation in South Africa – written by an ardent animal rightist, Ian Michler. It was a variation of the same tired propaganda he has been spouting for over 20 years, but what amazed me was his confession that he and his fellow travellers had no plan of any kind to substitute for the benefits that hunting has brought to conservation all around the world and to South Africa, in particular, over the last 60 years or so. I was compelled to reply to his arrant nonsense and followed it up a few days later with an article on Theodore Roosevelt, who he also denigrated in the same article. Much to my surprise, both my articles were carried unchanged by the Daily Maverick and I have attached them to my blog for your perusal and comment.

<https://www.peterflack.co.za/hunting-facts-versus-animal-rights-fiction/>

<https://www.peterflack.co.za/theodore-roosevelt-killer-or-conservationist/>

This week, another animal rightist, Don Pinnock, came out with an inflammatory article on a Kruger Park lion, which he said was “probably” called Skye, “probably” lured out of the park by an American hunter, who shot and killed it after paying “an estimated R1 million” for the privilege. It was a blatant attempt to recreate another Cecil incident that the animal rightists had been so successful with previously and again I wrote a column which was published by the Daily Maverick which showed how false every accusation was that Pinnock had made. I also attach this article on my blog.

<https://www.peterflack.co.za/kruger-park-lions/>

The Umbabat Private Nature Reserve where the hunt took place issued a comprehensive, factual, three page statement to the

media which comprehensively unpacked each of Pinnock's baseless allegations and showed each to be devoid of any truth whatsoever but no media outlet of which I am aware published it. I have attached a copy on my blog for those interested.

<https://www.peterflack.co.za/umbabat-private-nature-reserve-media-statement/>

What are the lessons, if any, that can be learnt from the above:

1. Michler has been writing the same unadulterated rubbish for over 20 years and, despite being contradicted in print by such conservation heavy weights as Dr. John Hanks, previously CEO of both WWF Southern Africa and Peace Parks Foundation and Dr. John Ledger, the previous long standing CEO of the Endangered Wildlife Trust, he merely ignored their accurate, fact based criticisms and continued to spout the same tired drivel.
2. In other words, there can be no point in trying to engage with people like him. It is a waste of time and effort in the mistaken belief that, if people like him were better informed, they might ameliorate their criticisms of hunting led conservation. In my humble opinion, they could not care less about the facts or conservation. Their mission is to stop the use of animals whether wild or tame and hunting is the route they have chosen because they see it as an easy target.
3. People like Pinnock are quite happy to accuse sound conservation organisations like the Umbabat Private Nature Reserve of unethical if not illegal conduct on the basis of unfounded rumour, without giving them an opportunity to reply to these false allegations before the article is published.
4. I believe the Michlers and Pinnocks of this world will not stop their antics unless forced to do so by someone suing them for the damage they cause and the sooner this happens the better.