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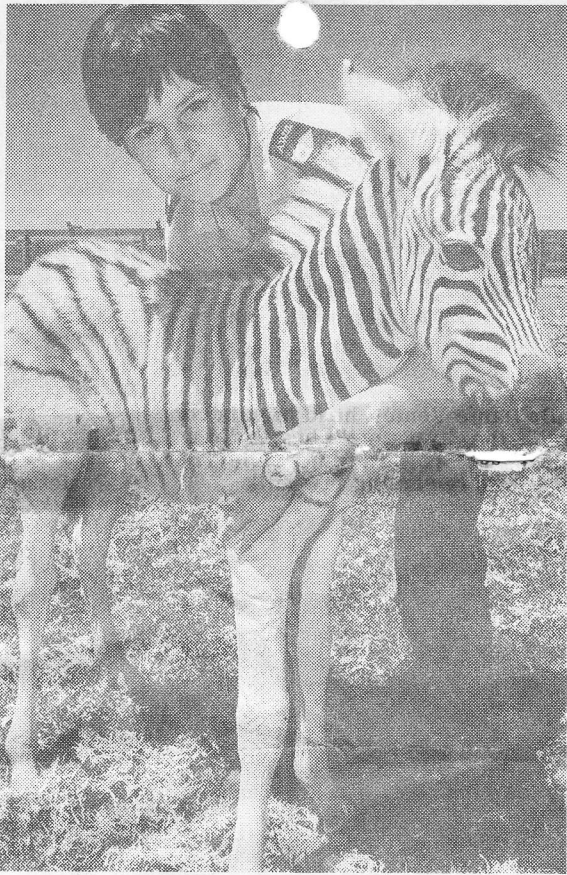
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MOTHERLESS ... An orphaned Quagga Breeding Project zebra foal is comforted by Animal Welfare nurse Miss Marlene Hirs-korm.

Picture: BENNY GOOL

'Eland kills zebra': Foal orphaned

Staff Reporter

A ZEBRA foal in the Quagga Breeding Project was orphaned soon after birth this week when her mother was gored to death — probably by a young eland bull — at Groote Schuur Estate.

The three-day-old foal was taken to the Animal Welfare Society in Philippi yesterday where staff are hoping a lactating mare will "adopt" her and allow her to suckle.

But Animal Welfare nurse Miss Marlene Hirs-korm said the mare was not yet interested in the zebra foal because she has her own foal.

"But the foal is due to be weaned soon and we hope the mare will then let her suckle," she said.

"His chances of survival are slim," she added, saying that in the meantime she was feeding the zebra foal on milk formula.

The zebra foal has the characteristic pale hind-quarters of the quagga. It was born to a plains zebra in the project to "recreate" the quagga, which was hunted to extinction last century.

Mr Reinhold Rau, SA Museum taxidermist and head of the Quagga Breeding Project, said yesterday he assumed the mare "was killed by a young eland bull who must have come too close to her foal".

"It is tragic because she was our best mare, whose markings were closest to the extinct quagga. But we are very hopeful he will survive," Mr Rau said.

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