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Issue 08

CONSERVATION

The Livingstone lion

By Peter Roberts

The appearance of a wild lion on the outskirts of Livingstone in Zambia *(see story on page 32)* made big news for several reasons. Not only was he the first wild lion to been reported in the immediate area for some 30 years, and he made the mistake of claiming domestic livestock as fair game (never good for local public relations if you are lion), but his subsequent capture revealed an amazing story. This lion was a Zambezi traveller!

It was only after the lion was successfully captured that wildlife officials discovered he was the proud owner of a GPS research collar. Enquiries revealed that the collar had been fitted by lion researchers in Hwange National Park, Zimbabwe, and somehow he must have crossed the Zambezi River to reach the north bank.

Through the collar GPS data and the Hwange Lion Research Project's valuable work over many years we are lucky enough to have a huge amount of information about our travelling lion's history. Jane Hunt, who has dedicated the last 10 years of her life to studying lions in Hwange, first saw this lion when he was a two month old cub. He is now about 9 ½ years old, the offspring of a male lion who dominated the Makalolo area of Hwange National Park for many years, and featured in a National Geographic documentary film 'Lion's behaving badly.' Indeed this specific lion is also featured in that film.



Dynamite, the male lion who became a Zambezi Traveller, on his home patch in Hwange in a photograph taken last year. PHOTO: MARLEEN POST

The story of an amazing Zambezi traveller

"He's a famous lion," said Jane "now even more so because of his travels!"

Known as Dynamite, after the pan in Hwange where he was first collared by researchers, we now know he crossed the Zambezi more than 50 kilometres downstream of the Victoria Falls. Not only does the river provide a formidable obstacle, the crossing is even more incredible as lions are not renowned swimmers and will often avoid water.

His plight highlights the problems lions face in an increasingly populated Africa, most significantly loss of habitat with suitable prey species and subsequent conflict with humans, as well as raising many issues relating to wider lion conservation and spotlighting the work of scientific researchers studying Africa's increasingly pressured wildlife. See our special feature on page 16 for full details of his amazing journey and more on lion conservation and the work of the Hwange Lion Research team.

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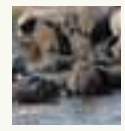
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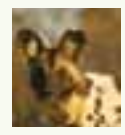
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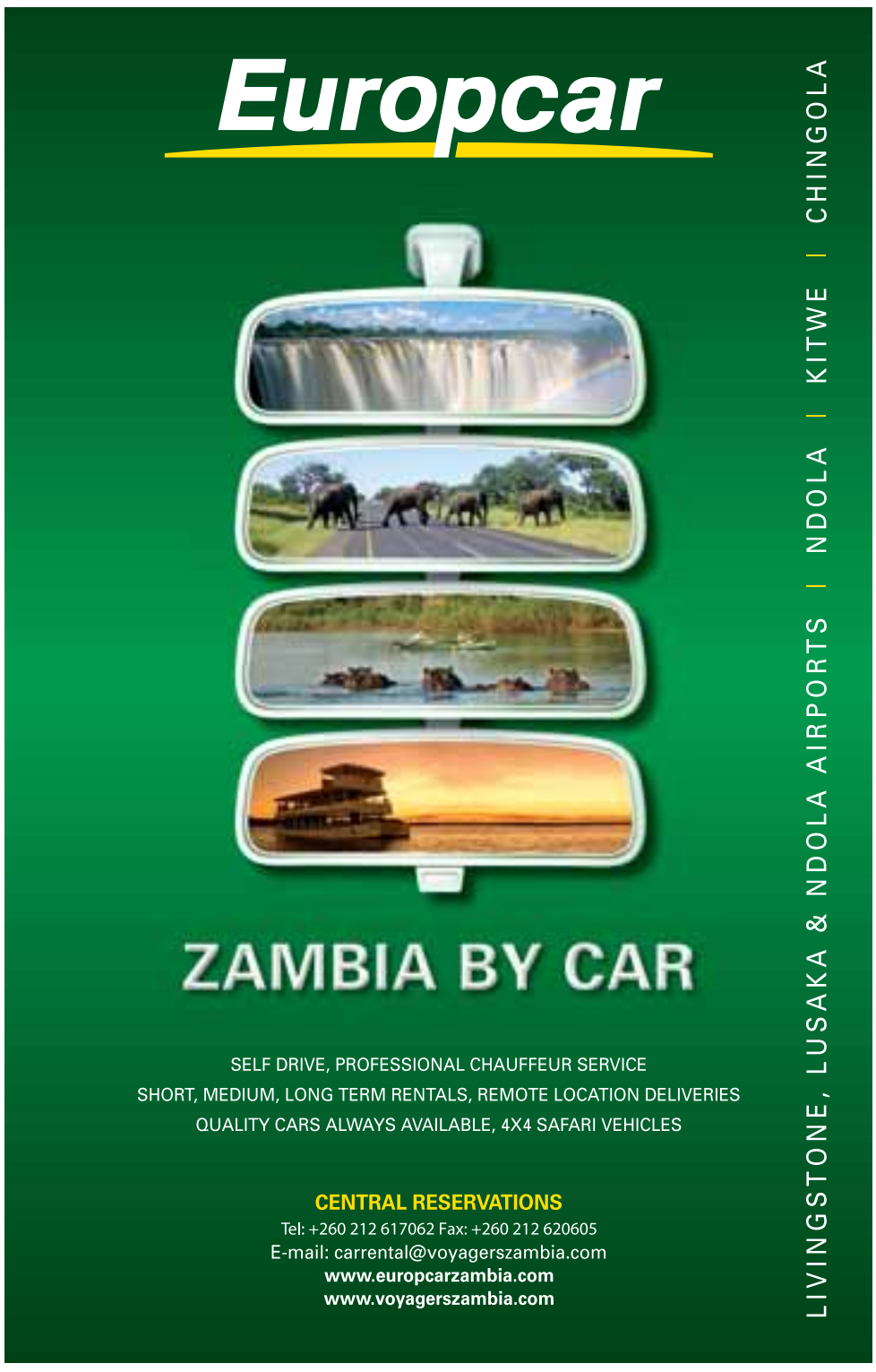
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ENVIRONMENT

Plans to dredge the Zambezi canned



PHOTOS: GIGI GUIMBEAU

Life along the Zambezi

Source: Club Of Mozambique News

The Minister of Transport has said that Mozambique has rejected an environmental plan submitted last year by Riversdale, now owned by Rio Tinto, for moving coal via barges down the Zambezi River.

Mozambique has rejected an environmental plan submitted last year by Riversdale, now owned by Rio Tinto, for moving coal via barges down the Zambezi River, its Transport Minister has said.

Mozambique's woeful infrastructure poses the biggest challenge for miners who have invested in the Tete province, which is estimated to hold one of the world's biggest reserves of coking coal, yet lack options for getting their product to the port.

Riversdale had proposed to initially move two million tonnes of coal per year via barges to the port at Beira and build that up to around 12 million tonnes.

"The impact was seen to be very negative, and there were no plans for mitigation. As proposed it is not doable," Minister Paulo Zucula told news agency Reuters in a phone interview.

"The Zambezi River ... every four years we have problems with flooding and killing people. So if you're going to dredge the river, expand the banks, we will be in trouble," he said. The barges were also expected to affect the local fish ecology.

Rio Tinto declined to comment. Zucula said the company was welcome to resubmit its study, although he stressed that Mozambique would much prefer that companies opt to move their coal by rail. "If you compare the two in terms of environment, the difference is huge," he said.

Current rail infrastructure is limited to a capacity of six million tonnes on the Sena railway line linking Tete with Beira, but Mozambique has plans to expand the Sena line and build and upgrade other rail lines and ports in the country.

"We can assure everybody that we will build enough rail capacity to carry their coal. The problem is timing," Zucula said.

"We are working at high speed to get financing. By the end of this year we will reach 10 million tonnes of capacity on the Sena line; next year we will start rehabilitating Nacala port and build two new railways."

He said it was as much a priority for Mozambique as it was for the miners to get the rail lines and ports built.

"Coal is a development project for us, so we are a most interested party. The planning of infrastructure and the mine plans do not match yet, but we are making every effort to make it match," he said.

Mozambique is planning to establish a framework for how infrastructure projects are planned and who will benefit to ensure all the projects expected to come online in coming years will get access to ports and rail.

For now miners without capacity on the Sena line may have to rely on trucks to get their product to port and need to plan the production of their mines in line with available facilities.

So far Brazil's Vale is the only miner exporting coal from Mozambique. The miner has said it will invest $4.4 billion to build a coal terminal at the deep-water port at Nacala and a rail line via Malawi to link Nacala with its mines.

Visit www.clubofmozambique.com



BUSINESS

Investing in Mozambique

By ACIS Mozambique

Mozambique's economy is growing rapidly and many people are showing an interest in investing. Professional advice is strongly recommended to save mistakes and expense in the long term.

The Mozambican economy is growing rapidly. With new discoveries of mineral resources and the country becoming an increasingly attractive tourist destination, many people are showing an interest in investing.

There are a number of things which need to be taken into account when taking the decision to invest. Perhaps most obvious among these are the questions of language and law. Mozambique's official language is Portuguese and all official documents must be prepared and managed in this language.

The country's legal tradition follows that of Portugal, and is a civil law system, which tends to be less familiar to people in the region. In addition Mozambique's legal framework, while regularly being updated, still tends to be bureaucratic.

Prospective investors should not be discouraged; it is perfectly possible to incorporate a company for any type of investment and to do so in such a way as to protect the investment being made. While it is not for example possible to buy a 'shelf company' in Mozambique, investors can consider opening their own company, or buying shares (known as quotas) in an existing company.

It is important to seek qualified legal advice; while this may seem expensive in the short term, it is a worthwhile investment to ensure that all the relevant licenses are obtained. This is particularly important when buying into an existing company, and extensive due diligence is recommended.

Investors should allow plenty of time as bureaucratic procedures can be myriad depending on the type of investment. It is important to fully understand the content of any document, and it is worth having key documents translated by a qualified professional to be sure of the content.

As the number of investors grows, so does the number of reputable organizations available to assist them. Comprehensive information about registration of companies, environmental and land licensing, employment and immigration procedures and tourism investments, among others, is made available by such organizations, which also have a database of reputable professionals including lawyers, auditors and translators.

Mozambique is definitely open for business and welcomes investors in this exciting economy.

Visit www.acismoz.com


PHOTO: JON VIDUCICH

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BUSINESS

Fuchs Lubricants now in Tete, Mozambique

By ZT Correspondent

Investment in plant and equipment is extensive and any breakdown can be crippling to even the largest company. Buying cheaper sub standard lubricants is false economy when considering the cost of downtime and overhaul of expensive engines and gearboxes. Fuchs have come into the Tete market knowing that they can provide the best products on the market.

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Fuchs are committed to providing the best quality products, backed by technical expertise to minimize expensive plant and vehicle breakdowns. A concerted effort is constantly being made to reduce the carbon footprint and minimize damage to the environment.

This ongoing development process ensures that Fuchs Lubricants will meet or exceed the future requirements of industry.


PHOTO: FUCHS



Image courtesy googleapis.com (Symen Postema)

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The wonderful business

Tete, Mozambique, a city known for its blistering heat and burgeoning coal economy, is considered by many to be a place best suited to men.

By Gigi Guimbeau

At least 52 different nationalities are represented in the province, with a colorful mix of first and third world cultures. It's a place where any mistakes can result in huge costs; a cut-throat environment where only the careful and perseverant succeed.

Despite the myriad challenges, many brave women, including those highlighted here, have come to this pioneering city to seek their fortunes. They have either started businesses of their own or play an important role alongside their partners, and many are truly thriving in their new lives.

We salute you…

Bébé Missanga

Create the Moment!

In the short year since her arrival in Tete from Angola, bubbly, tireless Bébé Missanga has transformed a run-down car wash on the banks of the Zambezi into an incredible restaurant, offering amazing food with a stunning view of Tete's picturesque bridge.

The name of the Cigana Restaurant (cigana means gypsy) reflects Missanga's long and challenging journey to the establishment's opening day, though she says that the experience has been largely positive.

As a newcomer to the city, Missanga views the expatriate community in Tete as a large family, and her care for her wide-ranging clientele is evident as she warmly greets guests between trips to the kitchen and open-air bar.

While doing business in Tete presents real difficulties for anyone, Missanga says that being a woman isn't really an obstacle. She loves the city's vibe, explaining that Tete has given her great opportunity to live and feel free.

Bébé Quote: If you can't make it in Tete, you won't make it anywhere! The opportunities are ripe for the picking.

Debbie Killoran

Never Say Never

Five and a half years ago, Debbie Killoran and a friend travelled from Vilanculos to Tete in a dhow that had been hastily transformed into a sea-going vessel. After sailing along 1000 kms of coastline and 600 kms upriver, Killoran arrived in Tete with only a kit bag.

She bought a guesthouse, Casa Branca, which came with a rather questionable past. With the help of friends and her plucky, never say never attitude, the adventurous woman started what became a remarkable transformation. She now owns 12 guesthouses, which keeps her incredibly busy, and she has also helped oversee and build the amazing Café del Rio on the banks of the Zambezi.

Killoran is very excited about the possibilities that Tete has to offer right now, as it grows rapidly in both size and opportunity.

Debbie Quote: There is huge risk in doing business in Mozambique, so make sure you do things right.



Marisa Braga



Bébé Missanga



Jenni Bekker

Marisa Braga

Belong With The Winners

Marisa Braga was born in Moatize, has lived and worked all around the world, and finally landed back in Tete, opening her business in 2011. Friends had suggested she come and look at the opportunities Tete had to offer, and she has never left.

Braga started off small, doing outside catering, and her business has expanded rapidly. She now owns two chicken takeaways called Kasekome, meaning 'We eat here,' on either side of the Tete bridge, and she still does outside catering for any type of function. Her aim is to do 3000 meals per day and she is fast reaching her goal.

"Small beginnings turn into larger futures," she says. Braga is a positive, strong and determined lady and nothing will hold her back. She is a single mother with commitments at home and in the work place.

Progress has brought its challenges, but the positives far outweigh the negatives. Braga loves what the rapidly expanding city of Tete has presented her with - many friends and many opportunities.

Marisa Quote: "I belong to the winners' world!."

Graziela de Souza

Where the Universe Leads

Graziela de Souza has travelled the world working for the United Nations and the World Bank, to name two, and has bravely faced the wild frontier of Tete.

De Souza moved to Tete from Maputo with just US$10,000. She paid rent up front for six months and voila, the birth of Thee Deli, a delicatessen selling food products from around the world.

After many setbacks she also started a restaurant, La Bella Italia, which also includes outside catering for private functions.

Cigana Restaurant

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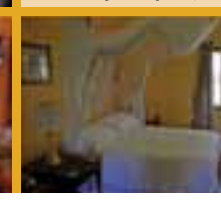
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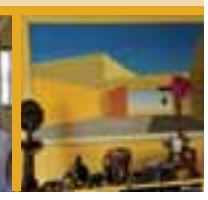
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women of Tete



Debbie Killoran

She will go out of her way to find anything you need. She flies in sushi once a week for a customer, a small example of her dedication to serving the needs of the community.

As founder and current president of the Lions Club in Maputo, de Souza has worked to bring the club to Tete as well.

Juggling these businesses and being a single mum of three is not easy, but she does it with grace, dignity and a quiet strength in a very tough enviroment.

Graziela Quote : To all women out there, "get up and do something; don't be afraid to try."



Graziela de Souza

razor write, palisade and electric), plastic water tanks and car ports.

New facilities and new companies are opening daily in Tete and "it's so wonderful being part of all this," says Bekker. She is an equal shareholder in the company with her husband, and she holds her ground in the man's world of Tete.

Bekker is currently doing an international certificate Health and Safety, and fits in other courses which benefit the company. She is fluent in Portugese and says it helps tremendously.

Jenni Quote : If you make your environment pleasant, you can live anywhere.



PHOTOS: GIGI GUIMBEAU

Nikki Killoran

Tete, Mozambique. On arrival she negotiated to buy a piece of land on the banks of the Zambezi River, from a "very nice old family with no funny business going on."

The building of a guest house then started, which isn't as easy as it sounds. It has now been running for a few years and is absolutely beautiful, with four rooms which are comfortable, cool and filled with gorgeous furniture and art.

Monika Quote : Be flexible. Pay attention to what's happening around you.

Jenni Bekker

Being Part Of All This

Jenni Bekker has an inspiring, positive and upbeat personality, something that will take you far in Tete. She is afraid of nothing and tackles anything head-on.

Bekker and her husband, Brendon, moved to Tete from Chimoio, sensing new opportunities here. Their business has gone from strength to strength and includes steel sheds (pre-fabricated or custom made), fencing (security, game, barbed or

Monika von Habsburg

Be Flexible; Pay Attention

What an inspiration this dynamic 72-year-old lady is! Three years ago Monika von Habsburg's son said to her, "Mother, if you are bored there is lots happening in Tete, so please come and join us," and join him she did.

She proceeded to pack up her entire life in Scotland, including many beautiful antiques, and shipped it all to

Nikki Killoran

Once In A Lifetime

Nikki Killoran is a talented woman with incredible energy and enthusiasm. Her mother, Debbie, who began building Café Del Rio a few years ago, offered her this "once in a lifetime" opportunity, and the young entrepreneur grabbed it with both hands.

After years spent travelling and working all over the world, Killoran is surprised to finally be settling down in Tete. She aims to provide an oasis on the banks of the Zambezi; an "African moment" to take away. It certainly is that. She has decorated the café beautifully, creating incredible artwork, lighting and furniture using locally-sourced woods and products.

Killoran has had to train staff from "below ground zero," and seeing what they now produce has been her greatest delight. As she says, opening the café has required patience as long and endless as the mighty Zambezi.

Quote: Make something incredibly well that people will keep coming back for.

CONSERVATION

Easy tips to help our river



Even the mighty Zambezi, symbol of wild Africa, is being affected by pollution. A timely reminder on the three 'R's of ecological responsibility – Reduce, Re-use and Recycle.

By Tash Morgan

Messages of impending doom concerning air pollution, water contamination and greenhouse gases seem applicable to some far-off place, and irrelevant to you and I. However, studies have shown that the Zambezi River is facing major ecological challenges including pollution from litter, sewage effluent, agricultural run-off, and mine waste.

Pollution causes unseen environmental damage such as oxygen depletion of the river water, affecting animal and plant populations. River pollution also facilitates the spread of diseases associated with poor hygiene such as cholera, typhus and dysentery.

Experts say that pollution in the Zambezi basin had reached appalling proportions. So, what can you do to take responsibility for your own waste, and make a positive change to your immediate river environment? Practice the three 'R's, Reduce, Re-use and Recycle, and you'll be well on your way.

Reduce

Your choices make a difference! Reducing the amount of plastic you purchase assists in waste management, and increases the chances of maintaining and rehabilitating our environment. For example, buy tinned cold drinks, instead of plastic bottled cold drinks; high quality products instead of poor quality plastic items that break easily and will be thrown away; items that offer reduced packaging, etc.

Re-use

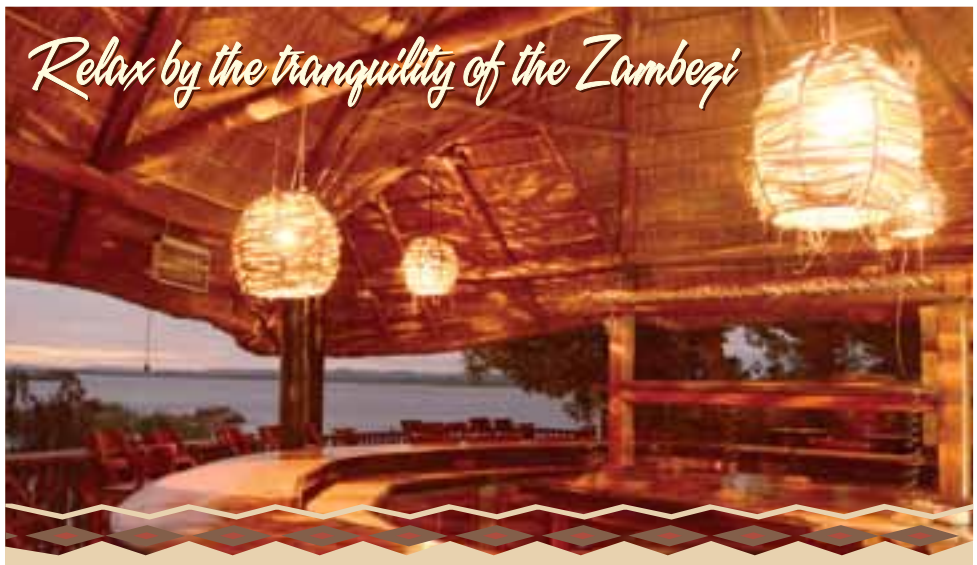
Re-use your plastic shopping packets, or thicker, stronger plastic or fabric bags. Take these with you when you do your shopping, and ask the cashier, or packing attendant, to use them to pack your purchases into instead of the plastic bags provided. You will automatically reduce the number of plastic bags littering our streets, clogging up drains, polluting the river, etc.

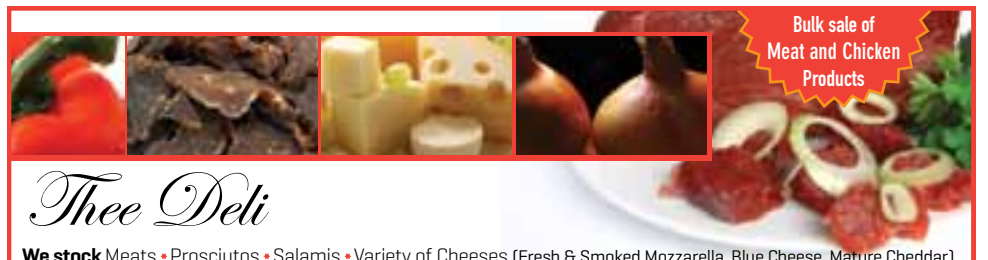
Recycle

Recycling projects are easy, fun, and can provide endless hours of entertainment for the whole family. Let your creativity take flight by making a cooler box out of polystyrene packing material; beer mats or coasters out of woven plastic bags; jewellery out of bottle tops; musical instruments out of tin cans, cereal boxes, and string; etc. Recycling makes a huge difference to our environment by removing potentially harmful items from it, and turning them in to something useful.

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CULTURE



PHOTO: WYNAND WELTHAGEN

Gule Wamkulu spotted on the road between Furancungo and Cazulo

A ghostly encounter far from anywhere

By Tash Morgan

In the mood for adventure, we recently decided to return to Tete from Dedza via Furancungo, and were lucky enough to encounter a ghostly group of Gule Wamkulu who appeared beside us on the road.

The road less travelled is often more exciting and rewarding than the beaten track.

Although long, it proved to be a worthy detour, not only for the cool, fresh, mountain air and magnificent views over the valley at sunset, but also because we were lucky (or some would consider unlucky) to encounter a ghostly group of Gule Wamkulu who appeared, as if by magic, beside us on the road.

The Chewa believe that living things were created by Chiuta (God) on the mountain of Kapirintiwa which borders Malawi and Mozambique. Ancestors and spirits of animals, and plants, interact with the living world primarily through the dancing of those initiated to Nyau, or secret societies. Gule Wamkulu, literally meaning 'big dance,' have become representatives for secret societies of traditional Chewa religious practices.

Gule Wamkulu dances are commonly performed in the season following the harvest in July. However, they also accompany initiation ceremonies, weddings, funerals, and the installation or death of a chief. On these occasions, Nyau dancers wear costumes and masks made of wood, straw and animal skins.

Gule dancers play a variety of evil characters that represent certain forms of misbehaviour in order to teach moral and social values to the audience. They perform movements with extraordinary energy, entertaining and scaring the audience as representatives of the world of spirits and the dead. Only the chief who appointed them to drive away evil spirits from the village knows who they are.

Gule dancers are considered to be in an unpredictable animal or ancestral state, and are not to be approached. If one has the misfortune of passing a Gule on the road, it is tradition to drop a few coins for them – never handing them the money directly for fear they will grab you and take you for ritual offerings.

Gule dancers may appear in small groups of four or five and villagers do their best to avoid any encounters with them. More common in the afternoon, they are a strong incentive for attending to all business outside the home in the early hours.

While many traditional forms of song and dance across the globe are eroding, the Chewa have managed to incorporate modern elements into Gule Wamkulu, such as masked representations of politicians, public policy issues, HIV, globalization and technology.

It's estimated that more than a thousand different Gule mask types exist, including helicopters and television sets. This wide range of symbolism ensures an active connection between the characters and the audience. However, there is some concern that this vibrant living tradition is at threat from lack of interest among young people, and the lack of appreciation for the value of this traditional practice to Chewa culture.

So, should you happen to cross paths with a group of Gule Wamkulu on a dusty Mozambiquan afternoon, be sure to show your respects by dropping a few coins for them before they slip back into the shadows.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Join Tete's photo club



Following the World Cup in South Africa, a group of boys began playing pick-up soccer games in my yard every evening. I love the interplay between lighting, dust and action in this shot.



PHOTO: JON VIDUCICH

I love the drama and whimsy that baobabs add to any shot, and, fortunately, there are plenty of them in Tete! I took this from atop a grain elevator just outside of Tete City.

By Gigi Guimbeau

Photography enthusiasts form a club and find subjects in Tete, Mozambique.

Most outsiders regard Tete as a hot, dusty, inhospitable locale, wholly devoid of beauty. With competing natural wonders like Victoria Falls and Lake Malawi, it's hard to imagine foreigners visiting the city with the hope of enjoying anything but the economic opportunities offered by the region's recent growth.

As an aspiring artist living in Tete, I was determined to discover something beautiful in this area, and struck out with a fellow photography enthusiast one Saturday last year to begin taking photos.

I've made two surprising discoveries in the months since: Tete is full of dramatic and stunning scenes, if you keep your eyes open, and there's actually quite a community of photographers in town! After creating a photography blog www.snappingafrica.blogspot.com to share my shots, many others have contacted me with ideas and questions, and we've formed a club around our common passion.

It's been wonderful to learn new techniques from each other, and to spend weekends exploring the city and surrounding areas together. New visitors of all skill levels are always welcome to join us, so look up our club if you're in town, and don't forget your camera!

Visit http://www.snappingafrica.blogspot.com/

NEWS

No more coal licenses The Mozambican government has announced that, for the time being at least, it will not issue any more licenses for coal exploration or mining in the western province of Tete.

Test well drilled by Anadarko Petroleum confirms existence of natural gas in Rovuma The Lagosta 3 test well drilled by Anadarko Petroleum in the Rovuma Basin has been concluded with very positive results that confirm the size of the seam and reserves of natural gas found there.

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CONSERVATION

The Boteti River flows again

We look at nature taking its course and man making a difference.

By Frances Jackson

David Dugmore, MD of Meno A Kwena comments:

"The arrival of the Okavango Delta waters along the Boteti River at Meno A Kwena was the most special moment I have ever experienced after a decade of seeing so much desperation for water amongst so much wildlife. The dependence of wildlife on our limited, yet so very precious water was almost too much to bear as we helplessly watched many animals dying of thirst and starvation. To hear the sounds at night of thousands of animals trying to suck water from damp earth was so sad, yet as long as our diesel pumps could be heard we knew we were doing as much as we could. The intense pressure on us to make sure water was supplied efficiently and sufficiently for wildlife, while keeping guests entertained and the community supportive was unbelievable, yet we prevailed, convinced the river would flow before we collapsed and gave up."

Veterinary fences, competition for water from both wild life and domestic livestock and the drying up of the river in the 1990's resulted in an estimated 100,000 zebra and wildebeest being trapped in the Makgadikgadi Pans National park, unable to move to Okavango Delta and the Chobe River. Southern Africa's biggest large herbivore migration was virtually wiped out in less than a decade. We have a very different scenario now.

Ten years ago Dugmore leased tribal land opposite the national park, overlooking the dry deep Boteti river bed. Utilizing water beneath the surface he starting pumping and very soon large numbers of zebra, wildebeest and elephants were congregating at the waterhole, they kept coming over the long dry months, until his many pumps were supplying 100,000 litres of water all day, every day.

"Almost ten years down the road we look back at a dramatic process that turned a serious human/wildlife conflict zone from a dead end into an impressive model for intelligent responsible and sustainable tourism" says Dugmore. "There is still a lot to do, and because of this we have started Conservation Safaris."



Elephants dominate our waterhole while zebra desperately wait



Elephants swim where once they competed for limited pumped water

OBITUARY

We salute Trevor Foster



The view of Nunda from the river

PHOTOS: NUNDA

By ZT Correspondent

On 15 February 2012, Trevor Ronald Foster, part owner of Nunda River Lodge, Kavango, Namibia, passed away peacefully in his sleep at the age of 68.

Trevor was born in South Africa and studied engineering in Cape Town. In 1963 he arrived in South West Africa where he spent his years in the engineering field as well as the fishing industry in Walvis Bay. He also consulted to various fishing companies throughout the world and in particular South America.

His love and passion for the outdoors led him throughout Africa and his vision was to build and operate a lodge where he could spend his retirement years. After travelling through Africa for three years looking for the right place, he chose the banks of the Okavango River, Namibia. In 2006 the ground was secured and building commenced. The lodge doors opened in 2008, but Trevor never stopped building!

Trevor was tireless in his efforts to create a unique and special lodge. His spirit and creativity will be everlasting. He leaves his wife Eugen, sons Garth and Ian, and three grandchildren.



PHOTOS: MENO-A-KWENA

Environmental education support by Meno A Kwena Tented Camp



Involving community in wildlife conservation

MORE ONLINE

Read Zambezi Traveller's interview with David Dugmore on-line. Discover how an area that was decimated of game because animals could not follow their ancient migrations has once again become abundant. For a change, man has truly made a positive difference.





PHOTOGRAPHY

Chobe kaleidoscope

Tom Varley shares his incredible visuals taken one morning in Chobe Game Reserve. Chobe is world renowned for providing an all encompassing wild life experience. These beautiful photographs tell it all.





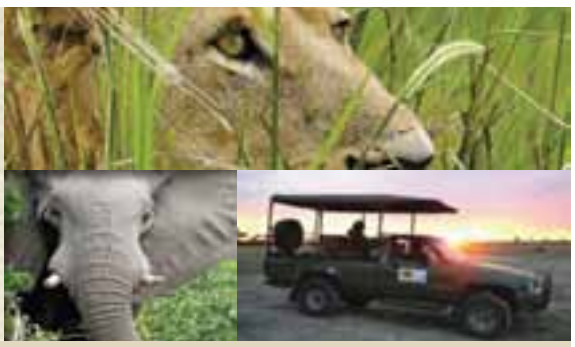








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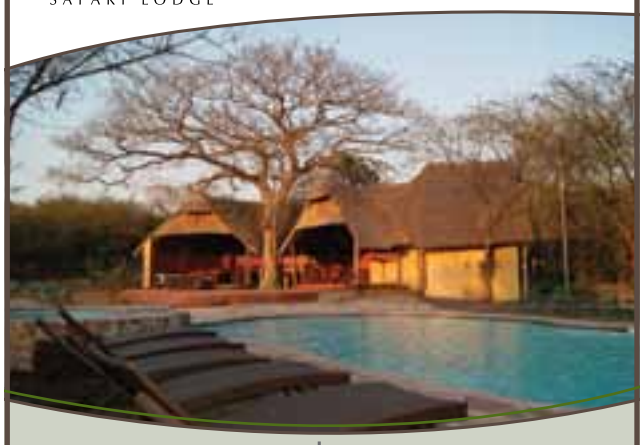
We offer a personal service by professional photographers. We can join your day trip in Chobe, trip to Victoria Falls, or anything else you'd like to keep a memory of.

Tom Varley, a camera man and a photographer, was raised in the Zimbabwean bush. His love for the wildlife and the area is reflecting in his work and led him to publish a coffee table book about Victoria Falls.

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COMMUNITY

Mobile vets treat local dogs



PHOTO: VETS ON WHEELS

Kasane spaying programme

By ZT correspondent

Well over two hundred dogs were treated in Kasane and Kazungula, Botswana, in January, by Vets On Wheels, an international, non-profit mobile vet service.

With assistance from their local partners, the Kasane branch of the Botswana Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Maun Animal Welfare Society, and local NGO Caracal, VOW vets sterilized and vaccinated 191 dogs, and an additional 51 dogs which had been previously sterilized received vaccinations.

Vaccination in combination with sterilization increases the general health of the domestic dog population and keeps their numbers from exploding. This serves as a preventative measure to control the spread of several canine diseases.

Demand for this service was overwhelming in both villages. Many residents of both Kasane and Kazungula were already familiar with sterilization campaigns and spectators were abundant. Pet owners are recognizing the improvement of the condition of their animals after treatment.

The surgeries, which were performed in the open, provided great entertainment as the vets showed off their skills to an appreciative audience of children and adults. Besides being castrated or spayed and vaccinated, the dogs were also treated against worms and external parasites. After sleeping off the effects of the anesthetic for about an hour most patients were in a fit state to make their own way home. Many were carted off by their owners in private cars, taxis and even wheelbarrows.

The ultimate goal of organizations like VOW, MAWS and the Kasane BSPCA is to reduce the population of dogs in the area. There should be fewer unwanted and uncared-for dogs wandering the streets, spreading diseases to both people and animals, domestic and wild. In reducing the population, there will be less competition for food and therefore less need for drastic culling measures to be taken in the future.

SPORT

Mowana Rebels take title

By Musa wa Phuma



The players pose with their silverware

PHOTO: CRESTA MOWANA

A coup for the hospitality industry as hotel team Mowana Rebels win the Chobe Regional Football Finals. A blow-by-blow account of the event follows.

Judgement Day came in February when Mowana Rebels took on Kachikau Football Club, David versus Goliath style, in the Chobe regional football finals in Pandamatenga.

Pound for pound Kachikau FC was a very strong team in all departments and they dominated the first 15 minutes of the game, forcing Rebels coach Willie Haskins to change his tactics. That soon paid dividends with the Rebels scoring their first goal, and after the first goal it became an avalanche of goals.

The mighty Rebels were three goals ahead by half time. The initial game was played on the side lines; hats off to both coaches who did their homework - at the end of the day the fans had an exciting game and football was the winner.

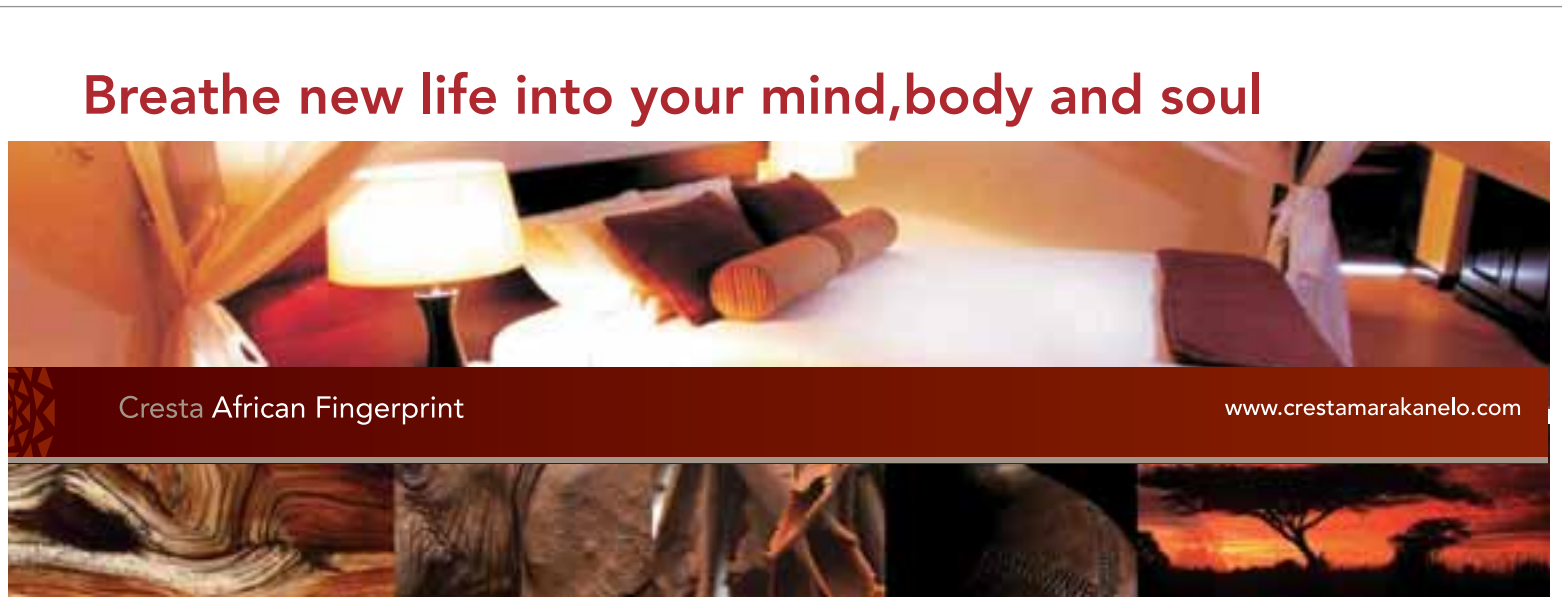
Kachikau FC never gave in, even when the Rebels came marauding into their half, always piling the pressure on the Rebels. Eventually it paid off as Kachikau scored, and they had dominance for five or so minutes.

Then the Rebels took off like a house on fire and revisited the Londoners, as they are affectionately called, in their 18 yard area and the pressure was unbearable. Kachikau defence fouled Latti (Gweta Express), the mighty Rebels were awarded a spot kick and Commodore scored his hat trick.

The road to the final wasn't an easy one for Mowana Rebels. There were 31 teams in the region competing for a spot in the final. Just to mention a few that fell to the wrath of the Rebels: Cross Border with the score 7 to 2 to the mighty Rebels; Rebels 5, Prisons 1; BAMB 2, Rebels 3; Social for Joy 4, Rebels 5 – this one was decided on penalties.







HISTORY

The first rhinos journey to Chobe

By Peter Hepburn

In 1967, Botswana received its first two pairs of white rhino from the Natal Parks Board. These rhino were an independence gift from the President of South Africa to the President of Botswana.

Rob Backus, a voluntary service officer who had arrived in Botswana in 1964 and had worked with Pat Hepburn in the early development of the Chobe Game Reserve, was tasked to build the bomas for the rhino and then to travel to Umfolosi Game Reserve with the Natal Parks Board rangers to help capture and transport the rhinos back to Botswana.

Backus has sent ZT his private memoirs of his time working in the Chobe National Park in its early days. In his words…

"I went out daily with Mike, a Natal Parks Board ranger, looking for suitable candidates of breeding age for relocation. This involved getting as close as possible to study the health and fitness, age, relationship, breeding status etc of each individual. We had a lot of fun stalking these prehistoric behemoths.

Darting, following up and recovery was a hectic affair, requiring stealth, stamina and teamwork. Once hit with an aluminium dart containing M99, fired from a .410 calibre tranquiliser gun, the rhino would inevitably take off into the densest thickets of acacia thorn.



The rhinos arriving in Botswana

We used game guards dressed in leather jackets and chaps, carrying walkie-talkies and mounted on horses with thorn-proof leather armour-plating, to follow up and find the drugged animals. Hurriedly a team would then cut a track in and we would winch them onto low loaders for transport back to kraals before they woke up.

The rhino were housed in enclosures until they quietened down and became habituated to humans and vehicles. They were gradually tempted into large wooden crates where they were fed and watered until ready to travel to their new home.

After being trapped in their crates and sedated, the first selected breeding pair of rhino were winched onto their respective trucks and we set off, with the South African and Botswana flags proudly flying and with two game guards, on the long journey north via Beitbridge and Rhodesia (Zimbabwe).

Somewhere in Northern Transvaal we stopped late at night at a motel for a few hours sleep, parking our charges in the car park with the guards sleeping in the cabs. At about two o'clock in the morning we were woken by irate noises coming from two cantankerous un-sedated rhino kicking their crates and squealing up a storm and an equally irate crowd of wide awake guests demanding some peace and quiet. The manager asked us to leave and, after administering some more sleep muti to our passengers and some 'wide awake pills' for us, we continued our journey.

On arrival the crates were manhandled off the trucks by a gang of labourers and game scouts and the weary travellers were released into the individual mopane pole kraals we had built under the huge Acacia tortillis tree near Serondella.

After a couple of days to ensure the rhino were settling in we repeated the journey, bringing another two back within a week.

In a letter to me dated 29 February 1968, Pat Hepburn wrote: "I let them go into the paddock at Christmas and they're thriving.

Except Henry's hocks are still raw. They're all in goodish condition and Squeaker and Pandane are very tame. Henry and Bukale are both very wild"

BUSINESS

Marketing boost for Chobe Marina


Chobe Marina Lodge view from the river

PHOTO: CHOBE MARINA

By Diana Howell

African Hotels and Adventure, the tourism property management division of Tourvest Accommodation and Activities, has acquired the sales and marketing contract for the Chobe Marina Lodge in Kasane.

The lodge is situated on the banks of the Chobe River in Kasane in north-eastern Botswana. It is in close proximity to the Chobe National Park, the Okavango Delta, the Kasane Forest Reserve, the Caprivi Strip and the Zambezi River, with the Victoria Falls a two-hour drive away.

The lodge comprises 60 different accommodation units ranging from studios, apartments, chalets and suites, each fitted with air-conditioning, television, telephone and mini-bar. It also has a 100-seater conference room overlooking the Chobe River with views of the Caprivi Strip. Game drives, river cruises and themed-dinner evenings are available.

"There are some very exciting plans for the refurbishment of Chobe Marina Lodge during 2012, and once all on line, the changes would completely enhance the guest experience," said Heath Dhana, chief operations officer of Chobe Marina Lodge and African Odyssey, its activities and transfer division.

Tourvest chief executive Gary Elmes told ZT that the property is the company's first in Botswana and is a strategic fit with its activity-based operations, such as Wild Horizons, which are largely concentrated in the Victoria Falls. "Chobe Marina is a world-class property and a valuable addition to our growing portfolio," he said. "It will also help the Tourvest group consolidate its position in the Victoria Falls area and to grow its presence into new highly sought after safari destinations."

MORE ONLINE

New opportunities with basketry skills

Local NGO CARACAL launches a programme to help destitute women in Kasane, Botswana, by enhancing their basket weaving business skills

More CARACAL projects

Biodiversity Centre

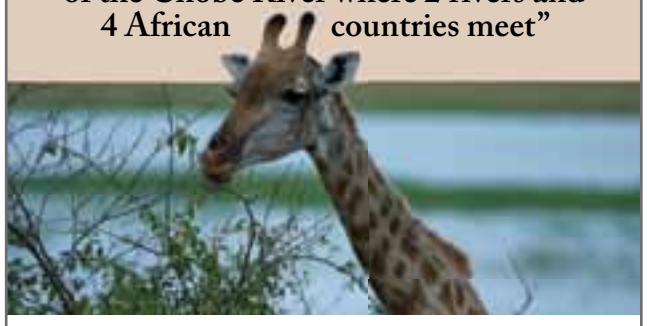
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HISTORY

History of Chobe National Park – Part 8

By Judy Hepburn

ZT's historian introduces Rob Backus who as a teenager fell in with Chobe's first warden and fell in love with the brand new Chobe wildlife reserve.

The early 1960s was a busy time for the banks of the Chobe River, south of the then small settlement of Kasane. Pat Hepburn and his newly appointed crew of workers began the arduous task of mapping and cutting what would be the initial network of roads, designed to offer maximum game viewing along the banks of the river and up amongst the mukusi forests off the sand ridge.

I am sad to say that I did not know my late father-in-law long enough. He was a wealth of knowledge, extremely well read with an instinctive understanding of not only the flora and fauna of the area but the human being as well. Pat had a quiet but authoritative demeanor together with an amazingly practical attitude to life.

My favourite quote among his many wise observations was, "Any fool can be uncomfortable," so I am sure his camp was very agreeable! While the first Department of Wildlife and National Parks base was being built, accommodation consisted of a couple of tents and a very rustic ablution block under the big baobab tree on the hill behind Chobe Safari Lodge. The camp was replaced by offices, workshops, the warden's house and staff lodgings, the remains of which can still be seen on the southern side of Sedudu Island.

Rob Backus was one of the many young adventurers who had the pleasure of working with Pat Hepburn. Rob hailed from England and arrived in Francistown in September 1964 as a Voluntary Service Officer at the tender age of 18.

Backus kept a daily diary of his experiences in Botswana in those early days. The District Commissioner of Francistown at that time, Phil Steenkamp, invited Backus to accompany him to Kasane and one of his diary entries reads:-



Pat Hepburn, first Warden, Chobe National Park 1961

The sights, sounds and smells, the excitement and romance and the multitude of unspoiled and exotic animals in their natural environment represented 'the real thing' to me.

"Wed. Sept 16th 1964. While the DC was doing his admin work I went fishing for tiger fish on the Chobe but caught nothing (too hot!). At 3.00 pm Pat Hepburn, the Game Warden, took us by Landrover into the reserve which had only been a reserve for three years and open to the public for one month so the game was still very wild.

"Game seen (all in large numbers): elephant, kudu, waterbuck, Chobe Bushbuck, impala, tsessebe, lechwe, baboons, monkeys, steenbok, duiker, warthog, zebra, sable, eland, spoor of lion, black mamba (9 ft), hippo, Egyptian geese, eagles, vultures, pelicans, storks, spurwinged geese, and dozens of other birds and beasts that I can't even remember.

"Pat Hepburn is a game expert and storybook game Warden who is fearless and knows the animals as individuals… The sights, sounds and smells, the excitement and romance and the multitude of unspoiled and exotic animals in their natural environment represented 'the real thing' to me. It was my holy grail and I had found it here. In one afternoon all my childhood reading and dreams had been realized and I vowed that, by hook or by crook, I would return to Chobe and work in the Game Department."

Backus did return and his recorded memories of those days are a wonderful insight into the development of the area. He has kindly emailed us some of his diary excerpts and these memories will be shared in the next issue.

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WILDLIFE

Hwange – a wilderness waiting

Hwange National Park is the largest national park in Zimbabwe, covering an area of 14,651 square kilometers. It has a deserved reputation as one of Africa's finest wildlife sanctuaries, boasting over 100 species of mammal and more than 400 bird species.

By ZT correspondent

Hwange National Park is the largest national park in Zimbabwe, covering an area of 14,651 square kilometers. This magnificent area lies in the west of the country, between Bulawayo and Victoria Falls; its western boundary bordering Botswana. It has a deserved reputation as one of Africa's finest wildlife sanctuaries, boasting over 100 species of mammal and recording more than 400 bird species.

Hwange park is steeped in historical events and has many a tale to tell. It was established in 1928 and named then as Wankie Game Reserve, with the first warden being the 22-year old Ted Davison.

Before the mid 1850's, the region was once the hunting ground of the Zulu warrior king Mzilikaze, then it was explored and hunted by the famous white hunter Frederick Courteney Selous, and hunted seasonally by bushmen.

At the turn of the century the government issued licenses and permits for animals to be captured for zoos around the world. Permits were also issued to cut great quantities of teak; these permits were allowed to expire when the area was officially proclaimed a reserve – the first in the country.

This vast park is characterized by its diversity in landscape. Two thirds of its area is covered by the Kalahari sands in the south, this terrain being mostly flat with water sources in seasonal pans dotted among large sections of teak forest.

As the new park was being established it was realized that the pans filled with the rains and in a good season they could hold water for some time. As the pans dried however, the game moved outside the park boundary in search of water, to the Gwayi Valley in the south and to the river systems in the north.



Scenic Hwange PHOTO: DAVE CARSON, CAMP HWANGE

The Kalahari sands of the south give way to basalts within which are found granites and inliers (an area of older rocks surrounded by younger rocks) in the north central area of the park. This area is drained by only two rivers, the Deka and the Lukosi and their tributaries, making this area more rugged.

Mopane woodland is common in this region; in the areas without rivers, grassy depressions and pans form, most of which fill with rain water, though there are some that are fed by natural groundwater.

To keep the game within the park, water pumps were installed at pans to create a permanent source of water for the game, and these pumps have become a Hwange legacy. The park developed and became world famous for its great herds of buffalo and elephant, its variety of antelope, predators, and birdlife.

During the economic instability of the last ten years, Hwange has seen a decline in growth of the tourism stronghold in the south. Good news for the park is the development of two new safari camps in the north-central region; Camp Hwange is situated approximately 2 km south of Shumba Pan, and Nehimba Safari lodge which is approximately 60 km north-west of Main Camp on the road to Shumba Pan.

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COMMUNITY

Communities partnered on human/wildlife conflict



PHOTO: WILD HORIZON TRUST

Pindile Ncube, CEO of the Hwange Rural District Council, and Roger Parry of the Wild Horizons Wildlife Trust.

Hwange Rural District Council representing rural farmers adjacent to protected land has joined Wild Horizons Wildlife Trust and the Hwange Lion Research Project to collect data on human /wildlife conflict and educate school children in conservation.

By ZT correspondent

Rural communities close to the Zambezi National Park and Fuller Forest in Zimbabwe, part of the Kavango Zambezi Trans Frontier Conservation Area, are suffering from loss of livestock to predators.

Last year the Hwange Rural District Council called a meeting of local stakeholders to find ways to reduce the impact of wildlife on rural farmers in the Mvutu and Shana Chiefdoms. In response, the Wild Horizons Wildlife Trust has formed a partnership with the Hwange Lion Research Project. These agencies are working with the Hwange Rural District Council, the Zimbabwe National Parks and Wildlife Management Authority, the Forestry Commission and local communities.

The Hwange Lion Research Project started a human/predator conflict data collection project in the Tsholotsho and Mabale areas bordering Hwange National Park three years ago. The resulting data has given an understanding of the conflict situation in the area.

Data was collected by Bongani Dlodlo of the Wild Horizons Wildlife Trust and Lovemore Sibanda of Hwange Lion Research. The project was overseen by Roger Parry of the Wild Horizons Wildlife Trust, with research consultant Dr Andy Loveridge of the Wildlife Conservation Research Unit, Oxford.

This project has been funded by the Safari Club International Foundation. An affiliated project involving providing environmental education to school groups has been funded by Cleveland Zoo (USA).

In 2011,700 children attended the Wild Horizons Wildlife Trust educational programme partnered with Environment Africa.It is planned to host another 800 children during 2012.

EDUCATION

Education to change lives

By ZT correspondent

The Char Char Trust with its iconic Char Char Chest is a feature of a programme to uplift rural schools in memory of a dynamic mother and her ten year old daughter.

A bright pink storage trunk sits in the corner of a rural classroom. It can withstand the harsh environment of poorly built buildings, dirt floors, leaking roofs and open windows. Inside, it has carefully designed compartments giving specific places to various items to be used in lessons.

The trunk cannot be mistaken for anything else; it is a Char Char Chest. The Char Char Trust was set up in memory of English born, ten and a half year old Charlotte Parker and her mother, Veronica, both of whom lost their lives to an elephant attack in Africa. The family had lived for a time in South Africa where Veronica developed a passion for the education of under privileged children.



PHOTO: CHAR CHAR TRUST

Calvin Parker presents the pink storage trunks

Today the Char Char Trust focuses on schools in Zimbabwe. The Hide Safari Lodge in Hwange National Park is the co-ordinator for the Trust in the Hwange region. The Hide assists with identifying schools in need and with the follow-up programme.

Ian Godfrey, manager of The Hide, said there are many schools in need, but once a school has been identified, the Trust works with that school until such time as systems are in place and the Trust can move to another school.

The Char Char Chest is given to each grade and this specific trunk will stay with the same class all the way to Grade Seven. The chest is stocked with everything the class will need for a year, and it is then replenished the next year, giving the teacher and the pupils a sense of ownership and responsibility for their education.

The school being assisted by the Trust and the Hide at present is Mambanje Primary School which has 104 pupils and 4 teachers and is about 20 kms from the small town of Dete on the edge of Hwange National Park.

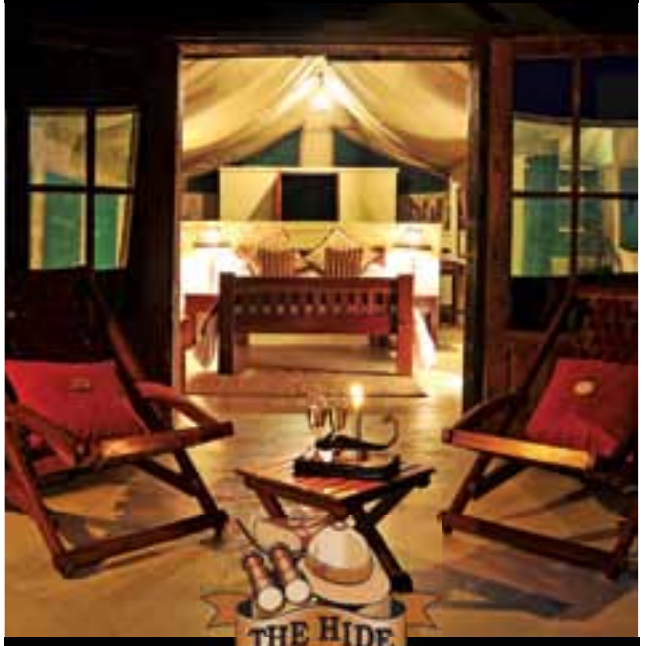
The many challenges facing rural schools such as Mambanje include poor facilities, no `electricity, no water, as well as obtaining and keeping qualified teachers. The Trust together with the Hide take on projects at the school - they are currently assisting with obtaining electricity for Mambanje. Another project is a feeding programme as the children are required to be at school for a full day without a midday meal provided.

The school authorities are tasked with being involved in every project. The Trust's strategy is based on a simple truth: teachers believe in the power of education to change lives.

Visit www.thecharchartrust.org

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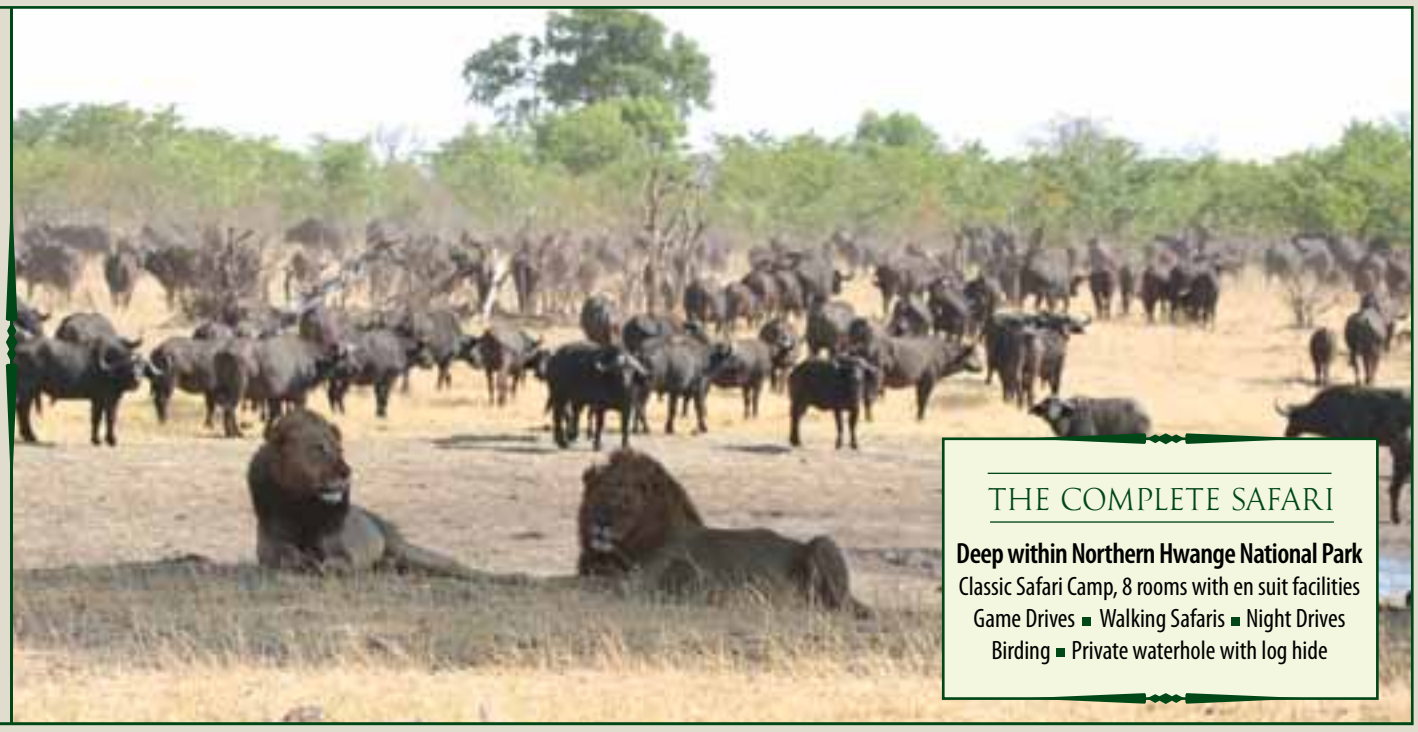
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CONSERVATION IN ACTION

Compiled by Peter Roberts

Travelling lion turns a spotlight on the species

We look in detail at our lead story on the Livingstone lion and the issues facing conservation of this species.

By Peter Roberts

The Hwange Lion Research Project of Oxford University's Wildlife Conservation Research Unit is one of the largest and longest running wild lion research projects in Africa. The project was started in 1999 by Dr Andrew Loveridge, at the invitation of and in collaboration with the Zimbabwe National Parks & Wildlife Authority, and has studied several generations of lions in the Park.

The core of the project's research is achieved through radio-telemetry and more recently the use of GPS collars, such as the one worn by our 'Zambezi Traveller,' which are fitted to individual lions and record data on their movements, supplying valuable information to researchers.

Data retrieved from the lion's GPS collar by Brent Stapelkamp, of the Hwange Lion Research Project, has revealed his route. "He travelled north from his home range, close to Hwange National Park's Main Camp, in mid December, before travelling west along a line parallel but a couple of kilometres north of the main Hwange-Victoria Falls road, and then turning north again, reaching the Zambezi River in early January.

"Initially he meandered upstream on the southern side, before crossing the river around mid January at a point some 50 kilometres downstream of the Victoria Falls at midnight on the 15 January.

"The GPS receiver in the collar records a positional point every hour, and shows the lion on the south bank at just before midnight and the north bank an hour later. He obviously swam the river, as indicated by his movement downstream where he crossed, the river being approximately 100 metres wide at this point.

"From here he circled inland and round to arrive on the outskirts of Livingstone on 22 January, having travelled a rough distance of at least on the map of 220 kms, although probably travelling a much greater distance on the ground."



PHOTO: MARLEEN POST

This lion is the sole remaining member of a coalition of four brothers, whose home territory for the last few years had been just outside Hwange National Park's Main Camp area.

This lion is the sole remaining member of a coalition of four brothers, whose home territory for the last few years had been just outside Hwange National Park's Main Camp area. It's a familiar fate for older male lions. At an age where he is unlikely to regain a territory or breeding pride, males like this typically become wanderers, frequently coming into conflict with livestock and local communities as a result. Unable to secure suitable territory and access to wild prey they get pushed into communal areas and often become livestock killers.

The problem can become a matter of life and death for the individual lions involved. Often there is no option but to destroy the animals concerned. Previous attempts to relocate problem animals away from conflict areas have met with mixed success, and it is always likely that lions with a history of cattle raiding will re-offend.

Dr Andrew Loveridge, director of Hwange Lion Research, explains: "The priority for lion conservation has to be to minimise human-wildlife conflict and limit the impact large carnivores have on people's livelihoods by finding ways people can live in close proximity with them. Current research by HLR, in collaboration with Zim-Parks, into conflict between people and lions hopes to assist the future management of these issues with benefits for both local farmers and lion conservation."

Having been eradicated from over 80% of their historic range, lion populations in Africa have declined drastically in the last few decades and there may be as few as 20,000 wild lions remaining.

Conservationists are concerned that lion populations are increasingly becoming restricted to isolated National Parks and other protected areas, their geographic range limited by the loss of suitable wild habitat with sufficient prey species to maintain healthy populations. "This fragmentation of population ranges causes potential problems, with isolated populations becoming genetically inbred and prone to extinction in the long term," said Loveridge.

Importantly there are thought to be only six contiguous populations of at least 1,000 adults, the Serengeti-Mara ecosystem (Kenya and Tanzania); the Selous Game Reserve complex and Ruaha-Rungwa ecosystems (both in Tanzania); the Lower Zambezi-Luangwa complex (Zambia); the Kafue-Kavango-Hwange region (Angola, Botswana, Nambia, Zambia and Zimbabwe) and the Greater Kruger ecosystem (South Africa and Mozambique).

"Without wildlife corridors to allow movement between populations their future genetic viability may be at risk. Large, wide ranging carnivores need to be conserved at the landscape level; it is not enough to conserve small isolated populations that are vulnerable to extinction," said Loveridge.

These issues highlight the importance of cross-border conservation efforts, such as the KAZA trans-frontier park initiative, which aims to unify conservation efforts over large areas of north-western Zimbabwe, north-eastern Botswana and south-western Zambia.

Finally, the story of our lion raises the issue of how authorities deal with human-wildlife conflict

Without wildlife corridors to allow movement between populations their future genetic viability may be at risk.

and problem animals. It's a shame that the first wild lion to be sighted in the Livingstone area for so many years has ended up being captured. It would have been even sadder if he had been shot as a problem animal.

The challenge now for the Zambian Wildlife Authority is to find a suitable wild site, supporting sustainable numbers of wild prey species, and away from any potential livestock conflict, where they can consider releasing this animal. The complication is that any such release should also aim not to disrupt local lion populations, which could result in other lions being displaced and pushed into conflict areas.

It is unlikely that he will be repatriated to Zimbabwe, especially as to re-release him back into his old home patch would only bring him into conflict with the two males who displaced him from his territory towards the end of last year and started him on his travels. For now the future of this Zambezi traveller remains in the balance.

The author would like to thank Dr Andrew Loveridge, his Hwange Lion Research team and Marleen Post of Sikumi Tree Lodge, for their assistance with this article.

Sponsored by Voyager and Europcar



ADVENTURE

How safe is bungee jumping?

By Frances Jackson

We interview the management of Victoria Falls Bungee two months after the incident where a bungee cord broke and an Australian tourist fell into the Zambezi resulting, fortunately, in relatively minor injuries.

Senior management of the Victoria Falls Bungee Company granted Zambezi Traveller an exclusive interview after the widely reported bungee accident. I spent a couple hours at the bridge with Allen Roberts, Director; Garth Fowler, General Manager; Sonja Clay, Marketing Manager; and Hosiah Mudzingwa, Operations Manager. To my dismay, I found I had just missed seeing Bear Grylls take a jump.

On 31st December 2011 a client from Australia plunged into the Zambezi River after her bungee cord snapped. She very soon became an international celebrity, while the media had a field day; crocodile infested river, famous location, approaching rapids, video footage of the event and most importantly a survivor who could tell the tale.

ZT: First and foremost, how is the client?

Allen Roberts: We are in regular contact with her and the good news is that she is recovering well. Her lungs are still sore due to water inhalation, but from all accounts all is going well and she is due to start a new job soon. Her courage and calmness from the minute the cord snapped must be commended, she is a very tough young lady

ZT: What impact did this have on your business?

AR - We were closed for 22 days whilst investigations were taking place. But this was not an option; this was the first accident since we started operating 17 years ago so we needed to find out why it happened and to do whatever was needed to make sure it does not happen again.

In terms of PR, I am sure that there has been a negative impact, but surprisingly enough we had continued requests to jump, even immediately after the event. Since we reopened business has been brisk, you have just missed Bear Grylls taking his jump.

We are also grateful for the support that we have had from the Zambian tourism authorities. The Honourable Minister came and jumped from the bridge just a few days after the incident to show solidarity and support for our product that has run safely for so many years, and we are very grateful to him for that.



Adventurer, Bear Grylls took the plunge PHOTO : VICTORIA FALLS BUNJEE

ZT: All over the world there are many adrenalin activities that have had serious accidents, but the hype around this has been huge, why do you think that is?

AR: All the activities on this bridge including bungee are among the safest activities that you can do. This incident received attention because there was instant video footage that soon went world-wide and most importantly there was a survivor that could be interviewed. It was a compelling story and thankfully one with a happy ending.

ZT: How are people briefed before they jump?

Garth Fowler: We are very clear and highlight the potential risks that are involved with taking part in these activities. We brief clients on how to jump safely and what to do in the unlikely event that something does go wrong.

AR: After this incident we are taking things to another level. There are currently no official standards for bungee jumping in either Zimbabwe or Zambia so we have always used the New Zealand Code of Practice which is very thorough. Now we are working on setting even higher standards. Our primary focus is to ensure that this never happens again, so we are taking even more stringent checks and balances on all equipment, and on the participants.

ZT: The broken cord was sent for forensic testing. What were the results?

AR: Obviously our primary concern was to find out what went wrong. We sent the broken cord to a specialized Structural Engineering company in SA which is run by a team of Professors from Wits University. They carried out extensive testing on the cord and found that the rubber was weaker than it should have been. The conclusion is that it is this that caused the failure. This is something we are discussing with our supplier but in the mean time, and to ensure that we can all have complete confidence in the bungee cords, we are now having the rubber independently tested at regular intervals to ensure that a similar failure cannot happen again. The good news is that the rubber we are now using is very strong and indications are that our new cords have a breaking strain in excess of 2 tones so they are completely safe.

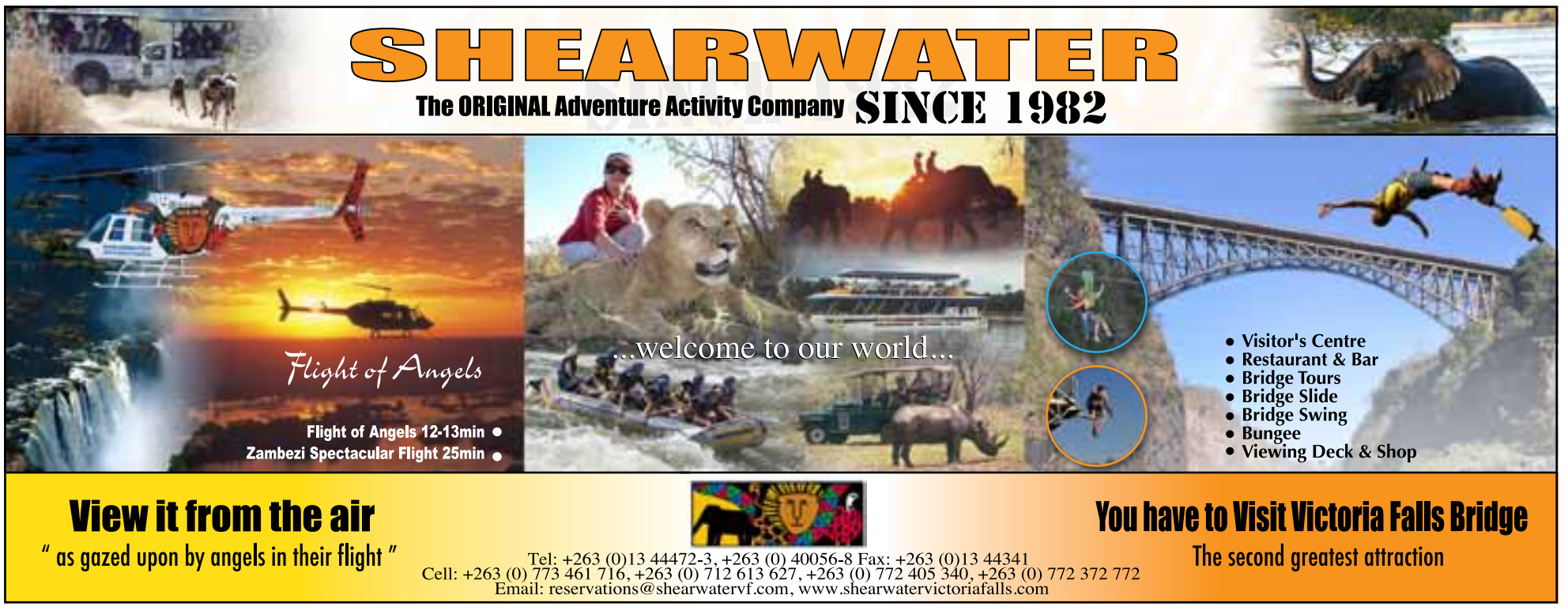
ZT: I know that you have introduced some new safety measures since the incident; can you tell me about those?

AR: Well the first thing is the independent testing of the rubber which I have already spoken about. That's critical and confirms that the rubber is of the required strength and elasticity.

The second thing is that once the cords are being used, we subject them to a load test after every 20 jumps where we stretch the bungee cord to a predetermined length and measure the force that the cord is applying to the load cell. The load cell reading tells us what condition the cord is in and is an early warning system should there be any undue wear or damage to a cord.

Thirdly we have implemented periodic cord inspections where we remove the outer binding of the cord which allows us to see exactly what the condition of the cord is inside. If there is any damage or wear to the cord then we will see it when we do this inspection.

Continued on page 20



HISTORY

Replica Victorian Tram to Operate in Vic Falls

The Victoria Falls Tram Company has commissioned a replica Victorian tram to operate a scheduled service in and around the world class tourist destination.

By ZT correspondent



The tram is modelled on the open-sided Brill trams of circa 1890 PHOTO: VICTORIA FALLS TRAM COMPANY

A vintage-style diesel tram is being made in Johannesburg, on order from the Victoria Falls Tram Company. The tram is modelled on the open-sided Brill trams of circa 1890 with contractors Prof Engineering required to replicate the quality and feel as well as the look of the late 19th Century vehicle.

The tram will operate a daily scheduled service from Victoria Falls Station to the Victoria Falls Bridge and the Rain Forest. It will also offer runs from Palm Grove Siding opposite the Royal Livingstone and the Livingstone Station in Zambia.

In addition, the tram will offer transfers to the game reserves and properties near the rail line south of Victoria Falls to Jafuta and Sekuti, a unique experience for visitors to the destinations in this area. An onboard bar and refreshment service will cater to passenger needs, with a public address system for commentary and announcements.

The tram will seat 30 passengers on eight comfortable wooden slatted benches, six of which have double seatbacks to allow passengers to face in either direction of travel. The tram will be able to attain a maximum speed of 25 km/h, and the open sides will have roll-down awnings for weather protection.

Disembarking of elderly and child passengers will be assisted with two low raiser, non-slip fixed steps on either side running the full length of the vehicle.

The tram is designed to meet and exceed safety and operating specifications of regional railway systems. Forward, rear and aerial lighting have been added for night tours, and red tail lights for each direction of travel, have been specified.

Delivery is scheduled for April 2012 and after completion of handover and operational training, it is anticipated that scheduled runs will start in early May 2012.

LITERATURE

Dust

For ever- and a thousand years
this place has been our home,
and when our ancestors turned to dust,
they became its fertile loam.
So the dust of the deserts
and the dust of the plains is part of our ancient line,
and their age-old voice has whispered to us,
from before the beginning of time.

Their spirit's calls out, for you to return,
and visit them if you will,
so you finally came back, to the cradle of man,
to answer the ancient pull.
By now you know, the fate I warned,
has inevitably come to pass-
that the dust of the ages has filtered in,
and found its way to your heart!

From the rattling rides, across the savannahs,
in bone-chill break of day-
to the height of noon, and the well-earned rest, with us
snoozing in the shade.
The dust we raised, as we went our way,
floated golden in the evening air
and as the sun sunk low, the earth below,
seemed to catch fire- here and there

The dust of the trails and the dust of the tracks, collected in
the cloths you wore
it drifted in the air- settled in your hair,
and it even seeped into your pores.
So the ancient motes of the ancient land,
now evermore will be embedded in your head, and
embedded in your heart,
where you think none can see

But the ancients know, that your visit home has made you,
for the first time, whole
and now the land of your fathers, fathers, father
is infused in the depths of your soul.
So they will sing in your sleep, to the dust in your veins,
much sweeter than ever before
till you return once again, to the home of our past-the land
that gave birth to us all!

Russell Gammon



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DEVELOPMENT

Awaking the Giant

By ZT correspondent

Renewed vigor in investment in Victoria Falls town is exciting the tourist industry after long years in the doldrums. Is the sleeping giant about to awake? We report on new developments near this World Heritage Site.



PHOTO: VICTORIA FALLS RIVER LODGE

Victoria Falls River Lodge from the air

Renewed vigor in investment in Victoria Falls town is exciting the tourist industry after long years in the doldrums. Is the sleeping giant about to awake? We report on new developments on the Zimbabwean side of the Zambezi.

Sleeping on the banks of the Zambezi is magical and can now be done in style at the newest property on the south bank. The Victoria Falls River Lodge in the Zambezi National Park has opened, providing luxury tented accommodation each with private decks overlooking the river.

For years, most serious investment in tourism infrastructure has been on the north bank of the Zambezi in Zambia. The Victoria Falls River Lodge joins other developments in and around the Zimbabwean town of Victoria Falls as evidence of a new optimism and confidence.

At the Victoria Falls River Lodge, the main complex has an open plan lounge and dining room, bar and pool deck plus a business desk, should it be needed. The Zambezi River here is tranquil and an ideal place to escape the pressures of today's interconnected world.



View from new Wild Horizons Elephant Camp lodges

PHOTOS: WILD HORIZON



Jono Hudson, VFSL GM, with Steve Kiggen, Induna Club Contractor

PHOTOS: VFSL

The lodge is close enough to the town of Victoria Falls to give guests the options of enjoying the wilderness and also visiting the Falls and taking part in other activities available. Days at the lodge can be spent on game drives, fishing on the river, enjoying a sunset cruise, relaxing by the pool, in the spa or working out in the gym.

Meanwhile, Wild Horizons' Elephant Camp is being extended with the addition of three new suites, increasing the camp's capacity to a total of 12 luxury tented suites. The new units will be built to the west of the existing camp and have views of the gorges and the spray of the Falls. The units will feature all the amenities in The Elephant Camp's existing suites. Construction commenced on 15 January and the additional rooms should come on line from 1 July 2012.

In the town itself, the ever-popular and centrally located Ilala Lodge Hotel has plans for a new wing of 20 rooms – watch this space as details were not available as we went to press.

At Victoria Falls Safari Lodge, construction is underway on a new and exclusive wing to be named The Induna Club. The 16 rooms and four suites in the new wing represent a US$3 million investment by Africa Albida Tourism Group, scheduled to open in August this year.

This will bring the total number of rooms at VFSL to 92 – the thatched African-style lodge opened in 1994 with 72 rooms and has consistently earned awards including being voted by the Association of Zimbabwe Travel Agents as Best Safari Lodge for 16 successive years.

"Victoria Falls is a 'must-see-in-your-lifetime' destination," said Ross Kennedy, Chief Executive of Africa Albida Tourism. "The Induna Club aims to attract the more discerning international traveller seeking an extra dimension of luxury and superior service. This significant investment reflects our supreme confidence that the revitalisation of Victoria Falls and of Zimbabwe as a global tourism jewel is well underway."

Induna Club rooms will be 50% larger than the current rooms at Victoria Falls Safari Lodge and the open design will give a sense of abundant space. The exclusive 'Club' ethos will be reflected in such features as butler service, private check-in and check-out and a multi-functional entertainment area that includes a bar, lounge and terrace.

Victoria Falls continues to see a steady increase of visitors from around the world and has had renewed success in attracting conferences such as the Africa Travel Association in May this year and the United Nations World Tourism Organisation General Assembly in 2013, to be hosted jointly with Livingstone.

The annual JWT Global Travel Trends Report makes bold predictions for 2012: "An increasingly hot tourist spot will be Zimbabwe – home to one of the Seven Wonders of the World, Victoria Falls. The country also has some of Africa's best game parks; the economy is stabilizing and, as more tour operators resume Zimbabwe tours, travellers are on the uptick. The country has the potential to once again be among the top tourist destinations in Africa," quotes the report.

Visit www.zambezicrescent.com







FACT FILE

- This is the second UNWTO General Assembly to be held in Africa, after Senegal, 2007.
- Statistically it might take another 400 years for the next conference to be considered for Africa.
- 2013 is the first time co-hosting has been adopted.
- The 2013 meeting is in a resort; most previous gatherings have taken in the capital cities of hosting countries.

ARTS & CRAFTS

What is UNWTO?

As the region counts down towards the United Nations World Tourism Organisation's General Assembly to be co-hosted by Zambia and Zimbabwe in August 2013, we look at who these organisations are.

By Rose Mukogo

As the region counts down towards the United Nations World Tourism Organisation's General Assembly to be co-hosted by Zambia and Zimbabwe in August 2013 in Victoria Falls and Livingstone, it is important to understand the institutions governing world tourism and why this conference is so crucial for the regional growth and development of tourism.

The United Nations is an international organisation made up of 193 of the 196 countries in the world. It was established to promote international peace, cooperation and human rights. UNWTO is affiliated to the United Nations and mirrors its structures. The tourism sector has taken the prefix UN to differentiate the acronym WTO from that of the trade sector whose organisation is the World Trade Organisation.



The Victoria Falls PHOTO: TOM VARLEY

The UNWTO General Assembly is the forum where the tourism ministers of member countries congregate to discuss policy issues affecting the sector. It is held every alternate year and has a similar set up to the UN General Assembly in New York; however, the tourism sector is unique in holding its general assembly outside New York and away from its own headquarters in Madrid, Spain.

UNWTO has six regional commissions; issues relating to tourism in sub-Saharan Africa are discussed under the Commission for Africa with a membership of 48 countries.

Zambia and Zimbabwe are also members of the promotional and marketing agency, the Regional Tourism Organisation of Southern Africa, which is a subsidiary of a regional economic grouping of 14 member states, the Southern Africa Development Community. It is important that the private sector in tourism takes a keen interest in these forums which contribute to the creation of an enabling environment for business at regional, continental and international levels.

Email rosemukogo@gmail.com

How safe is bungee jumping?

Continued from page 17

We also inspect the cord before and after every jump throughout the day and twice a year we are independently audited by an organization that inspects the safety of critical equipment for oil rig workers, crane workers and other professionals working at height – they thoroughly inspect our operation to check our equipment, safety standards and procedures and report accordingly. This has just happened and we have passed with a 100% clean bill of health. We are also working with the Zambian Bureau of Standards to set up a set Code of practice for Bungee Jumping for Zambia.

ZT: Who makes the bungee cords that you use?

We make our own bungee cords. We buy the rubber in a raw form, it comes in long extruded belts and each belt consists of forty individual threads lightly joined together. We then make up cords according to certain specifications that match jumper weights. We have detailed safety procedures in place for cord make-up. The staff are very experienced and there are numerous checks and balances.

ZT: How many people have bungee jumped since the accident?

Sonja Clay: Well over 500, including Bear Grylls!

ZT: I have to ask all of you – do you jump?

Hosiah Mudzingwa: At least one member of our crew jumps every day. The first jump of the day is done by a member of staff to check that everything is good to go.

Garth Fowler: I jump as often as I can, I love it.

ZT: What have you all gained from this experience?

AR: The silver lining is that as a result of what happened there has never been a safer time to bungee jump at Vic Falls. The new standards, tests and inspections we have implemented are probably setting a new standard for the activity world wide. It's great to think that we are pioneering techniques that can make bungee jumping safer for everyone

ZT: Bungee Jumping isn't all you do is it?

Garth Fowler: That's right, bungee was our first activity but in recent years we have added a Bridge Swing, which most of our clients tell us is even more exciting than the bungee. Then we have the Bridge Slide or "foofy" slide as some people call it, which is great for the less adventurous and for families. Then we also have a Bridge Tour which is a great experience for families and tourists with an interest in the history of the area. Our Visitor Centre tells all about how the bridge was build in 1905, it's a fantastic story. Infact for any visitor coming to the area we would say you have to visit the bridge; there really is something for everyone.

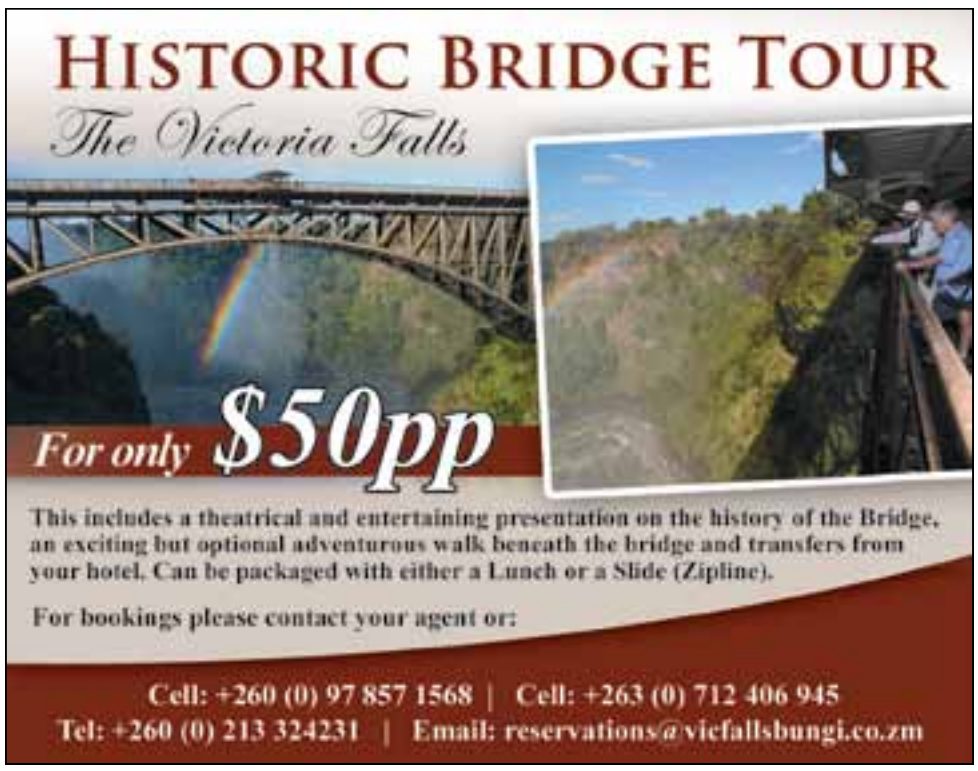


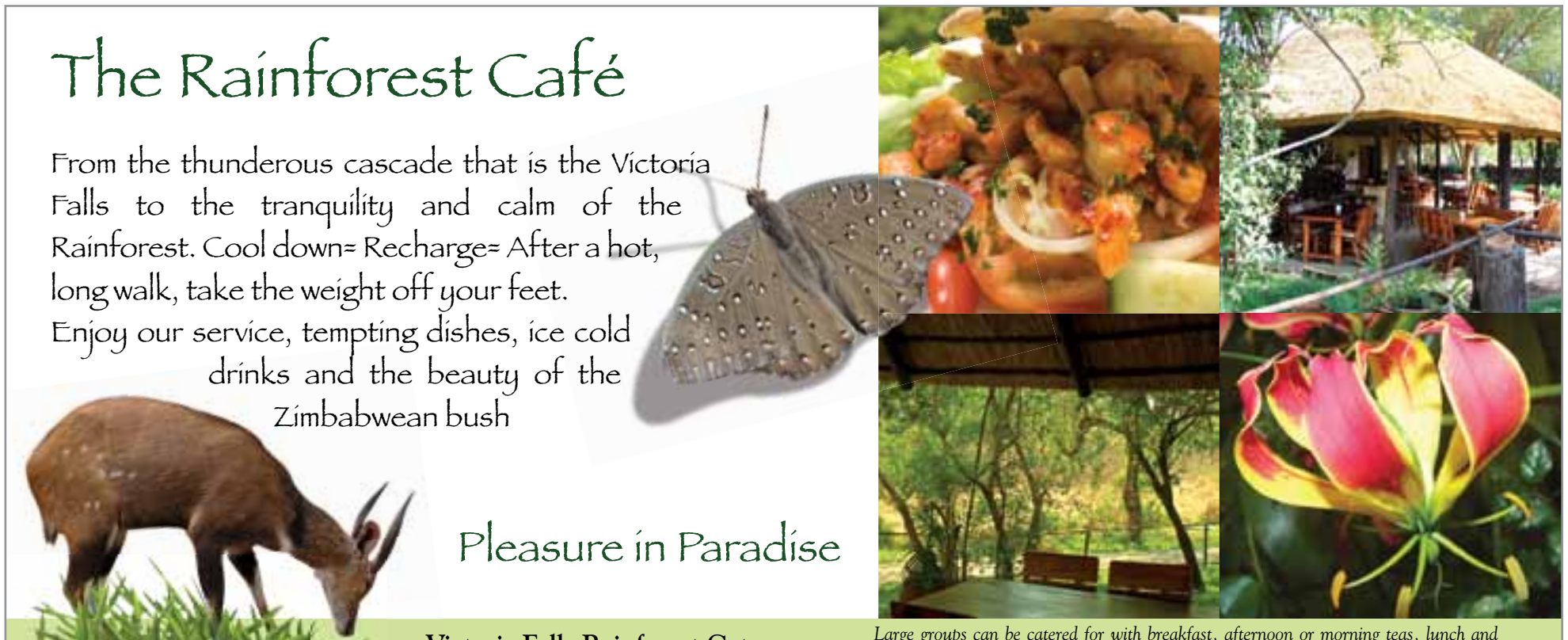
PHOTO : VICTORIA FALLS BRIDGE COMPANY

Minister of Tourism, Honourable Given Lubinda about to Bungee

ZT: Finally, what would you say to anyone thinking of doing a bungee jump at Victoria Falls?

Garth Fowler: We would say see you at the bridge, because there has never been a safer or better time to bungee jump off the famous Victoria Falls Bridge.





COMMUNITY

Victoria Falls community outreach

By ZT Correspondent



Day 1 - Victoria Falls eco composting unit

PHOTO: CONSERVATION SCIENCE

The Victoria Falls Hotel is showing the way in the greening efforts of the premier resorts in Zimbabwe. For the past two and half years the hotel has been recycling its kitchen organic waste, off-site using vermiculture (worms), and the eco-compost from this is a very important soil nutrient for the hotel's organic herb gardens on-site. The hotel is extending the programme to a full eco-initiative and all recycling of the hotel's organic waste will be done at a suitable location at the hotel, a large worm farm will be an important part of a Community Outreach Centre where local trainers will be instructed in the production of high quality eco-compost and the latest conservation farming practices.

Managing the programme is Conservation Science Africa (CSA) who have designed community programmes regionally in Zambia, Botswana and Kenya. The team wants to spread conservation farming practices into the surrounding communities where poor soil and arid conditions make it difficult to grow food.

Conservation farming methods will build the soil profile in homestead gardens and crop plots. Eco-compost reintroduces the vital soil biota that is destroyed when soil is overworked and treated with toxic chemicals and fertiliser. Conservation farming is an important tool in reducing shifting agriculture and reducing deforestation as the emphasis is on intensive, well managed, high yielding plots rather than extensive hard to manage fields. Importantly, conservation farming methods work equally well in an urban environment.

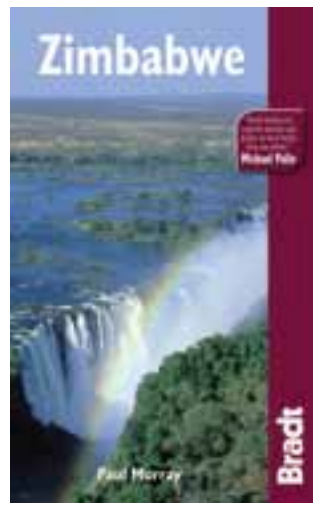
The Eco-Initiative will promote community-based micro-enterprises centred around the production of conservation commodities such as eco-compost, conservation-farmed produce, wildlife, trees and carbon.

The aim is for these community activities to be twinned with woodland conservation. These measures will not only be designed to avoid further deforestation, but also to restore and rehabilitate degraded habitats. This avoided deforestation approach (REDD+) creates the opportunity for carbon finance to off-set the costs of avoiding shifting agriculture, deforestation and habitat destruction.

LITERATURE

The man who wrote the guide

Introducing Paul Murray, author of the the Bradt Guide to Zimbabwe.



By ZT correspondent

Paul Murray worked for many years in the airline industry, taking every opportunity to travel the world in his spare time. He first visited Zimbabwe in 1986 to cover the Zim Sun Air Rally and quickly fell in love with the country and its people.

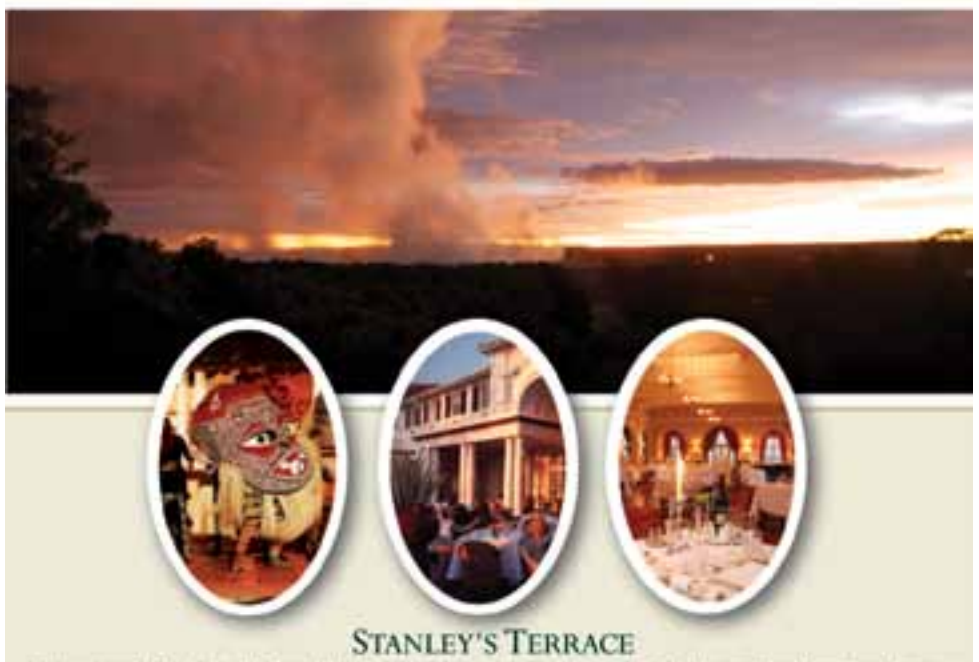
That love affair saw Paul and his wife Frances visiting Zimbabwe pretty much every year afterwards, culminating in their purchase of a house in Victoria Falls. Paul's involvement with the country led to an invitation to write the Bradt Guide to Zimbabwe which was published in 2010, following three years of research.

His guiding principle was that if the book was to carry his name as author, he was determined to personally experience or visit every single tourism offering included in the book. He reckons he achieved over 90% of that tough objective.

Today, Paul divides his time between Victoria Falls, Durban and the UK, and he continues to write frequent online updates to the Bradt guide as well as being involved in a number of other travel and wildlife related journalistic ventures.

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ARTS & CRAFTS

A Vic Falls Renaissance

Travellers to Victoria Falls will beat a new path to the revamped outlet of handmade and collectors jewellery known as African Renaissance based in the Victoria Falls Hotel.

By Frances Jackson



Colourful crafts inside the African Renaissance

PHOTO: GAIL VAN JAARSVELDT



PHOTO: GAIL VAN JAARSVELDT

African Renaissance in the Victoria Falls Hotel has recently undergone a complete facelift. Beautiful works of art and jewellery adorn the shelves making it worth a visit just to gaze.

Champion of local art, Gail Van Jaarsveldt, along with creative genius Christie Brookstein and a talented team of resident artists have given this prime shopping location a distinctive look. Shelves are stocked with one-off collector's items and an exclusive range of jewellery called the African Renaissance Collection.

The African Renaissance Collection is exclusive to Victoria Falls Hotel and offers an insight into the old realms of the kingdoms of Africa. Pieces of history and beauty are displayed together with original Zimbabwean museum artifacts on loan from The Jafuta Heritage Centre.

CHARITY

The Rotary Club of Victoria Falls update

The Rotary Club of Victoria Falls, together with "Children in the Wilderness" have paid school fees for 63 pupils including our first student to attend university.

By Anne Taggart, President

▶ Together with the Rotary Club of Beira, Mozambique, we have donated Items to the pre school at Z.R.P. station in Victoria Falls

▶ With the help of Zimbabwe Tourism Services and the Odysseys Travel Group, The Rotary Club of Victoria Falls, continues to help Chinotimba Primary School, with their 'wish' list.

▶ Another lot of desks and chairs are being organized for Chamabonda school through a matching grant.

▶ The first recipient of the Rotary Club of Victoria Falls Scholarship award, is a 4th year Doctor of Pharmacy student, studying in the U.S.A.

▶ The Rotary Club will be holding a "Murder on the Victoria Falls Steam Train" event in the middle of the year. Thanks to Sean Young for offering this opportunity to us to raise funds for the needy. Zambezi Traveller will publish in their website the exact dates of this event when it has been confirmed.

▶ Victoria Falls Rotarian's would like to welcome any interested persons, to attend their Thursday luncheon meetings, which are held between 1 and 2pm at Ilala Lodge.

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EDUCATION

'Isikolo Project' celebrates computer studies



The children have a feel of their new computers



PHOTOS: BAOBAB PRIMARY SCHOOL

Baobab Primary school celebrated at the beginning of March when their computer studies department officially opened.

By ZT Correspondent

Zambezi Traveller reported in 2010 on the amazing Isikolo Project where the Young Presidents Organisation gave the school an amazing face lift. Larry Norton the world renowned wild life artist donated a painting depicting elephants on the school soccer field for fundraising. This painting and subsequent prints raised an incredible $45,000. These funds have been used to build and equip up to date computer room. This amazing facility will hold 40 students at time and will also be used to assist with an adult computer literacy programme in the evening.

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ARTS & CRAFTS

The Ruoko Project at Elephant's Walk



Sharing ideas an important part of Ruoko Leamington, Christie, Gail, Obert, Moses, Gift. PHOTO: ELEPHANT'S WALK

The Ruoko Project at Elephant's Walk Complex,Victoria Falls, takes up the challenge of actively supporting selected artists instead of simply warehousing their works for sale

By Frances Jackson

Trading in curios and authentic African jewellery for more than 18 years, Gail Van Jaarsveldt has developed a unique eye for talent and creative expression. But the past ten years have been challenging and hard for retail outlets to maintain stock levels and pay for artefacts.

Van Jaarsveldt witnessed some of the best Zimbabwean talent leaving home for greener pastures across borders. The biggest wire art company in South Africa is almost totally staffed by Zimbabwean artists, says Christie Brookstein, marketing and public relations manager for Elephant's Walk complex in Victoria Falls.

From hardship a creative solution was born; an empowering initiative called the Ruoko Project is uplifting four artists who were struggling to survive in the current economic climate.

"Talented artists were coming to my door to sell their work and I couldn't buy it," said Van Jaarsveldt. "I wanted to find a way that these craftsmen could develop their talents, stay within Zimbabwe and have a viable business.

"All of the members of the Ruoko Project have exceptional talent, but they needed materials, space to work, business strategising and sound marketing. We have the resources to do this at Elephant's Walk."

"It all happened organically," said Brookstein. "We knew these people, we knew they were struggling and we realized that by collaborating we could do something special. Between us all, we had the creative ability and energy.

"We were also becoming aware that today's tourist likes an interactive experience and that they want to see local talent at work. We had the opportunity to make Elephant's Walk more than a shopping complex, we could make it a destination."

"Since the 90's we have let a select group from the curio market sell their wares within our garden courtyard for free," said Van Jaarsveldt. "They have always maintained a high standard of work and conducted business professionally, so the blueprint for something bigger was in place."

Elephant's Walk and the Ruoko Project provides the artists with free work space in an appropriate environment, business advice, exposure and international marketing. Artists are provided with the best possible tools for their trade so that they can produce a quality product.

Training is provided to enable the artists to work with a multitude of media. Gift Sithole, a wire sculptor, now works with gold and silver wire, semi precious stones and does elaborate cast wax moulds for the Ndau studio. Moses Kalembela the scrimshaw artist has moved on from ostrich eggs and cow horn to collaborating with jewellery artists in creating high-end jewellery pieces.

Leamington Muzhingi, a pencil artist who once believed that unless you were a painter, you were not an artist, is now working on a curated collection where his exquisite pencil portraits are uniquely combined with jewellery.

Obert Monga, the mosaic artist who once used to create giant pieces for the City of Johannesburg is back home making gorgeous mosaic belt buckles with stones, beads and bone that sell well.

"There is an incredible synergy with this project; many of the items are created by more than one person. We also have other people on the fringe of the Ruoko Project who benefit as they may do the beadwork, braiding or cutting. We consider these to be 'Friends of Ruoko.' The Ruoko group are aware of their responsibility to empower others and are always willing to share their skills," said Van Jaarsveldt.

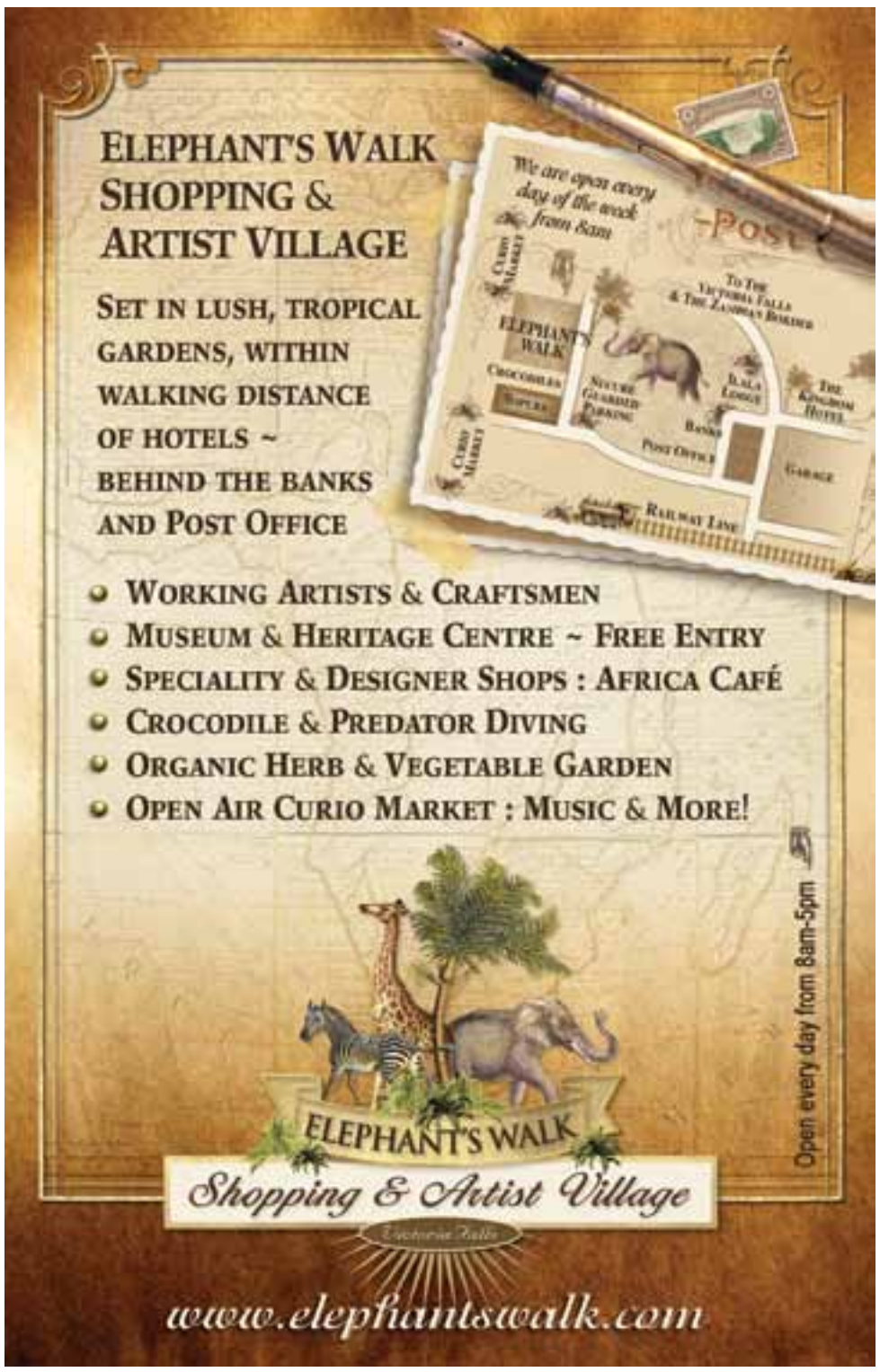
"We want our artists to work in a stress-free environment, to leave their worries at home and come here and create, and then reap the financial benefits of their work."

"As an artist I have been empowered to take my talent to another level. I have been given new materials to work with; I have more opportunity to explore my creativity." Gift Sithole.

"I have been given a home, a place where I am now working to a professional level. Gail has provided me with beautiful materials and I am surrounded by other artists to learn from. The highlight for me so far was collaborating with Kelly Landry (jewellery designer) and seeing our pieces sell well." Moses Kalembela.

"I love drawing bushmen, and I was a bit like a bushman myself, wandering from place to place, country to country. I did not believe that I was an artist; Gail took me from illustrating tin cups and made me realize that I have a talent. I feel I belong here and know that my work is good." Leamington Muzhingi.

"My mosaics were good for Johannesburg, but Johannesburg was not good for me. I love exploring new ways to work with mosaics, and this project is making me focus on ways to make this work for me. My fellow artists also keep me motivated and on track." Obert Monga.







DEVELOPMENT

Batoka Power Scheme revisited



Batoka Gorge PHOTO: TOM VARLEY

It was announced in February that Zambia and Zimbabwe have signed a joint Memorandum of Understanding to develop the 1,600 megawatt Batoka Hydro Power Station.

By Peter Roberts

It is estimated the project could cost in excess of US$4 billion. Advanced feasibility studies will now be commissioned and proposals to secure funding drawn up.

The project was initially proposed in 1993, but a major obstacle to the agreement has been the outstanding settlement of debts owed to Zambia by Zimbabwe from the division of assets which were jointly owned by the two countries during the period of the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, when the Kariba Hydro Power Station was built. It was announced in January that Zimbabwe had agreed to pay off more than $70 million in settlement of this issue, paving the way for the February's agreement.

The proposed Batoka site is located approximately 50 km below the Victoria Falls on the Zambezi River. Once completed it would supply 800 MW of power to each of the two countries. It is also believed that the project could enhance generating capacity at Kariba power station, downstream of the Batoka Gorge site, by 300 MW.

Zimbabwe suffers from a power deficit and desperately needs to boost power generating facilities within the country, currently importing a third of its needs from neighbouring countries. A wider power deficit is expected to grow across the region in the next few years, threatening the longer term availability of power imports to Zimbabwe.

The proposed hydro-electric dam and lake would flood large sections of the Batoka Gorge and there are concerns over the environmental impact of the project. There are also concerns within the tourism industry as to how the project will affect activities at Victoria Falls, especially the world renowned white-water rafting .

RECREATION

Victoria Falls tees off once again



Wartog strolling around the course PHOTO: VICTORIA FALLS STEAM TRAIN COMPANY

A major upgrade of Victoria Falls' famous golf course is underway through a partnership between African Sun hotel group and the Victoria Falls Steam Train Company.

By ZT correspondent

Work has already begun on the Elephant Hills Golf Course, with all tee boxes on the course being rebuilt. Sponsors of each tee box reconstruction will have an advertising board at the site.

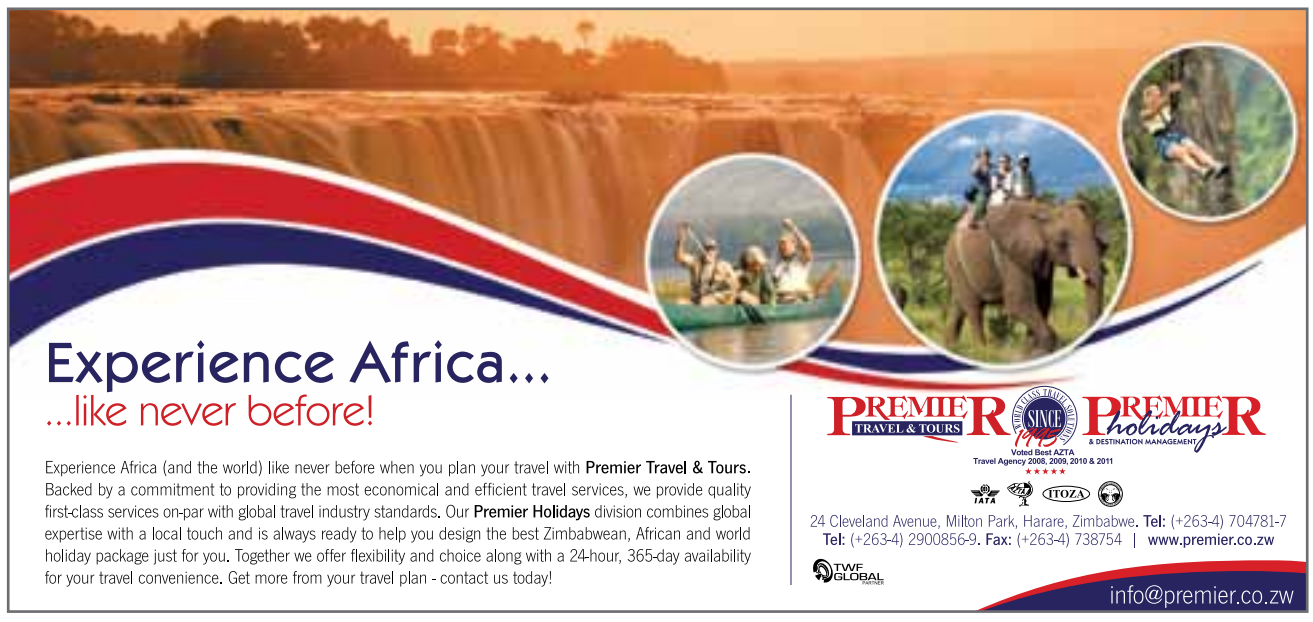
The sprinkler system and overall course condition is also undergoing a complete overhaul. "This is positive news for the region, as it may bring back golfing tourism from local, South African and especially overseas markets," said a spokesperson for the Victoria Falls Steam Train Company.

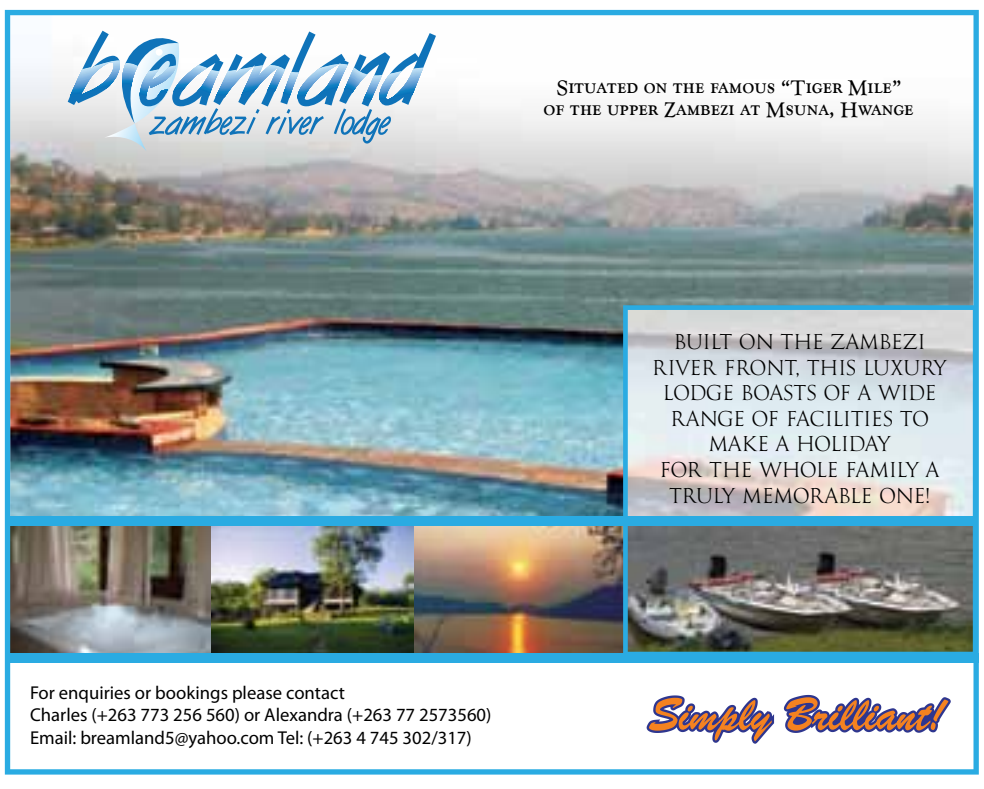
"Livingstone Golf Course and the Botswana, Mowana Golf Course are also in the process of upgrading in preparation for a Three Countries Tour which will create a golfing safari like no other. Golfers will see three different countries and have an African experience including other activities along the way."

The long term goal is to bring the Elephant Hills course to a standard to host the Zimbabwe Golf Open as part of the Sunshine Tour in the next three to four years. This will bring global exposure for the region with international television coverage.

For this to happen, other large golfing events will take place to demonstrate the ability of the course and supporting infrastructure to host events of this magnitude. The first of these is the Victoria Falls Steam Train Golf Classic from 27 – 30 April 2012, which will bring together tourists and corporate attendees from across Southern Africa.

"The hope is that in the near future we will have international golfers gracing the greens of Victoria Falls. Perhaps one day a Zimbabwean golfer will win a prestigious championship on the 18th at Elephant Hills," said the spokesperson.







ADVENTURE

From our valley to the top of the Andes

Victoria Falls resident Sara Norton defeated all odds to summit Mount Cerro Aconcagua, the second most prominent mountain in the world. She was one of only two climbers to finish this attempt from among the group of twenty enthusiasts from all over the world.

By Frances Jackson

Victoria Falls resident and managing director of The Project Company Sara Norton has defeated all odds and managed to summit Mount Cerro Aconcagua, the second most prominent mountain in the world.

Twenty climbing enthusiasts from all over the world made the attempt during this period and all except two were overcome by harsh weather conditions, altitude sickness and the sheer physical struggle of the climb.

Being a small, close-knit community, residents of Victoria Falls town are immensely proud of Norton's achievement.

I chatted briefly with her physiotherapist who was a key player in her preparation for this grueling endeavour - and almost became as emotional as him when he passionately told me of his huge admiration and great pride in Sara.

Norton talked of how close she came to her fellow climbers and of how she rarely cries in public, but as she said goodbye to each climber as they turned back, she shed many a heartfelt tear.

She was astounded by the beauty of this rugged landscape and how it was all so much more than she imagined. She was the only woman in the group, and hearing of the general nitty, gritty of everyday bodily functions, I was put off climbing any mountain - like I ever would!

FACT FILE

Cerro Aconcagua

Elevation: 22,841 ft (6,962 m)
Prominence: 22,841 ft (6,962 m), 2nd most prominent mountain in the world
Location: Andes, Argentina
Coordinates: 32°39'20"S 70°00'57"W
First Ascent: Swiss climber Matthias Zurbriggen, solo ascent, 1897



Sarah on the Zambezi River



Sarah on the top of the world

▶ Aconcagua lies within Aconcagua Provincial Park in the province of Mendoza in the Republic of Argentina. The mountain lies completely within Argentina and, unlike many other Andean peaks, does not sit on the international border with Chile.

▶ Aconcagua is the highest point in the Andes, the world's longest mountain range. The Andes, beginning in northern South America and ending at the continent's southern tip, stretch over 4,300 miles (7,000 km) in a narrow band along the west edge of South America. The Andes pass through seven countries - Columbia, Venezuela, Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Argentina, and Chile.

▶ The first known ascent of Aconcagua was during an expedition led by Edward FitzGerald in the summer of 1897. Swiss climber Mathias Zurbriggen reached the summit alone on January 14 via today's Normal Route. A few days later Nicholas Lanti and Stuart Vines made the second ascent. These were the highest ascents in the world at that time.

This is not the first of Norton's climbing achievements; last year she successfully climbed to Everest Base Camp. Listening to her recounting her Aconcagua experience, it is evident that Everest Base Camp was the proverbial walk in the park by comparison.

When Madeleine (Norton's ten year old daughter) and her boisterous group of girl friends enthusiastically welcomed Norton home with hugs and "Wow, you're amazing" greetings, Norton paused to think. Maybe her crazy desire to do these things serves to inspire little girls to dream big.

I suspect it also inspires us bigger girls to dream big too! Well done, Sara.

MORE ONLINE ***Read Sara's own record of her incredible journey in the Victoria Falls section www.zambezitraveller.com***

ENTERTAINMENT

Falls Fest to move downriver?

By Mana Meadows

Falls Fest, the New Years Eve musical extravaganza which has been held in Victoria Falls for three years, may move to Kariba this year. Revellers should take this as due warning!

After three years gracing the town of Victoria Falls with its annual deluge of enthusiastic year-end party-goers, the popular New Year 'Falls Fest' may lose its 'Falls' tag and move to Kariba this year.

Event organiser Sarah Brown says the reason for the possible move is the organisers' concern that people will not travel to Victoria Falls for a fourth year in a row. "Kariba is closer for a lot of people. It's cheaper, people can camp and stay on houseboats and since there is already a tradition of people heading to Kariba every New Year, everything is already in place," said Brown.

"For Harare people it will mean a four hour drive rather than a ten hour drive. Also, it will provide much needed business for Kariba." Brown cautioned that nothing has yet been confirmed and that the move is still in the planning stages. "There are still lots of logistical obstacles before we can make a final decision," she said.

Vic Falls residents have graciously shared their town with revellers for the four day period over the last three years; the tourism returns of fully-booked accommodations and increased adventure sports bookings may have compensated for the loss of peace and quiet!



Partying into 2012 PHOTO: FALLS FEST

Sponsored by Ilala Lodge, the event has gone from strength to strength with 2011 seeing around 3500 people attending the party on 30 December and just over 4000 people attending the main event on the 31st.

A jam-packed music lineup of local and South African performers included Evicted, Ryan Koriya, Clint and Co, CrashCarBurn, The First Descent, Ghapi and the popular electro pop duo Locnville.

Whether it's upstream or downstream on the Zambezi for 2012 – we look forward to the next one!

Prime Art GALLERY
www.primeart-gallery.com



Snake, DOMINIC BENHURA

Our Gallery is situated at the Elephant's Walk Shopping Village. We also have a display of some of the artwork at the Victoria Falls Airport's departure lounge, and at the Historical Chogm Park in Victoria Falls where some of our larger works have been featured.

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The Zambezi Helicopter Company. View the vastness of the Victoria Falls and its surrounds the best way! Take a helicopter flip and enjoy the magnificent splendour of the Zambezi River and its Falls. Contact The Zambezi Helicopter Company, Box 125, Zimbabwe. Tel +263 (0) 13 43569, cell: +263 (0) 773 080 909, +263 (0) 712 324 422. Tel/fax: +263 13 40059. Email: zhc.reservations@highestec.co.zw. Skype: zambezihelicopters Web site: www.zambezihelicopters.com

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Wild Horizons is a "one-stop' activity provider offering a range of tours and activities including rafting, canoeing, elephant back safaris and high wire activities. Email: info@wildhorizons.co.zw

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Mosi-Ua-Tunya B&B, six en-suite rooms, air conditioned, and additional family accommodation available. Located 603 Mahogany Road. Reservations call: +263 (0) 13 44336, email moslodge@yoafrica.com, cell +263 (0)772 462 837.

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CADAC Gas Equipment

CADAC gas equipment – Wide range, competitively priced. Our products include, skottel braai $100.00 , 3kg cylinder $57.99 , 5kg cylinder $63.00 , standard regulator $13.50 , Eazilite 100CP $40.00 , Eazilite 300CP $57.50 , 2-plate stove $73.00 , 500g gas cartridge threaded $8.00 , Grillo gas braai $75.00 , mantle 100CP $2.70 , mantle 300CP $3.20 , cooker top $19.00 , glass 100CP $7.90 , glass 300CP $9.50 , Adventure Eazi Kit $41.00.See our modern, well stocked wholesale warehouse opposite Marange Motors. Tradepower Wholesale Vic Falls - Telephone (013) 44870 / 44871 or 0712 587 123 / 0774 022 312

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We do not sell individual packets of cigars, we only supply shrink wraps to the trade.

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SEVEN 11 Convenience Store

The one and only convenience store in Victoia Falls. Open 7 days a week Monday to Saturday 7am to 11pm and Sundays from 7am till 9pm. We will cater for all your food needs during your stay in Vic Falls. Situated in the centre of town opposite the Rest Camp, Shop 6 Parkway Drive, Victoria Falls. Contact us on (013) 43429.

Charity Events

Once a month a number of Victoria Falls residents put together 'goodie parcels' with a few luxuries, mostly necessities for elderly people in the community that are struggling to make ends meet. Anyone wishing to contribute to this can email Cathrina Gover: gover@yoafrica.com and Mel Hudson: hudsons@yoafrica.com

Rotary Club of Victoria Falls meets every Thursday at Ilala Lodge between 1:00pm and 2:00pm. For further information please contact our club president Anne Taggart on +263 (0)772 254552 or Josh Ncube on +263 (0)772 105515 or, our club secretary Babara on +263 (0)773 228084.

Victoria Falls Tourism Police Unit. A donar funded iniative between private and public sector in conjunction with the Zimbabwe Republic Police to ensure a safe environment for visitors and local residents within the Victoria Falls tourism area. Anyone wishing to assist in sponsoring one or more of the dedicated Tourism Police Officers please contact Kevin Fry +263 (0) 772 872646

Charity Events

Cultural Activities

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Email : muposiwa_tsitsi@yahoo.com

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Forklift to take a weight off your shoulders. Tradepower Wholesale Victoria Falls has a 3 tonne forklift for hire at an hourly rate. Please phone Neil on (013) 44870/44871 or 0712 587 123 / 0774 022 312.
Please visit our modern wholesale warehouse, where service to you will be a privilege.

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Fresh fruit and Vegetable stocked daily
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+263 772399779
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Victoria Falls Hair Salon - We do all types of hair-do's, manicures and pedicures. 307 Parkway Drive. Tel + 263 13 40981, Cell + 263 712 716 930

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Builders' Hardware. For all your building material visit Builders' Hardware, Old PG/Johnson & Fletcher building, Orders done to your specification. Contact Thandi 0772 347687/ Itai 0712 597465

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Elephant Camp. The Elephant Camp is a luxury and intimate lodge under canvas only 10 minutes from Victoria Falls and all it's attractions and activities, yet secluded in it's own private game reserve so as to allow close up encounters with wildlife. Email: info@wildhorizons.co.zw

Imbabala Zambezi Safari Lodge. Located in the Matetsi Safari Area with 14km of Zambezi river frontage Imbabala is reknowned for it's game viewing and bird watching Tel: +263 (0) 13 44571,44426. Email: info@wildhorizons.co.zw. www.wildhorizons.co.za

The Victoria Falls Hotel. ***** Situated on a world heritage site, the legendary Victoria Falls Hotel overlooks the magnificent falls. This gracious 1904 hotel is set in lush tropical gardens that recall the romance of days gone by. Contact Sales and Marketing Manager. Email: marketing@tvfh.africansun.co.zw. Telephone: +263 (0) 13 44751/9

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Ice always available at Tradepower Wholesale Victoria Falls - 7kg bag for $2-20. Tel: (013) 44870/44871 or 0712 587 123/0774 022 312.
Please visit our modern wholesale warehouse, where service to you will be a pleasure.

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Spotless Laundry Services at Victoria Falls Restcamp, Lodge 17. Open daily. Contact +262 (0) 40509-11 or +263 (0)772 347687

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Cooling Horizon - Provides Cooling and Refrigeration and Air Conditioning. Contact Becky 0773 537428 / 0772 341048 / 0712 593586. Email : coolinghorizon@yahoo.com

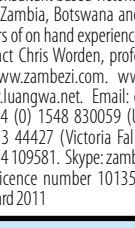
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The Victoria Falls Hotel: Livingstone Room, fine dining with a 7 course menu.
The Victoria Falls Hotel: Jungle Junction, international buffet and African Spectacular show. For bookings, contact +263 (0) 44751/9, email : marketing@tvfh.africansun.co.zw.

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Discover Safaris Charles Brightman P O Box CT 544 Victoria Falls Zimbabwe, Tel/Fax + 263 13 45821, Cell + 263 712 209144 or + 263 917 747 426, Skype : charlesbrightman, Specialising in walking safaris, game drives, bird watching trips and tailor made safaris. Finalist in the Safari Awards Category. Best Personal Contibution to Wildlife Conservation, www.safariawards.com/winners11

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Zambezi Safari & Travel Co. Registered in the UK and ATOL protected, have a Professional Guide and Safari consultant based Victoria Falls, we cover Zimbabwe, Zambia, Botswana and Namibia. We have 28 years of on hand experience on the ground here. Contact Chris Worden, professional guide/director. www.zambezi.com. www.bushcamps.com. www.luangwa.net. Email: chris@zambezi.com. Tel: 44 (0) 1548 830059 (UK head office) +263 (0) 13 44427 (Victoria Falls office). Cell: +263 (0) 774 109581. Skype: zambezi_chris. ATOL protected: licence number 10135. Winner Z.A.A Tourism Award 2011

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WIDENG UPHOLSTERY CENTRE

For all your canvas and tarpaulin products, game drive vehicle seat and canopies, boat blinds.Office and household furniture contact on 0773000888/9

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Tradepower Victoria Falls are the agents and distributors for a wide range of liquor brands. Swaartland Wines are our speciality, including all famous liquor labels. Also a full range of canned soft drinks and mixers always available at genuine wholesale prices. Contact Neil on (013) 44870 / 44871 or 0712 587 123 / 0774 022 312.

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Chicken – Zimbabwean bred FAIRHILL chickens are outstanding in quality and value. Whole birds, breasts, thighs, drumsticks, wings or in mixed portions. Tradepower Wholesale Victoria Falls.
Contact Neil on (013) 44870 / 44871 or 0712 587 123 / 0774 022 312. Our modern freezing facilities ensure absolute freshness always.

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fresher for longer



AVAILABLE AT ALL LEADING SUPERMARKETS
Limpopo Dairy Depot, Industrial Sites, Victoria Falls, opposite Marange Motors
Tel: (013) 44870 / 1 Fax: (013) 44871, Mobile: 0712 587 123 / 0774 022 312 - Mr Neil Norman
Email: orders@limpopodairy.co.zw / vicfalls@tradepower.co.zw

ANTI-POACHING

Poacher killed in rhino war

In mid February 2012 a poacher was shot and killed after a gun battle with scouts in Hwange National Park.





PHOTO: SAVE VALLEY CONSERVANCY

Bull rhino left to die

By ZT Correspondent

The poachers had dehorned a black rhino and left the bull to bleed to death in a ditch. National Parks called for the support of Zambezi Helicopter Company, who sent a helicopter to assist with the pursuit.

A poacher was shot and killed in a gun battle with scouts in Hwange National Park in mid February. The poachers had dehorned a black rhino and left the bull to bleed to death in a ditch.

National Parks personnel called for the support of Zambezi Helicopter Company, which sent a helicopter to Hwange to assist in a hot pursuit, but the rest of the gang escaped.

A 'shoot to kill' policy has been adopted by several African countries but does not seem to deter poaching. In South Africa in 2011, 443 rhino have been poached. This is a rate of one rhino killed every 20 hours.

Fuelled by insatiable Asian demand, rhino horn is worth more than its weight in gold, valued at around $50,000 per kg. This is a war which threatens the black rhino with extinction.

A 'shoot to kill' policy has been adopted by several African countries but does not seem to deter poaching.

Meanwhile, a rhino breeding programme supported by Shearwater Adventures and property owners Rani Resorts is a rare success story in the Zambezi area, with the only remaining black rhino in the proximity of Victoria Falls. This flagship conservation project is situated on the Victoria Falls Private Game Reserve and is now home to six black rhino, three of which were born on the estate.

In an example of how tourism can contribute to the future of endangered wildlife, part of the proceeds of receipts from game drives to see these rare beasts goes to their protection and preservation.

CHARITY

Victoria Falls Steam Train fund raiser for VFAPU

30 March 2012 - US$40.00

Duration: Leave approx 17h00 from Vic Falls station, arrive back about 23h00
Journey – go to bridge, then on to Jafuta Siding where there will be a bonfire and entertainment
DJ Francis will be entertaining guests on the train
Canapes and snacks to be served throughout the journey
Cash bar at reasonable prices.

Booking : Tel: 263 13 429 12 or reservations@steamtraincompany.com

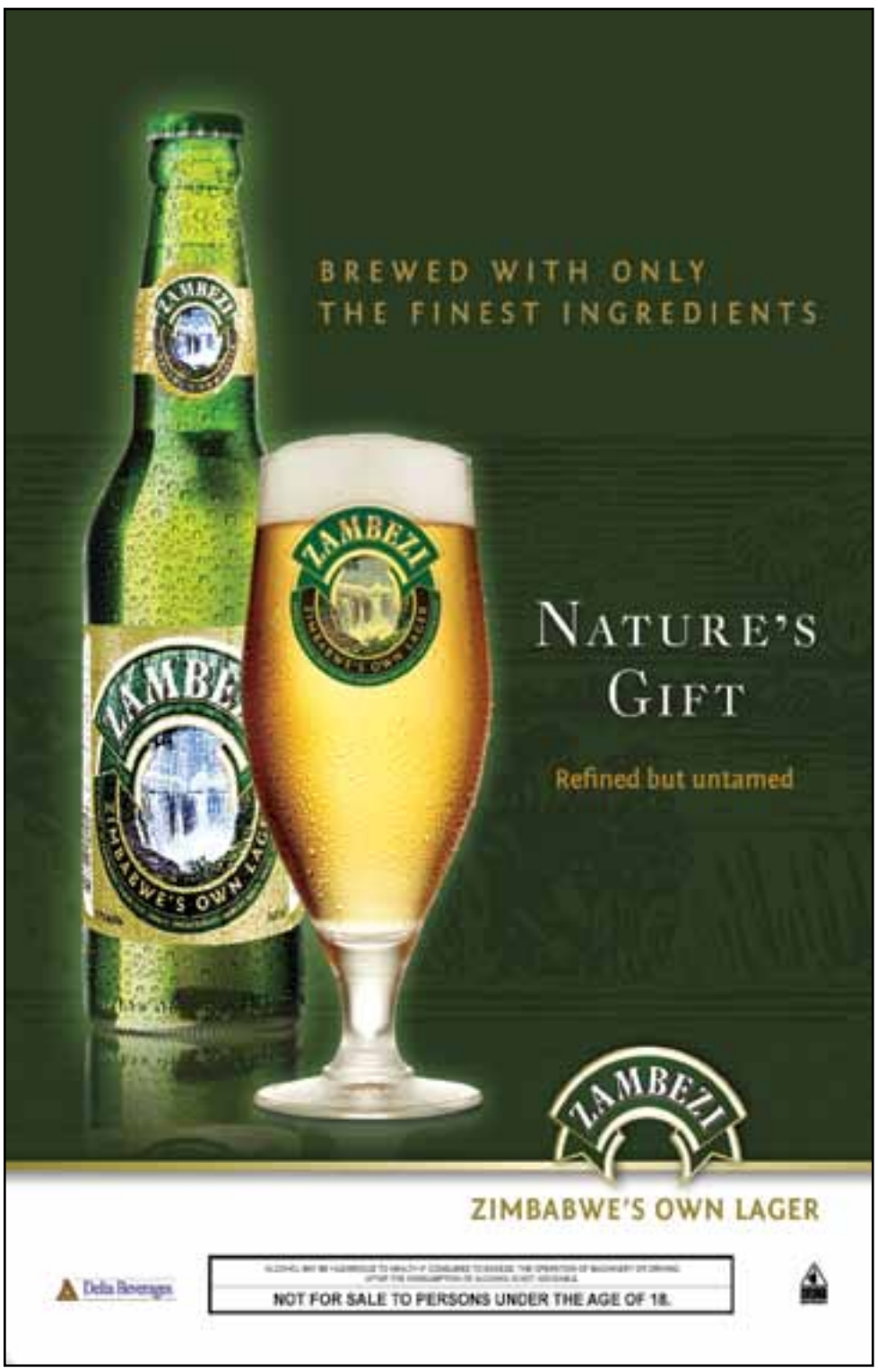
ANTI-POACHING

Proud VFAPU scouts



PHOTO: CHARLES BRIGHTMAN

The sixteen man unit serves to combat the various forms of poaching that occurs in the bush surrounding Victoria Falls. Patrolling seven days a week, the scouts are actively involved in searching for deadly wire snares that have been set by bush meat poachers as well as deterring wood, fish and mineral poaching in the National Park. VFAPU works in close co-operation with the National Parks and Wildlife Management Authority and the Zimbabwe Republic Police, to achieve many successes. The unit was set up by Charles Brightman, and the Victoria Falls Safari Lodge in 1999.





HISTORY

Mystery and magic in Matobo

Archaeologist, historian and guide Paul Hubbard tells of his love for the ancient and spectacular hills of Matobo, filled with relics from prehistory to modern times.

By Paul Hubbard

The Matobo Hills World Heritage Site is acknowledged by UNESCO as having the greatest density of ancient painted sites anywhere in the world, and more archaeological work has been done on these sites than anything else in the area. More than 3,000 are known and more are recorded every year.



Nanke formling PHOTO: PAUL HUBBARD

At times, when out on a survey, it feels as though almost every place you look has a wonderful little painting - or even better a large panel filled with scores of images. Often, these paintings are so brilliantly preserved, the colours seemingly as fresh and bright as the day they were painted as to make you doubt their great antiquity.

Most paintings in the area are thought to have been done in the Late Stone Age, (dating from 13,000 to 1,500 years ago) as a part of the religion and spiritual practices of the nomadic hunter-gatherers who created them. Most images are probably at least 2,000 years old, created using pigments made from various mineral oxides.

The art is metaphorical and symbolic to a degree which is hard to appreciate today. One particular painting from Inanke Cave should be a World Heritage Site in its own right, because of the magnificent quality of its images. These closely packed, multi-coloured ovals create an image called a 'formling,' an important and highly complex group of images associated with termites, termite nests and spiritual potency.

The ovals mimic the egg chambers in the heart of the nest and careful inspection of the lower portion of the painting shows paintings of flying ants entering one end and exiting the other, confirming the hypothesis. The lovely giraffes painted over and around this image are likely metaphors for healing and healing rituals.

Ever a place of refuge and conflict, the Matobo Hills have witnessed trials and tribulations of human endeavour over the millennia.

Shattered fragments of their dreams and achievements are found everywhere in the hills – from pottery shards to overgrown battlefields. All give mute testimony to how these people lived, loved and died in this timeless environment. Paradoxically, it is a place of serenity, beauty and peace. Each group that lived within the hills has left their mark. The painted caves later became important shrines for the traditional worship of God, calling believers from across the region.

Today, walking around these hills becomes something like a pilgrimage. Almost every event of historical significance in Matabeleland can be traced back to the Matobo.



Zimbabwe born **Paul Hubbard** is a professional archaeologist with expertise in rock art studies as well as the pre-colonial period in southern Africa. Formerly a university lecturer, he now works as an independent archaeological consultant and tour guide. He can usually be found wandering in the Matobo Hills where he guides guests out of Camp Amalinda, some of whom have travelled far to meet him personally.



CULTURE

The song of the carnivores



The cheetah PHOTO: HUMPHREY GUMPO

By ZT correspondent

Linking conservation and the creative worlds of music and writing, The Song of the Carnivores programme started with a poetry competition and continues into 2012 with a lecture series and the first public performance of a specially commissioned piece of music at the Bulawayo Music Festival.

Poetry and song will come together in a celebration of the majesty and beauty of Africa's five large carnivores in 'The Song of the Carnivores,' an innovative programme to raise awareness and appreciation of the cheetah, leopard, lion, wild dog and spotted hyaena.

Uniquely linking the worlds of conservation and the arts, the collaborative venture is supported by the Cheetah and Wild Dog Regional Programme, the British Council Zimbabwe, Alliance Française de Bulawayo, the Zimbabwe Academy of Music, 'ama-Books Publishers, the Howard G. Buffet Foundation and the Zoological Society of London.

The first stage of the project was a poetry competition, with both school children and adults invited to write about the five carnivores. This part of the project will culminate in the winning entries being put to music by the celebrated British composer, Richard Sissons. The composition will premiere at the biennial Bulawayo Music Festival during May 2012. Parallel with the creative programme is a series of five talks to be given in Bulawayo to dispel myths about each of the carnivores and to encourage action to ensure their continued survival.

www.cheetahandwilddog.org

Visit www.afzim.org/bulawayo

LECTURE SERIES

PROGRAMME

Cheetah – On the myth that cheetahs are genetically doomed and need to be captive bred to be saved. See full story on page 37.

Lion – On the myth that trophy hunting is bad for lion conservation (16 February).

Wild Dog – On the myth that they are cruel hunters that decimate wild prey populations (22 March).

Leopard – On the myth that there are plenty of leopards, that they are simply a problem animal and that we can continue hunting them indefinitely with no problem (19 April).

Spotted Hyaena – On the myth that they are simply lowly scavengers that impact on lions (17 May).

RECREATION

Challenging bikers amid scenic splendour

The Kasanka Challenge calls mountain bike enthusiasts to a race through a scenic national park in Zambia.

By ZT Correspondent

The second Kasanka Challenge mountain bike race takes place this year in the beautiful environs of Kasanka National Park. This race traverses Miombo woodland, wetlands, rivers and villages where waving crowds cheer on the competitors.

The event takes advantage of the increased popularity of mountain biking to build awareness of the conservation needs of the park and of neighbouring communities. All proceeds are ploughed back into conservation through the Kasanka Trust Ltd which manages the park. Kasanka is the first and longest running private partnership park in Zambia.

The park is famed for the largest mammal migration in the world - with over 8 million fruit bats roosting during the last three months of the year. It is also home to numerous large mammals including the elusive sitatunga and more than 460 bird species.

The inaugural Challenge took place in May 2011 and attracted a field of 22 riders who competed in two categories of 56 km and 22 km. A short kiddie's ride was also catered for.



Race winner, Ryan Ellis enjoying the Kasanka Challenge

PHOTO: JOYCE BENADIE

The main event was won by Ryan Ellis in a blistering time of just over two hours which completely blew away the competition and landed him a weekend at Robin Pope Safaris in South Luangwa.

A local Njinga race of 12 km is also part of the cycle-themed weekend, to give local cyclists the opportunity to show off their cycling prowess. Last year this race was won by Greward Chalwe who took home a new Zambike as first prize.

Kasanka is easily accessible on tar road from Lusaka, and offers accommodation in chalets as well as camping.

TOURISM

Tips on booking your safari

Helpful suggestions for anyone planning a safari.

By Daphne Lindsay

To my mind a small exclusive safari is one of the best holidays in the world. But what might be to my liking might not appeal to someone else. Over the years I have met all different types on safari; those like me who are addicted and can't get enough, to those who fancied the idea but what they are experiencing is not really what they wanted.

I have been called in the middle of the night by a hysterical client who was having a fit because there were elephant outside her chalet and she was convinced every wild animal would eat her. She was definitely better suited to a package holiday staying in hotels with air-conditioning, TV and game viewing from closed vehicles.

Some tips on how to book your safari:-

- Book through a reputable and knowledgeable tour operator or travel agent, or if you know where you want to go, book direct.
- Don't be scared to ask questions.
- Give as much information about your preferences as possible. There's nothing worse than being sent somewhere that doesn't suit you.
- Let them know if it is your first safari or where else you have travelled.
- What type of accommodation do you like – air-conditioned comfort or a tented camp?
- Do you feel safer in bigger hotels or lodges?
- Do you want budget or luxury accommodation?
- Are you relaxed about wild animals walking freely around the camp?
- Are visas required?
- How long do you want your safari for?
- Advise your interests – are you keen on birding or photography?
- Advise any special dietary requirements.
- Do you have any physical challenges, for example needing a wheelchair or having difficulty with steps.
- Location, location, location!

Where the property is situated, for example inside or outside the park.

What are you likely to see.

The distance to game areas or other attractions.

- Does the property have internet or TV?
- Whether access is by air or road.
- What is game viewing like at the time of year you will be travelling?
- How do transfers work and the time taken.
- If flying do you need to pay airport departure taxes?
- Is it a malaria area? Seek professional advice on malaria prophylaxis.
- How much luggage is allowed?
- What will the weather be like? If it is during the rainy season does it rain all day?
- What do the temperatures get up to?
- Is your passport valid for travel?
- What vaccinations do you need?

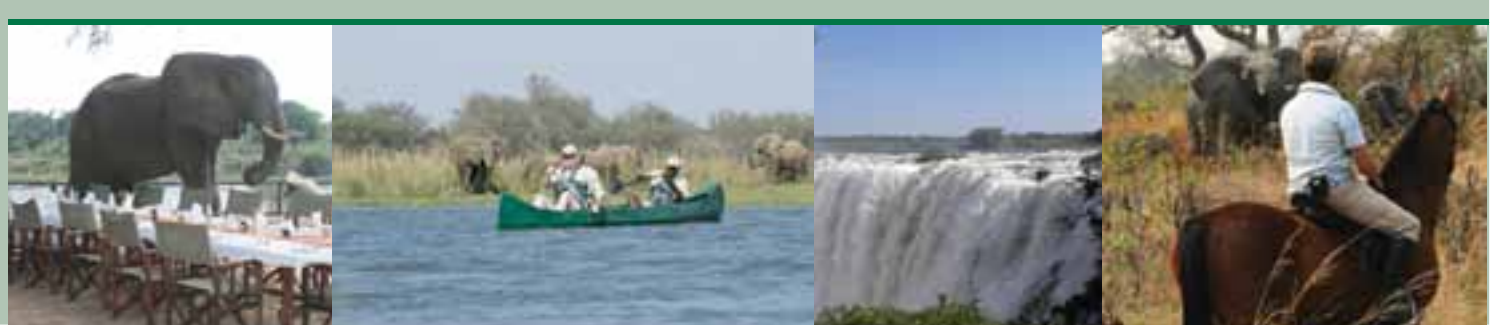


Daphne Lindsay was born and brought up on a farm in Zimbabwe. Has been running her own safari tour operating business for the past 20 years. Due to her love of the African Bush she has travelled Africa extensively. She now lives in Zambia with her husband Ian where Daphne a runs her own Tour Operating business Zamag Tours & Safaris. Not only do they tailor-make personalised safaris throughout Zambia, Zimbabwe and Botswana but they specialise in Agricultural Tours. Daphne's passion is horse safaris and annually guides a groups to different destination each year.

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CONSERVATION

Dealing with snaring



PHOTO : SCLS

'SLCS wildlife rescue team immobilizes and treats a snared giraffe with the help of Flatdogs Camp, Mfuwe'

By Rachel McRobb

South Luangwa Conservation Society has an active programme to lift snares and treat wildlife injured by snares in its prime big game country.

Illegal snaring for bush meat is widespread in Zambia and represents a major threat to important target and non-target species such as giraffe, elephant, lion and the African wild dog. Snares are easy to set and conceal and wire is readily available.

With the human population in Africa predicted to double by 2050 (UN-ESA 2008), sustainable protein resources will be increasingly strained, escalating the harvest of the illegal bush meat trade. Where meat poaching occurs, wire snaring is likely to be the most popular method. However, due to their non-selective nature, snares inflict severe injuries on wildlife, normally resulting in a long, painful death.

Elephants are particularly susceptible to snaring as they are often attracted to farming areas around protected areas such as the Game Management Areas which surround the parks. While lions and wild dogs are not target species, their tendency to frequent areas with high prey density, where snaring is likely to be more prevalent, also makes them extremely susceptible.

In order to combat snaring in the South Luangwa, the South Luangwa Conservation Society supports village scouts who conduct regular anti-snaring patrols. The Society also responds to reports of snared animals and will immobilize and treat any casualties.

From 2006 - 2011 SLCS has detected over 50 elephants and 15 lions with wire snares. Every pack of wild dogs recorded also had an individual with a snare, while numerous giraffe, hyaena and antelope have also been reported injured. Luckily all these animals were identified, immobilized and treated and the vast majority made a full recovery.

Visit www.slcszambia.org;

Email: rachel@slcszambia.org

CONSERVATION

The Chichele pride

By ZT Correspondent



PHOTO: CHICHELE

Chichele lions

The Chichele Presidential Lodge in South Luangwa National Park is one of the many safari lodges whose guides assist the Zambia Lion Project with details of their lion sightings and photographs.

The lodge was originally built in 1972 as a private presidential retreat for Kenneth Kaunda. We look at the recent history of the Chichele lion pride, with information built up over years of daily observation.

In 2000 the Chichele pride consisted of fourteen lions which ruled the land surrounding Chichele Hill and the Presidential Lodge. However in 2004 thirteen of the lions migrated to the western area of the South Luangwa National Park, leaving behind only one female.

As it happened this female was pregnant at the time and she gave birth to two females and one male cub, which she successfully reared to form the new Chichele pride.

In 2007 the alpha female became pregnant again and gave birth to two more cubs, one female and one male. Sadly, the female cub did not survive.

Tragedy struck again in 2009 when the pride was hunting a herd of buffalo. During the hunt the alpha female was attacked by one of the buffalo and suffered a broken back. Hunting large prey has its dangers and a determined attack from an adult buffalo, or backward kick from a zebra, can be fatal, as in this case.

In 2010 the young male, coming into maturity, decided it was time to leave his maternal pride and successfully challenged an older male from a neighbouring pride. This displaced male in turn found refuge with the Chichele pride. He has now become the alpha male, but reaching almost 12 years old is considered 'Madala' (Nyanja for 'old man').

Only time will tell how long he can hold sway over the land surrounding Chichele Hill.

Visit www.santuaryretreats.com



RESEARCH

High-tech tracks Luangwa lions

By ZT Correspondent



PHOTO: ZAMBIA LION PROJECT

Dr. Paula White, Zambia Lion Project using high tech Biopsy darting methods.

Since 2003, Dr Paula White has been studying wild carnivores in Zambia. What began as an investigation of secretive, nocturnal genets in North Luangwa, quickly grew into a country-wide project on what may be the most iconic of all species, the African lion.

Dr White's Zambia Lion Project operates primarily outside of the parks, seeking the more elusive (and less-studied) lions that reside in the surrounding game management areas.

Biopsy darts are one of the high-tech approaches that White has been using, allowing her to sample individual lions without the need to drug or handle them. The high-quality DNA contained within the tiny snip allows White to learn more about the valley's lion populations, including elusive individuals seldom seen by the public.

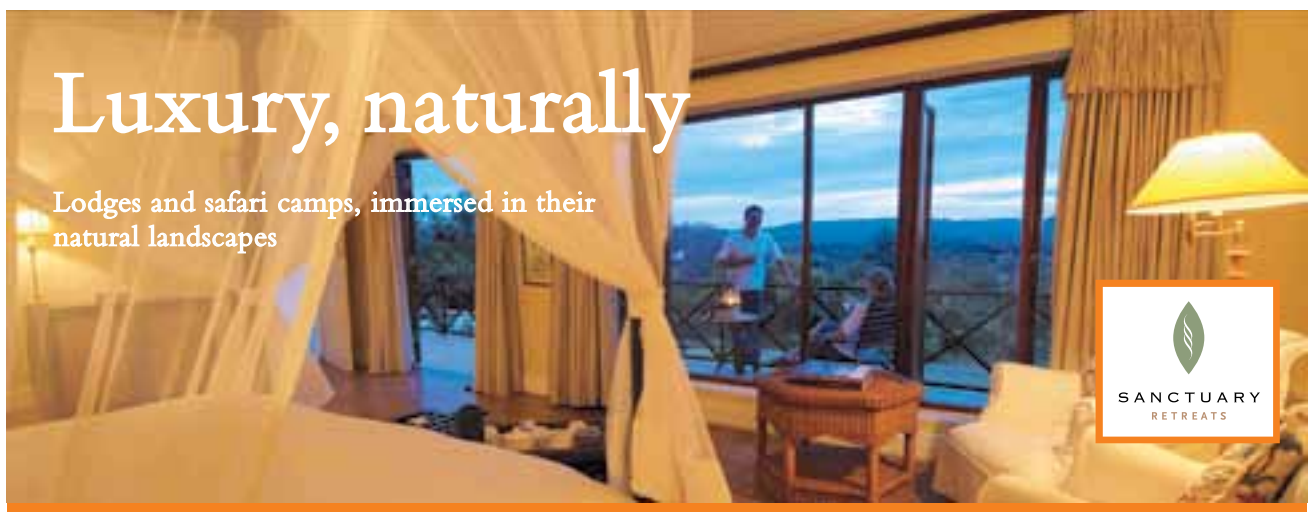
DNA analyses are being used to estimate the number of lions in the Luangwa Valley ecosystem, measure their genetic biodiversity to assess the level of inbreeding, examine the distance and direction of dispersing individuals, as well as conduct paternity tests of adult males.

"To study cats that are rarely seen, you need to get creative," says White who, in addition to DNA work, uses playback equipment such as the bawling buffalo calf to detect the presence of lions as well as to attract them for sampling. Spoor counts and interviews with professional hunters and photographic guides provide seasonal account data, which over the course of multiple years can be used to establish population trends.

Most recently, White has been using GPS radio-collars (equipped with automatic drop-off mechanisms) as a comparative method to document lion movements, range and habitat use.

White cites the crucial role that safari-hunting operators play in protecting the game management areas which serve as buffer zones around national parks, and much of her work is dedicated to developing and promoting sustainable hunting. Towards this end, White is working closely with Zambia Wildlife Authority and the hunting fraternity to develop mandatory sampling, and the adoption of an age-based trophy selection program similar to that in Tanzania.

paw@carnivoreconservation.com





PLANT ENCOUNTERS

Dogbane drugs

1. Frangipani
2. Madagascar periwinkle
3. Poison-rope fruits
4. Kombe seeds on vine
5. Reduced carbon Kombe seeds in hand











By Evelyn Roe

The pink or white flowers of the Madagascar periwinkle **(Pic2)** brighten up many gardens, but few people appreciate what a gift this species is to the world of medicine.

Medical researchers became interested in the plant during World War Two, when Canadian soldiers stationed in the Philippines used the leaves as a substitute for insulin. The discovery in Jamaica of a "periwinkle tea" with anti-diabetic properties led to further Canadian and American research in the 1950s and the development of drug treatments for cancer.

Extracts of the whole plant have yielded more than 70 different alkaloids of medicinal use. Two of them, vincristine and vinblastine, have raised the survival rate in childhood leukaemia from less than 10% to over 90%. Remission of other forms of cancer, such as Hodgkin's lymphoma, has also been achieved after chemotherapy with the naturally-occurring alkaloids.

Traditional herbalists use extracts of Madagascar periwinkle to treat high blood pressure, diabetes, bacillary dysentery, rheumatic pains, and abnormally heavy and painful menstruation.

Its scientific name is *Catharanthus roseus*, formerly *Vinca rosea*. It belongs to the dogbane family, the Apocynaceae, a Greek word that means "away from dogs". This refers to the use of some species as dog poison. The family also incorporates the milkweeds, which were previously classified as the Asclepiadaceae, named after Asclepius, the Greek god of healing.

Here are two examples of indigenous medicinal plants in the dogbane family, from the Livingstone area:

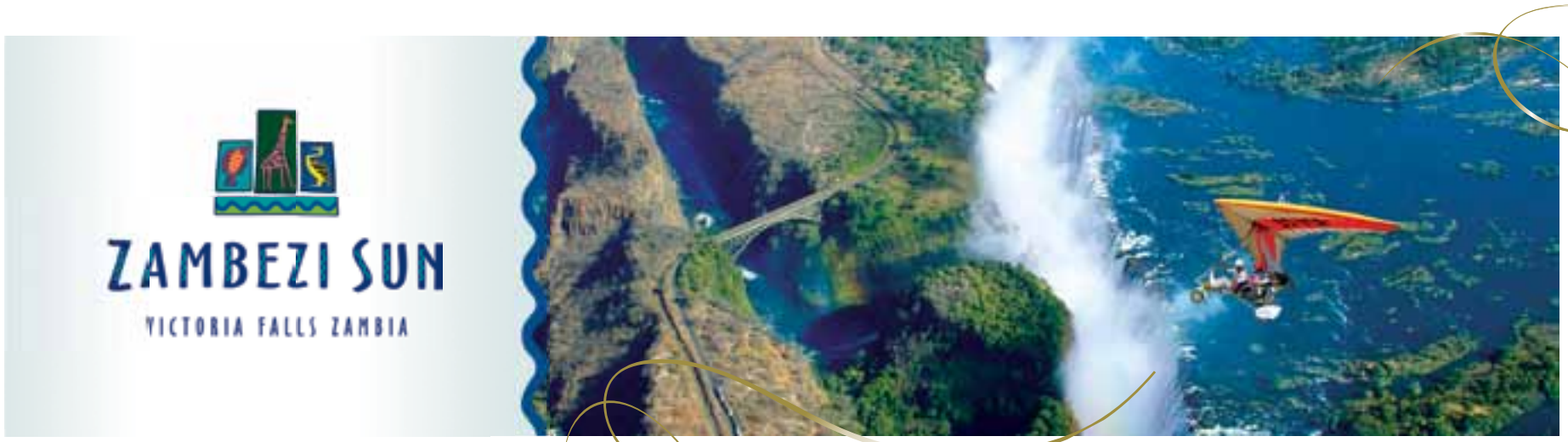
Poison-rope, *Tacazzea apiculata*, **(Pic3)** is a common vine in woodland fringing the Zambezi. It has milky sap, opposite leaves, and velvety fruits in paired, slender follicles. Traditional herbalists make many uses of this plant, including treating "fits". Pharmacological research has discovered that extracts do control convulsions and epilepsy.

Kombe tail-flower, *Strophanthus kombe*, can be found overhanging the path by the Victoria Falls in Zambia's Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park. Its tiny seeds are used to make drugs for heart conditions. They contain compounds that slow down the heart rate, yet increase the force and efficiency of its contractions. During heart surgery, strophanthin can be administered to stop the heart temporarily.

The seeds **(Pic4)** are dispersed in a mass of fluff from paired, pod-like fruits **(Pic5)** that split open when dry, but for pharmaceutical production they are harvested while still in the fruit.

It's not advisable to ingest any material (or to inhale smoke from burning wood or leaves) from the dogbane family, unless administered by a qualified medical practitioner. This caution includes ornamentals such as frangipani (*Plumeria* species) **(Pic1)** and oleander (*Nerium oleander*).

Evelyn Roe; Botanical Researcher with North-West Naturalists' Society of Zambia; roe.evelyn@gmail.com



CONSERVATION

Lion captured near Livingstone

By Peter Roberts

Residents of the wider Livingstone area were on alert in January when a wild lion was reported in the area, the first for over thirty years. It was initially feared that the animal had escaped from one of the two captive lion tourist interaction operations which operate locally, who were quick to confirm that none of their animals were missing and to offer assistance to local wildlife officials.

Zambia Wildlife Authority area warden Rodgers Nkhoma confirmed that the authority started tracking the lion immediately after it was first reported in the area on 22 January, and that the animal had killed three cattle in Songwe village area. He added that there was provision in the law for compensating the owners of the cattle for their losses.

In an area with virtually zero natural prey species to support lions, the Zambia Wildlife Authority, with the support of wildlife vet Dr Ian Parsons, and help from staff of the two local captive lion operations, decided to capture the lion to prevent any further loss of livestock. Often the last resort with lions which become livestock raiders is to shoot them as problem animals.

The capture was successfully undertaken on 26 January, when the lion was darted and drugged and transported to a secure captive facility near Dambwa. Questions over his origins took a surprising turn when it was discovered that hidden underneath his dark shaggy mane was a GPS research collar.

For more on this amazing lion and his travels see our cover story and special conservation feature on front cover and page 16 on the work of Hwange's lion researchers.



PHOTO: MUKUNI BIG 5

Left to right are; Cliff Welch (Mukuni Big 5); Dr, Ian Parsons; Ian Ngwenya (MB5); ZAWA Scout Zimba; Richard Leach (Lion Encounter & ALERT).

The first wild lion to be recorded in the Livingstone area had his own story to tell – in scientific detail

MORE ONLINE *View more images of the lion's journey in the Livingstone section of www.zambezitraveller.com*



ENVIRONMENT

Climate ambassadors clean up

By Clare Mateke

Unite for Climate, a programme coordinated by UNICEF, came to Livingstone, Zambia, this year with twenty child climate ambassadors from local schools who lead a tree-planting and litter collection effort, facilitated by the Wildlife and Environmental Conservation Society of Zambia.

Twenty child climate ambassadors from schools in Livingstone helped clean up litter around the Victoria Falls in January. This was part of an ongoing project funded by UNICEF, in which children are being trained as climate ambassadors to carry out projects to improve the environment and help mitigate climate change.

The programme is called Unite for Climate and is being facilitated in Zambia on behalf of UNICEF by the Wildlife and Environmental Conservation Society of Zambia. This year's event was combined with a visit to Livingstone by a UNICEF team from Ireland, including crew members from Aer Lingus, Ireland's national airline, who have been helping raise funds for UNICEF.

The day's programme began with a courtesy call on the Mayor of Livingstone, after which the Mayor and the Permanent Secretary for Southern Province led the climate ambassadors, the visiting Irish team, members of the Wildlife and Environmental Conservation Society of Zambia, and representatives from related organisations, in a tree planting ceremony at Livingstone Hospital. A total of 15 trees were planted near the children's wing of the hospital.



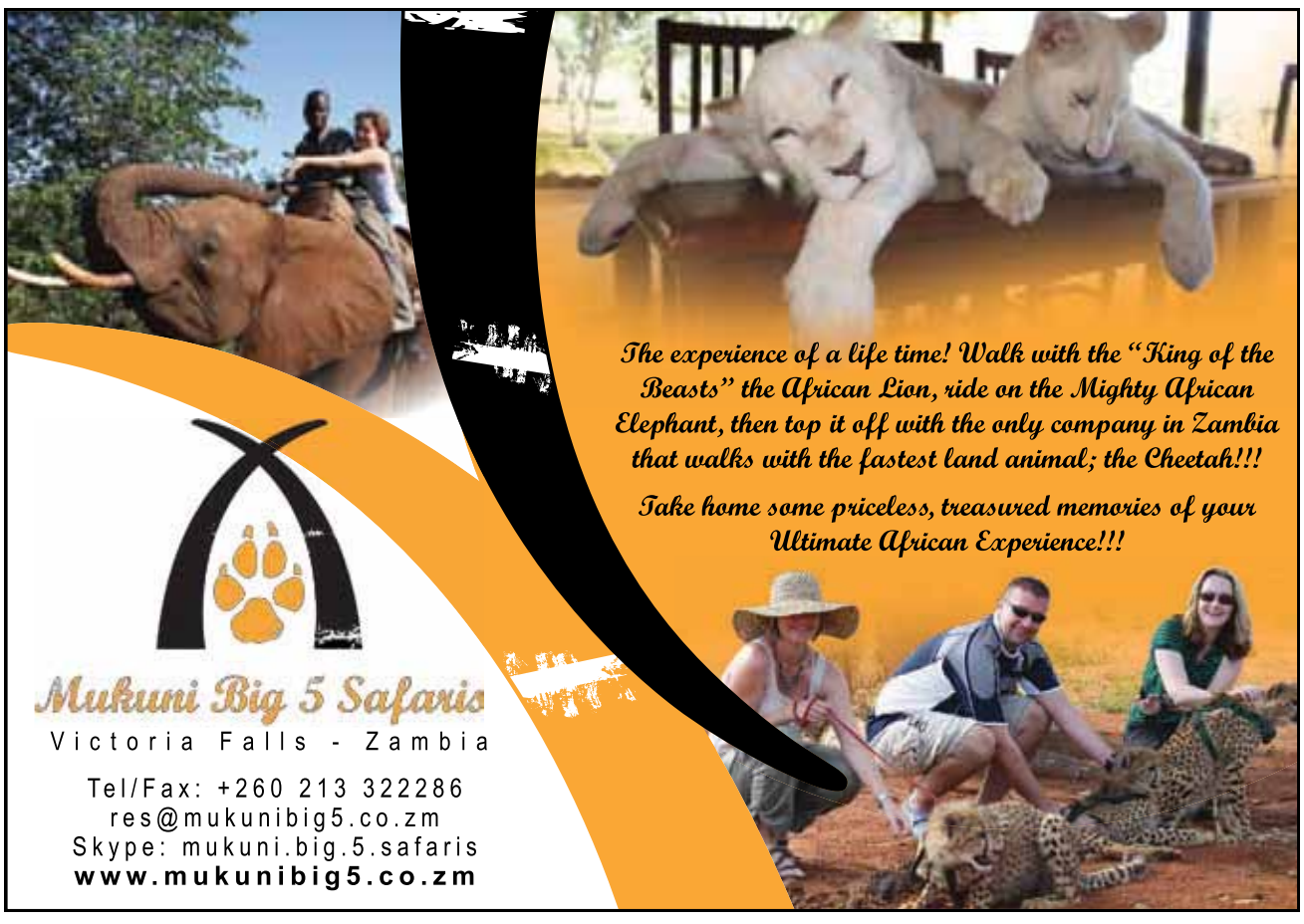
PHOTO: CLARE MATEKE

Students from the community schools drumming

The party then proceeded to the Victoria Falls, where they split into three groups. One group collected litter from Victoria Falls bridge to the Zambian border post, another group went down the path to the Boiling Pot, while the third group took the photographic trail which leads round towards the bridge and gives an overview of the Falls. Lots of litter was collected and much fun was had by all.

The ambassadors hope to make this a regular event to try and keep Livingstone and the Victoria Falls clean. They also hope to carry out tree planting programmes, school debates, and environmental awareness campaigns on radio and television.





BIRDING

Counting the Zambezi River's water birds

Birds dependent on wetland habitats can provide a good indicator of the health of the environment as well as having their own intrinsic importance. This report covers the first of the biannual water bird counts in the 17th year that the survey has been taken in the Livingstone area.

By Clare Mateke
Livingstone Museum

Every January and July for the past 17 years the Livingstone Museum has counted the water birds along the Zambezi River. A team of researchers and volunteers walks along the river bank from the Victoria Falls to the end of Mosi-o-Tunya National Park, identifying and counting every water bird in sight. A second count is made at the Livingstone sewage ponds; the whole process takes four days.

Birds included in the count are those that are dependent on wetlands for their survival. The purpose of the count is to keep track of the status of bird life in the area, as well as providing an assessment of the state of the wetlands, as the number and diversity of bird species gives an indication of the changing state of the wetland.

This is only one part of a continent-wide census of water birds, carried out by volunteers across Africa. Last year ten wetland areas in Zambia were included resulting in a total count of over 28,000 water birds. This was the widest coverage of the country in the past decade.

This year the Museum and Zambia Wildlife Authority staff were joined by volunteers who love to spend a day in the bush counting birds; it is always more fun with more people. A total of 748 birds were counted, from 40 different species. This was well over the average number – perhaps because we had more than the usual number of good bird spotters?



Clare Mateke, Terry Nyambe, Joreck Chishika, Kawana Munalula, Sydney Munakabayo, Todd Johnson

PHOTO: AVI SABAG

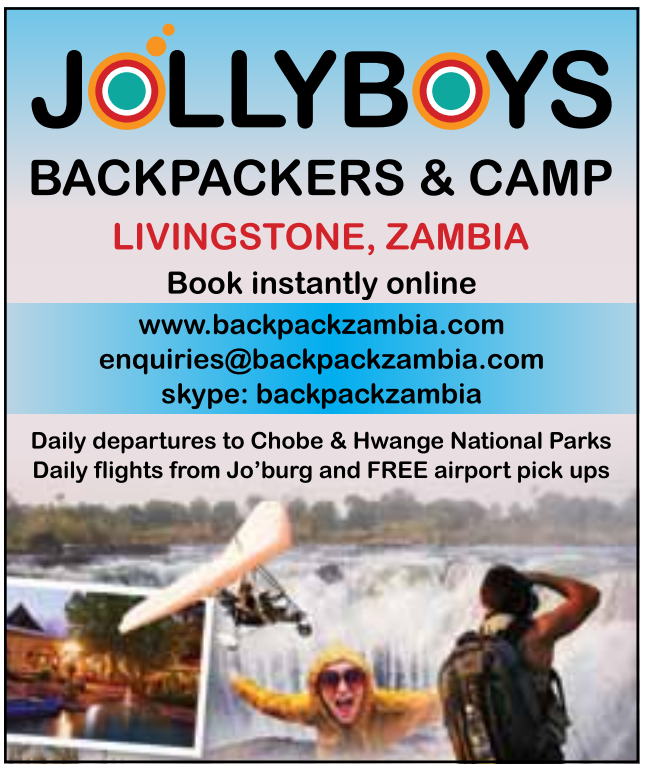
Abundant species included reed cormorant, cattle egret, openbill stork, sacred ibis and African jacana. Interesting sightings were two painted snipe recorded at the sewage ponds for the first time in seven years, a slaty egret, only recorded three times before and a black-crowned night heron, previously recorded only twice.

We deliberately sought out the hard-to-see rock pratincole out on the rocks in the Zambezi River – and found them. These birds head north as soon as the river starts to rise and covers the rocks that they like to sit on; we were lucky to find them still around.

A record number of 27 long-toed lapwings were seen at the sewage ponds – the highest number so far recorded. This species was first recorded in 2008 at this location and appears to have been increasing in number ever since, along with the water hyacinth plant that seems to make up an important part of its habitat.

Purple gallinules are also multiplying, enjoying the cover of the bulrushes but venturing more and more out into the open. In addition, the sewage ponds yielded a number of waders including wood sandpiper, ruff, common sandpiper and three-banded plover.

The sewage ponds provide an ever-changing and diverse habitat for birds and we once counted over 1,000 birds there. Unfortunately, illegal settlements have been mushrooming around its borders posing an ever-greater threat to the bird life. There has been a proposal to turn the ponds into a mini bird sanctuary and placing a full time bird guide there, who, apart from guiding tourists and other keen birders, could teach the children who live nearby, to enjoy the beauty and diversity of birds, gradually discouraging the use of catapults. Ideas are welcome!









ART & CRAFT

Rhythms of changing times



Rhythms of Changing Times 3 "He stands impotent on the threshold between life and death, beckoning her to bareness as they together step on toes of dancing trees."



Chiinga Siavwapa

In his own words, painter and wilderness guide Chiinga Siavwapa explains his current exhibition in Livingstone,

By Chiinga Siavwapa

I have always thought art has a far more important role to play in contemporary times than just the general perception of it as decorative or entertaining. My painting styles and subjects therefore change not necessarily in the use of media but based on issues currently affecting us. Recently my comments and expressions have been on environment and political developments.

As a nature guide for walking safaris, I see nature as art and art in nature. Nature is my inspiration mentally, physically and spiritually. To me, there lies a thin line between our environment and art. Unfortunately in most cases, nature is mismanaged by humans through political systems. Political influences are in themselves not bad if intentions and implementations are for a better future for all. Hence "Rhythms of Changing Times" is the theme for my April exhibition.

It is important for every person who is conscious of our environment to sometimes pause and consider how fairly we treat other forms of life. Human existence depends on what we do to anything living. We don't need more unanswered questions about disappearing wildlife and forests.

What happened to the miombo pied barbet which two years back was easily seen just beyond the Livingstone town's northern weigh bridge? One solution to this problem would be the passing and implementation of a bylaw restricting unnecessary cutting of trees on newly allocated plots. Building plans must fit in with the environment and not vice versa.

The basic fact and principal of respect for life seems to be ignored as deforestation, poaching, greed selfishness, corruption and crime, escalate. I try to address and point to these issues. My works, mostly characterized by human faces and figures, may be viewed and read like a newspaper and displayed as historical fact.

Contact: chingalog@yahoo.com

CHARITY

Artists exhibit for a worthy cause



PHOTO: CLARE MATEKE

Exhibited paintings at the exhibition

By ZT correspondent

A diverse exhibition of visual artworks in Livingstone aims to raise funds for needy children of deceased artists.

The Livingstone Museum, in collaboration with the Zambia National Visual Arts Council, is hosting an exhibition of paintings and prints with works carefully selected from Visual Arts Council members in Kafue, Mazabuka, Monze, Choma and Livingstone districts. The council is a non-governmental, non-profit organisation formed in October 1989 with the aim of fostering the development of visual art in Zambia and uplifting the standard of living of its members.

Proceeds from the sale of art will raise funds for orphans of deceased visual artists. Following much discussion of the predicament of these children, the exhibition was initiated within the context of museum outreach to the community. This comes after the 'Art Live On' exhibition in Lusaka, sponsored by the Lechwe Trust, with proceeds given to families of departed visual artists.

A wide cross section of artists, male and female, young and old, have work on show producing a uniquely diverse exhibition. Works include samples from the studios of Poto Kabwe and Chansa Chishimba both of whom have been exhibiting since 1979. Clare Mateke is known for her keen interest in wild animals and landscapes, while Alumedi Maonde, Suse Kasokota and Chiinga Siavwapa are eclectic modern artists who have distinguished themselves with individual techniques.

The Livingstone exhibition is accommodated in the museum courtyard and runs from January to March.

Events

March, April, May
Art Exhibition 09hrs -16.30hrs
L/Stone Museum
Clare Mateke
e-mail: c. mateke@gmail.com

31st March
Car Boot Sale & Easter Fair
Protea Hotel
Tanya + 260 213324630

Wednesdays
Touch Rugby
17.30hrs , *L/Stone Golf Club*
J.T. Cell + 260 (0) 974269646

Fridays
Cake Sale
11.00hrs - 13.00hrs
Acacia School,
Sonja + 260 (0) 977126526

Tuesdays & Thursdays
Yoga classes
Tuesdays & Thursdays 8.30 - 9.30 hrs , *Livingstone Golf Club.*
Bev + 260 (0) 979959981

Fridays
Rotary Club of L/Stone meet
13.00hrs - 14.00hrs,
Livingstone Golf Club.
Sue + 260 (0) 965888810

8th April
Easter Sunday Buffet Lunch
13.00hrs - 15.00hr,
Protea Hotel
Phone + 260 213324630

Late March/early April
Kuomboka Ceremony Western Province
Zambia National Tourist Board
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COMMUNITY

Sun International impresses UNDP representative

By ZT correspondent

Sun International Zambia conducted its first harvest of compost from their in-house worm farm and used this important phase in their project to train 18 members of their community in vermiculture. This activity marks yet another important phase in the work of the worm farm.



Community training PHOTO: SUN INTERNATIONAL

The worm farm uses earthworms to process and manage organic kitchen waste by feeding on it to produce organic fertilizer that comes in liquid and solid (compost) forms, good for the hotel and community gardens that Sun International Zambia supports.

The Programme Analyst Governance, Ms Bairbre Fee, from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was recently at the Resort where she undertook a tour of Sun International Zambia's community projects that are situated on- site. More and more guests are showing an interest in learning about the success stories that are being told by Sun International Zambia and the beneficiaries from its community initiatives. Fee was impressed by the scope of these projects and the impact the company is making on the lives of the community.

Fee was in Livingstone to undertake a study of the developments taking place in the region and to meet with various stakeholders.

MORE ONLINE

Ceremony launches fish restocking

A total of 50, 000 three spot and red breasted tilapia fingerlings have been released into the river around Mwandi under the first fish restocking programme.

Livingstone receives donated books

Educational institutions around Livingstone will benefit from a donation of some 22,000 books and ten desktop computers. The books are surplus resource materials from institutions in the United States.

MYTHS & LEGENDS

The myth of the African thief ant



By Todd Johnson,
Curator of Entomology, Department of Natural History, Livingstone Museum.

The African thief ant has been cleared of the allegations of theft, by the Curator of Entomology in the Department of Natural History, at Livingstone Museum.

During the rainy season we expect to see all sorts of insects from grasshoppers, crickets and beetles to ants. Ants are undoubtedly the most successful and ecologically dominant group of social insects in the world. They make up 15–20% of the animal biomass (dry weight) in tropical rainforests.

Most of us have surely seen flying ants which are not termites during the rainy season. From my perspective, the African thief ant queens (*Carebara vidua*) are the most amazing of the flying ants. They are black to reddish brown in colour with swollen abdomens.

These queens are commonly called 'fulufute' or 'matingatila' in Nyanja and Tonga respectively. The queen is eaten as a delicacy by many people living along the Zambezi River, especially in the middle and lower Zambezi valleys.

In the past, scientists have given conflicting reports on the establishment of a new nest by virgin queens leaving the parent colony. According to one veteran expert, the virgin queen when leaving the mother colony steals some of the workers, who are actually her sisters, to help her with rearing of her first brood of eggs and larvae. The author in this case thought the young queen needed the workers because she would be unable to feed her young with her large mouth parts.

Another ant taxonomist found the African thief ant nesting in termite mounds and believed that the tiny workers construct channels through which they creep into the termite chambers to steal termite eggs and their young for food. This ant got its name from one of these fairy tales

COMMUNITY

Facing the challenge of deafness

By Dianah Genada

One success story from Livingstone of an individual challenged by deafness, Ricky Mapetapeta, who nevertheless today makes a living for his family, through his own hard work, perseverance and some good fortune.



Ricky and his family PHOTO: DIANAH GENADA

At five years old Ricky Mapetapeta was stricken with malaria and became deaf as a result. As he grew up, the greatest challenge he faced was getting people to communicate with him and to understand what he was saying.

The public generally do not know sign language and with no specialised schools in Livingstone to teach the language of the deaf, Mapetapeta found employment opportunities were limited.

With determination, Mapetapeta overcame his disability. He was blessed with friends who were willing to share their practical skills and he gained hands-on training in carpentry. Today, Mapetapeta is able to make a living for his family selling furniture to anybody ready with an order. One day he hopes to own a small furniture shop to improve the lives of his family.

The Deaf Baptist Church which meets at Holy Cross Basic School every Sunday has recognised the challenges faced by the deaf members of Livingstone community. Taking Mapetapeta as an example of how individuals can meet these challenges, in coordination with the Livingstone Fundamental Baptist Church Leaders of the deaf community have developed plans to build a school in Dambwa Central to teach deaf students and create skills for job opportunities.

Currently, Livingstone Fundamental Baptist Church helps the deaf by organizing social events such as conferences, luncheons and other activities to develop self esteem and let the deaf know that they have a part in society and a place where they belong.





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ENVIRONMENT

Problem – paper waste. Solution – read on!



PHOTO: ABC COFFINS

Making final touches to the coffins

ADVANTAGES

- **The coffins are fully biodegradable.**
- **Every three coffins produced saves one tree.**
- **The community can clean up the streets by selling their waste paper.**
- **Reduced carbon dioxide emission by burning less paper.**

By Ferdie Barnard

Introducing an environmentally friendly coffin made from compressed paper waste which will both help clean up cities and cost less than a conventional wood coffin – and save a few trees. This is a must-read story for anyone concerned about pollution and people.

Two years ago Livingstone City Council asked me to build a trailer for their tractor to collect and compress paper waste that was generated within the city. It was to be pulled from point to point where waste would be collected, compressed and then delivered to the city dump where it would be burned.

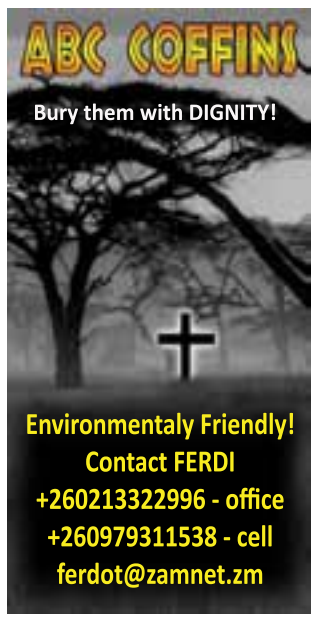
I realised they were asking me to manufacture a trailer with a hydraulic press which would be costly. This got me thinking.

Recycling paper is a great idea but the cost of transporting it is high. Not only that, the town of Livingstone produces about one tonne of paper trash daily. When it is burnt all that paper goes up in the form of a pollutant, carbon dioxide gas. So the question was how to rid the city of this paper waste cleanly and also put it to some commercial use that would justify the cost of collecting and compressing it.

Coffins! There is a great need for inexpensive coffins in Africa. Would there be a way to make coffins out of this paper waste? After many protypes and design changes, I came up with the process which would solve the problem. It is a papier-mache type product that can be moulded into the form of a coffin that is strong enough to support the necessary weight.

It is strong, biodegradable, lightweight and cost effective - and it is exclusively manufactured using waste paper trash that is thrown away every day. With mould improvements and better machinery, we now have a state-of-the-art production process that can be replicated and sold to cities throughout Africa.

The coffins are painted inside with a biodegradable latex that gives a water tight seal to prevent contamination of underground water. The end product is one third the price of pressed wood and thus more affordable for low-budget families to bury their loved ones with dignity.





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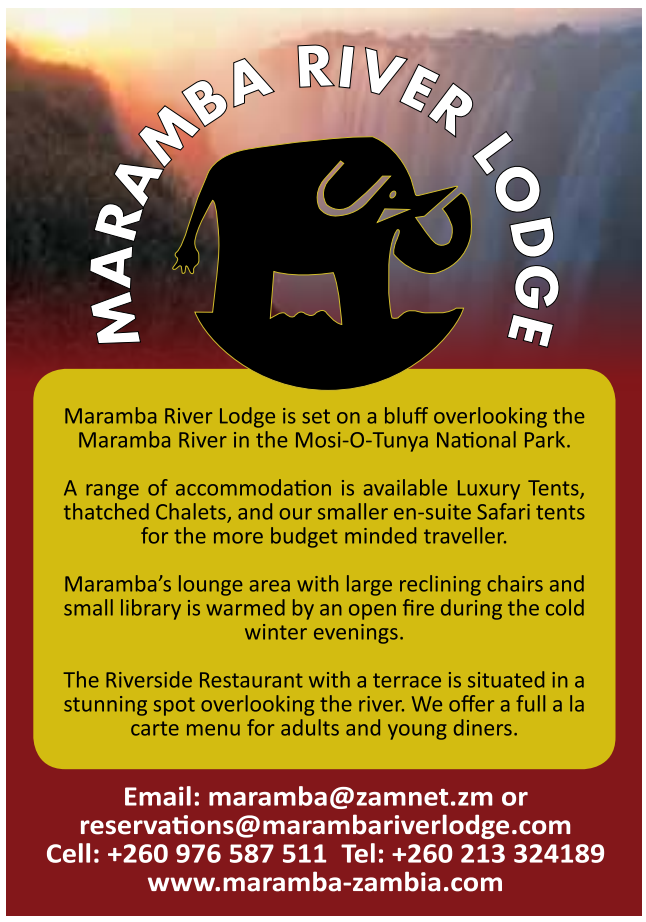
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WILDLIFE

Cheetah do well outside parks

The first in a series of lectures on the large carnivores, Dr Netty Purchase spoke on the fact that the future of cheetah lies outside of captive breeding centres and also outside of protected areas – on land where prey exists and the people are tolerant



Cheetah cubs Inset- Cheetah at sunset



PHOTOS: HUMPHREY GUMPO

By ZT correspondent

The inaugural lecture in The Song of the Carnivores series was given by Dr Netty Purchase in Bulawayo in January. Dr Purchase's talk was titled '*The Cheetahs; are they really genetically doomed?*'

Although closely related to the lion, the tiger, the leopard and the jaguar, the cheetah is a unique species in a unique genus. A flexible spine, long tail that acts as a rudder, large heart and long legs all work together to allow the cheetah to reach high speeds; 104 kms per hour has been recorded.

Once it catches up with its prey, generally antelope, the prey is tripped and then held and suffocated. Although these high speeds can only be maintained for short periods, the cheetah is a remarkably successful hunter.

Because of its body structure the cheetah is not powerful enough to protect its prey or its young in areas with lion and hyaena, and losses can be high. Consequently the cheetah does well in areas with few lion and hyaena, but these areas tend to be where humans live, who can provide another threat.

Until recently it was argued that the cheetah was genetically doomed – that it had gone through a genetic bottleneck a millennium ago, resulting in low genetic diversity. This led to the belief that only captive breeding, carefully selecting individuals for maximum diversity, would safeguard the species.

More recent evidence proves that the cheetah is no less diverse than most large carnivores. Being at the top of the food chain, cheetah exist in low numbers and hence have relatively low genetic diversity. However, recent studies have indicated that there are at least four separate groups of cheetah – the Asian, North African, East African and Southern African.

These groups are distinct enough to mean that movement of animals between these areas could be detrimental. Cheetahs also breed very well and have high cub survival where there are no competitors, something that would not happen if they were inbred.

It is a sad fact that cheetah are prized in some parts of the world as pets, and animals from captive centres are highly sought after. The more cheetahs in captivity and the more breeding centres, the more difficult it is to police this trade in live animals, and because of the lucrative nature of the trade, illegal trading has grown.

Being at the top of the food chain, cheetah exist in low numbers and hence have relatively low genetic diversity

The conservation world is working to change this. The value of captive centres is in giving people the opportunity to see and appreciate this beautiful animal. The need, as always, is for cooperation and compliance to what is known to be effective.

The message that Dr Purchase wanted her audience to take home was that by looking after the cheetah in the wild it will survive well into the future. By securing land through increased tolerance by human communities to the presence of cheetah, and safeguarding its natural prey, the cheetah can continue to run wild for generations to come. Overcoming the threats of habitat destruction, human conflict and a lack of political will is necessary if this amazing species is to survive.

Visit www.cheetahandwilddog.org



EDUCATION

Rifa trains the rangers of the future

Rifa conservation education camp on the banks of the Zambezi runs a conservation education programme for schoolchildren of Parks staff, with support from Safari Club International.

By Leslee Maasdorp

Schoolchildren from Zimbabwe's Parks and Wildlife Authority schools benefitted from conservation education camps at Rifa in the Zambezi Valley last year, sponsored by the Sacramento and Houston Chapters of Safari Club International.

Well over 100 schoolchildren and 24 adult teacher / supervisors attended the camps in the perishing heat of October and November. "We are all grateful for the support given by SCI over the years. This has enabled the Rifa programme to start re-building children and teachers' appreciation for wildlife and conservation," said a spokesperson.

Rifa education camp is run by the Zimbabwe Hunters' Association. Both ZHA and National Parks and Wildlife consider these three weeks devoted to local pupils to be invaluable. "Through education and action an actual difference can be made to the well-being of the environment in protected areas, and to the current poaching crisis," said the spokesperson.

Meanwhile, the Rifa ecosystem has seen massive changes and many positive spin-offs from the flooding one year ago.



Kids playing games on the new beach PHOTO: RIFA

Four floodgates were opened that season in the Kariba dam wall, causing havoc to the banks of the river downstream. At Rifa camp near Chirundu the water pump in the Zambezi snapped from its wires. While it drifted downstream those on a boat sent to look for it luckily spotted it drifting by and fished it out of the water.

Huge benefits were derived from the flooding of the extensive dried-out channel systems connected to the Zambezi. Soon grasses were sprouting, trees put out new leaves and countless sets of teeth and lips plucked the grasses to lawn height.

This grazing was the only fresh food in a very hot dry season enabling grazers from inland to survive. Only the elephants, half-starved anyway in September, were pressed for food and attacked the bark not only of baobab, mopane and the albida trees but also tamarind and the Zambezi fig. Early on they swam to the island reed beds and often made the dangerous trip to Zambia for fresh food.

Another ecosystem to benefit was Bream Pools, choked for a decade by water hyacinth. The floods cleared out this thick burden, allowing more birds to use the pools. Schools at last can see hippo coming up to breathe. They also shiver at the thought of the huge man-of-war with the armour-plated upper deck watching them from under the water.

Hyacinth is a tenacious alien and a working team has been spraying the weed which is fast re-colonising the pools.

The Rifa staff watched new landscapes appear as the water lever went down when the gates were closed. Overnight muddy channels and sands appeared, countless fish fingerlings dried out and over one hundred marabou storks came to the feast.

Upstream a large new beach formed, ideal for school picnic days, so gone are the mud fights at Hot Springs.

PROFILE

About Humphrey Gumpo

One is always learning photography but Humphrey Gumpo has grown into a specialist guide with a contagious passion for photography, and he loves sharing unique and remote Africa with wildlife enthusiasts and future generations.

By ZT Correspondent

Born in the small lakeside town of Kariba, Humphrey discovered his love for the bush and remote areas at a young age. Surrounded by wilderness and water, buffalo, rhino, elephants and various antelope were part of the scenery on his journeys to school every morning.

Weekend outings included bush walks with friends, which his parents did not find amusing as these areas were alive with potentially dangerous wildlife species. This led Humphrey to follow a career in safari guiding, pursuing both walking and canoeing qualifications after high school.

Fortunate enough to experience the most amazing and educational natural interactions in his day-to-day work left Humphrey "no choice" but to learn the art of photography. "One is always learning photography," he says, but



PHOTO: TAILOR MADE SAFARIS

Humphrey is joined by two elephants at the camp

Humphrey has grown into specialist guide with a contagious passion for photography, and he loves sharing unique and remote Africa with wildlife enthusiasts and future generations.

ANTI-POACHING

Wounded Zebra is treated

By ZT correspondent

Kariba Animal Welfare Fund Trust took care of an injured zebra recently.

A lone zebra with a wounded back leg was reported to Kariba Animal Welfare Fund Trust by residents of Kariba town. The male zebra was favouring the back left leg and lifting it continuously.

On investigation it was decided to leave the animal to see if the small wound would heal without the trauma of darting and antibiotics. However a week later the leg had become quite swollen and it was necessary to dart and administer antibiotics as well as clean the wound.

National Parks was contacted and a scout collected. Andries Scholtz who was sponsored by KAWFT to obtain his darting licence undertook to do the darting and the operation was successfully completed.

'Bachelor Boy' was still able, with his swollen and sore back leg, to move distances from one end of town to the other. He is now looking much better and was seen with a second zebra, perhaps no longer a bachelor!



CONSERVATION

Can elephants fly?

On 15 January, just over two months after his initial rescue, orphaned elephant calf Bezi was successfully relocated by air from Conservation Lower Zambezi base camp to the Elephant Orphanage Project, Lusaka.

Byline: By Sarah Davies

Two months after his rescue, orphaned elephant calf Bezi was successfully relocated by air from Conservation Lower Zambezi base camp to the Elephant Orphanage Project in Lusaka.

In November 2011, Bezi was found without his mother at one of the lodges on the Zambian side of the middle Zambezi, and rescued when he fell into the swimming pool! He had been heard calling for his mother for 48 hours before he was reported to CLZ.

Bezi was quarantined at CLZ base camp for two months while the authority and means to move him was arranged. Bezi was fed a complex formula every two hours by a tireless team of volunteers, his wounds were treated and his temperature and behaviour recorded while his condition gradually stabilised.



Getting Bezi on the plane PHOTO: CLZ

At about four months old and having been vaccinated, Bezi was flown to Lusaka, attended by Zambia Wildlife Authority vet Dr Harvey Kamboyi, Rachel Murton and Tanya Shober from the EOP. At the Elephant Orphanage Project in Lusaka, Bezi became the youngest member of the four-strong herd of orphan elephant calves.

Although still underweight and vulnerable, he seems happy and healthy. Two casual elephant carers employed by CLZ from Chiawa village have been employed by EOP on a full time basis. Ultimately it is intended that Bezi and his adopted family will move to Kafue and be reintegrated into the wild.

Thanks to all at the EOP, Royal Air Charters for transporting Bezi to Lusaka free of charge; and all those who generously contributed to costs of keeping Bezi at CLZ.

AWARENESS

Sponsorship of event for the International Anti-Poaching Foundation

The illegal trafficking of wildlife is now the 3rd largest illegal industry in the world.
20 April @ Mystique Function Centre, Bulwayo

By Steven Dean

The International Anti Poaching Foundation (IAPF) mission is to protect and preserve wildlife in volatile regions.

The IAPF is a fully registered charity in both Australia and Zimbabwe. We are a 100% non-profit organization. All the proceeds made go straight back into the foundation, which is distributed back on the ground in Africa.

The money is spent in various ways. We equip, train and deploy new and existing ranger both in Zimbabwe and South Africa. Education within local schools is also a major priority of the foundation. It is imperative for the future of wildlife.

Just recently we have been asked to conduct a feasibility study in preparation to rebuild and resurrect Chizarira national park. This is a huge undertaking and support from local Zimbabwe donors is essential.

Kirsty Alexander from Gardens & Events recently approached the Foundation to hold a charity event for the organisation and in particular Chizarira

Whether it is equipment to host the event, prizes for auction through to a donation your participation and sponsorship in this event would be greatly appreciated.

IAPF WWW.IAPF.ORG INTERNATIONAL ANTI POACHING FOUNDATION

For more information on the IAPF head to www.iapf.org or alternatively to see what is happening on a regular basis head to our blog at www.iapf.wordpress.com

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CONSERVATION

Jumbo's valentines date

By Sarah Davies

Conservation Lower Zambezi organised the darting and treatment of an elephant injured by a snare.

A different kind of arrow was received by a Lower Zambezi elephant this Valentine's Day. After a severely injured bull was seen in the Nkalange area of the Park, Conservation Lower Zambezi organised a date with a Zambia Wildlife Authority vet.



Darted elephant PHOTO: CLZ

Playing cupid complete with dart gun was Dr Harvey Kasmboyi, who was flown in to treat the elephant. The young bull of about 20 years was located quickly and although still in good condition, he was suffering severely from a wire snare embedded in his front right leg, and was unable to move easily.

After an efficient darting by Dr.Kasmboyi the wire was removed and the wound cleaned. Long-acting antibiotics were administered to help recovery from what would otherwise have been a fatal injury. Within forty minutes of being sedated the elephant was back on his feet with good prospects for a full recovery.

CLZ will continue to monitor the bull's progress. Thanks to Dr.Kasmboyi for his expertise as well as research assistant Daniel Mwizabi. Thanks also to pilot Brad Reid for flying in Dr.Kasmboyi.

Reports of a much younger snared calf were followed up, but due to thick bush at this time of year, aerial and road tracking was not successful and CLZ will continue the search.



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TRAVEL

Zambezi X-factor

By Mana Meadows



Mana pools in the morning

PHOTO: MANA MEADOWS

There's a lot to love about Mana Pools. For me, daybreak is always a highlight. There's an exquisite freshness that surrounds waking up before dawn in this tranquil riverside wilderness. Being up and about early with the rest of the diurnal animal kingdom is always satisfying. But being up in a new space, in the dark, with a steaming cup of coffee in hand and listening to the last sounds of the night as it retreats from the creeping dawn just adds that extra X-factor. The last lingering notes of lion music filter down from upstream while behind the tent, grazing hippos huff and puff – honking and grumbling at each other in the way that only hippos do.

Across the Zambezi, the grey-blue Zambian escarpment is kissed pink by the emerging sun. Mist rises off the river. The first light seeps in and starts to separate the shadowy forms of the flat river scene. The trees, the rocks, the escarpment all take on their own identity and the bird chorus cranks up a notch. The hippos start to make their way to the river, dive-bombing off the river bank like characters from Disney's Fantasia movie – landing in spectacular shadowy explosions in the water below.

From the comfort of your sleeping bag you can watch the whole show while the full flood of morning bird chorus drenches the tent. Looking up through the open tent flaps, the acacia albida and pod mahogany canopies dance with the ceaseless flow of bright avian visitors while far up above, the sky is momentarily frenetic with the flight paths of various species of egrets, herons, ducks, geese and cormorants as they chart their way to feeding grounds. The sunrise itself is fleeting, but the sense of clarity and calm surrounding it lasts all day.

More info: For more information about booking accommodation in Mana Pools National Park contact Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management by viewing their website at www.zimparks.org

National Parks accommodation consists of communal camping sites (with ablutions and braai facilities); private camping sites (basic toilet plus braai site) and lodges which are fully kitted.

COMMUNITY

Chillies to discourage crop raiders



Clearing and planting



Besa pumping

PHOTOS: CLZ

By Sarah Davies

Conservation Lower Zambezi staff spent a long hot day in February in the village of Mugurameno, helping to plant chilli seedlings to ward off crop raiding elephants. The seedlings were grown by Zambeef at Chiawa from seed donated by South Luangwa Conservation Society, in a project funded by the Civil Society Environment Fund.

As part of CLZ's Environmental Education Programme, two local farmers, Joseph Liempe and Patrick Shawa, were chosen from a community survey because they have both suffered heavily from crop raiding elephants in the past. CLZ will assist with planting and sustainable irrigation using a treadle pump provided by CLZ. Next season these farmers will use a combination of methods to protect crops, including chilli fences and chilli burning blocks.

"This is a small-scale initial project, but we hope to increase our role in human / elephant conflict activities, if we can secure funds and once we have more practical knowledge of the risks and possible solutions," said a spokesperson for CLZ.

Human / wildlife conflict has been recognised as a major threat to both the elephants and people of southern Africa, and should be addressed in the wider context of elephant conservation.

Simple, low-cost and locally adapted methods have been shown to reduce site-specific conflict so that people and elephants can live together without danger and destruction.

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RECREATION

Test of the best is crowned

Remington Gold proved their mettle once again by claiming the title of 2012 Test of the Best champions. Test of the Best is a two-day catch and release tiger-fishing tournament held on Lake Kariba.

By Mana Meadows

Remington Gold proved their mettle once again by claiming the title of 2012 Test of the Best champions. Test of the Best is a two-day catch and release tiger-fishing tournament held on Lake Kariba.

The elite tournament, this year held over the last weekend of February in Charara, was contested by the top ten teams from the previous year's Kariba Invitation Tiger Fish Tournament. The competition was especially fierce and the victory especially sweet this year as 2011 marked the 50th anniversary of KITFT.

It's been an impressive few months from Remington Gold who were also the convincing winners of the 2011 KITFT. They started off well in the Test of the Best by establishing a good lead of 16 points to finish as the leading team after the first day.

They carried on to win by a margin of more than 30 points – echoing their performance at the KITFT where they were the leading team at the end of each of the three days of the tournament.

Despite only catching two fish less than Remington Gold, team Africom Charter X did not land enough heavy fish and they came in second with 102.6 points, closely followed by Bumi Hills Anti-Poaching with 101.2 points.

Quinton le Roux of Remington Gold said that his team was really pleased as it was the first time they had won KITFT and Test of the Best back to back. "We worked well as a team and both boats worked well together," he said.

Peter Lawson of Remington Gold landed the heaviest total catch with his 13 fish reaching a total weight of 45.1 kgs. He was closely followed by Boetie O'Neill of Africom Charter X who brought in 12 fish with a total weight of 42.5 kgs.



PHOTO: KITFT

Deane Le Roux, Dean Dewdney, Quinton Le Roux, Ewan Macmillan, Bryan Arnold And Peter Lawson, winning team Remington Gold Credit DSW of KITFT

Karl Eckard of Team Nissan caught the heaviest individual fish, weighing in at 8.6 kgs. Team ULTC Burn was the only team that managed to catch their forty fish limit over the two days.

This year Bols Brandy came in as a new Gold Sponsor, joining Nashua, Nissan and Zambezi, while Schweppes Water pitched in as the official water sponsor. Mega, Multichoice and RAM petroleum continued in their role as Silver Sponsors and Rapala sponsored the scales used to weigh the fish prior to their release.

Tournament Director Rod Bennett said that this year's event was "a real test of the best with the conditions really testing the anglers."

Visit www.kitft.co.zw/totb

www.kitf.co.zw

FACT FILE

- Average weight of fish caught: 2.8 kgs
- Total weight of fish caught: 851.4 kgs
- Total Number of fish caught: 300
- Results of 2012 Test of the Best Tournament:

Position	Team	FISH	POINTS
1	Remington Gold	35	134.9000
2	Africom Charter X	33	102.6000
3	Bumi Hills Anti-Poaching	31	101.2000
4	Stryke-Tynserv	29	92.9000
5	ULTC Team Burn	40	92.3000
6	Team Mega	30	90.3000
7	Team Nissan	23	75.0000
8	F Neill & Sons Bull Sharks	37	72.8000
9	Fisheagles	33	71.7000
10	Sakunda	9	17.7000



Karl Eckard with his 8.6kg tiger caught and released in the Gache Gache on day two of the competition. The largest fish of the tournament.

PHOTO: BOB WARREN-CODRINGTON

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PHOTOGRAPHY

Feathered fight over fishing spot

Christopher Scott shares on how he achieved a great photo of eagle and heron rivalry in the wild.

By Christopher Scott

Christopher Scott shares on how he achieved a great photo of eagle and heron rivalry in the wild.

On a recent visit to the stunning Matusadona National Park I was pottering around one of the multitude of quiet bays when I came across a Goliath heron going about his early morning routine; flitting from spot to spot looking for the biggest fish.

The largest of the heron family, the Goliath is a beautiful bird and thus I was very keen to get a few pictures. I slowly and quietly eased myself into a position where I had a good view of him, hoping he would move towards me so the early light would catch him at the right angle and light up his plumage.

After a few moments of blissful silence and serene observation, he started moving, to my dismay, away from me and towards the open water. Disappointed, but still keen for a picture of this large bird in flight, I lined up and waited patiently for him to spread his wings and head out.



The fish eagle and the heron PHOTO: CHRISTOPHER SCOTT

Almost on cue, the magnificent bird, with wings outstretched, began his pre-flight check, when all of a sudden in a blur of sharp claws and unrestrained anger, a nearby previously peaceful fish eagle took deep exception to the presence of the Goliath.

Almost on queue, the magnificent bird, with wings outstretched, began his pre-flight check, when all of a sudden in a blur of sharp claws and unrestrained anger, a nearby previously peaceful fish eagle took deep exception to the presence of the Goliath. All I saw through the viewfinder was a blur of motion in from the top right, and I heard the indignant squawk of the Goliath as it headed out, feathers somewhat ruffled!

Thankfully, due more to instinct than anything else, I managed to squeeze off a few shots of the action before I even knew what was going on. Which brings me to some pearly photo advice; plan for everything and when it happens, when you are off guard, don't hesitate to hold your finger down on the shutter button. You may end up with some stunning results!

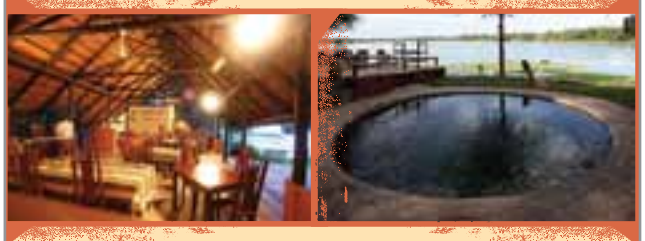
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AWARDS

"WINNER - 2011 - SAFARI OPERATOR'S ASSOCIATION OF ZIMBABWE AWARD FOR THE GREATEST CONTRIBUTION TO THE COMMUNITY"

goes to... Chapungu Safaris t/a Gache Gache Lodge - Kariba Zimbabwe for Conservation to protect wildlife for the community. Establishing a Wildlife Environment Protection Unit (WEPU) for anti-poaching, including fish poaching and the protection & care of wildlife. Fish population has improved tremendously since then.

Chapungu Safaris supplies fuel for vehicles to take poachers to Police/National Parks offices/jail in Kariba town. Feeding animals in drought times with hay bales, molasses and salt licks. Wildlife populations have improved tremendously in the Gache Gache Wilderness Area due to the efforts by Ray Townsend and the WEPU team."

TRAVEL

Getting around the Zambezi Valley

By Sally Wynn

Creative options for transferring visitors into and around the Lake Kariba - Zambezi Valley areas are springing up this year, and travellers should think seriously about extending their trips to include Lake Kariba's magnificent water wildernesses and the wildlife tourism options downstream of the dam.

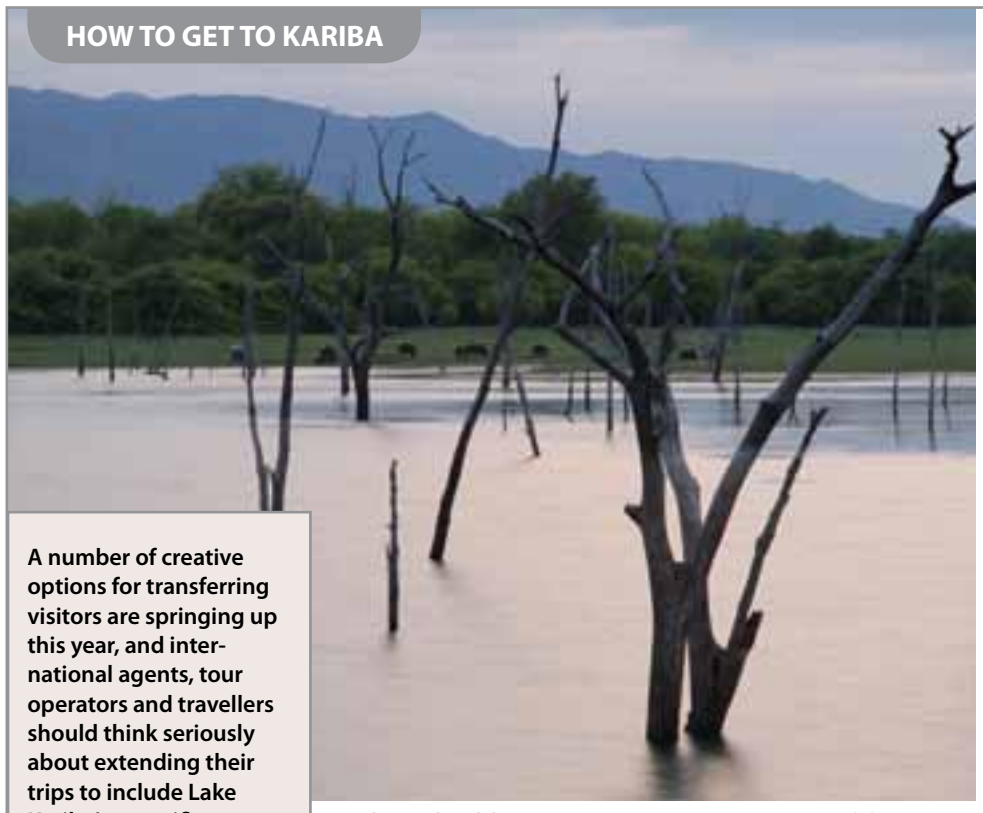
The international travel industry has started to remember what a wonderful place Zimbabwe is; an uncrowded African destination with a variety of travel opportunities, friendly people and pristine wildlife and safari options.

Victoria Falls remains the country's best-known destination, but few internationals are aware of the Zambezi River's jewels downstream of the Falls, where most of the Zimbabwean side of the river is protected wildlife area.

Self-drive locals and South Africans fell under the spell of Lake Kariba a long time ago but international visitors have yet to discover the idyllic holiday options available on Zimbabwe's inland sea. Watch elephants, hippos, crocodiles and even lion from your lakeshore lodge or bushcamp, or from a houseboat, cruiseboat or sailboat parked in a quiet creek; take a guided walking safari and track the rare black rhinoceros; catch your supper of tilapia off the back of the boat, or do sporting battle with the formidable tigerfish.

Further downstream, the river offers safaris through unbroken wildlife country, with Mana Pools National Park and its neighbouring safari areas forming a vast UNESCO World Heritage Site. Canoe the river on a 3-4 day safari, walk in the game-rich, riverine woodlands, or tackle the legendary river tigerfish which are leaner and meaner than their Lake Kariba counterparts. This is a wild paradise where development is minimal and accommodation is in small lodges or tented camps to enhance the wilderness experience of visitors and protect the area's pristine character.

HOW TO GET TO KARIBA



Kariba Creek with hippos PHOTO: KIERAN WYNN

A number of creative options for transferring visitors are springing up this year, and international agents, tour operators and travellers should think seriously about extending their trips to include Lake Kariba's magnificent water wilderness and the safari destinations downstream of the dam.

Access options:

Safari Logistics Air Taxi: Run by African Bush Camps linking Victoria Falls, Hwange, Matusadona, Kariba and Mana Pools, in a 4-seater single-engine Cessna 206. Flights depart Victoria Falls at 08.00 on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays and make a circuit between the various airstrips listed below, returning to Victoria Falls on the same day at 15.35. Pay for and fly only the sector you require. Minimum 2 passengers. 20 kg luggage per person packed in a soft bag. No on-board refreshments.

Hwange (Manga): Somalisa Camps

Hwange: The Hide, Sikumi Tree Lodge, Ivory, Miombo & Hwange Safari Lodges

Bumi Hills: Bumi Hills Safari Lodge, Rhino Safari Camp, Musango Camp

Kariba: fuel stop or house boats

Mana (Dandawa): Kanga Camp

Mana Pools: Zambezi Life Styles, Vundu Camp, Goliath Safaris, various canoeing and walking safaris

Bumi Air 5-seater twin-engine flights: Coming soon: scheduled flights between Bumi Hills airstrip (on the southern shore of Lake Kariba) and Victoria Falls in a Baron 55 (twin engine 5-seater). Depart Bumi 0800 on Tuesdays, Fridays and Sundays. Return same day. Flight time 90 minutes, minimum 2 passengers, 15 kg of luggage per person only, packed in a soft bag. On-board refreshments. Bumi Hills airstrip services Bumi Hills Safari Lodge, Musango Safari Camp and Rhino Safari Camp. Flexible hops will also be available to other airstrips; charters available on non-schedule flight days.

E-mail: bumiair@bumihills.com

Bumi Hills 18-seater transfer boat from Kariba: Boat transfers across Lake Kariba from Kariba town to the Bumi Hills harbour. 6-18 passengers. Crossing about one and a half hours, depending on weather. On board bar.

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River Horse Safaris: Road transfers Lusaka-Chirundu-Kariba: minibus road transfers for groups (minimum 3 passengers) Lusaka-Kariba or return (3-4 hours daily). Also 11-seater minibus transfers Lusaka-Chirundu for onward 4x4 transfer into Mana Pools in conjunction with Tailormade Safaris (see below) (allow 5-6 hours Lusaka-Mana Pools). Drinks and meals can be arrangement on request.

zambezi@iwayafrica.com

Tailormade Safaris: Road transfers Kariba-Chirundu-Mana Pools. This is a new product from a company that also offers minibus road transfers linking Kasane and Livingstone with Victoria Falls, Hwange, Bulawayo, Matopos, Great Zimbabwe, the Eastern Highlands, Harare and Lusaka. Guests are transferred by knowledgeable driver/guides. Refreshments, snacks and packed lunches included on longer transfers.

info@tailormade-safaris.com

International visitors have yet to discover the idyllic holiday options available on Zimbabwe's inland sea.



Canoes in Mana Pools PHOTO: SALLY WYNN

Visitors to Zimbabwe are missing out on something special if they don't look further than Victoria Falls. But how to get there? There are international flights into Victoria Falls, Harare and Lusaka, but few reliable services linking Kariba and the Zambezi Valley with these regional tourism hubs.

Website: www.wildzambezi.com



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ART & CRAFT

Bed of thorns

By Will Maberly

Old buffalo bulls can be cantankerous - walking across something like this can make your heart beat a lot faster. These old men often hang about in thickets, and nearly always sit in such a way that they cover each other's backs. Here, in the shade of the palms and a young Baobab tree, amongst the combretum thickets, sit three old men living life as it is, in the comfort and necessity of each other's presence.

Website: www.willmaberlyart.com



2012 Kariba Half Marathon

SUNDAY 12 AUGUST 2012

REGISTRATION – OG'S HARARE Thursday 2 & Friday 3 August 5pm – 8pm

LATE REGISTRATIONS LOMAGUNDI LAKESIDE, KARIBA, Saturday 11 August from 10am – 4pm. **Strictly no entries after 4pm**

ENTRY FEE - $20 per 21km & 10km entry, $2 for 2km baby race.

Start Time - & Where Start Is Start time AMC garage - **21km Half Marathon** start 06h30 **10km Fun Run** start 06h40 (fun runners to note that only the first 3 runner in will be timed) **Baby race** starts at 10h30 at the Lomagundi Lakeside main gate

Prize giving from 11h30 at Lomagundi Lakeside Dome

Registration forms available via email or can be collected from:

Old Georgians Sports Club, Harare, Lomagundi Lakeside Office, Kariba - E-mail – kariba-halfmarathon@gmail.Com

Tel: Kiara 0779675 935 (Working hours only) Sonya 0772 874 352 (Working hours only) **COME JOIN US** For a fun filled weekend with water slides, bucking bronco, disco, full bar and catering before and after the race! **Accommodation** enquiries contact:

gokariba.com: enquiries@gokariba.com or Lomagundi@zol.co.zw

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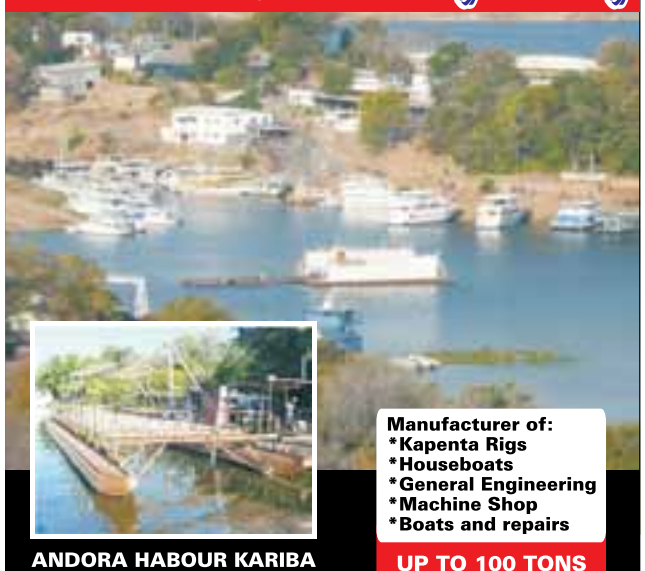
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JEWELLERY

Finding the secrets of the stone

By Pam Lindsay

Each piece of jewellery hand crafted from African crystals and stones by Our Crystal Passion is a work of art.

Compiling a feature on Harare's Doon Estate for the December issue of Zambezi Traveller, I happened across a truly Zimbabwean gem. Set in beautiful suburban surroundings, Our Crystal Passions' airy premises exude calm, tranquility and creativity.

The two owners of this treasure trove, Aude and Sieglinde, are as unique and colourful as each of the pieces they create. Our Crystal Passion came into being ten years ago when Aude, who is a trained and practicing yoga teacher, became interested in the 'energies' of crystals.



Having access to a myriad of African stones and knowledge through her geologist ex-husband, Aude made a couple of necklaces for herself. The response and reactions when she wore these pieces planted the seeds and ultimately the birth of the business Our Crystal Passion.

Each exquisite creation is unique and individual, hiding a secret message for the wearer. "The stones have to sing to me as I work," says Aude, a true artist. Entirely hand-made on the premises, each piece is crafted from silver and genuine African gems and crystals.

Our Crystal Passion donated for auction a unique necklace and earring set called 'Awakening the Wild Woman' to the highly successful Celebration of Painted Wolves event, featured in this issue of Zambezi Traveller.

WHATS ON

Thursdays

Acting classes @ Reps

George Barnes Room at Reps Theatre

Are you an actor/actress? Do you aspire to be one? Then Reprobates is for you! Acting classes with an accent on fun and easy learning. Every Thursday in the George Barnes Room at Reps Theatre, starting 6pm Open to all – Reps members and aspiring Reps members (you'll be shown how to join up!) Linked to this initiative is SUNDAY NIGHT LIVE a monthly showcase for Reprobates and other talent in Theatre Upstairs.

29 March 7pm

The Gospel of Othello

British Ambassador residence

Fundraiser for the Harare City Library. The British Ambassador is hosting a Black Tie, Venetian-themed Champagne Dinner and Theatre, with an exclusive performance of The Gospel of Othello with Patrice Niambana (Royal Shakespeare Company) and talented Zimbabwean artists, at her residence on. Tables of 10 and limited numbers only. Contact Nancy Benham benham@dfid.gov.uk or 0772 127214

23 to 27 May

Bulawayo Music Festival

Call for Volunteer Experienced Choristers. Carl Orff's magnificent work, Carmina Burana, will be performed by massed choirs and accompanied by top international musicians at the upcoming Bulawayo Music Festival. For more information Contact rosie@wildimaginings.net

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CONSERVATION IN ACTION

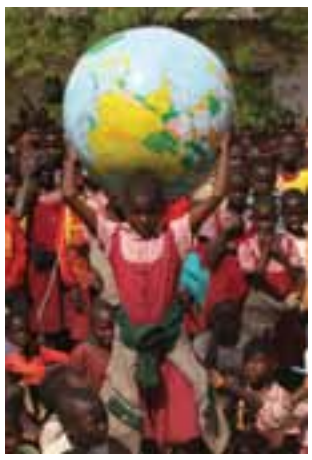
Compiled by Lin Barrie

Celebrating Painted Wolves

Funds raised by a glamorous "Safari Soiree" in Harare will go to two Zimbabwean wild dog conservation projects, Painted Dog Conservation based in Hwange, and the Lowveld Wild Dog Project based in the south east of the country.



Lin Barrie and Jeremy Borg meet with The Giant bottle in Harare



Mahenye school children, beneficiaries from Happy Reader Books and education outreach programmes

Two wild dog conservation projects were the beneficiaries of a glamorous soiree in Harare late last year. Billed the 'Conservation Event of the Year,' the event combined talks by wildlife experts, catering by a top event coordinator and an exhibition by well-known wildlife artist Lin Barrie.

Supporting the event was Painted Wolf Wines of Cape Town, launched by Jeremy and Emma Borg, with their local agents Harrison and Hughson. One of the auction prizes at the event was a giant bottle of Painted Wolf Shiraz, which arrived after some adventure en route by air and road from Cape Town.

Catering for the dinner was by Lee Vermaak, and the event was held in an elegant white Rooneys tent pitched in the Mukuvisi Woodlands, an appropriately wild location in the heart of the city.

Funds raised by the event went to two Zimbabwean wild dog conservation projects, Painted Dog Conservation and the Lowveld Wild Dog Project based in the south east of the country.

Painted Dog Conservation will use the funds to continue its children's bush camp programme in Hwange in 2012, having lost the support of an international donor at the close of 2011.

The Lowveld Wild Dog Project will use the funds to facilitate a mobile education and library unit to provide a variety of educational resource materials direct to communities.

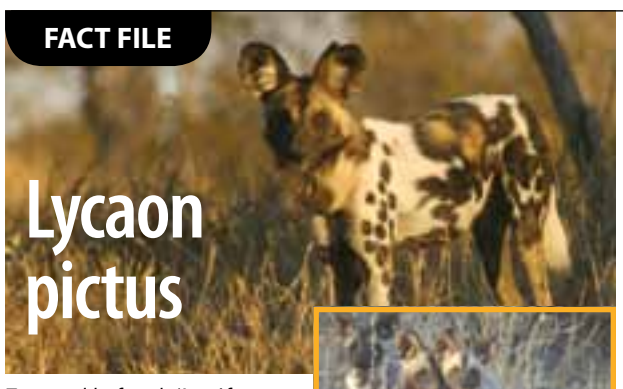
Emma and Conor O'Beirne of Happy Readers Books have donated ten sets of literacy series to LWDP, plus classroom kits, which will directly benefit children in schools adjacent to Gonarezhou National Park.

The Safari Soiree will be repeated in 2013, and 'A Celebration of Painted Wolves,' which now has its own facebook page, is growing into a project with far reaching initiatives for wild dog conservation.

Jeremy Borg is planning Pedals for Paws, in which he will ride by bicycle to key wild dog sites in Sub-Saharan Africa during 2012 and 2013, to raise funds for, and awareness of wild dog conservation.

The two Zimbabwean wild dog research projects will engage with Mukuvisi Woodlands' Eco Schools programme during 2012, giving interactive talks to Harare school children.

FACT FILE



Lycaon pictus

Tete-an older female 'Aunt' from Snare's pack, Inset: The four surviving pups in Snare's pack

African wild dogs have disappeared from much of their former range throughout sub-Saharan Africa.

According to the IUCN Red Data list for endangered species, between 3000 – 5500 free-ranging wild dogs remain in Africa, mostly in southern Africa and parts of East Africa.

Lycaon pictus, meaning 'painted, wolf-like animal,' is a descriptive name for the graceful wild dog, also commonly known as painted dog or African hunting dog. Painted wolf is another apt name for this endangered predator, considering the similarities in social pack structure between African wild dogs and wolves. Although it belongs to the Family Canidae, the wild dog is not of the species canis. Unlike wolves, it cannot interbreed with domestic dogs.

According to the IUCN Red Data list for endangered species, between 3000 – 5500 free-ranging wild dogs remain in Africa, mostly in southern Africa and parts of East Africa.

In Zimbabwe, there are estimated to be about 520 wild dogs. Since the formation of the Save Valley Conservancy in 1991, the wild dog population there has slowly re-introduced itself. Likewise, the populations of Mana Pools, Victoria Falls and surrounds, Hwange and surrounds, Gonarezhou National Park and Malilangwe Wildlife Reserve, have shown encouraging resilience in the face of adversity. However, populations are declining generally; the challenges for conservationists are threefold:

- **WORK** with local people to enable wild dogs to co-exist with increasing human populations, through better protection and implementation of education programmes.
- **Establish** effective techniques for protecting small wild dog populations from infections such as rabies and distemper.
- **Expand** connectivity of habitat available to wild dogs across southern Africa, emphasising the importance of corridors between Trans Frontier Conservation Areas.

The Conservation projects listed below address all of the above challenges; here ZT highlights the educational aspects of their work.

Painted Dog Conservation, working in Hwange, Victoria Falls and Mana Pools, aims to protect and increase the range and numbers of the painted dog in Zimbabwe and elsewhere in Africa. They are committed to creating a conservation model built on education, community involvement and international support.

Iganyana Arts and Crafts produce sculptures from recovered snare wire. The children's bush camp and conservation clubs at local schools teach conservation concepts, promoting an ongoing interest in nature.

The Lowveld Wild Dog Project, working in the Save Valley Conservancy and Gonarezhou, believes that investing in future generations and improving the relationships between protected areas and neighboring communities will have immeasurable benefits for long term conservation on a broad scale. Community education and outreach are a primary focus. The project is implementing a long term, sustainable education programme for primary schools in the Greater Limpopo Trans Frontier Conservation Area, together with Chishakwe Ranch and the Lowveld Rhino Trust.

Malilangwe Wildlife Reserve, adjacent to Gonarezhou, has an excellent community outreach programme and have initiated a schools bush camp programme.

Mukuvisi Woodlands in Harare has a strong 'Eco-Schools' programme working with schools in and around the capital city.

African Wildlife Conservation Fund



Snare and her sister

The story of Snare

Artist Lin Barrie has been watching and sketching wild dogs for many years, never wearying of these graceful and seriously endangered animals.

In the many years that I have been watching and sketching wild dogs, I have never wearied of my passion for these graceful and seriously endangered animals.

Thick coats of black and gold, splashed with unique white markings and white flagged tails, greeted us when we first saw the particular pack of wild dogs that we watched throughout 2007, in the south of the Save Valley Conservancy. Lean and long-legged, with astonishingly large black ears and elegant black masks, these animals were a painter's dream of energetic movement and colour.

Except for one young female. A gaping wound betrayed a wire snare wrapped tight around her throat. She was wary and difficult to approach, since the pack had not yet denned. I called her 'Snare' and knew she would die if we did not help her.

The Alpha female of Snare's pack was visibly pregnant, and obviously looking for a suitable den site. After many anxious days, scouts located the den in a warthog burrow and we began to habituate the dogs to our presence, in the process discovering that more than nine pups had been born.

Each day I watched Snare struggle to breathe. She resolutely trailed after her pack on every hunt, interacting as best she could with her boisterous siblings. Thin and subdued, she avoided playing with the new puppies, unlike her sisters.

Her siblings licked her terrible wound and chaperoned her constantly. I cried as her brother repeatedly tried to bite the terrible noose from her neck. Snare tried hard to interact with her siblings in the pep rallies before evening hunts, but she could not match their playful exuberance.

Another tragedy then hit the dogs - a python discovered the burrow and, overnight, ate many of the pups. The Alpha female immediately relocated the four surviving pups to a nearby warthog burrow.

After some aborted attempts to dart the elusive Snare, eventually we immobilized her. Removing the wire, we found that it had begun to cut into her trachea. Cleaning the wound as best we could, we administered antibiotics and hope...

Then came a transformation that was wondrous to behold - slowly but surely Snare went from strength to strength, interacting more and more each day with the pups and hunting with her pack.

She was a new animal, the breath still faintly whistling through the healing hole in her neck, but her eyes bright and her enthusiasm boundless. She became a leader of the hunt, often being the first to return with the Alpha male, both bloody necked from a successful kill, to regurgitate food for the Alpha female and the pups.

Snare will be forever an icon of survival in my memory; an indomitable, invaluable, social animal.

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Letters

Hi Francis

I have been meaning to write to you ever since I first read your newspaper - it is just wonderful!! We enjoyed the last one so I thought it is high time we wrote and tried to subscribe. I would like to subscribe for ourselves and four others. I was reading through it and was delighted to see John Cockburn's article and a picture of my Mum, her Mum and her brothers.

Chrissie, *Mutare*

Frances

I have just received my copy of the Traveller - and is full enough now to keep me busy for three or four nights when I crawl into bed. I was SO thrilled with the cover-age you gave my Dad's article – unedited ! Thank you very much. I have had a few calls from people who have seen it. Keep up the good work
Much love

Mark and Caryl, *Cape Town*

"Thoroughly enjoyed the articles in issue 06 of your news-paper. Would be interested to feature some of our products"

Msuna Safaris and Travel

Good evening to you Teddy.

I have just returned from a trip to Botswana, and during my wanderings I came across a couple of issues of your Zambezi Traveller.

Being an ex Zimbabwean now living in South Africa, I found your publication to be possibly the most interesting newspaper that I have ever come across, and I pored over it for hours!!

It covers what happens to be my passion – a part of Africa unparalleled anywhere else in the World.

Please advise me how to go about receiving regular copies, and whether or not they can be posted, and if so where postage payment can be made.

Gordon Guthrie, *South Africa*

The Zambezi Traveller welcomes letters to the editor fjackson@iwayafrica.com

Dear Editor

I stumbled across your paper at one of the fishing shops I frequent here in Johannesburg, unfortunately It's the second edition from 2010, could you possibly assist me in getting up to date editions of your paper.
I thoroughly enjoyed reading your paper and must commend the excellent work and articles you produce.
Kind Regards

Angus Roberts, *South Africa*

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Editorial Submissions
Zambezi Traveller welcomes editorial submissions but reserves the right to publish. Email in Word format to *fjackson@iwayafrica.com*

Publisher
The Zambezi Traveller
P O Box 183, Victoria Falls,
Zimbabwe,

Design and Layout
Baynham Goredema
Xealos Design Consultants
www.xealos.com

Printing
Strand Multiprint

SUBSCRIBE
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RESEARCH

Top award for lion researcher

Dr Andrew Loveridge from Oxford University's Wildlife Conservation Research Unit (Department of Zoology) has won the SATIB Trust Award in recognition of his dedicated work in understanding lion biology and supporting conservation in Africa.



The grand prize, a landrover from SATIB Trust

PHOTO: BRIAN COURTENAY

By ZT correspondent

Researcher and conservationist Dr Andrew Loveridge from Oxford University's Wildlife Conservation Research Unit has won the SATIB Trust Award for his work focused on lion in Hwange.

The SATIB Trust supports conservation initiatives to protect southern Africa's natural heritage for future generations and the Award is in recognition of the dedication of the Hwange Lion Project team working in Zimbabwe under difficult conditions.

Dr Loveridge is the Kaplan Research Fellow at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford University, and a member of the Wildlife Conservation Research Unit within the Zoology Department at the University. He has spent the last 15 years researching lions and other carnivores in southern Africa.

Loveridge heads the Hwange Lion Project which focuses on the ecology, behaviour and conservation of the lion, aiming to provide reliable data for the conservation and management of this iconic species.

"I am delighted and deeply honoured to accept this award," said Dr Loveridge. "It is immensely encouraging to have my own and my team's research and conservation efforts recognised.

"African lions and most other large carnivores, worldwide, face significant threats to their continued survival in the wild. One of the keys to halting the continued decline of these species is through hands-on practical research and conservation, undertaken by WildCRU and the Hwange Lion Conservation Project."

The SATIB Trust award ceremony and handover of a specially fitted new Land Rover Defender LWB will coincide with Indaba, the annual tourism convention in Durban, South Africa. The vehicle has drop sides, long range fuel tanks, duel battery, 220 Volts power system and GPS.

"I know the harsh conditions these researchers work under with little recognition," said Brian Courtenay, South African businessman, founder and Chairman of SATIB Insurance Brokers and the Ivory Group. "For me it is a great honour to award this Landrover Defender to Andy for his and the team's ongoing enthusiasm and dedication."

The award was created to mark the launch of the SATIB Trust. Courtenay has been a trustee of Endangered Wildlife Trust for 17 years, a trustee of Elephants for Africa (UK) for four years and is a long standing supporter of conservation work in southern Africa. He now chairs the SATIB Trust which will provide a conduit of support to conservation projects in Africa.

Prof. David Macdonald, Director the WildCRU, commented "Our work at Hwange is a model for how scientific discoveries can inform policy and change practice, leading to benefits for both wildlife and people.

"Our findings at Hwange have influenced ideas about people living alongside predators around the world. Andy Loveridge's inspiration and dedication to lion conservation has been immense, and WildCRU is deeply proud of his achievements and this richly deserved prize."

SATIB Insurance Brokers/ Ivory Group provide risk solutions for the hospitality, tourism, safari and wildlife industry throughout southern Africa using long term underwriting facilities with Lloyds of London.

Visit www.wildcru.org

Visit http://www.satib.co.za/SATIB_Trust.aspx



PHOTO: SATIB TRUST HWANGE LION RESEARCH

Brian Courtenay hands over the Landrover log book to Dr. Andy Loveridge.
***Left to right. Crouching** - Brent Stapelkamp, Lovemore Sibanda,*
***Standing** - Brian Courtenay, Andrew Loveridge, Jane Hunt*



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