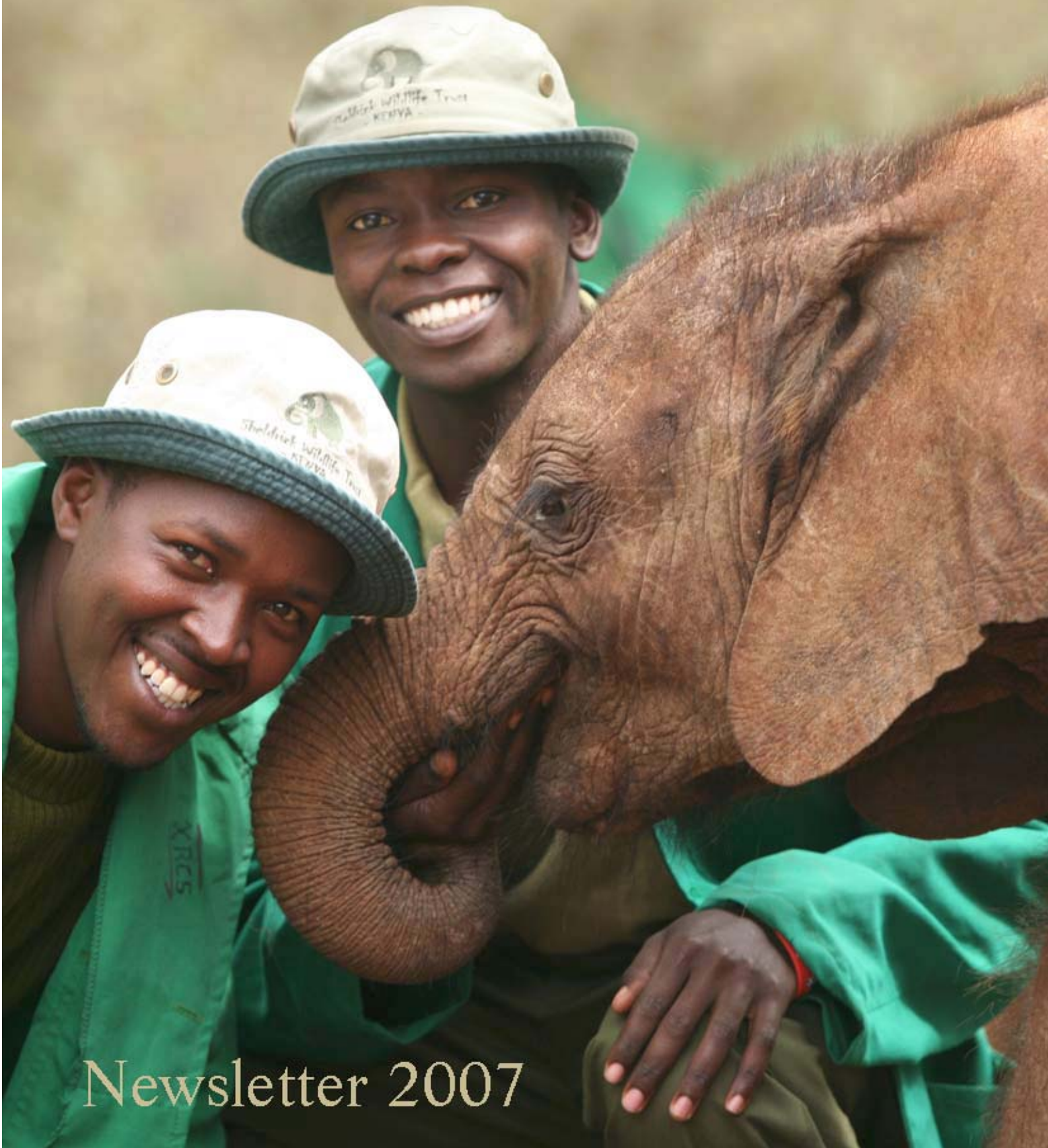


# The David Sheldrick WILDLIFE TRUST



Newsletter 2007



[www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org](http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org)

## 2007 NEWSLETTER

Time again to reflect back on the main events of 2007 and share them with our Supporters. With elections due to be held in Kenya on the 27<sup>th</sup> December, 2007, and possible changes within Government, we deliberately delayed sending out this 2007 Newsletter, (which usually brings Christmas Greetings as well), in order for it to be more current. However, we hope our many friends had a Merry Christmas and we wish all our supporters all over the world a Prosperous, Happy and above all Peaceful and Healthy 2008.

Kenya is comprised of 42 very different tribes, each with its own tribal dialect, diverse tribal culture and origin, so those of us who are familiar with tribal undertones and ethnic animosities, knew all along that the results of the December 27<sup>th</sup> election were likely to be very close, since two of the Presidential aspirants, namely President Mwai Kibaki and Raila Odinga were from Kenya's two main and largest tribes, with a third aspirant, Mr. Kilonzo Musyoka splitting the votes of the rest. He has since aligned himself to the President's ruling party and accepted the post of Vice President in the disputed new Government.

However, most of us were surprised that our country rated so high in international democratic expectations and also somewhat amazed by the reporting of the Western Media, which portrayed the entire country in chaos, rather than putting matters in better perspective. In reality, the disturbances were confined to Western Kenya and some towns of the Rift Valley with some skirmishes around the slum areas of Nairobi and Mombasa. Nevertheless, they have cost the lives of some 900 people and displaced thousands of others, even though most of the country remains quiet and functioning as normal. The negative press highlighted on overseas television screens for days on end will cost the country dearly, impacting on the country's lucrative Tourism Industry, which up until now has been enjoying a bumper boom period. Now, officials are warning that nearly 1 million people employed in the country's lucrative 60 billion a year tourism industry could face lay-offs should Hotels and Lodges be forced to close following the Travel Advisories issued by America, Britain and the West. By extension this will adversely also affect the Kenya Wildlife Service and wildlife conservation in the country.

We thank all who have supported us financially in 2007, and in so doing have empowered us to continue our important work at the field level which is where the conservation emphasis should always focus. May 2008 prove to be a year that heals our troubled Nation, and one more sensitive to the needs and plight of the natural world and the animals that have no voice other than that of those that speak up for them. Wild places and all that they harbour are precious, balm to the human soul in today's stressed and troubled world, for it is in such places that the human spirit finds renewal and solace and where problems return back into perspective.

As always, we are mindful that we owe the success of this small Trust to the financial assistance of many caring people worldwide who dig deep into pockets to enable us to

continue our work. This year we have benefited from the confidence of overseas and local N.G.O's who, because of our long field experience, entrust us to utilize their funds in the best possible way. We are humbled by the selfless sacrifice of many very ordinary people worldwide who give what they can and derive satisfaction from doing so in order to feel that they, too, have made a difference according to their means. We thank all who have supported the orphaned elephants by becoming Foster-Parents. Rearing long-lived species such as elephants and rhinos is a long-term financial commitment and one we could not shoulder without a great deal of help. Thanks to the assistance of caring folk worldwide, we are proud to have been the catalyst that has been able to offer over 85 previously doomed orphans a second chance of life and to have been able to nurture them with love and sensitivity so that they can grow up psychologically sound and ultimately take their place back where they belong – among the wild herds in a Protected Area that offers them the space they need for a quality of life.

**We thank our very energetic US Friends of The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust Board Members, all of whom have worked hard to promote the Trust and source the funding we need for field projects. Especially we are enormously grateful to Stephen Smith, the President of our US Friends Board, his wife, Jan, and his Assistant, Kathryn Fenley, who voluntarily handle the donations from US taxpayers, so proficiently. We are enormously grateful to Stephen's law firm, Kreig deVault LLP who permit their premises to be used as our US Friends' Office space.**

**We also thank the Trust's U.K. representative, Robert Brandford who runs our U.K. Charity with dedication and Mr. James Clark who is always at hand to offer professional advice. We thank Metage Capital Ltd., the Treasure Charitable Trust and the Scott Eredine Charitable Trust for generous donations made through our U.K. Charity and Cartridge SAVE for their ongoing support through their ink cartridge recycling scheme. They have also kindly developed through their Webmaint Company a system that will host free of charge the new Elephant Diaries website for our U.K. Office. Koan continue their public relations support with further assistance through their newly formed Charitable Trust Magic Beans. We are deeply grateful to all these organisations.**

For Daphne personally, it has been a milestone year, for at long last her long awaited Autobiography is out of her head and on paper, currently in the hands of a Literary Agent and an Editor who has the unenviable task of paring down 625 pages into a more acceptable length for a published version. Daphne deliberately wrote this tome in detail with the Trust's archival records in mind, but also for her family, knowing that human memory falls far short to that of an elephant! She was anxious to be able to leave a first-hand historical overview of the creation of Tsavo from virgin scrubland to the important wildlife refuge it has become, and also ensure that her grandchildren and

subsequent generations can learn through the written word, what things were like “once upon a time”.

## **An Overview**

Conservation in this country has always been a roller-coaster of highs and lows, and since Government took control from the original Board of Trustees way back in 1976, it has also become intensely political. There have been many instances when the Trust has had to risk unpopularity by speaking up about matters that need addressing at the field level, wildlife conservation being an important issue of public concern. David Sheldrick, in whose memory the Trust was established, would expect no less of us and because our involvement with wildlife spans the terms of many different Wildlife Directors, as well as three Kenyan Presidents since Independence in 1963, we enjoy the benefit of a unique overview. Said Confucius, “If you would determine the future, take a look at the past”.

Fifty eight years of the past remain clear in Daphne's memory, ever since the first National Park, which happened to be Nairobi, was created as a faunal Sanctuary way back in 1948. Her involvement with wild animals reaches back even further, for she had her first orphaned antelope when she was just 3 years old. Her parents were Naturalists who knew the country when it was teeming with animals in the early 1900's and her father spoke about those days in five tapes before he died, so she has a record of how things were in those days as well. However, recent events highlighted the fact that perhaps the rest of the world knew more about our work than our Kenya Wildlife Service neighbours just next door!

It transpired that there were many within the current Wildlife Service who wondered what we had contributed to conservation that entitled us to be within Nairobi National Park and even believed that our Orphans' Project was a commercial enterprise for personal profit, seemingly unaware of the immense contribution the Trust has made over the years. Perhaps we had overlooked the fact that with the passing of the years, and the “Changing of the Guard”, the contribution of people like David Sheldrick, Bill Woodley and Peter Jenkins had become vague to the point of total oblivion amongst the Services higher echelons, even though some of the Old Timers remember them with reverence and pride. Naively, we simply assumed that the Kenya Wildlife Service, who are the custodians of all wildlife countrywide, would make it their business to keep abreast of the input of stakeholders such as the Trust, since we have always enjoyed a unique relationship as Partners in Conservation. Furthermore, without counting the Orphans' Project, donations to the Service through projects funded through the Trust this year alone topped more than US\$ 1 million. Our Annual Newsletters are distributed widely and our website is current, depicting the work of our seven full time anti-poaching De-Snaring teams, our two fully equipped Mobile Veterinary Units, the Orphans' Project through the Keepers' monthly Diaries, all posted along with illustrations on our website on a monthly basis.

And so, for the benefit of those that don't know the background of the Trust, and perhaps should, we feel it important to give a brief summary of how and why the

Trust came about and how we happen to have found ourselves living within the confines of Nairobi National Park, because of the nature of our work not actually within the Compound fence but just a stone's throw from it, in a place selected by the wildlife authority itself.

## **The Background**

In 1948 Nairobi National Park was the first Park to be set aside by law in Kenya. This year the Kenya Wildlife Service celebrated its 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in style with a lavish “re-branding” function at the Headquarters, aimed at publicizing it as a World Class Destination (which, of course, it always used to be in the beginning). In those days, Nairobi Park was a miniature replica of the Masai Mara, with large herds of eland, thousands of migratory wildebeest, zebra and small gazelles filling the plains every year during the dry season, plus a plethora of predators following in their wake. During the wet seasons the migratory species spilled out beyond the Park boundary into their dispersal areas - the Kitengela and Kapiti plains, but the resident wildlife was still in abundance for visitors to view, as were some sedentary lions and other big cats such as leopards. Giraffe were plentiful but buffalo and elephants were absent, for they kept to denser habitats further afield.

Nairobi Park was a paradise worthy of protection and it generated the revenue needed to develop all the subsequent National Parks, Tsavo being one of them. Then the city that today is home to some 3 million people, was just a small town far removed from the Park boundaries, although wild animals roamed freely. In fact, Daphne's father as a child of 7, and others from the earlier generation, remember seeing lions and buffalo etc., from the verandah of the Norfolk Hotel. (Her father attended the very first school established in Nairobi, one of 4 first pupils to enroll and accompanied by a faithful retainer, he walked to school from his grandparents' farm in Naivasha, crossing the Aberdare range and visiting relatives in Nanyuki en route, carrying just a gun, a cooking pot and a small haversack of clothing!). He grew up amongst wild animals, and so did his four children, Daphne being the third child and her brother Peter Jenkins, who became the Warden of Meru National Park, the first.

Daphne's connection with Nairobi National Park reaches back when her brother, aged 18, left the Prince of Wales school in Nairobi, and was one of two Junior Assistant Wardens to be recruited into the fledgeling National Parks' system, his friend, Billy Woodley being the other. Both served under two famous Pioneer Wardens, initially Ken Beaton who was the first Warden of Nairobi National Park, (and later became Director of Uganda Parks), and then under David Sheldrick, the first Warden of Tsavo East National Park, who transformed a barren waste of largely unknown arid scrubland called the Taru Dessert into the world famous Park it is today, and what is more, today the highest revenue earning Park in the country.

David was ahead of his time for in addition to installing the infrastructure that serves the Park today, which involved over 2,000 miles of road carved out of dense scrubland, and the causeway that spans the Galana River, all with the limited tools at his disposal at the time, he went on to be the first to understand hitherto unknown aspects of elephant



David Sheldrick M.B.E



and rhino behaviour, their food preferences, their metabolism, their specific parasites and their natural role within the environment. He was also the first person to rear their orphans of misfortune, (although the newborn infants defeated both him and Daphne during 28 years of trial and error); first to understand natural vegetational progression between woodland and grassland, and the role of elephants as the agents of such cycles,; plus their importance to the habitat generally in terms of creating and sealing waterholes, opening up the thickets, and creating trails through dense terrain. He was the first to appreciate their mysterious intelligence, long before anyone else afforded them this credit and as a born Naturalist, David Sheldrick saw "The Big Picture", and never viewed species and events in isolation of that overall Big Picture.

He served Tsavo from 1949 until 1976 when he was transferred to head the Planning Unit of the new Wildlife Conservation & Management Department, leaving behind a world class Park, fully developed, and fully functional at all levels with not one piece of equipment that was not in working order, and a para military Field Force that was without doubt, the finest in Africa, and the role model for subsequent anti-poaching units. He fought many very tough, and sometimes lonely battles for Tsavo, one when the early Trustees felt Tsavo East was too difficult to manage and protect, and too un-inspiring scenically to be worth the cost and the effort. He fought many elephant battles too, notably when there was talk of culling the Tsavo population at a time when white collar corruption and illegal ivory dealing was a factor.

The two new young school-leavers recruited as Junior Assistant Wardens for Nairobi National Park, namely Daphne's brother Peter Jenkins, and the man she went on to marry, Bill Woodley, could not have had better tutorage in field management skills than under both David Sheldrick and Ken Beaton. It was through her brother Peter, that Daphne first met Bill Woodley when she was just 15 and still at the Kenya Girls High School in Nairobi. He had been allotted the task of carving out Nairobi Park's 100 miles of tourism circuits, that still serve the Park today, and he did this often with Daphne seated beside him during school leave-outs. As time passed, suddenly the Grader he drove carried the name "Daphne" blazened on a side panel and when Daphne was 18, she and Bill were married, Bill having been posted to Tsavo as Assistant Warden to David Sheldrick before being made Warden of the Mountain Parks. He and Daphne had a daughter together - Jill, who was just 6 months old when they moved to Tsavo. At the same time Daphne's brother, Peter was posted first to Tsavo West, but later also joined David Sheldrick in Tsavo East before being becoming Warden of Meru National Park.

The years passed. Both Bill Woodley and Peter Jenkins went on to become famous in their own right, Bill Woodley as Warden of the Mountain National Parks, instrumental also in the creation of Lake Nakuru National Park, and Peter Jenkins as Warden of Meru National Park, charged with the task of restoring it and enhancing it until it became one of Kenya's show pieces. (His son, Mark, did the same after its subsequent deterioration after Peter left the service.) Peter also master-minded the country's rhino strategy, overseeing the fencing of Lake Nakuru National

Park, and the introduction of the first Black Rhinos translocated from the privately owned Solio Ranch, where they had been protected during the years that rhinos in the National Parks were almost poached to the point of extinction subsequent to David Sheldrick's death. (One of Daphne's ex Tsavo orphaned rhinos fathered most of Solio's rhinos, having been moved there in the early sixties, and two of her ex Tsavo orphaned rhinos still live on Solio, Stropie now almost 40 years old, and Pushmi a few years younger).

Daphne and Bill parted company amicably in 1959, Bill to marry Ruth Hales with whom he had three sons, (two of whom later became Wardens within the Kenya Wildlife Service) and Daphne to marry David Sheldrick with whom she had a second daughter, Angela. The two families remained very close thereafter and, in fact, people found it strange that Bill and Ruth spent part of their honeymoon in Tsavo with David and Daphne!

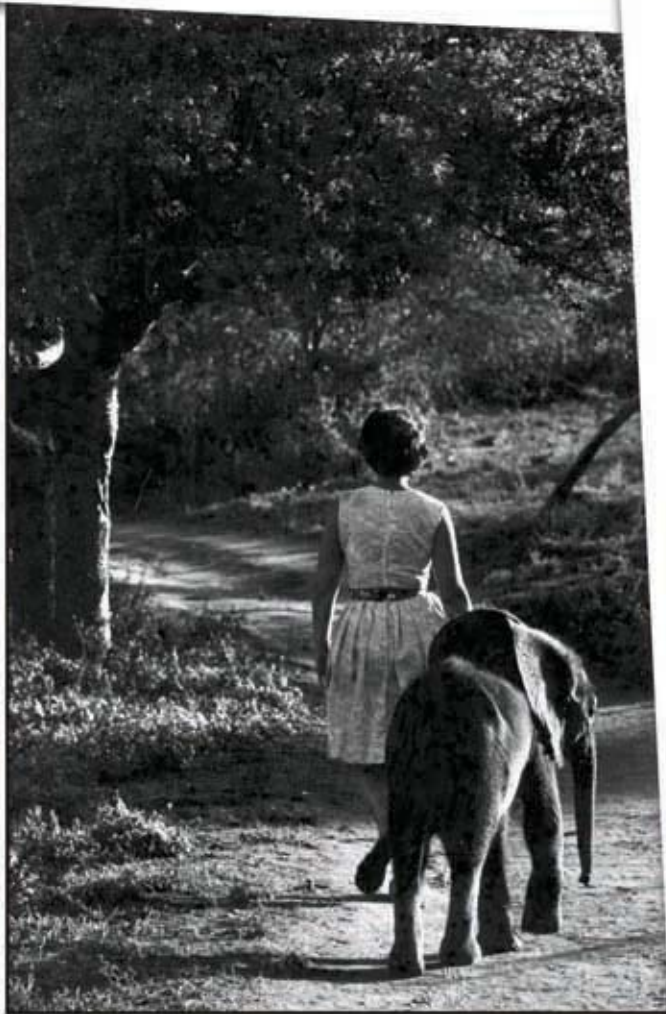
David Sheldrick was moved from Tsavo in late 1976 after the Government took control of the National Parks from the independent Board of Trustees. He was posted to Nairobi to head the new Wildlife Planning Unit of the Government Wildlife Conservation & Management Department. Six months later, he unexpectedly died from a massive heart attack, leaving Daphne a widow at 42, and his daughter, Angela, just 12 years old. The Government very kindly and unexpectedly gave her permission to erect a small house next door to the one she and David had occupied in the Nairobi National Park within reach of the Service Entrance to the Park, so that she could continue her work with orphaned animals. This was an exceedingly generous gesture of goodwill, made in recognition of David's immense contribution and dedicated service to the country and out of compassion for Daphne, who was also well respected within the Service for her work with orphans of many different species whilst in Tsavo. (In fact, 16 of her hand-reared orphaned buffaloes formed the nucleus of the present buffalo population of Nairobi National Park). A donor kindly put up the money for the little Timsales house that she occupies to this day; the trees she planted as tiny seedlings now towering over it, testimony to the passage of 30 years, as are the young elephant orphans and orphaned black rhinos, none of whom would exist today had it not been for her expertise.

The David Sheldrick Wildlife Appeal (as it was first called) was the brain child of David's many friends, both here and overseas. Initially it was merely a project of The African Wildlife Foundation, charged with disbursing the funds donated in memory of David when he died, so that they could be spent in a way of which he would have approved. Daphne was asked to head a small Committee of his friends to determine the projects for this purpose.

There was rampant poaching (a lot of it in-house) at the time and the elephant orphans began to trickle in. Knowing that Daphne had been involved with orphaned elephants in Tsavo, and was the only person in the world with experience in that field, the then Director of Wildlife (Daniel Sindiyo) asked for her help to rear the infant elephant orphans. She managed to get the first two baby elephants to over a year old, but then tragedy struck. The baby



DR. Dame Daphne Shelbrick



female named "Bibi" was anaesthetized so that a fragment of broken bone, which was causing problems, could be surgically removed from a front foot, and she died under anaesthesia. The baby bull, Juma, was sent to Tsavo and handed over to "Eleanor", the famous Matriarch raised during David Sheldrick's Wardenship, but he likewise perished following a medical blunder made by the then Warden.

The poaching continued and further elephant orphans were brought in, so Daphne's work continued. She asked if she could have more supervision of them when they were old enough to be transferred to Tsavo, and that request was also granted by a subsequent Director (Dr. Perez Olindo).

Due to David Sheldrick's legacy, donations continued to come in and it was then, having disbursed the original lump sum given at the time of his death, that at the suggestion of The African Wildlife Foundation, the original David Sheldrick Wildlife Appeal officially, and legally became a separate entity known as The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, with a Mission Statement as under:-

**"The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust embraces all measures that compliment the conservation, preservation and protection of wildlife. These include anti-poaching, safeguarding the natural environment, enhancing community awareness, addressing animal welfare issues, and providing veterinary assistance to animals in need, rescuing and hand-rearing elephant and rhino orphans along with other species that can ultimately enjoy a quality of life in wild terms."**

## **NAIROBI NATIONAL PARK TODAY**

With the passing of the years, Nairobi National Park has suffered fewer paying visitors due to the paucity of animals within it. Whilst three boundaries eventually had to be fenced, as the city of Nairobi expanded, the Southern boundary was left open and remains so to this very day, supposedly to still provide access to what has become a phantom dispersal area, for the once migratory passage has now been strangled by Kenya's rapidly expanding human population. Established settlements have sprung up on its once open plains as the Masai landowners have systematically sold off parcels of their land to urban dwellers. Ongata Rongai, once just a tiny village, is now a huge cosmopolitan town of mixed tribes that is rapidly spreading and will soon merge with the town of Athi River on the Mombasa highway.

Every year, the migrant animals that have left the Park through that open Southern boundary in response to their imprinted genetic memory, find it increasingly difficult to find their way back, having to negotiate fences and houses, chased by domestic dogs, caught in wire snares or shot for the illegal commercial bush-meat trade which remains a devastating threat to the country's wildlife resource. Nairobi Park has always been the animals' dry weather range but the few that do manage to return today are confronted by a wall of unpalatable long grass which has not been recycled as it would have been had the spectrum of grazing species been in normal numbers. In a perfect world the grazing multitudes keep the pastures in balance through utilization, each according to its particular niche within the environment, recycling the herbage at various levels until just a short trampled, fertilized sward remains as they move on. Then, when the rains break, the pastures regenerate in even healthier profusion due to this utilization undertaken as Nature intended, trampled and fertilized by dung and ready to cope with the normal natural annual increase in numbers. However, for many years now, instead of a natural increase, there has been a steady decline leaving

the pasture rank and unpalatable. The only management alternative would be to burn the rank grass just before the onset of rain, something the so-called experts have long been reluctant to do, but this year, a small portion of the Park has, in fact, been burnt, and this has attracted a few animals back again.

There has long been talk of establishing a safe corridor between Nairobi Park and the dispersal area beyond, but it never happened. Even today, the Wildlife Service talks eloquently about setting aside a corridor for the few migratory animals that remain, but everyone knows that this is unrealistic, for no Government could face ejecting myriads of legal property owners and face endless law suits. Hence the corridor remains an illusion, and Nairobi Park continues its demise, not helped by hordes of cattle who illegally intrude during drought years, it being politically unpopular to antagonize the Masai tribe.

Nairobi Park, ring-fenced, and re-stocked could again become an enormous source of revenue for the country. The Park is the same size as Nakuru – in fact larger, because it does not hold a sizeable lake in its midst. Nakuru National Park today, which is ring-fenced, is home to an astonishing array and number of animals as well as being an important Black Rhino stronghold. In fact, if anything, Nakuru Park is currently overstocked with herbivores, so it is a puzzle as to why the Wildlife Service, as the custodian of wildlife for future generations, does not address the issue of ring fencing and restocking Nairobi National Park, instead of complacently presiding over its decline. Recently surplus animals from the Rift Valley and Lake Nakuru have been taken to far away Meru National Park, which is a frontier Park that has always been prone to poaching, Somalia being just next door. In Daphne's time Meru Park has virtually collapsed no less than three times and its wild animals decimated to the point of almost total annihilation for bushmeat.





## THE TRUST'S WORK THIS YEAR

This year the Trust's support of the Kenya Wildlife Service has been substantial, thanks to grants from many organizations whose assistance for wildlife is channeled through us. We maintain and run seven fulltime Anti-Poaching De-Snaring teams along the boundaries of Tsavo, we fund and run two highly effective Mobile Veterinary Units, one working the Tsavos and neighbouring ranchlands as well as Amboseli and the Shimba Hills, and the other the Rift Valley and Masai Mara areas. We have erected, and also maintain, 62 kms of highly successful electric fencing along Tsavo's sensitive Northern Boundary, maintain 4 Windmills and 8 Boreholes and have an energetic community outreach programme that reaches numerous schools along the Tsavo boundaries.

**Funding for the Northern Area Fence has come from our US FRIENDS, CARE FOR THE WILD INTERNATIONAL and RETTET DIE ELEFANTEN AFRIKAS E.v with support from THE INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR ANIMAL WELFARE (IFAW) for 1 Energizer House. We are deeply grateful to these organizations for their substantial help with this vitally important initiative, which the Trust sees as one of the most valuable donations ever made to Tsavo's elephants and one of the Park's neighbouring communities.**



### The Tsavo Management Plan

The Trust funded a specific Tsavo Management Plan, at a cost of some US\$ 120,000 thanks to specific support from donors. For this purpose we were very fortunate to acquire the services of Ian Games, who has been responsible for drawing up highly acclaimed Management Plans for most of the Southern African, Zimbabwean and Tanzanian Parks. He produced an exceedingly comprehensive document for the Kenya Wildlife Service, the emphasis being, of course, on environmental factors rather than the demands of the Tourism Industry for Tsavo's environment is arid and extremely fragile. All stakeholders agreed that it was imperative that bed-night numbers within the Park should be restricted to prevent overcrowding and depredation to the dry season circuits, bearing in mind that permanent water in Tsavo is a very scarce commodity. The Games Management Plan, therefore, placed great emphasis on not "killing the Goose that lays the Golden Egg" through over utilization of a fragile ecosystem, so it was very disappointing to find that instead of restricting tourist accommodation in the Lodges and tented Camps, as recommended, the numbers were quietly inflated to satisfy the demands of Coast tourism. Whilst, we were assured that most aspects of the Ian Games document would hold and be written into law, this one crucial aspect, unfortunately, has been changed, without consultation with



**The Gazi Boundary Fence**



Stakeholders. All water dependent species in Tsavo, which include elephants, are concentrated along the few permanent water sources in that arid Park, and will suffer a great deal of human intrusion and disturbance as a result. Overcrowding will also impact negatively on Tsavo's tourism potential, for no-one likes to find themselves in a veritable convoy of Minibuses along the few dry season game viewing circuits of the Southern section of that Park. We hope that sense will prevail in the end.



### **The Gazi Boundary Fence**

This year we have completed the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of the Northern Area Electric Boundary Fence to Gazi along with a Gate and Energiser House, and this is another major contribution made by the Trust. With help from the German **Rettet die Elefanten Afrikas E.v.** we cover a sizeable monthly outlay for maintenance of the fence, undertaken by the Contractor who erected the fence, with the stipulation that he employs the local community for this work. In such an arid part of the world, the community's crops are a life-saver, and hitherto have suffered intrusion by large herbivores such as elephants and buffalo etc., but since the erection of the fence, few elephant or buffalo have been able to breach it. There has been only one instance of wire theft, after which the culprit was frog-marched before the Chief, and the wire returned intact. The fence, has not only been an unmitigated success, but has generated immense goodwill amongst the local people who can now reap what they sow.

It was interesting that in October 2 bull elephants found themselves outside the fence, in waterless country, having walked around beyond its current end. They followed the fence line in the direction of Ithumba, and by nightfall had reached the Gate House, which, when open, has electric droppers as an elephant deterrent. The Attendants at the Gate House heard the elephant rumbling outside, and holding the droppers aside, by torch-light coaxed one of the bulls through the Gate and into the Park proper. The other bull lacked the courage to follow his companion, and instead continued up the fenceline, until by putting a foot on the outside wires, he managed to earth the circuit and hoist himself over in order to get back into the Park. In an area where the elephants remember severe harassment, this episode is testimony to their amazing intelligence and probably also their hidden powers of telepathy for otherwise who would have believed that one of the two bulls would have been prepared to risk walking through the narrow Gate House entrance, with the human "enemy" holding the droppers on either side, and also that the other knew how to earth the hot wire by putting a foot on it from the outside!

**We are deeply grateful to the ERNEST KLEINWORT CHARITABLE TRUST for the Heavy Duty Machinery Attachments which became operational in 2007 and have greatly enhanced road works in the North.**



## Boreholes and Windmills

The Dida Haria Windmill, one of three Windmills the Trust has funded and continues to maintain in the Southern Section of Tsavo, pumps water from a borehole installed by the Trust, into a natural waterhole which would normally just hold rainwater during the wet season. Now water is provided all year round, a life saver in a thirsty land particularly as the Aruba dam has silted up and is no longer a permanent source. A concreted section at the outlet provides clean drinking water for the elephants, and this circumvents damage to the outlet pipe, for elephants prefer clean water to drink, rather than that muddied through trampling and wallowing. This year, a huge Bull took exception to the Windmill, and literally flattened it, so that it lay in a twisted heap on the ground. Thanks to funding provided by our **US FRIENDS**, the Trust has installed a new Windmill at Dida Harea and water flows once more in an arid landscape. **Ndara** provides permanent water on the important Ndara Plains of the Park, and **Aruba**, which now that the Aruba Dam has silted, provides an alternative source during the dry season in this part of the Park.

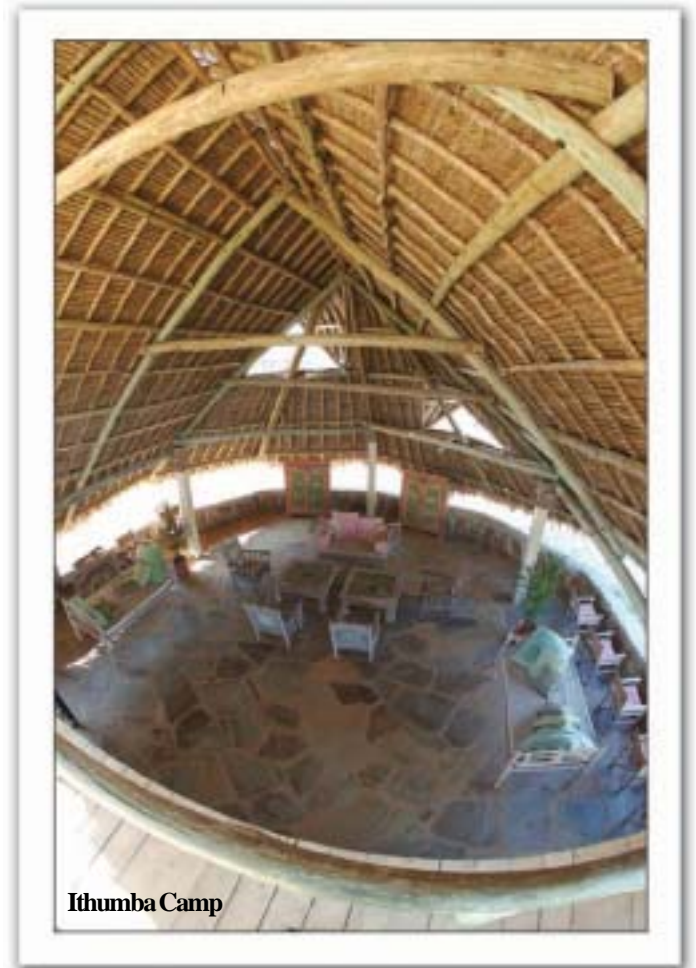
**The Ndiandaza** borehole and Windmill on the lower Tiva in the Northern Area of the Park has long been dysfunctional, inhibiting the patrolling of the Park near the boundary with the Orma tribe during the dry season, the borehole and Windmill having been installed in David Sheldrick's day especially for this purpose. This vital facility was restored by the Trust this year, and is now functional again.

**We thank our US FRIENDS most sincerely for funds to resurrect the Dida Harea Windmill and also for making provision for the servicing of the other Windmills and boreholes provided by the Trust in Tsavo:-**



## Support for the Northern Area

The Northern Area is an enormously important frontier of Tsavo East so the Trust has long provided much needed assistance. We oversee the Northern Headquarter's water supply, funded a De-Salinator so that the saline borehole water becomes fit for human consumption, brought water in our Tanker when the borehole ran dry, provided **Fuel** on a regular basis to keep the wheels turning and anti-poaching security personnel mobile, rehabilitated the Warden's ancient Landrover, the Road Grader and Bulldozer and the KWS Staff Minibus, in addition to covering the monthly salary of a competent Plant Operator for the Grader.



**Ithumba Camp**



## Ithumba Camp

Elephant Diaries II was completed at the beginning of 2007 and aired in December 2007 in Europe and January 2008 in the UK. A number of overseas foster-parents utilize the **Ithumba Camp** in order to keep in touch with their fostered elephant orphan during the rehabilitation process. The Ithumba Camp was built by the Trust to encourage tourism in the North, and it has proved immensely popular and an important source of revenue for the Park. The Trust handles the bookings, and is responsible for the running and maintenance of the camp with the majority bednight proceeds donated to KWS to assist with the overheads of the Northern Area of the Park. The Camp is fully furnished and sleeps six in double tents, each tent with en-suite shower and water-borne toilet under the stars, secured by a rough stone wall behind the tent. Shower water is solar-heated, the heating system cleverly disguised as an anthill near each tent while a small waterhole at the edge of the cleared compound attracts many of the smaller species. Dikdiks, a warthog family, and other small creatures, plus a spectacular diversity of birdlife provide endless fascination, and of course access to the 27 young orphaned elephants in the process of rehabilitation is a unique, and stirring experience. Visitors merely bring their food, and leave with their litter. The quiet solitude, and pristine wilderness of the North with its spectacular array of truly wild creatures, fulfills the need of wildlife enthusiasts who are beginning to shun the busy "Milk Run" tourist routes which were fast becoming over-crowded.





## Community Outreach

The Trust's Field Officer, Lionel Nutter, in conjunction with our De-Snaring Team Leaders, oversees the Trust's very active community outreach Programme, mindful that the future of wildlife rests with the next generation of Kenyans. A major donor, who wishes to remain anonymous, has enabled us to provide substantial support to different schools along the Tsavo Park boundary each year. This assistance includes desks, tables and chairs, text books and sporting equipment, plus a Community Hall and regular school field trips. The relevant De-Snaring Team Leaders also undertake regular lectures and screen environmental documentaries within their chosen schools through the Trust's four mobile Cinema units.

In addition to this, the Trust continues its other normal community outreach initiatives, both along the boundaries of Tsavo and also within the confines of Nairobi where our Nairobi based Public Relations Officer operates.

Down in Tsavo, Lionel Nutter continues to investigate the viability of other community initiatives, such as the planting of Aloes that have commercial value and thrive in an arid environment, fish farming, bee keeping, silk worm farming and zero grazing techniques. Goats are the livestock of choice for the communities bordering Tsavo, but they are very destructive to the habitat. Through embracing the zero grazing technique combined with enhancement through breeding, the community will not only be sparing the environment immense degradation, but also benefit in terms of better meat and more milk.

Thanks to a very generous donation from **THE DULVERTON TRUST**, we have now acquired our own 29 Seater Bus which will be used for school Field Trips.

**We thank the DULVERTON TRUST in England enormously for this exceedingly generous donation which will greatly enhance our outreach community student field excursions into the Parks, enabling us to become more self-sufficient in this respect.**

**We thank the WAVES CHARITABLE TRUST for marking their 10th year Anniversary with a generous grant to provide 4 Primary Schools with a substantial number of desks as well as sports equipment, and also for their community assistance which has been ongoing for many years including an annual grant in support of one Keeper's salary.**



## Orphans Stockades and Stables

With 27 young Elephants now growing up in the North, we have had to extend the existing Orphans' Stockades at Ithumba, secured as usual by a solar powered peripheral fence. We have also had to extend our Infant Elephant Nursery accommodation in Nairobi, and for this we received a generous donation from

**MR. AND MRS. DAVID VANN. To them most grateful thanks. Our US FRIENDS funded the Ithumba extensions, and we thank them for doing so.**



## DSWT Operated Veterinary Units

Our Mobile Veterinary Unit which covers both Tsavo East and West, Amboseli National Park, the Shimba Hills National Reserve and neighbouring ranchlands and community areas has been incredibly successful. This is funded by the Austrian **VIER PFOTEN** Animal Welfare organization, who have extended their support for a further 2 years. The second Mobile Veterinary Unit came about thanks to Mrs. Rex Dobie and her Minara Foundation, again headed



by a Veterinarian seconded from the KWS Veterinry Pool. A new vehicle was purchased, and then customized with drop-down field working tables, refrigeration facilities, darting hatches etc., plus all the necessary drugs and equipment. The new unit is now fully operational, covering the Masai Mara, the Rift Valley including Naivasha and Lake Nakuru, and even working further afield in Western Kenya. The unit has already saved numerous snared and injured animals.

In order to provide a working base for this Unit, the Trust had to rehabilitate the existing KWS Staff facilities in the Masai Mara at a cost of K. Shs. 1.8 million. Funding for this was provided by our **US FRIENDS of the DSWT**.

**We are deeply grateful to VIER PFOTEN for this very valuable support, and thank them enormously for empowering us to continue it. It has saved the lives of over 115 elephants and numerous other species that would otherwise have perished and was the inspiration for us to seek funding for a Second Mobile Veterinary Unit. We are deeply indebted to MRS. REX DOBIE AND HER MINARA FOUNDATION for providing the wherewithal for the Trust to operate this second Mobile Veterinary Unit, with pledged support to cover three working years. Already the new Unit has proved equally as effective as that of Tsavo, albeit more costly to run in view of the enormous distances they have to cover.**

We have long thought it very important to try and capture information from infamous and seasoned old poachers, in order to contribute a better working knowledge about how, and where, they operate within Tsavo. This, in particular is vital to be able to combat the traditional bow and poisoned arrow poachers who continue to take a very heavy toll of wildlife in Tsavo. We need to know their secret hide-outs, hitherto unknown sources of water during the dry seasons, the waterholes they habitually ambush, etc.

For this exercise, the Trust hired Conrad Thorpe, a Kenyan who once served with the Special Services in hot-spots such as Iraq and Afghanistan, to accompany on foot and spend time in the Park with a notorious old rascal our De-Snaring Teams captured, who has long been poaching in the Park and who, having served a jail sentence, immediately returned to do so again. During the time that Conrad Thorpe accompanied this man in the bush, and gained his confidence, an immense amount of vital information was gathered and documented, which has been made available to the relevant KWS field authorities in Tsavo.

For De-Snaring purposes, this year we gratefully received Grants from AFEW (THE AFRICAN FUND FOR ENDANGERED SPECIES), WSPA (THE WORLD SOCIETY FOR THE PROTECTION OF ANIMALS), SAFARICOM and THE CULLMAN FOUNDATION, who also provided the wherewithal to purchase a much needed new engine for the Mtito De-Snaring Team's vehicle which was on its last legs having done many years of tough service while THE US FRIENDS enabled us to purchase a new Landcruiser for anti-poaching work. We thank all these organizations most profusely. We also thank MARILLA VAN BEUREN for communication support, in terms of funding for base radio stations at Ithumba, Voi and Mtito, hand-held radios and radios for some of our operational vehicles.

**We thank WSPA most sincerely for their Grant towards the De-Snaring Manual also, produced by Dr. Ian Games.**



## Anti Poaching Initiatives

Our anti-poaching and vitally important, plus much needed, De-Snaring initiatives continue with seven fully mobile De-Snaring teams working the boundaries of Tsavo East, including the Northern Area along a notorious hot-spot near Gazi from whence we hope to extend the fenceline to Mtito Andei and the Chyulu Hills to further prevent human/elephant conflict.





## Conservation Radio Broadcasts

Our Elephant Keepers, together with our De-Snaring Team Leaders have been involved in Radio conservation outreach programmes, speaking in their particular tribal dialect to their respective tribal communities about the nature of elephants, and what it is like to be a human member of an elephant family. They have undertaken 7 broadcasts on the **MUSYI FM WAKAMBA** network, 7 Programmes on the **KAHAME KIKUYU STATION** and 5 on the **LUO** network. These have proved immensely popular, and subsequently the Keepers have been bombarded with praise from tribesmen who have found their talks incredibly enlightening and fascinating, reaching people at the grass-roots level to educate them about their priceless wildlife heritage.



## Tree Nursery & Road Maintenance

This year the Trust has embarked on creating an ambitious Tree Nursery on the Trust's land bordering Tsavo where our Mtito De-Snaring team is based. Since groundwater in the area is too saline for irrigation purposes, water has had to be pumped from the river Athi to a large Holding Tank near the Trust's Airfield, and a trench dug through rocky terrain for the piping to be buried deep enough not to attract the attention of thirsty elephants. There is a great need to encourage communities to replant indigenous hardwood trees that have been lost to the massive commercial charcoal trade, especially now that through Global Warming increasing desertification is becoming a reality that will impact negatively on all life.

Lionel Nutter has a permanent road-work team he calls "Strabag" (the name of the Austrian Contractor that built the new tarred road from Ulu to Mtito Andei, and who kindly graded the Trust's Airfield on our land as a donation during this process.) Lionel's "Straborg" road gang is comprised of local tribesmen who are happy to have a job, and who continually, by hand, work on the roads on the Trust Land. Lionel employed another "Straborg" road gang in the North who have cut entirely by hand a beautiful road to Gazi, through terrain that no machine could have managed, and the result is an amazing job, tackled with great enthusiasm and determination which has provided much appreciated employment for the community.

Finally we would like to thank **GLEN EDMUNDS** for putting all the Trust's Drivers through his advanced 4 x 4 Training Course free of charge. This has been particularly useful and informative for our De-Snaring Team Drivers who often have to cope with off road driving in difficult conditions and over inhospitable terrain. As a result this course has made them a lot more proficient, and by extension spared the Trust costly vehicle repairs.



**The massive Charcoal Trade**



# The Orphans' PROJECT



Kilgoris with Shimba

The Trust's Orphans' Project has benefited Kenya's tourism through international exposure and Kenya enjoyed its best tourist season ever in 2007, tourism having brought in over K. Shs. 60 billion . This has enabled the Kenya Wildlife Service to turn around its inherited huge deficit for the first time since Independence so the imposition in October 2007 of the \$40 entrance fee at the Service Entrance which provides access to the orphaned elephants in our care, came as an unwelcome bombshell. We endured a full month with our visitor numbers cut by two thirds before public pressure forced the authorities to re-think their revenue earning strategy which penalized the Trust and by extension the orphans in our care.

The Trust has to raise the funding to rear and rehabilitate the orphans, and when dealing with long lived species such as elephants and rhinos, it takes TIME and TIME takes MONEY!

**Whilst 36 of our hand-reared orphans are now grown and fully integrated back within the wild community of Tsavo East National Park, another 36**

**are still Keeper dependent, 8 of whom are still infants in our Nairobi Nursery. Over and above these 36 now "wild" ex orphans, there are others that were orphaned old enough and fit enough to be able to be sent directly into the care of our Keepers at the Voi Unit where their milk dependency could continue, but who didn't require specialized care in the Nairobi Nursery. These are Lissa (born 1986) and now 21 years old with 3 wildborn calves, Chuma, (born 1987) a young bull now aged 20 and Mpenzi, (born 1992) the "Nannie" to Lissa's calves who lost her own firstborn to the lions below the Voi Safari Lodge in January 2007. This brings the total of Trust reared orphans now reintegrated back into the wild herds to 39 all told, not counting others reared by David Sheldrick when he was the Warden of Tsavo, among them the famous Matriarch born in the late fifties in Samburu National Reserve, called "Eleanor" who is now in her late forties and returned to make contact after an absence of 10 years, with three wildborn calves.**

## **The Rearing and Rehabilitation of the Orphaned Elephants**

Young elephants are milk dependent for the first three years of life, and fully milk dependent for the first year, by which time they will be consuming upwards of 20 litres of special formula per day. Because elephants mirror humans in terms of development, the orphans are in our care until at least the age of 10, by which time they have made friends amongst the wild herds, been tutored by wild Matriarchs concerning elephant discipline, and eventually discover that their human friends are not quite as exciting as their elephant ones. Each and every elephant makes the transition in its own time, because, like humans, each and every elephant is an individual with its own specific character traits and temperament.

Costs involved include the chartering of aircraft to fly the orphans in, for they are usually far too fragile to withstand a car journey, and time can make the difference between life and death. Invariably, there are veterinary costs involved, plus the need for a veritable pharmacopeia on hand at all times of both conventional drugs, homeopathic remedies and essential oils for healing purposes. Most of the orphans arrive in a state of near collapse from dehydration, milk deprivation, many injured and all wounded psychologically, suffering the debilitating affects of trauma and stress from the loss of their elephant mother and family which can result in life-threatening conditions such as pneumonia and diarrhoea. All require very intensive treatment and care upon arrival.

Most of the special base milk formula that we use, which has always been donated in bulk by the Manufacturers in England free of charge, being time expired for human consumption, now has to be purchased, since it is not always freely available. However, Wyeth Laboratories have very kindly agreed to provide 6 cartons of SMA Baby Formula a month for British Airways crew members to bring out for the infant elephants, and supplied us with two bulk shipments in 2007. In addition to the milk, necessary supplements, such as desiccated coconut, oatmeal, isabgol fibre and copra also have to be purchased. Infant elephants must be fed on demand to begin with, and thereafter every three hours throughout the day and the night during the Nursery stage. Since little elephants would be sheltered from the sun, the wind, and the rain by being beneath the body of the adults, we have to try and provide the same, and this involves umbrellas, sunblock for tender baby ears, blankets and rainwear.

Infant elephants are so fragile that they can be fine one day, and dead the next. Caring for them during the Nursery stage is a tight-rope of 24 hour care from a team of Keepers working round the clock in shifts, who are with the orphans throughout the day and also at night, one Keeper actually sleeping in the stable with each elephant to provide the physical contact a baby elephant needs to

grow up psychologically sound. (In the wild a baby elephant would **never** be without its mother and family). It also entails a man on duty throughout the night mixing milk feeds every three hours, and a great deal of supervision. Each orphan's intake is recorded in a book, the stools carefully monitored, and anything unusual, such as listlessness or looking "dull" immediately reported for then only years of experience can make an accurate assessment of the likely cause.

As the elephants grow, the milk consumption increases, and has to be fortified with oatmeal and coconut. During the rehabilitation stage, a Milk Replacer imported from Israel replaces the Nursery SMA formula because SMA is heat sensitive and deteriorates in a hot environment such as Tsavo. From the age of 6 months, the growing elephants require cut natural browse placed in their protective Night Quarters to enable them to feed throughout the hours of darkness with the quantity increased as the elephants grow. Water has to be provided, both for drinking, and for a mudbath, the mud being important for skin care, acting as a protection against sun damage and to stabilize temperature, since elephants have no sweat glands. Up until the age of five years, elephant orphans need the supplementation of coconut which contains the correct fat. Without this, they begin to show signs of malnutrition. (An elephant calf would normally suckle its mother for up to 5 years, until the birth of the next baby.) The Trust purchases Copra from Mombasa to cater for this necessity during the Rehabilitation stage.

Rehabilitation back into the wild system of an orphaned elephant takes a long time, for at any age a baby elephant duplicates its human counterpart in terms of age progression, so the young elephants are not ready to make the transition until at least the age of 10, just as a human child could not be dumped in a strange environment and be expected to cope alone when so young. (Those orphaned too young to be able to recall their lost elephant family remain with the human family that replaced their lost elephant one, longer). The young elephants initially need exposure to the wild system for the genetic memory to become active, then they need to make contact with the wild herds, form friendships within and eventually at the age of 10 or older, make the transition, having found their erstwhile human family somewhat dull compared to the wild elephants. Then, instead of being with the human family and being exposed to the wild elephants, they live as wild elephants, but some still like to keep in touch with their orphaned friends remaining still Keeper dependent, for "an elephant never forgets".

The Trust has some 39 Elephant Attendants working in its three elephant locations - the Nairobi Nursery, and the two Rehabilitation facilities in Tsavo, one in the Southern section of the Park, and the other in the North. Kenya can be proud of these men, whose dedication, caring,

**It gives us untold satisfaction to have pioneered the successful rehabilitation of human-raised elephants into a wild elephant community, the first time that newborn elephants have ever been successfully hand-reared with kindness and sensitivity and successfully returned to the wild community when grown.**

Idie and Roan



Chyulu



Lesanju

Kilgoris



Edwin with Shimba



Lesanju



Shimba and Lempaute

endurance and compassion provide an exemplary example for many others less motivated.

This year through the regular radio broadcasts they have undertaken, our Keepers have spread the conservation message to tribesmen in their own tribal dialects, explaining to others less well informed the sophistication and gentle nature of elephants, which are often viewed by the uninitiated public as dangerous pests. These radio discussions have proved an extremely valuable method of educating rural communities.

During rehabilitation, the orphans have to be confined at night in Night Holding Stockades, erected in the Southern and Northern sections of Tsavo East National Park. These have to be electrically fenced to protect the young elephants from lions and other unwelcome intruders such as snakes, until they are old enough and large enough to be able to look after themselves. The orphans require a good supply of water, which entails boreholes, and in the North, a De-Salinator as well as generators, pumps, water Bowsers, trailers and tractors. Existing Stockades have to be constantly maintained and extended when necessary to make provision for growing numbers. Provision also has to be made for the storage of milk and other supplements as well as medicines such as snake serum and de-wormers etc., etc. at both Rehabilitation Centres. The Keepers are equipped with radios so that they can keep in touch with base whilst walking in the bush with the elephants, as well as with the Trust Headquarters back in Nairobi, at all times.

In short therefore, the Orphans' Project is a substantial financial commitment for which the Trust has to make provision, money which the Trust has to source. The Second Series of elephant Diaries, which was broadcast in early 2008, will hopefully not only give a further boost to Kenya's Tourism Industry, but also provide yet another example both of human compassion as well as the incredible intelligence and intuition of elephants.

**We owe the success of our Orphans' Project to many organizations as well as all the individuals who support our on-line digital Fostering Programme and we thank them, one and all, wholeheartedly. Specifically we thank WYETH PHARMACEUTICALS LTD for donations of milk provided as and when stocks are available. We thank DICKY EVANS and all at MK AIRLINES for getting it to Kenya for us, as well as those at FLAMINGO HOLDINGS and the SKY TRAIN STAFF for clearing it through Customs and delivering it to our doorstep.**

**We could not manage without generous Annual Grants received from the English based CARE FOR THE WILD INTERNATIONAL, the Dutch and Belgian based VRIENDEN VON DE OLIFANT, the German based RETTET DIE ELEFANTEN AFRIKAS E.v., AKTIONSGEMEINSCHAFT ARTENSCHUTZ (AGA), THE EDEN WILDLIFE TRUST and the INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR ANIMAL WELFARE all of which have been lifesavers for our Orphans' Project, for which we are deeply grateful. Likewise we thank**

**NATASHA WELD-DIXON for ongoing donations of hay, saving us thousands of shillings. We are extremely grateful to BRITISH AIRWAYS for flying out Caroline Ingraham free of charge in order to work on the horrifying wounds of our little "Sinya" and to their Cabin Crew who bring us tins of milk and blankets on an ongoing basis as do the crew of VIRGIN ATLANTIC. British Airways also provide the Trust with eight complimentary flights for conservation related work, one of which was used to fly our Head Nursery Keeper Edwin Lusichi, (first class, no less) to U.K. as part of their exchange programme to promote awareness about the plight of elephants. This is an exceedingly generous gesture, for which we are deeply grateful.**

**Elisabet Peterzen and her organization, the Swedish based FORENINGEN FORSVAR ELEFANTERNA and the Swiss based TERRE ET FAUNA have also continued financial support as when possible, as have AGA in Germany for which many thanks. Donations in memory of Colin Smith and Dawn Rollins came from their friends and colleagues at PRICE WATERHOUSE COOPERS in England, following their tragic death in June due to a plane crash in Malawi. They were foster-parents and valuable supporters in life, and their friends felt it fitting that money given in memory of them go towards the infant elephants. We are also deeply grateful to FELIX AND CLAUDIA SOMM and MR. AND MRS. GROOM for their continued generous support of our Orphans' Project.**

**We thank Marleen LeFebvre most sincerely for her professional alternative medical assistance, and also, along with colleagues, for arranging the transportation of a donation of Vitamins kindly provided by AOV and ORTHICA PHARMACEUTICALS which arrived on our doorstep in Nairobi, facilitated by the kind help of ECULINE in Nairobi and JAN DEURLOO of Mission Relief in Holland. We thank Rob Faber of VRIENDEN VAN DE OLIFANT for shouldering the courier and shipping costs to get them to us. We thank CAROLINE INGRAHAM enormously for journeying to Kenya to work on Sinya's wounds and for introducing us to potent natural plant based remedies, and the healing clays that have worked wonders. We thank ALAN HOWELL OF SHECHINA who so generously donated many of the essential oils she needed free of charge and also MR. AND MRS. BURNETT for their continuing donations of essential oils.**

**As always, we are deeply grateful to LESLEY COOKSLEY for ongoing donations of all our homeopathic remedies; to WOODLAND PARK ZOO, USA, for blankets, antibiotic creams, Elephant Sized feeding bottles and Teats again this year, which are always welcome, to CARRIE and**

RONNIE WILKIE for ongoing donations of healing Tinctures of Calendula and Thuya and all others, both near and far, who have freely offered alternative healing techniques for all our new and ailing Nursery elephant and rhino inmates. MR. AND MRS. GERALD RATZ and MRS. ANN BIRLEY have given substantial support to our U.K. Charity for which we are deeply grateful.

BRIAN CUSHING continues his support through donations of Post Cards, and photographs for sale at our Shop Table, and MR. HERBERT SCHIABLE also allows us access to his beautiful images of the orphans for use on our website. Grateful thanks to these two gentlemen and to RAMESH SHAH OF RITZ ENTERPRISES LTD., who very kindly made the Keepers' Dustcoats for us.

We are enormously grateful to DR. PETER SCHWENDEMANN for undertaking the operation to remove the cataract from Rhino Maxwell's left eye free of charge, and to the ALCON PHARMACEUTICAL firm in Germany, who very generously donated the cortisone needed for the aftercare. We also thank DR. ANTONY GOODHEAD, a Veterinary Animal Eye expert, who traveled from South Africa with all his sophisticated equipment to try and restore vision to rhino Maxwell's right eye and MRS. SUE CARR-HARTLEY who kindly organized the Ultra Sound machine that was able to determine that Max's eyes were inoperable, sparing him the anaesthetic which otherwise he would have had to endure. We thank PETE FULLERTON for covering the costs of Dr. Goodhead's visit and all THE VISITORS who have donated drugs, sun-cream and wound ointments, to assist in the health care of the orphaned elephants and rhinos.

MR. PETE FULLERTON deserves special mention again, for he has constantly provided so generously for elephant rescues, unforeseen contingencies that constantly crop up for the most needy, over and above his support for the orphans he has fostered, including rhino Maxwell. Pete Fullerton is, indeed, the Guardian Angel of our orphans, and someone that can always be counted upon to do his utmost to help financially. We simply have no words to adequately thank this kind and exceedingly generous gentleman.

As at mid November 2006, which is when the last Newsletter was completed, we were left with the following infant elephants in our Nairobi Nursery, namely **Sian** (Amboseli National Park, **Loijuk** (West Gate Samburu Conservancy) **Makena** (Laikipia), **Chyulu** (Chyulu Hills), **Kamboyo** (Tsavo National Park), **Zurura** (Ziwani, Tsavo West), **Lenana**, (Ol Pejeta Ranch, Laikipia), **Shimba** (translocated from Shimba Hills National Reserve), **Lesanju** (Milgis Lugga, Laikipia), and **Lempaute** (West Gate Samburu National Reserve). Sian had taken over the Matriarchship of the Nursery group with Makena glued to her side at all times.



Keira Knightley

The smallest Nursery members, Lesanju, Lempaute and little Shimba, were mainly kept apart from the older Nursery orphans, for they needed to be closer to home and under shade to spare their petal soft baby ears from sun damage. As the oldest of this miniature trio, Lesanju instantly took charge and ever since has resisted being "possessed" by any of the older females, as and when the two groups do join up, clinging instead to the Keepers. Lempaute, the most mischievous member of the baby trio, is inseparable from Lesanju, while Shimba, who has always been docile, and self sufficient, is quite happy to be "smother-loved" by any of the Big Girls.

The Nursery Elephants have enjoyed visits from International Celebrities this year, among them SIR RICHARD BRANSON OF VIRGIN ATLANTIC AIRLINES, who came to launch Kenya as the latest destination for his Carriers, paid a visit to the orphans, donated blankets and umbrellas as well as support for orphan Lesanju, plus a generous cheque representing the amount raised through internal Staff Raffles for tickets on the inaugural Virgin flights to Kenya. In addition to pledged free work related flights, space permitting. Virgin have an on-board four month appeal to raise funding towards the Trust's community outreach programmes.

The celebrity singer known as "STING" was another visitor, as were film stars KEIRA KNIGHTLEY and NATALIE PORTMAN, all of whom were charmed by the baby elephants.

## New Arrivals

### Galdessa

In late November 2006, huge rainstorms brought the Galana river down in full spate, and two baby elephants were washed down the river in Tsavo East National Park. One, a baby of about 6 weeks old, ended up in the Generator Room of Galdessa Camp on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November, battered and bruised from having been hurled against the rocks of the rapids, too shocked and exhausted to care and resigned to giving up the ghost. Having spent a night at the Voi Stockades, he was flown to the Nursery the next day, and we named him **"Galdessa"** after the tented lodge of that name. (Another calf rescued by KWS Rangers a day or two later which was near dead on being pulled free of the water, died shortly after arrival).

Galdessa was with us 2 months but he was always far too subdued for comfort. Though barely 2 months old herself, little Lesanju embraced Galdessa immediately, and was very caring and motherly towards him, arousing jealousy from mischievous baby Lempaute, who resented the competition for Lesanju's undivided attention. Sadly however, suddenly during the evening of the 23<sup>rd</sup> November, Galdessa began to hemorrhage internally, and within hours, he was dead, leaving everyone shocked and distraught, for his demise had been unexpected and so sudden. Obviously the ordeal in the flooded Galana inflicted internal damage - the Vets suspected a torn spleen.

Lesanju, missed him sorely, and spent days searching for him, going in and out of his Stable, and looking in and around the compound bushes, until she gave up hope of ever finding him again, and went unusually listless for a

few days, obviously mourning the loss, whereas mischievous little Lempaute seemed happy to be without competition from an even smaller baby. It is always a source of wonder to observe how much more mentally advanced an elephant baby is to a human infant of the same age, despite the fact that elephants duplicate humans in age and longevity!

### Kenze

"Kenze" was the next arrival at the Nursery on the 6<sup>th</sup> December. It says a lot for the community outreach work of our Chyulu De-Snaring team that members of a previously very un-ele-friendly community took the trouble to walk a long distance to our Chyulu De-Snaring team's Camp in the forested hills to report the presence of a young elephant that was obviously an orphan near their village of Kenze. This was a 2 year old, in an emaciated and advanced state of starvation due to milk deprivation. Whilst he left us in no doubt about his loathing of the human race when he arrived back at the Nursery, he obviously knew that his only chance of survival during the hours of darkness was to be near humans, for otherwise he would have made an easy meal for the hyaenas which hunt in packs at night.

Upon arrival at the Nursery, his physical condition was shocking to behold. Besides being literally just a bag of bones, and with an under-belly chewed by something small (possibly a domestic village dog), there wasn't a square inch of his skin that was not literally plastered in layers of ticks of all shapes and sizes. Old enough to understand how his mother died, he had just one last mission in mind - retribution, by trying to kill any human in sight. Even a feeble two year old elephant can inflict a great deal of damage, particularly one armed with tiny tusks, so there was nothing we could do, but keep clear and stand by for the inevitable collapse which we knew was not far off. Only when this took place, an hour or two later, were we able to help him.

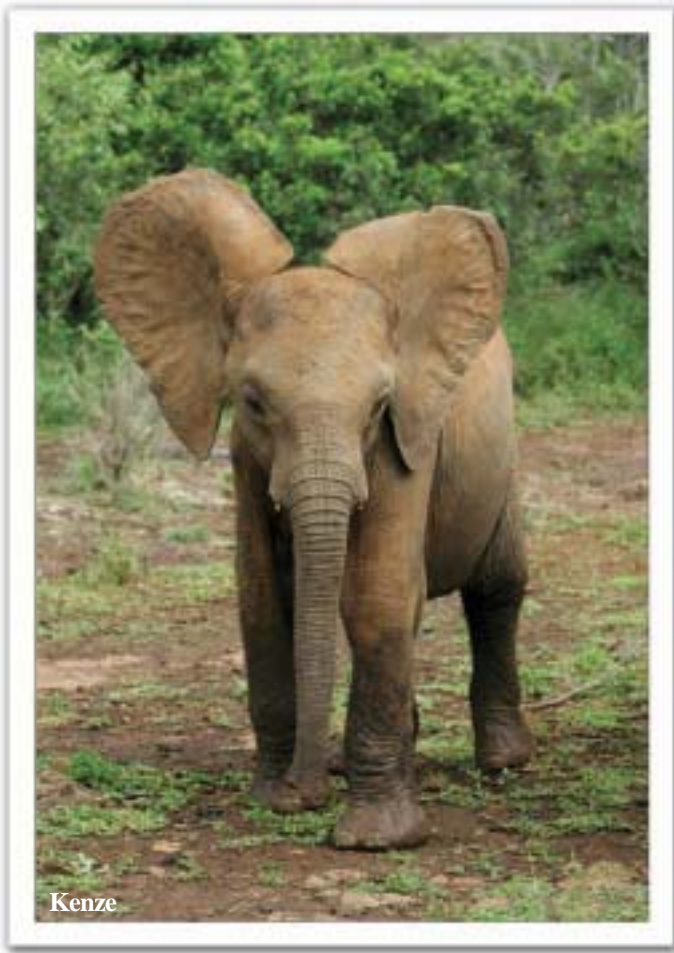
Immediately, life supporting intravenous drips were inserted into an ear vein, his suppurating belly wound flushed out, and the tick burden addressed by the Keepers, who pulled out what they could, and sprayed those they couldn't with Frontline and T Tree oil. Meanwhile, Daphne rushed to the kitchen to make balls of cooked oatmeal porridge and desiccated coconut, mixed to a paste with formula milk which were inserted into the elephant's mouth and were swallowed with difficulty as he hovered between life and death. Fortunately, the belly-wounds were superficial and not life threatening, albeit severely infected. What was life threatening was the anticipation of the usual muscular dystrophy which seizes starvation cases, and which usually heralds the end, but fortunately the intravenous fluids managed to avert that. Even so, we doubted that we would wake up to find Kenze still with us in the morning, so it came as a pleasant surprise to find that he was, and although still comatose, breathing a little easier, having been turned by the Keepers during the night to avoid lung collapse.

By midday of the 8<sup>th</sup> he was a lot better and could be hauled to his feet, left propping himself against the bars of his Stockade, but still too aggressive to risk close Keeper contact. A bottle of milk offered through the separating



Galdessa

## Shida



partition of the Stockade was rudely flung aside, but the taste and smell of milk splashed against his face, lingered. He was also an interested spectator as Kamboyo and Zurura hungrily downed theirs next door and by day three, he accepted milk offered to him through the bars, but was still far too aggressive for a Keeper to risk being actually in with him.

During the ensuing days, the Keepers worked on him with patience and understanding until he understood the word "No", and that they meant no harm, although he still involuntarily lunged forward but stopped short of pushing home a charge. Once he had regained some strength, we felt it was time to let him out and about with the others, for contact with other elephants is the best antidote to bereavement and depression, besides which all elephants loathe being confined.

He was a tall calf, older and larger than both Kamboyo and Zurura, but still much weaker, so the two smaller boys were quick to take advantage of his debility, and couldn't resist giving him the odd shove to flout superiority, rank being important to even young elephant bulls. We knew that in the fullness of time, when Kenze had regained his strength, the score would be settled, but right now he sought solitude, feeding apart from the others, and only approaching a Keeper holding his bottle of milk. We knew now that Kenze would live, and that the gentle inborn nature of his species would emerge given time. We called Kenze our 2007 Christmas miracle for never before had we been able to retrieve a young elephant so far gone.

Feeling good over that Christmas miracle was, however, short-lived, because just as we were recovering from the New Year festivities, Shida, (the orphaned rhino born in August 2003, whose mother died of old age at the Ivory Burn site in Nairobi National Park, and who by now had been successfully reintegrated back into the resident wild rhino community of the Park, free to come and go at will), turned up with "a prolapsed mucosa of the rectum" – in other words, innards that should be inside, hanging out of his rear end. He returned to his Nursery Stockade looking decidedly sorry for himself sending us into panic. Hurriedly, the Vet was called and was soon on his way, the alarm in his voice upon hearing the news, adding to our disquiet.

This condition, is apparently not unusual in horses, (and possibly rhinos as well, since they belong to the family of horses). It necessitated an anaesthetic so that what was hanging out could be shoved back in, after which his rectum was stitched up using stout fishing line. He would have to remain quiet in his Stockade for 10 days or so, and during that time eat no solids, so Shida was back on a milk-only diet, and lost condition before our eyes, so much so, that we began to fear that we might lose him. Then to our dismay, the prolapse appeared again, so a second anaesthetic was necessary, and this time the anus stitched with an 80 lb fishing line. By now he was just a shadow of his former portly self, and was the picture of misery, desperate to be allowed out. Finally, in a desperate attempt to give him the will to live, we capitulated and opened the Stockade Gate ahead of time, assigning two Keepers to accompany him at all times to ensure he came to no further harm, since our other ex orphaned rhino, 9 year old Magnum, was a definite threat, as were members of the wild rhino community. Although now fully rehabilitated, Magnum was still in the habit of returning habitually to check that his Nursery Stockade had not been usurped by another and had been incensed to find Shida in it. Like elephants, rhinos have long memories and can harbour a grudge so we knew that Shida would face a hot reception if Magnum came across him unattended.

Nor were his problems over yet, for as soon as he began browsing again, it turned out that the anal opening was too tight for him to be able to pass dung, so there was a huge build-up inside ballooning outwards leaving him again in need of urgent attention. Once again, the Vet was hurriedly summonsed while, pending his arrival, a desperate attempt was made to remove what dung we could by inserting an arm up his rear end and scooping what we could out!. Amazingly, during this process Shida stood quite still, and this surprised us, for normally a rhino would be intolerant of such intrusive intervention. The Vet finally arrived, and in a swift deft manouvre, managed to cut the restraining fishing line, but was not sufficiently agile to leap clear as an explosion of dung shot all over him, much to everyone's amusement! Miraculously, this time, what should be inside remained so, and this was an enormous relief to all bystanders, including the Vet, for Shida could probably not have withstood a third anaesthetic. Ever since then, he has steadily regained all the weight he lost, and was soon back to his previous portly self, casing the forest for signs of his wild kin, and giving a good account



Maxwell



Shida's prolapse



Shida



Maxwell's Operation



Maxwell



of himself when he happened to come across Magnum, who is handicapped by being blind in one eye.

### **Magnum**

Magnum celebrated his 10<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 30<sup>th</sup> January, 2007, his debut into the world 10 years ago witnessed by the Keepers who were attending his injured mother, Scud. She was an ex orphan born during the Gulf War, who was already 9 months pregnant with Magnum when she turned up one early morning laboriously bringing herself home on just three legs, one foreleg completely paralyzed. The Veterinary prognosis was never hopeful, for the radial nerve was obviously damaged, and could have even been severed, probably following a heavy fall on a shoulder. We nursed Scud for the next 9 months until Magnum was born, doing everything humanly possible to try and save her, but the leg withered, and she was too incapacitated to be able to keep up with her baby. It was then that we had to make a very tough decision. Either face losing the calf to the lions, and his mother to another rhino when she came into season again, or euthenase Scud and raise her calf as an orphan, so that Nairobi National Park would at least have lost only one rhino rather than two.

Magnum grew up and eventually was integrated back into the wild rhino community of the Park. As time progressed his return visits became more sporadic, and we assumed that he was now the holder of prime real estate down on the plains of the Park, and daren't leave his patch unattended. However, with rhino horn now a prized commodity, as months passed without sight of him, we voiced our concern to the KWS Rhino Surveillance team, who assured us that he was alive and well.

### **Kilgoris**

The 25<sup>th</sup> January 2007 saw the arrival of another tiny elephant orphan, whom we later named "Kilgoris". He was another flood victim, swept from his elephant family whilst crossing a flooded watercourse, the event witnessed by tribesmen. Eventually, the baby ended up downstream on a sandbank and staggered to his feet, joining a herd of goats feeding nearby who belonged to an ele-friendly Masai farmer of the area. The little elephant followed them back to the farmer's "manyatta" and since in Masai custom it is apparently lucky to find a wild animal in the kraal, the farmer fed the calf cows' milk before walking it to the nearest K.W.S. Outpost. Too young to know fear, the baby trustingly followed along behind. It was from there that we were alerted and the rescue set in motion.

It was encouraging that this community farmer cared sufficiently to save this calf, despite the fact that some of his friends tried to persuade him to kill it. Diligently, he laid it on a bed of hay in the back of the Landrover Pickup belonging to Ann Kent Taylor's anti-poaching team funded by Care for the Wild International in order to bring it to the nearest Airfield some 30 kms distant. By the time the calf arrived, the rescue plane had landed and was waiting.

Because the little elephant had taken cows' milk, the resultant upset stomach came as no surprise, exacerbated by the fact that he was also cutting his first molars, and these invariably tend to cause diarrhoea. Being another



**Kilgoris**

water victim, he was also vulnerable to pneumonia, so we took the precaution of giving him a long course of injectible antibiotic, plus the Sulphadimidine boluses to control the diarrhoea. However, he fell ill again, so a second course of Sulphadimidine had to be administered. Even this failed to control the diarrhoea and by the time the results of a sensitivity test were available, little Kilgoris was being kept alive on an intravenous drip. It was, however, too late, and like Galdessa, he began to pass blood and died on the 21<sup>st</sup> March.

The results of the post-mortem examination revealed a severely ulcerated colon, and an overload of Ecoli bacteria. Thinking back, we now suspect that this tiny calf had probably not had his mother's first colostrum milk to provide the vital antibodies his new immune system needed. For such cases, only an early infusion of plasma taken from an older elephant can save them. Little Kilgoris was, as always, deeply loved, and sorely missed, especially by Lesanju, who had witnessed so much tragedy in her short life – separation from her own elephant family when she fell down a well in the Milgis Lugga, then the loss of Galdessa, and now Kilgoris. Shimba grieved as well, for he had become a best friend during the 2 months that Kilgoris had been with us.

### **Maxwell**

The 6<sup>th</sup> February turned out to be another unusual rhino day - the rescue of blind little Maxwell, which was a fraught event indeed. His distressed mewing was heard by the Keepers mid morning, and upon investigation, they came

across this 3 month old calf in the forest about 2 kms. from the Trust's premises, running around in circles with no mother in sight. Hoping that the mother rhino would return to retrieve her distraught calf, the Keepers were told to keep watch from a safe distance, and report back in the evening, KWS meanwhile having also been alerted.

However, when there was no sign of his mother by nightfall, we were faced with the dilemma of having to try and capture the calf, or risk losing him to a predator during the night. Using the rhino "come hither" exhalation of breath call, the baby followed our Keepers and the KWS Rangers until near the Trust premises, and then unfamiliar sounds "spooked" him and he began charging aimlessly in the direction of any sound. Only then, did it become evident that he was, in fact, completely blind in both eyes.

The rescue turned dramatic when the rhino detected Daphne's voice, and came straight for her like a train, covering the separating distance in a matter of seconds. At the last moment, when the rhino was almost on top of her, she managed to dive headlong into a nearby thorny bush, and fortunately her pursuer carried on, homing in on the Staff, who were shouting "Mama Mama", certain that Daphne must have been flattened! All available personnel then swarmed all over him, but it took about 12 men to subdue him, tie his legs, sit on his head, and eventually lift him onto the Elephant Rescue Tarpaulin, exclaiming that he was far heavier than any elephant they had previously had to deal with! It entailed the strength of about 10 men, with several stops en route, to get him to a stable, and there, as soon as he was freed, everyone had to vault over the door with alacrity, as he smashed

into it, missing the last escapee by inches. He could certainly pack a punch as he crashed around, breaking some of the stable timbers in the process!

A prophylactic antibiotic injection was a necessity, for past experience had taught us that unless a newly captured rhino undergoes a course of antibiotic, the immune system suffers such a knock that they invariably succumb to diseases to which they are normally immune. This posed a dilemma, for he was far too wild to handle. There was just one person bold and brave enough to undertake this task, and that was Angela's husband, Robert Carr-Hartley, who vaulted over the stable door and with all his strength managed to restrain the rhino's sharp end, meanwhile bellowing for some back-up. Reluctantly, some of the Keepers were galvanized into action, enabling Robert to leave them holding the head, while he administered a shot to the bottom. Then, it was each man for himself, leaping clear as best they could! For the next three days, this same procedure had to be repeated, it being important that Max receive at least a three day course.

Meanwhile, the taming process was taking place. No rhino can resist being scratched under the stomach. Their legs cave in and they simply **have** to collapse, lying with outstretched legs, and eyes closed in bliss as they succumb to a sensation that is entirely irresistible. Max was no exception, even though the scratching had to be done long-range by a man beyond the stable door holding the broomstick, talking to him all the while, and calling his name. Once the antibiotic acrobats ended, he rapidly became more docile, coming to take the milk that was offered over the stable door and eventually sufficiently calm for a Keeper to be actually inside with him, the first one sufficiently brave to accomplish this offered a reward as an incentive! Rhinos are, in fact, one of the easiest species to tame down, as long as they are not surprised, for then they will instantly charge as a means of defence. It is even more important not to surprise one that is blind, but the transformation of Max was dramatic. Soon he was a trusting and loving little fellow, and in view of his disability, quick to learn his way around.

He had cataracts in both eyes, and this was a puzzle, since, due to his age, we thought that he had probably not been born blind. There has never been any news of his mother. Had something happened to her, and had he been spiked in both eyes by rushing through a thorny thicket to escape death himself, or could this be the work of yet another parasite specific to his species, for other totally blind rhinos (usually only females) have been known to lead perfectly normal lives, eyes being only important to a rhino at close quarters. Chemistry and scent dominate their lives, aided by a phenomenal memory, but a bull needs his eyes for combat to be able to size up an opponent. Rhino bulls must fight for rank and territory in order to prove their worth as breeders, and every rhino bull naturally aspires to that.

In order to give him more space, Max was moved from the small stable he occupied, to the large Stockade next door to that of Shida. In no time at all, he had learnt his way around, the highlight of every day being when Shida paid a visit whose approach was detected long before anyone



Taru and Maxwell

in the compound even knew he was close. Shida was not quite as enthusiastic about his small neighbour, and would have liked to beat him up, given half a chance.

On the 21<sup>st</sup> March, Max was anaesthetized so that Dr. Peter Schwendemann, one of Kenya's top Eye Specialists could operate to remove the cataract from his left eye, having warned us that the cells in animal eyes react differently to those of a human, and that in his experience, such operations on animals were seldom a success, post operative "inter-ocular inflammation" usually clouding the cornea. Sadly this prediction proved correct in Max's case for the cornea gradually became opaque, and Max's dark world remained a reality.

We then heard that a successful operation had been undertaken using a special technique on a young Zoo rhino in Germany, and whilst the German Surgeon could not afford the time to travel to Kenya to operate on Max's right eye, he put us in touch with Dr. Antony Goodhead, an Ophthalmologist specialist from the Johannesburg Animal Eye Hospital, with years of experience working on wildlife and domestic animals throughout the world.

Dr. Goodhead's sophisticated equipment was couriered to Kenya from Johannesburg ahead of his arrival, and the operation was scheduled to take place on the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2008.

Upon arrival in Kenya Dr. Goodhead noticed that Maxwell's eyes were sunken and smaller than normal, suggesting additional inoperable complications over and above the obvious cataracts. At his suggestion, (and thanks to Sue Carr-Hartley), we hurriedly managed to source an ultrasound machine and with Max obligingly lying still whilst his tummy was rubbed, Dr. Goodhead was able to carry out an extensive ultrasound examination of both his eyes, bringing images to the screen that confirmed our worst fears. It was confirmed that Maxwell's blindness was likely to have been a degenerating developmental defect from birth for not only did he have cataracts, but he also had a hyperechoic mass in the anterior part of the globe with the posterior segment filled with extremely dense point-like hyperechoic masses. On movement of the globe, these masses which were probably blood and degenerate cellular material could be seen moving about. Over and above this, the retina appeared detached and the optic nerve dead. Hence no amount of surgery could ever restore sight to poor Maxwell but at least he was spared the anaesthetic and surgery that would still have left him blind.

Shida happened to turn up that morning and was confined in the next door Stockade in order not to disrupt events so Dr. Goodhead was able to also examine his eyes with the ultrasound machine as a comparison to the image of those of Maxwell, and the marked difference was clearly visible.

Now, we will have to think about Plan B – build a nice enclosure for Max nearby in the forest; introduce the dung of other rhinos so that he does not feel alone; provide him with a sumptuous mudbath to roll in and a soft dustpile to play in, plus cut browse to feast on at all times. Possibly we will have to consider neutering him, so that he doesn't aspire to anything other than a quiet life. As such he can still be a valuable ambassador for his severely threatened species.

Currently, he is contented and happy in his darkened world, moving around his space with uncanny dexterity. He knows exactly where his water bin is, and when his milk is due. However, when he decides to romp, the Keeper has to retreat rapidly and leave him to it, for he races around at speed, doing happy little pig-jumps in the air, and spinning like a top. He responds to his name, and comes to be gently caressed on the face, and mysteriously, he can detect the approach of Shida long before Shida even appears, his excitement tempered by a touch of anxiety, evident by a raised tail. The appearances of Shida are the highlight of his darkened world and such highlights are frequent these days, for Shida has decided to keep close to home. We will do our utmost to ensure that Max wants for nothing and leads a quiet but healthy and happy life as does another neutered rhino called "Morani" up at Sweetwaters Ranch near Nanyuki.

## Elgon

In August, there was great excitement when a baby elephant of about one year old came to us from the Elgon population of famous cave excavating elephants. She had fallen into a disused pit latrine obscured by overgrown lush vegetation in this high rainfall region, and had endured an entire night down that unsavoury hole, in freezing temperatures and pouring rain, before being rescued the next morning. It was, indeed, a miracle that she had survived this and was still alive when the tribal people who had found her the previous evening, returned to try and get her out.

This proved no easy task, for it entailed digging a large trench to connect with the bottom of the pit, so that the little elephant could be pulled free. Nor was her ordeal over, for she then had to endure a grueling 4 hour journey over appalling roads to reach the KWS Elgon National Park Headquarters, from whence she was flown to the Nairobi Nursery, arriving during the afternoon of the 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2007.

We were never optimistic of being able to save little "Elgon", and sure enough, she passed away 3 weeks later. Not only was she a prime candidate for pneumonia, but the entire left side of her body was so painful that she could barely walk, added to which her digestive system was in a mess from having ingested some of the contents of the pit. Her death was a sad loss, for she originated from a world-



famous and unique population of elephants, so far not represented within our orphaned herd.

The Elgon elephants tunnel deep into the extinct Mt. Elgon volcano in their search for minerals, excavating caves that penetrate several Kms into the sides of the mountain where they have chiseled off chunks of mineralized sodium-rich volcanic rock for centuries. Today, their numbers are few, for Mount Elgon National Park has long been a forgotten corner of the country where the elephants have suffered heavy poaching both from Kenya and Uganda, since the mountain straddles the border between the two countries.

### **Sinya**

Elephants that fall into dry pits invariably suffer more damage than those that fall into wells dug in dry sandy riverbeds. On the 14<sup>th</sup> September, we received another such victim, this time a calf from the Amboseli population, who had been rescued from a pit near the Tanzanian border at a place called Sinya. The tip of her trunk had been bitten off by a predator, and she had suffered extensive bruising, although the severity of her injuries only became evident when huge slabs of skin turned necrotic on her back leaving raw suppurating flesh beneath, alarmingly close to the spinal column. In addition, she had a deep wound on the right foreleg.

Dealing with Sinya's serious wounds involved a great deal of pain, adding to the trauma for this unfortunate baby. However, it had to be done at least twice a day, and entailed

having to overpower her and keep her still so that the Vets could work on her. Every day became a dreaded nightmare for her and as soon as she saw the Vet and the Keepers congregating to subdue her, she became extremely fearful and tried to escape. Daily antibiotic injections, a necessity to forestall serious problems such as pneumonia and septicemia, didn't help matters either, and when the Vets said that she would have to be anaesthetized so that the wounds could be properly scrubbed, we feared that the elephant's immune system would become life threateningly depressed. It was then that we decided to call in Caroline Ingraham, a specialist in Zoopharmacognosy – in short the study of animals self selecting what aromatic plants and plant essential oils, algae, clay and other natural remedies their body needs to cure itself and maintain health. Caroline had been out to work with the orphaned elephants before, and had kindly offered her services should we ever need them again.

She was flown out courtesy of British Airways, and by anointing Sinya's back wound with Red and Green Clay, Turmeric and Garlic, achieved what even the Vets described as a miracle. Instantly, signs of healing became evident for the clays created a natural covering, inhibited flies, and drew out impurities, yet allowed the wound to breathe. Garlic essential oil, which is a potent natural antibiotic devoid of adverse side effects was offered to Sinya, and she simply could not get enough of it. She took it from Caroline's hands drawing it up into her trunk and sneezing out congested fluid, she also took it into her mouth and in such quantities that the Keepers were all but asphyxiated



**Sinya**

by the overpowering garlic scent throughout the night. She even got used to holding out her leg so that Caroline could apply the Green Clay, which she obviously found soothing. Soon she was standing quietly so that her wounds could be cleaned and dressed. After just 2 weeks the last slab of dead skin could be cut away and the flesh beneath looked clean and dry, while the leg wound and her raw trunk had also healed. The best news of all was that there was no need for the anaesthetic. Sinya began to come to life before our very eyes, gain weight and thrive, the other Nursery inmates comforting her throughout her ordeal. She is especially close to Lesanju, something about which Lempaute is not overly happy, but tolerates, seeming to understand Sinya's psychological needs.

## **Dida**

The pipeline from Mzima Springs, in Tsavo West National Park, takes water to the Port of Mombasa, runs through Tsavo, and hugs the Railway just beyond the boundary near the Buchuma Entrance Gate. It was here that yet another baby elephant of just 1 month old was suddenly orphaned in September 2007 when she fell down a manhole that had been left open after the local people had illegally watered their livestock. Four other of our elephants have been orphaned in the same way and along the same stretch of pipeline. The distress of the mother elephant, and the herd generally, when such a tragedy occurs can well be imagined.

Fortunately, for this tiny orphan, her cries were first detected by the Railway Staff during a routine check of the line, for had she been found by Duruma tribesmen who inhabit this area, she would undoubtedly have been killed and eaten, for the Duruma people are particularly partial to wild game meat. Mindful of this fact, the Railway team posted a guard on the calf whilst others walked to the KWS Buchuma Gate to alert the authorities back at the Voi Headquarters. Soon our Voi Unit Keepers were on their way, as were the Burra De-Snaring team, and upon arrival, they were able to manoeuvre a rope under the calf's front legs and hoist the tiny exhausted water-logged baby through the narrow man-hole entrance, pulling her to safety. Being so young, she was immediately trusting, following the men around, suckling their fingers and hungrily downing the formula milk from a bottle which the Keepers had brought with them. Far more used to dealing with older elephant orphans, she captured the Voi Keepers' hearts as she followed them around the Voi Stockades where she was held pending the arrival of the Rescue Plane. They chose the name "Dida" for her, after the Dida Harea plains not far from where she was orphaned, "Dida Harea" meaning "the place of the zebras" in the Mliangulu tongue. (David gave all places South of the Galana Waliangulu names, and those North of the river Wakamba names).

Back at the Nursery, we had been driven by mischievous little Lempaute to make adjustments to the sleeping arrangements. Having moved Lesanju next door to Sinya, whose psychological needs were paramount at this point in time, since she was still fearful of the Keepers, Lempaute, who remained next door to Shimba, objected strongly. She refused to settle, exhausting her Night Attendant, until we

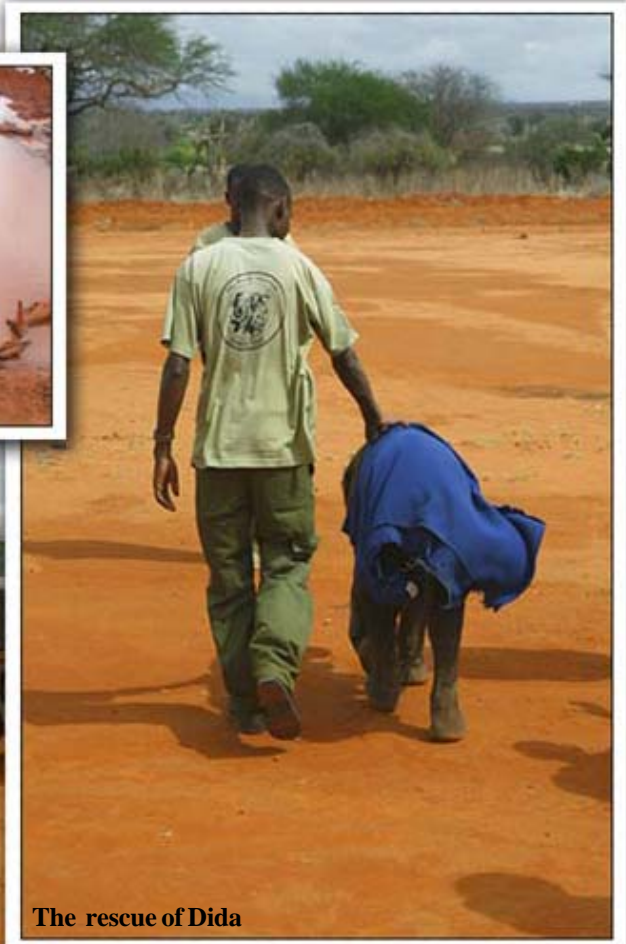
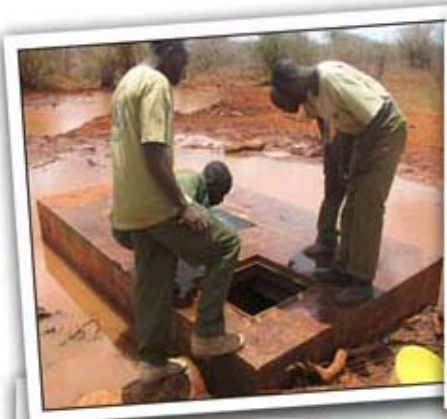
relented and doubled her up with Lesanju, removing a separating partition in order to allow more space for two. Previously, we had been reluctant to put two infant elephants together at night, because like human children, they keep each other awake!

Upon arrival, little Dida took over Lempaute's now vacant stable but was so restless that we decided to put her in with Shimba so that she would also have elephant company during the night. Immediately, she took to suckling his ears for comfort, about which, at first, he was not overly enthusiastic, but eventually became resigned. However, during the hours of daylight, Dida also wanted Lesanju, but this didn't suit Sinya or Lempaute, both of whom pushed the tiny calf away since they occupied pride of place, one on either side of the little Matriarch, Lesanju! Psychologically, this was not ideal for the new baby, who felt rejected and became dull and listless. Knowing that psychological distress can tip the odds of survival, we decided to move Dida in with Lesanju and Lempaute, hoping that Lempaute would allow the tiny newcomer attention from Lesanju without competition from Sinya, and that Lempaute herself might also become tempted to be more maternal herself! It worked, and since then, baby Dida has blossomed, obviously so much happier, at last beginning to play and gain weight.

However, the "musical stables" hadn't yet ended. Now Shimba decided that he didn't want to be without company at night, and began to make this plain, by trying to climb the door, and refusing to sleep. At first we wondered if he had suffered a bad dream, or perhaps spotted something like a lizard in his hay, but as the days passed, it became clear that he was actually trying to tell us something! We decided to try and move Sinya next door, but this made matters worse, because then she wasn't happy either! In the end, she was returned to her stable next door to Lesanju and Lempaute, and Shimba was put in with her at night, so all five babies are happy! However, soon afterwards, very uncharacteristically, Shimba picked a fight with Lesanju, which went on for about an hour. Even though the Keepers did their best to separate them, the two started the fight elsewhere, so the Keepers were left to surmise that perhaps Shimba blamed Lesanju for taking baby Dida from his night stable!

Changes had also taken place amongst the sleeping arrangements of the older orphans once Sian, Kenze and Lojuk were moved to the Ithumba Rehabilitation Centre on the 24<sup>th</sup> May 2007. Having come into the Nursery older, and now fully recovered, they were ready for the next phase of their journey back to where they belonged – amongst the wild elephant community. Lenana now replaced Sian as the new Nursery Matriarch, but because Chyulu had been so attached to Sian and Lojuk, we feared that their sudden absence would send Chyulu into a decline. Surprisingly, however, Chyulu turned out to be unusually adaptable, immediately battenning onto Makena which pleased Makena no end, so the two shared the Stockade vacated by Sian, with Lenana next door, and Kamboyo and Zurura behind.

With Nairobi Park devoid of prey species, the resident lions led us a dance until some of the rank grass was burnt, and



The rescue of Dida



some ungulates returned. The lions took to targeting the wild warthogs that reside under Trust Containers, and who keep close to the elephants and their Keepers for safety. Every day brought them into contact with the orphaned elephants and their Keepers, and even with the mudbath visitors between 11 a.m. and 12 noon, who often not only had Shida and Maxwell as extra attractions, but sometimes also had the lions in the carpark and on the rocks adjacent to the mudbath as well. Avoiding the lions became a daily ordeal for the Keepers, (and especially the Night Milk Mixer) until we had to request two armed KWS guards to be with them out in the bush during daylight hours, and bring the baby group of elephants closer to home.

We were saddened to lose an old friend to the lions. "Warrior Pig", although wild, became so tame around the compound, that he would walk on his knees around the evening Foster-Parent visitors, just to show that he was entirely friendly, and posed no threat. He was a monument and certainly no beauty for time as a wild patriarch had taken its toll. Both side tusks and lower tusches were absent, as was his tail and the "warts" of one cheek, plus rheumy old eyes and a decided limp. Having done the rounds of the Foster-Parent visitors, every evening found him patiently waiting at the Staff Canteen, on his knees, hoping for a hand-out, something the staff were unable to resist, so he enjoyed a portion of "ugali" or maize-meal before retiring in the Hay Store. He sometimes shared the Hay Store with an old decrepit buffalo who likewise chose to remain close to humans at night for protection. However, during the hay-cutting season, when fresh bales filled the Store to capacity, Warrior Pig took to sleeping beside the Elephant Stockades near the Night Milk Mixer's three-hourly beat and it was there that he was killed by a

hungry lioness as he slept. She dragged him off to be eaten by her and her cubs in the nearby forest where the Keepers, and the elephants came across his remains the next morning. Discarded by his carnivorous killers, was the last supper of "ugali" he had been given the night before!

By November, Kamboyo and Zurura were also old enough to be transferred to Ithumba, and it was time they went. Kamboyo now sported short tusks, and he and Zurura were beginning to throw their weight around the girls, since the new Matriarch, Lenana was not as forceful as had been Sian and even the Keepers were finding the two boys quite a handful to control, when they mounted onto the younger girls in a display of one-up-manship. They needed older Females and bigger Bulls to keep them in line and teach them elephant etiquette, but we had to wait for the rains to break up North, so that they could adapt to the tough dry seasons of Tsavo gradually. Their transfer occurred on the 8<sup>th</sup> November, and not a moment too soon, because the day after their arrival at Ithumba, the heavens opened, and the newly graded access road to the Park's Northern Headquarters turned into an impassable quagmire. As it was, one of the lorries carrying the two elephants got bogged en route as a result of just a small shower.

### **THE ITHUMBA UNIT**

It is the first time that orphaned African elephants, hand-reared from early infancy and grown up with a surrogate human family, have been both successfully reared and ultimately integrated back into the wild community, so the Orphans' Project has been an incredible learning curve for all who have taken the trouble to followed its progress through the monthly Keepers' Diaries. These have proved



**The Ithumba Unit**



**The Ithumba Orphans at the waterhole**

extremely enlightening teaching us a great deal about the complexity of elephant social behaviour, illustrating their incredible caring, compassion, intelligence and friendships and their very human emotions and quirks. Their timid nature and fear of the unknown is continually reinforced in the Keepers Diaries, showing just how fearful they are even of a dikdik or a squirrel, and in fact anything unless it obliges by running away. Also illustrated is how the older Matriarchs instill discipline and good behaviour amongst the young, as well as many other mysterious aspects far too complex and obscure for humans to be able to unravel and comprehend. Let's just call this "extra-sensory perception". What is more, we are learning still, so those who arrogantly claim to know it all, merely display a fundamental ignorance of their subject. One never knows it all, and every month reveals new aspects that fill us with reverence and wonder.

The addition of **Sian, Kenze, Loijuk, Kamboyo and Zurura** brought the number of young elephants in the process of rehabilitation at Ithumba in Northern Tsavo to 27 - quite a handful for the Keepers to handle in wild country dominated by dense Commiphora thicket which is intersected only by narrow game trails and where all wild animals, including the wild elephants, are un-habituated to human presence. The rampant poaching of the Northern Area that spanned three decades during the 70's, 80's and early 90's remains very much alive in the memory of Tsavo's elephants leaving them still extremely wary of human contact when North of the Galana river, even though those same elephants may be quite docile in the Southern Section. The rampant and ongoing bush-meat business leaves everything else on four legs extremely timid of any hint of the mutual "enemy".

When the Ithumba Rehabilitation facility first became operational with the injection of ex Nursery babies, four older females were moved from the Voi Unit to supervise the newcomers - **namely Yatta (an orphan from Tsavo East, now 8 years old and the Ithumba Matriarch), Mulika (born in Meru National Park, 6 months younger than Yatta), Nasalot (from Lake Turkana, some 2 months younger than Mulika) and Kinna (ex Meru, who is just 1 month younger than Yatta). They are assisted by the units oldest bull named Napasha (ex Laikipia) who although only 5 years old, is large for his age and by far the strongest male in the group. These four young females have proved extremely capable Matriarchs shouldering the responsibility of leadership in an awe-inspiring way that leaves us humans humbled.**

All young bulls love sparring with one another to test their strength, for rank is the lynch-pin of bull elephant society. However, often what begins as a friendly bout deteriorates into something more serious should one of the combatants lose his cool. It is then that the Matriarchs step in to separate warring parties, for female elephants are essentially peace-loving and gentle, intolerant of aggression. Bullying those younger and smaller is something else that is not tolerated in elephant society, so any protest bellow from a youngster brings the Big Girls along to investigate the cause, and if the cause happens to be bullying, (usually a boy trying to mount onto a smaller girl), the culprit is ejected from the fold and forced to spend time apart from all the others on his own. Isolation from the unit is a severe form of discipline, for the youngster will feel extremely vulnerable alone. It is, however, also interesting to observe that elephants have a conscience,





**Lualewi leads the way**



**Wild dogs at the stockades**



**Ithumba Dam**



**The Ithumba Unit**



**Ithumba stockades**



**Mulika**



**Wild Elephants**

for should one knowingly step beyond the bounds of good behaviour, he or she is quick to beat a hasty retreat in anticipation of the reprimand! They have a sense of fair play too, demonstrated when Sidai approached Rapsu from behind at the mudbath and deliberately pushed him down for no good reason, something witnessed by all four of the Big Girls who were just a stone's throw away. Rapsu was furious, and using his short tusks, retaliated forcefully making Sidai bellow. On this occasion, unusually, none of the Big Girls paid a blind bit of notice to her cry for help, obviously aware that she got what she deserved!

Yatta, as the main Matriarch and oldest female in the Unit, is exceedingly conscientious, going in search of any straggler who inadvertently has taken the wrong path, and quick to respond to any distress call. Kinna, the next in age, can always be relied upon to act as the disciplinarian if Yatta, Nasalot and Mulika happen to be preoccupied elsewhere. Napasha enjoys testing his strength against one of the Big Girls, who provide more of a challenge than the younger boys, but if the bout looks like going his way, another Big Girl will instantly provide reinforcement to put him back in his place and ensure that he respects age related rank.

It is also very normal for the older cows to select a favourite calf from amongst the junior ranks, who is assured of preferential protection and special consideration from the adopted "mother figure". Ol Malo has long been Yatta's favourite, and woe betide anyone who bullies Ol Malo. Mulika has chosen Selengai and these two lucky youngsters have so far not had their position usurped by any of the smaller newcomers. However, Nasalot bided her time, and instantly selected little Orok the moment he arrived at Ithumba, and after him, Kenze, the moment he arrived. These two young bulls needed the love of an older elephant most, always having been "outsiders" in the Nairobi Nursery, grief-stricken and traumatized, and sharing a marked hatred of humans. We sent Orok to Ithumba earlier than we would normally have liked, simply because he flatly refused to have a blanket over him, and we knew the cool season was coming. To have him and Kenze embraced so lovingly by Nasalot was to witness them both literally healing psychologically and realizing that life was still worth living. All elephant babies need a great deal of loving, and those that arrive anti-human, need the consolation and affection of an older elephant more than those who learn to love the human family, having arrived with no previous sinister experience etched in their memory.

The transfer from the Nursery of Kamboyo and Zurura, was one of the smoothest so far. Both had shared the Nursery when very young with many of the older Ithumba inmates, so their arrival at Ithumba was a joyful reunion. Recognition was instant, especially by Sian and Loijuk, who remembered them well having themselves left the Nursery not so long ago, added to which, a veritable feast of mineral rich greenery appeared almost overnight, brought on by the arrival of the rains that coincided with their transfer. There is, however, never a problem introducing newcomers into the established herd, for elephants are extremely sociable animals, and any newcomer is welcomed with great excitement and joy, instantly embraced as part of the family. All seem to understand that as orphans, they share a common lot.

During rehabilitation, instead of the elephants following the Keepers, as at the Nursery, at Ithumba the Keepers follow the elephants, understanding that they are far more proficient at finding their way in thick bush. Every morning is greeted with elephant unbridled joy, with the Bigger Girls leaving their Night Stockade to run to the smaller elephants' Stockades for a "good morning" greeting. Then comes the ritual of slaking thirst at the Stockade water trough, which is now beginning to become popular with the wild elephants as well, plus others not so welcome, so it is sometimes emptied by morning. Then, one of the older orphans, often Napasha, will seek out a Keeper and make it known that he wants the water turned back on!

Having taken their fill, it is time for Compound Games until all are ready to set out for the feeding grounds together. Compound games usually involve charging imaginary or real small intruders, who oblige by running away; hide and seek antics around bushes, something always accompanied by a great deal of happy trumpeting, or merely scratching themselves against trees or rocks, or else carrying out an investigation of anything out of the ordinary, such as the tanker parked in a different place.

Sunyei remains the prankster, well known for practical jokes - pretending to have seen something scary and running away as though fearful, which usually prompts a mass retreat of all the youngsters back to the Keepers for protection, leaving Sunyei pirouetting in circles, looking decidedly smug! However, the older elephants have become used to her "crying wolf" and choose to ignore false alarms. Kora has taken a cue from her as a means of getting the others to exit the mudbath before time, since he has an aversion to cold water, and seldom ventures in. Only on a very hot day will Kora take a wallow, which is strange, since he comes from Kora National Reserve, a very arid part of the country, not far from the Somali border where he was found on a deserted track 50 kms. from the nearest water, with a jaw shattered, probably by the bullet that killed his elephant mother. Mercifully, this year, Kora's jaw has only opened on two occasions to exude a minute portion of pus, so we are hopeful that he will eventually make a complete recovery, despite the Veterinary prognosis that he would probably have to live with chronic bone infection. Fortunately, the jaw wound does not seem to have interfered with the progression of his molars.

The preferred route for the day is usually decided by the Big Girls, who can often be found huddled together at the compound, as though in discussion, until one gives the signal that it is time to move on. If an intruder is spotted, and happens to be something more sinister than a dikdik or a squirrel, the alarm goes out and as those fearful retreat hurriedly to their Keepers, older elephants join forces to present a united front, and, if necessary, charge in unison to drive the intruder out. Unwelcome common intruders often turn out to be the wild dogs that habitually drink at the Stockade trough, and have become quite blasé about the presence of the orphans. Likewise, with the passing of time, the orphans have become less fearful of the dogs that were previously anathema following the rabies scare of several years back. However, intruders such as lions are treated with the respect they deserve, and leave all

members of the Unit, whether human or elephant, decidedly nervous.

The lions also sometimes come to drink at the Stockade trough during the night, and should they roar at such close quarters everyone is left trembling. On one occasion a lion roared close by as the orphans were browsing near the Kalovoto watercourse, and blind panic ensued. Everyone took to their heels and headed for home, the elephants arriving at the Stockade compound long before their Keepers, who eventually turned up with torn clothing and bleeding limbs, having sped through thorn thickets! And in October, all trunks went up like periscopes when a light earth tremor shook the ground, leaving both the elephants and their Keepers nonplussed, but since the tremor was short-lived, so was that interruption to the daily routine. There is never a dull moment for the Ithumba unit, and every day brings its own adventures.

Subservient to the four older Matriarchal orphans at Ithumba, are the younger generation of female orphans, who similarly take on the task of keeping order amongst the younger set. Ex Nursery Matriarchs such as Wendi, Sunyei, Naserian and Sian all turn out to be major players within the Ithumba Unit, and are permitted by the Big Girls to lead some of the youngsters off to browse elsewhere in a splinter group separate to the others. Here we see infrasound at play, for separated groups know exactly where the others are, even if the Keepers don't. It is then that Sunyei, in particular, displays an understanding of the human dilemma, for she will walk up to the Keepers who are undecided as to which direction to take, tap one with her trunk to get his attention, and then walk determinedly in a set direction, intermittently testing the wind by raising her trunk. Sunyei has done this often, and the Keepers now know that all they have to do is follow, for Sunyei will invariably lead them directly to the missing group, even though this may involve a walk of a couple of hours! Alternatively, the missing group will already be on its way to come and find the Keepers, and have, on occasions, simply brought themselves back home to the Stockade

unattended in the late evening. However, if one junior member of the herd is missing from the main group, having lagged behind, or taken a wrong turning, their absence is immediately noticed by Yatta, who will instantly set out and round up any straggler. Very recently, the four Big Girls have reached the conclusion that the presence of the youngsters, as well as that of their human Keepers, is a deterrent to them meeting their wild kin, something they yearn to accomplish. In November they deliberately distanced themselves from the youngsters and Keepers, which was uncharacteristic, lingering behind in the bush long after all the others had left for home, and returning to the Stockades long after dark. This is becoming more frequent, an indication that our Big Girls are growing up, eager for a wild date!

Each morning, after fun and games in the compound, it is time to head out to feed, and one of the youngsters, often Sunyei, but sometimes Kora and more recently Kenze or Sian or Naserian is allowed the privilege of leading the herd, which is a great treat. On one occasion, when Sian, Lojuk and Naserian headed the column, they took a wrong turning, and as Nasalot hurried forward to halt them, they merely quickened their pace, reluctant to be overtaken. It was then that Nasalot displayed elephant ingenuity. She reached up and deliberately pulled down a big branch which broke with a resounding crack. This, immediately had the desired affect for the three youngsters did an about turn and rapidly retreated, allowing Nasalot to steer them in the required direction! More recently Kamboyo and Zurura have been leaders of the column, indicating just how settled they are at Ithumba, and how rapidly they have adapted to their new life.

Should the older Matriarchs decide that a change of direction is necessary, it is usually Yatta that steps forward to lead the way, and should the Keepers make a similar decision, they do the same, but then the elephants themselves decide whether or not to obey their Keepers. Should the Keepers face a flat refusal, there is invariably a good reason for it in that either a buffalo, lion or the wild



**Wild Elephants drinking at Ithumba Dam**



David walking deep in the bush with the Ithumba Orphans

dogs are lurking nearby. The Keepers have learnt to respect the amazing intuition of the elephants and rely heavily on them to warn them of impending danger.

Nevertheless, encounters with wild elephants have a habit of turning out differently, such as the occasion when an advance party of orphans happened to make contact with a wild cow and calf, but as soon as the Keepers came into view, the wild mother elephant became seriously spooked and took flight. This triggered the usual exodus of orphans heading, of course, for their Keepers, with the wild elephant and her calf in their midst!. Noticing that the orphans had wild elephants with them, the Keepers likewise took to their heels, much to the consternation of the orphans, who could not understand why their human family were fleeing from them. However, all ended well, when the wild cow and her calf veered off at the last moment, leaving the orphans to catch up with their retreating Keepers. The reunion was highly charged, for the orphans were left convinced that something much more threatening must be lurking nearby!

On another occasion in August, when it was time to return, the Keepers who were sitting under a tree, called the orphans, but only the youngsters responded. The Keepers then set off to investigate and were surprised to see Yatta's group surrounding 3 wild elephants, but again, as soon as the wild elephants got wind of the humans, they fled, leaving the orphans looking bewildered! A few days later, Yatta's group of older orphans were trailed by 4 wild bulls at the back of the long column, so the Keepers hurried ahead to allow Yatta's group to fraternize with their admirers. This they did for a full hour before Yatta brought her satellites back home, leaving the wild admirers behind, who pitched up to take a drink at the stockades much later.

It has taken the wild elephants a long time to pluck up the courage to actually make contact with our Ithumba orphans during daylight hours. To begin with they were visited only by bulls (the scouts of elephant society) during the hours of darkness, This year, the cow herds have been coming, but again, still only at night, when they spend a

long time rumbling to the orphans. Yatta, Nasalot, Mulika and Kinna are desperate to make contact, having fraternized frequently with wild herds when they were in the Voi Unit. It is just a question of time before our Ithumba elephants mingle with the wild herds, for their presence at the Stockades has brought the wild elephants to an area that they have long shunned. It will soon be time to leave the Stockade Gates open at night, of the older group at least.

The October Diary chronicles another wild encounter, this time involving the youngsters. Kenze, Kora and Lualeni, who were within an advance guard heading home in the late evening, encountered a wild herd and went off with them. Kenze well remembers being a member of a wild herd, so the Keepers were concerned that the three youngsters may not know how to return, and decided that they would have to mount a search the next day. However, they need not have worried, because the three truants turned up later during the night, indicative of the trust that Kenze now has of the human Keepers, whom he once loathed with such passion! It also says a lot for the amazing sense of direction that elephants possess, that even at such a young age, all three of these juveniles, who are not yet 4 years old brought themselves back home.

An interesting event took place in December, when the orphans split into two separate groups, Yatta and her group remaining behind whilst the Keepers went ahead in the evening to return the youngsters to their Night Stockade. En route, something in-noticed by the Keepers, startled them, and whilst most of the group surrounded their Keepers, Olmalo and Rapsu fled in a different direction. By dusk, the search for the two missing members had proved unfruitful, so the Keepers decided to return the rest to the Stockades before darkness set in. There, they found Yatta already ensconced, but minus Sunyei, so were faced with three missing orphans. When there was no sign of them later, the Keepers decided to entrust the search to Yatta, so they opened up her Stockade to allow her out. She took with her Nasalot and Buchuma, and headed out into the bush. Half an hour later, Yatta and Nasalot

returned, but without Buchuma, meaning that there were now four missing orphans! The Keepers were surprised that Yatta and Nasalot seemed so unconcerned, which was out of character. However, all was revealed, because half an hour later, much to the delight of the anxious Keepers, and to a rapturous welcome from all the Ithumba elephants, especially Yatta and Nasalot, Buchuma came striding home with them all - Sunyei, who had been in Yatta's group, (far removed from where Olmalo and Rapsu fled) plus Olmalo and Rapsu! Who can still possibly doubt the mysterious abilities of elephants, bearing in mind that, like us, they have no night vision and at Ithumba the thicket is a dense entanglement of twisted barbed trees and inhospitable vegetation.

The Trust rotates all its Elephant Keepers regularly so that they spend time at all three Orphans' Project Centres. However, whenever a fresh batch turn up at one of the Rehabilitation Centres, the elephants immediately notice their presence, and need reassurance from the resident Head Keeper, whom they know, love, and trust, that the newcomers are acceptable as part of their human family. The Head Keeper has to "introduce" the newcomers by escorting them in turn up to the orphans to have the "once over"! A similar "introduction" is practiced by the elephants themselves when the orphans happen to meet up with a wild herd. Youngsters, who are not familiar with the wild members of the herd are escorted up and "introduced" something that is often mentioned in the Voi Keepers' Diary.

## THE VOI ORPHANS

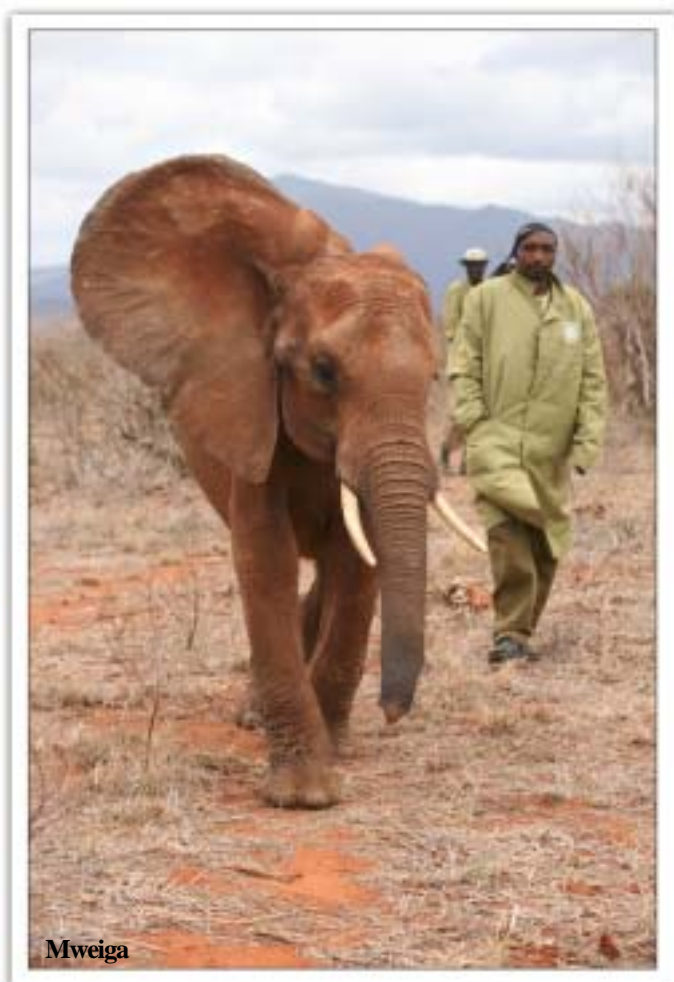
### Mweiga

Within the Voi Unit was one very fragile elephant named Mweiga, who although now 9 years old, seemingly could not do without the Milk Replacer as well as special extra supplements. She came to us as a 7 month old, orphaned when her elephant family "trespassed" on an ancient elephant migratory route, now occupied by humans, as they were trying to travel from the Mt. Kenya forests to the Aberdare National Park. She could not keep up with the herd as it fled, and was rescued by wildlife Rangers. Since she was in apparent good condition, she was flown directly to Voi so that she could be with older elephant orphans, who would heal the psychological trauma of losing her

elephant mother and family. However, it very soon became apparent that Mweiga was handicapped. She was lethargic and very slow, and the Veterinary prognosis was that she was suffering from a congenital heart defect and possibly arthritic joints. We could alleviate the joint problems with daily doses of Aloe Vera, Glucosamin and Chondroitin, but there was nothing anyone could do for her heart. But, from the start she was nurtured and cosseted lovingly, both by her Keepers and also by the other elephants in the Voi Unit.

It was extremely touching, and also enlightening, to observe that Mweiga was never left on her own. Because she was slow and had difficulty keeping pace with the others, there was always several of her elephant friends with her to keep her company, voluntarily undertaking what became known as "Mweiga-sitting" duties. They remained behind at her side when she could not keep pace with the others, fed alongside her at the base of Mazinga Hill when the others climbed up, helped to lift her when she stumbled, and even stood by quietly watching as she took her milk and supplements, even though they would have loved some themselves. With amazing elephant intuition, they all instinctively knew, and accepted, that she was a "special needs" case, so they all watched out for her, showering her in concern and love and coming to her aid whenever needed in what was a heart-warming example to us humans of elephant compassion and caring. Surprisingly, latterly, when all the other elephants were independent of their Keepers, and living as "wild" members of Tsavo's elephant community, her most loyal companions were two young bulls, Burra and Morani who took turns to be with her at all times, sleeping with her at night within the Stockades, and escorting her out to forage during the hours of daylight, often leading her to join up with the others somewhere out in the bush.

Then, on the evening of 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2007, as Mweiga and Burra, who was with her on that occasion, were coming up the incline back to the Night Stockades as usual, having spent a wonderful day out with the others, enjoying the brimful waterholes and lush vegetation brought on by recent rain, Mweiga suddenly collapsed, and within several moments, as her desperate Keepers, and Burra did their





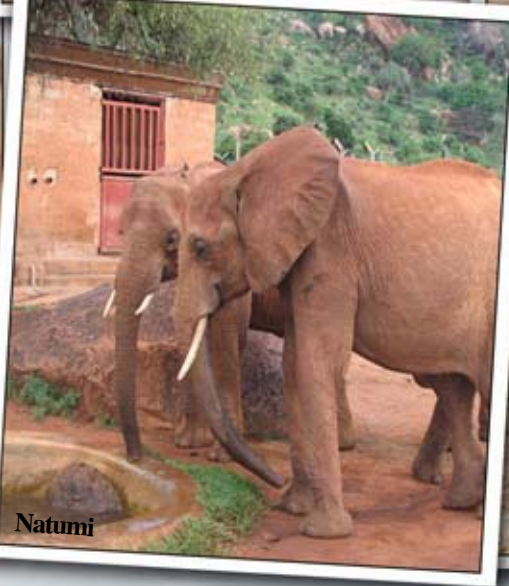
Voi Orphans



Emily



Burra and Co



Natumi



Idie



Emily and Aitong's herd

best to lift her back to her feet, she died. Burra instantly knew the worst, that this was simply not the usual stumble. He rushed around bellowing, clearly distraught by the unexpected loss of one for whom he cared deeply. Finally, having accepted that she had, indeed, been taken from him forever, he returned with the Keepers to the Night Stockades, from whence he ran to find Natumi and the other orphans, who were feeding near Mazinga Hill. From that day to this, none of the orphans have returned to the Voi Stockades, but all have instead joined Emily's now wild unit, finding comfort in being united all together.

Amidst the grief and tears that followed this sad loss, shared by both Mweiga's human and elephant family, we all knew that our gift to Mweiga had been 9 good years of quality life that would otherwise have been denied her. During those 9 years living in as near natural conditions as possible given her impediment, she had been protected and surrounded with concern and love. Hers was not a wasted life, for her gift to us was the volumes that she and her companions taught us over the years about elephant compassion and caring, witnessed on a daily basis first-hand. Mweiga was a special and very gentle elephant, happy whilst she was alive, enjoying the company of wild friends and her extended orphaned elephant family, and adored by her Keepers, and little Serena, the orphaned zebra that accompanied her out into the bush on a daily basis. She will remain in our hearts forever, and in the memories of the elephants that loved and cared for her so deeply.

## The Wild Orphans

Plentiful rain fell at the end of 2006 and the beginning of 2007, turning the parched landscape utilized by the Voi elephant orphans into a veritable Garden of Eden, after a very long, tough dry season. The presence of water in natural inland depressions and waterholes released the wild elephants from their dry season Home Ranges, enabling them to disperse and forage further afield, so the usual encounters with wild herds became less frequent during the first part of the year. Nevertheless, the orphans greatly enjoyed the replenished Red Waterhole below the Headquarters whilst it lasted, where they could actually submerge themselves, and swim, with just a trunk above water level like a periscope. Every day was filled with fun and joy at the waterhole, the green flush of vegetation brought on by the rains filled big bellies rapidly, providing time for play. The Orphans took into the pool a "toy" in the form of a large log which they pushed around as a child would a boat, just as Olmeg, the first Nursery orphan, had done when he was young. By June, however, as usual, the countryside began to dry again so the wild herds returned to their dry weather Home Range, and the orphans in the Voi unit again enjoyed the usual frequent wild encounters.

Emily, an ex Tsavo orphan who was reared in the Nairobi Nursery from the age of just 1 month, and who grew up to take over the Matriarch-ship of the Voi Unit following the death in childbirth of Malaika, has been Keeper independent and "wild" for over a year now. She is now 14 years old and took with her a selection of her favourites from amongst the ranks of the still dependent orphans to form her wild unit. With her went 13 year old Aitong, (born in Masai

Mara), Aitong's favourite calf, 6 year old Sweet Sally (from Sweetwaters Ranch), 7 year old Tsavo (a young bull from Tsavo who has long been one of Emily's chosen), 9 year old Loisaba (Loisaba Ranch, Laikipia) and 7 year old Ndara (a Tsavo orphan). Eight year old Ilingwezi (Il Ngwezi Community Ranch) has divided her time between Emily's wild unit, and Natumi's group, Natumi having succeeded Emily as Matriarch of the then still Keeper-dependent orphans.

With food still plentiful at the beginning of 2007, all members of the remaining Keeper dependent Voi Unit, were now at the age when they were able to be weaned off milk entirely. However, growing youngsters need the fat of coconuts until at least the age of 5, so the evening hand-out of Copra has continued as a vital supplement.

Also now "wild" are the Trust's awesome Big Boys who now tower over the girls. These are Olmeg, (ex Maralal, now aged 20) Taru (ex Tsavo also now 20), Dika (Tsavo West now aged 19), Ndume (Imenti Forest aged 18,) Edo (ex Amboseli also aged 18), Uaso (Uaso Nyiro Laikipia, aged 11), Lewa (from Lewa Downs Private Ranch and now living in Tsavo West National Park, aged 10), Imenti (ex Imenti Forest, born on the 19th January 1994 and who came to us just hours old, now aged 13 and living as a wild elephant in the Northern Area of Tsavo East).

Elephant bulls wander over huge distances, and many of our Big Boys have not reappeared to make contact for many years now. Taru appeared once in 2006 after an eight year absence, and Olmeg was last seen on the Eastern Boundary of Tsavo East, whilst Lewa was translocated to Tsavo West and has not returned. Imenti was translocated to the Northern Area of Tsavo East, and has become established there. Only Dika, Ndume, Edo and Uaso have regularly kept in touch, although Edo has been absent during 2007. Dika reappeared several times in March 2007, joining the orphans at their mudbath on one occasion along with 2 wild bull friends, and seen mating Aitong near the Stockades on another. The Keepers did not recognize him at first, since he arrived with one tusk broken half way down.

Ndume likewise reappeared on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2007 with a wild bull friend, after a two year absence, but Uaso is a regular visitor to all the Voi orphans, and had "the hots" for Edie for quite a long time.

The two "wild" bulls that accompanied **Dika** appeared completely confident near the human Keepers, although the Keepers could not identify them. Because of this the Keepers were certain that they must also be ex orphans. Could one have been **Ajok**, who decided to become an independent wild boy when aged only 4, and who would now be 17, or perhaps **Lominyek**, now 12 years old, who came to us aged 14 months after his Samburu mother was gunned down by poachers, and was only with us for a short time before attaching himself to a wild tuskless Matriarch? Usually it is the behaviour of the wild friends that lead the Keepers to believe that they must be ex orphans, as was the case when Eleanor returned after an absence of 10 years, but we have learnt that elephants can communicate sophisticated messages to one another.

Sometimes even wild elephants will accompany the orphans **and** their Keepers out in the bush, quite peacefully. One such elephant is the wild cow called "Catherine" and another the wild cow known as "Naomi" and her family, all of whom behave in this way, appearing quite comfortable around both the orphans and their human family and in the past even going into the Stockades. The Keepers have been instructed never to actually approach one of the now "wild" orphans, but rather keep their distance and allow the elephant to make contact should it so wish. Once a member of the wild community, it is quite conceivable that an ex orphan may not wish to be contaminated with human scent, which will not be appreciated by wild friends.

**Aitong** obviously has great elephant sex appeal, although to us, her human family, she appears somewhat ungainly and no beauty! However, she has earned the title "Slapper of Mazinga Hill" for she is continually singled out both by wild elephant bulls, and also our Big Boys! Even 11 year old Uaso aspires to fathering a child with her!

An attempted rescue in August of a young 3 year old abandoned calf who had been reported alone on the Voi River Circuit by tour drivers, turned out badly for one of our Keepers who found himself pinned to the ground and skewered by the calf's small tusks. The rescue was hurriedly aborted so that he could be rushed to hospital for a chest X-Ray. Fortunately, however, his injuries were only superficial, and apart from extensive bruising, there was no internal damage.

The next day a ground party failed to locate the wild orphan until the Keepers climbed up Mazinga Hill and spotted the lone calf some 8 kms distant on the plains below. They decided to walk our orphans to her knowing that they would embrace and calm her. Upon arrival, this they immediately did, imparting confidence and friendship so that soon the wild calf was feeding happily in amongst them, whilst the Keepers kept their distance. When it was time to return to the Night Stockades in the evening, the newcomer came along too, but once at the Stockades, despite much coaxing, was reluctant to go in. Being vulnerable to attack by lions, the Mobile Veterinary Unit was called to sedate her so that she could be man-handled into safety. The Keepers named the newcomer "Msinga" since she had been seen from the top of Mazinga Hill.

For the next week she remained confined to the Stockades, with either Mweiga or another member of the then still dependent unit taking it in turns to remain with her as company whilst she calmed down. Once she had become accustomed to the Keepers, she was allowed out with all the others, and simply became the newest member of the orphaned group, singled out by all the others for preferential treatment because she was the smallest and youngest.

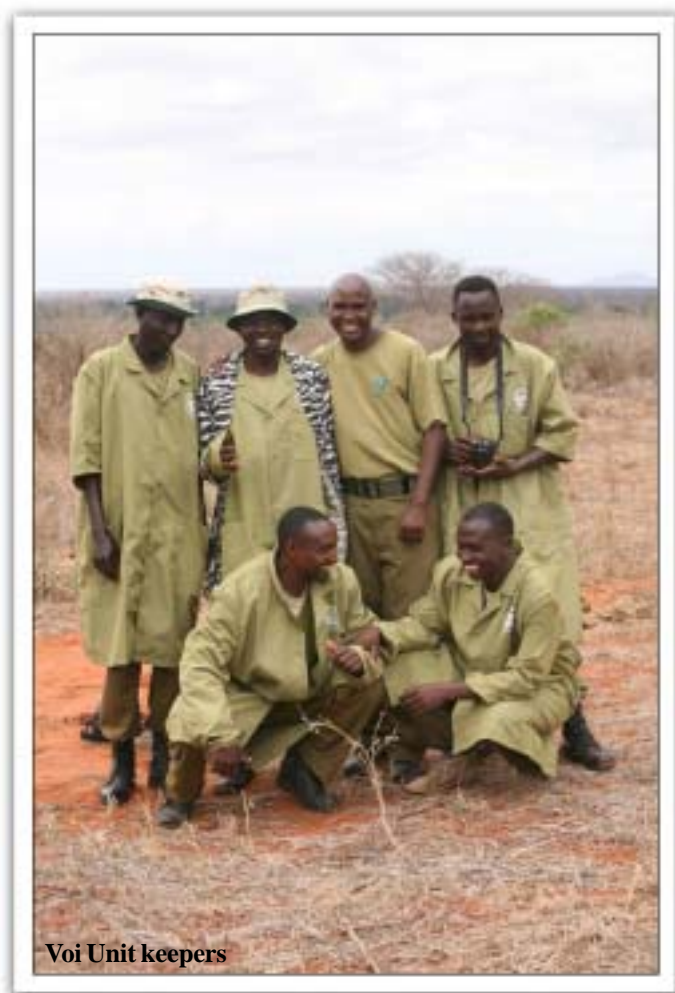
Little Msinga was a permanent member of the Keeper-dependent orphans until Emily turned up with her now wild unit, and hijacked her, persuading her to come along with them instead which she was happy to do. She remained with them for several weeks thereafter, along with them visiting the still dependent group regularly, until one day Emily's group arrived without her. Since then, there has been no sign of her, but we can surmise that this interlude

in the life of Msinga had a happy conclusion. We believe that Emily returned her to members of her natal wild family, for no lone calf of Msinga's age has been seen in the area since, nor has there been news of a body having been found. Furthermore, should she ever be in need of help again, she will know where to come, for the Stockades and the other orphans are now well known to her.

On the 16<sup>th</sup> February 2007, Joseph Sauni, Head Keeper of the Voi Unit, undertook one of his frequent recesses to see what Emily's unit was up to, and found them feeding in a beautiful area on the Southern side of Mazinga Hill, where the vegetation was still lush, and depressions still holding water. With Emily's group was a large wild bull "boyfriend" who was paying particular attention to Aitong, and who was quite happy to also accommodate the presence of Sweet Sally, her favourite calf, while Emily and those with her, including Uaso, kept a discrete distance. Joseph was quite sure that Aitong was enjoying a honeymoon with this admirer. Assuming that she fell pregnant as a result, her first calf will be born in February 2009.

Later on in the year, Emily was also observed enjoying close attention from a large wild bull, so 2009 should be a milestone year for these two hand-reared ex Nursery females and a milestone for us, their human family, as well!

The transition of Emily to "wild" status, left Natumi, as the next oldest female of the remaining Keeper-dependent Voi orphans, in charge. Emily was a very frequent visitor to the Orphan Stockades, until February 2007 when we





decided that the time was ripe to leave the gates to Natumi's Stockade ajar at night so that she and those with her could also graduate to the "wild" status, free to come and go as they pleased, independent of their Keepers. Within Natumi's Group were, Edie, Salama, Icholta, Laikipia, Lolokwe, Nyiro, Irima, Mvita, Mukwaju, Sosian and Mweya but since then the composition of both Natumi's group and that of Emily changes periodically, with comings and goings of orphans between the two. Emily took most of Natumi's group off with her quite early on, leaving Natumi only with Edie and just three bulls, Laikipia, Salama and Lolokwe until Big Boy Uaso turned up to take the younger boys from her and hand them over to Emily's unit, who happened to be further afield at the time. Since then Salama has left Emily's group, probably to join some wild bull friends, while Laikipia, Lolokwe and some of the others within her group decided to return to Natumi! In June Natumi surprised the Keepers at the Stockades when she turned up with a wild female elephant in her unit, but this wild newcomer subsequently decided not to become a permanent fixture.

What has evolved is that all the orphans who have been hand-reared from early infancy retain an affiliation as loose "family" members, and will undoubtedly remain so for life. This applies to both the bulls and the cows for "an elephant never forgets". Every female elephant aspires to being a Leader, or Matriarch of a herd, but things can become confusing when the first ex Matriarch now living wild, keeps contact with those that remain Keeper- dependent, regarding them still as her responsibility, even though the next oldest female has assumed the Matriarchal role. Whenever Emily returned to renew contact, she reasserted her authority over Natumi, who then had to step down in rank, something that is as unpopular with elephants as it is with humans! An added complication was that some of the young females in Natumi's unit were very close to her in age, and this has resulted in some rivalry for the top job, something that would not happen within a natural family, where 5 years separate calves making age differentiation obvious. Not only does Natumi have to give way to Emily whenever Emily reappears, (which she used to do frequently), but she has also suffered competition from Edie and Icholta, both close to herself in age.

However, since Natumi and her group have been set free, Emily seems to have ceded more responsibility to Natumi, and has taken her group further afield to explore new pastures, sometimes absenting themselves for a month at a time, (which was unheard of before) relying on Natumi to keep in close contact with what became known as Thoma's group – i.e. the younger orphans who were still enclosed at night along with weakling Mweiga. Thoma's group comprised Morani, Burra, Seraa, Mpala, Mweya, and Solango, Almost every morning, without fail until they were also set free, all Natumi's group turned up to escort the youngsters out, remained with them during the daylight hours and escorted them back home in the evening, before departing elsewhere for the night. On days when all didn't arrive, then some members would do so to accompany the still dependent orphans out each morning, either escorting them to meet up with Natumi's group somewhere out in the bush, or simply just keeping them company until nightfall when they returned to the Stockades.

For several months, Edie split from Natumi's group, taking it upon herself to assume leadership of the still dependent orphans, usurping the new role of Thoma, turning up alone first thing in the morning, accompanying the youngsters throughout the day, and insisting on actually being in with them during the night as well, on hand at all times and usually trying to avoid contact with Natumi's gang. Edie's aspirations to become an independent Matriarch were satisfied for a time, but eventually she was persuaded to rejoin Natumi's group, leaving Thoma back in charge of the youngsters.

Then in August 2007, it was the turn of Thoma's group to become Keeper-independent and once given free reign during the hours of darkness, they merged with Natumi's unit, leaving only Mweiga enclosed at night in the Voi Stockades. Nevertheless, "Mweiga-Sitting" duties continued without interruption, Morani and Burra relieving Mweya and Sosian, who had previously assumed this task, and taking turn and turn about, something obviously decided amongst the elephants themselves, quite independently of the Keepers, although in November Burra did an entire month without a break. Whoever was on Mweiga duty not only escorted her during the day, but also voluntarily chose to remain with her inside the Stockade during the night. To us, this was remarkable, knowing full well that they would far rather be out and about with their peers. It was interesting too that in November two older bulls from Natumi's unit came independently to spend time with Mweiga, namely Laikipia and Nyiro, illustrating again that the bulls of elephant society are equally as compassionate and caring as the females. Also enlightening is the fact that none of the orphans have returned since Mweiga's passing, demonstrating that she was the catalyst that brought them back home regularly, rather than an affiliation for their erstwhile Keepers.

The November Diary again illustrated the changing composition of the now wild orphaned units. Edie formed a satellite group consisting of Lolokwe, Mukwaju and Mweya, and these four kept in almost daily touch with Mweiga and Burra, but later on in the month Mukwaju decided to opt out and return to Natumi's group. Edie then recruited Loisaba and Morani, which was interesting since Loisaba has long been part of Emily's group. Then Ndara, who is also normally with Emily, and one of her favourite calves, was spotted in amongst Natumi's group, but later both she and Loisaba were absent so they had probably rejoined Emily's unit. Whereas the orphaned Matriarchs used to display possessiveness of the youngsters in their care and resented sharing them, more recently they seem to have come to an amicable sharing arrangement. Hence, younger orphans can sometimes be with Emily's group, at other times with that of Natumi, while Edie is sometimes permitted to "borrow" some independent of Natumi. At other times, however, she is simply another member of Natumi's group and on occasions Natumi's group joins up with that of Emily, and they again form one large orphaned family, as they have done since the death of Mweiga.

It was a very happy day in March when 21 year old ex orphan **Lissa** returned to the stockades with her third wild-born baby, this time a little bull of about 3 months old, so



**Lissa with two of her wild born calves**

he was born around January 2007. We named him “Lugard” and he has two older sisters to help their mother take care of him – Lara born in mid January 1999, and Lali born on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2002, within sight of the Stockades and the Keepers. In November, Lissa arrived at the Stockades with only her two younger calves, the oldest, 8 year old Lara not with the family, probably having been left with Emily’s unit, since Lissa mingles with them frequently. She could also possibly have been spending time with a friend in another wild family in the same way that human children often spend time with friends, away from their parents.

Lissa along with Chuma and Mpenzi was amongst those handed directly to the then Matriarch at Voi, Eleanor. When Eleanor left to join the wild herds 10 years ago, having fallen pregnant for the first time, Lissa and the other ex Nursery orphans that were then in her care, were handed over to a wild friend, the cow named “Catherine”. With Lissa is Mpenzi, the young cow who lost her first calf to the lions and who acted as Nannie to Lissa’s two first-born calves, and obviously did the same for the third baby, having lost her own. Lissa has always kept in contact, often appearing either at the Stockades with wild friends or meeting the orphans out in the bush, sometimes with Emily’s unit and at others, with Natumi’s group or in amongst both if they happen to be traveling together.

The Voi Stockades have been in use since the early fifties, originally built by David Sheldrick to house the very first orphans, “Samson” and “Fatuma”. When grown and living as a “wild” elephant, Samson was found dying of poisoned arrow wounds near Lugards Falls, and was shot by David

to end his suffering, a deeply emotional tragedy for David who had raised this orphan from the age of two years old. Fatuma joined a wild herd when 10 years old, and was followed by Kanderi, Aruba, Sobu, Raru, and Bukanezi all of whom joined the wild herds in the fullness of time, leaving only Eleanor to assume leadership of the orphans reared by Daphne subsequent to David’s death.

The Trust has since enlarged the Voi facility to accommodate the growing number of ex Nursery orphans, but now plans to rest these Stockades in preparation for the next in-take, which will be Lesanju, Lempaute, Shimba, Sinya and Dida, since the Ithumba Stockades have reached capacity owing to pertaining water restraints.

### **Other Orphans**

This year the Trust has been called upon to assist with the rearing of other elephants far afield, a tiny Sumatran elephant named “Pipi”, and an orphan in Zambia named “Zamma”. Both are, apparently, doing well. Unfortunately, a third baby forest elephant from Gabon didn’t make it.

We were delighted to receive news from the Wildlife Trust of India, that thanks to the input of the Trust, some little Indian Elephant orphans are in the process of being released back into the wild community of Manas National Park in Assam having been reared at the Kaziranga Elephant Orphanage run by the Wildlife Trust of India. Several years ago a Veterinarian and a Staff member of the Indian Wildlife Trust came to Kenya to work with our Keepers within the Nairobi Nursery and also at the Voi Reintroduction

facility in Tsavo and to learn from them. All eyes in Asia are peeled on the experiment currently in progress in India, which we hope will revolutionize elephant husbandry in that part of the world. We are delighted to have been the catalyst for this important step to be taken in a country that hitherto thought the reintroduction of orphaned elephants into the wild community an impossibility.

At Manas Park the orphans are in the care of 2 Keepers who monitor them, their base a makeshift enclosure in the heart of the forest that is home to wild elephants near the Doimari hills that straddle the Indo Bhutanese border. The elephants, aged two and over are still milk dependent, but wander in the forest during the day, and return to their enclosure at night and there was an occasion when one of the calves returned in the evening accompanied by adult wild friends. "It seemed as if they were already remembering their early childhood with their original herd," said the astonished Keeper, and so, thanks to the work of the Trust, in far-off India, history is being repeated!

The Trust's Keepers have also successfully reared orphans of species other than elephants and rhinos recently, one being a young female zebra foal, whose mother fell prey to lions near the Serena Lodge in Amboseli National Park two years ago. She is named "Serena". Another is a little kudu bull, called "Rukinga" who owes his life to being rescued from a bushmeat poacher who planned to make a meal of him. Once old enough both these orphans accompanied Mweiga on sorties out into the Park proper, away from base, accompanied by a Keeper who dons a zebra striped jacket for the purpose, since newborn zebra foals bond to their mother's unique pattern of stripes. Experience has taught us that without the striped jacket, a zebra foal is unable to recognize its wild kin when grown!

Rukinga, the kudu, is now three quarter grown, sporting short horns, and is a gentle and beautiful animal, who recently has become a permanent member of a wild kudu family that live near the Stockades. Whilst he returns occasionally to greet his erstwhile Keeper, he is now comfortable living as a wild kudu. Serena, the orphaned

zebra, likewise has been showing an interest in wild zebras encountered on her travels in the Park with her Keeper now that Mweiga is no more, and we hope that one day she will be rounded up by a wild Stallion, and taken into his harem of wives, as were another two earlier female orphaned zebras reared by the Trust.

At Kaluku, the Mtito De-Snaring Team's base, an orphaned baby female dikdik, rescued from a poacher, and named Mbee (the Mkamba word for dikdik) has been hand-reared



and is now grown and living wild and has recently given birth to her own wild-born baby. Her presence around the Kaluku base has encouraged many of her wild friends to come and join her, making Kaluku a stronghold for wild dikdiks as well.

All these orphans of other species have been a resounding success, and we applaud the Keepers for successfully rearing and rehabilitating them when grown. As a result, the Keepers have learnt a great deal and have emerged humbled and touched to discover the magic of forming friendships with animals they previously regarded as just "nyama" (meat).

### THE COMMERCIAL BUSHMEAT TRADE

This poses an enormous threat to all species of wildlife in the country, and its seriousness cannot be over-emphasized. The Trust's seven full time, fully equipped anti-poaching De-Snaring teams, who work in conjunction with KWS, witness the terrible toll taken on a daily basis, and whilst their presence has certainly made a small difference along the Tsavo boundaries that they are able to cover, this is just the tip of the iceberg. Unless the bushmeat issue is addressed at a higher level through the Courts and deterrent sentencing meted out to offenders, Kenya's wildlife will continue to disappear at an alarming rate and with it will go the lucrative Tourism Industry which hitherto has been the bastion of the country's economy.

The setting of wire snares to trap animals, is bad enough, but "lamping" is taking an even greater toll in areas where this is common practice. A first-hand report from a poacher himself certified that lamping can kill over 30 animals in a night, and that species such as dikdik, lesser kudu and impala have all but disappeared entirely from his particular community area abutting Tsavo. Armed with a powerful spotlight, machetes and a crude horn that makes a bleating sound, the poacher attracts the attention of antelopes at night which become dazzled by the spotlight beam, as several accomplices armed with "pangas" creep up from

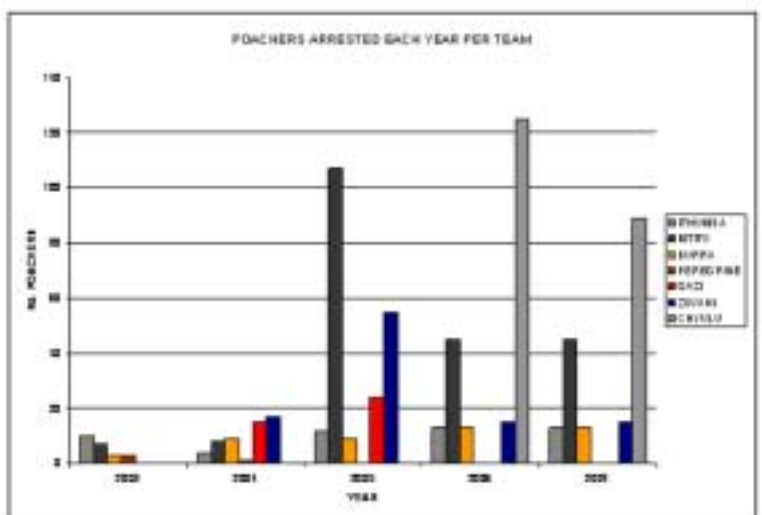
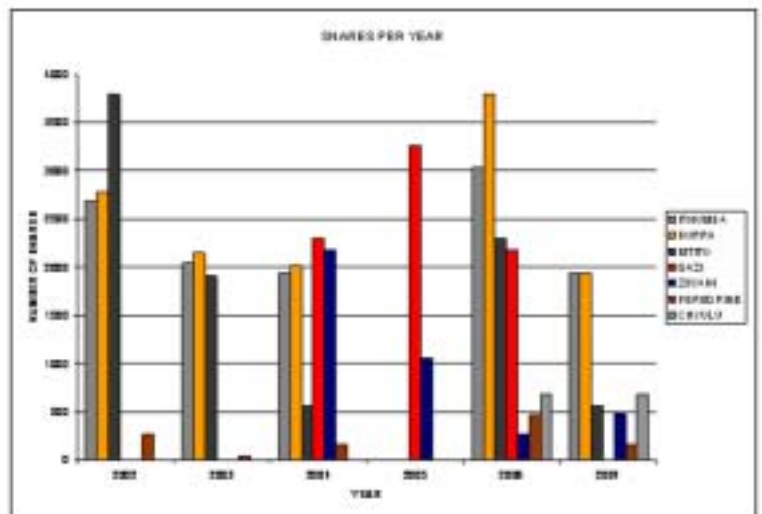
behind hamstringing as many animals as possible rendering them immobile. These are then often left to suffer, panic-stricken and in excruciating agony until dawn, when a gang arrives to dismember them, and carry off the meat in sacks to the main Mombasa road, where it is picked up by transporters.

### Charcoal

This is another sinister trade to which the present Government turns a blind eye, and which is, in essence, importing the desert and exporting the trees to the middle East in the form of charcoal. With Global Warming predicted to further desiccate Africa with disastrous consequences to all life, including the human population, this issue also needs to be addressed urgently.

### THE MOBILE VETERINARY UNITS

Our two fully equipped Mobile Veterinary Units are the good news, to counter the bad news mentioned above. The Tsavo Unit has alleviated the suffering of countless victims during the 6 years that it has been operational. In 2007 the Trust's Central Rift Veterinary Unit which covers the Masai Mara, Naivasha, Nakuru and neighbouring ranchlands, was modeled on the same lines as that of Tsavo, and has also taken to the field and been extremely successful. Snaring for bush-meat is rampant in the Rift Valley around population centres such as Naivasha and





**Snared Leopard**



**The terrible wound caused by a snare**



**Snared Dikdiks**



**Snared Kudu**



**Poached Elephant**



**A Snared Elephant trunk**



**Snared Buffalo**



**Collected snares targeting medium size wildlife**



**Genet Cat**

Nakuru, and also further West, as well as within the Masai Mara National Reserve so this second unit was formed not a moment too soon. The Trust would like to reiterate just how grateful we are to the Austrian based Vier Pforten and to Mrs. Rex Dobie's Minara Foundation for saving the lives of so many stricken animals, and for alleviating suffering on such an enormous scale.

Summary of Treatment and Rescue Cases Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit						
Reasons for intervention						
Species	Snares	Arrows/Spear injuries	Rescue	Bullet injuries	Others	Totals
Elephant	23	45	18	10	19	115
Giraffe	12	-	-	-	-	12
Buffalo	6	-	4	-	3	13
Lion	2	-	2	-	8	12
Impala	6	-	-	-	1	7
Zebra	5	-	2	-	4	11
Leopard	-	-	-	-	1	1
Grant Gazelle	-	-	-	-	4	4
Cheetah	-	-	-	-	2	2
Baboon	-	-	-	-	1	1
Waterbuck	3	-	1	-	1	5
Hyena	-	-	-	-	1	1
Caracal	-	-	-	-	1	1
Hippo	-	-	-	-	1	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>186</b>

Summary Of Treatment And Rescue Cases Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit:					
Reasons for intervention					
Species	Snares	Injuries	Rescue	Other diseases/ Postmortem	Total cases
Giraffe	6	4	-	1	11
Cheetahs	-	1	-	3	4
Lions	-	4	3	2	9
Black rhinos	-	-	-	1	1
White rhinos	-	2	-	1	3
Elephants	-	4	-	-	4
Zebra	16	11	1	1	29
Waterbucks	4	-	-	1	5
Buffaloes	2	1	1	1	5
Jackals	-	-	-	1	1
Elands	-	1	-	1	2
Colobus monkey	-	-	-	1	1
Wildebeest	-	-	-	2	2
Topi	-	1	-	-	1
Impalas	-	-	1	1	2
Hippopotamus	-	-	-	1	1
Hartebeest	-	-	-	2	2
<b>Total cases</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>83</b>

### CITES and ELEPHANTS

It is a sad reality that Elephants are increasingly under threat from poaching due to the growing influence of China in Africa, China being the largest buyer of illegal Ivory. The Chinese populace are becoming more opulent, providing an insatiable and unsustainable demand for what is known as "white gold". Recently the Elephant Trade Information System (ETIS) presented data to the International Convention on Trade for Endangered Species (CITES) revealing that over 322 tons of illegal ivory had been seized in 12,400 instances from 82 countries between 1989 and March 2007 – in other words 92 cases per month or 3 per day. The Democratic Republic of Congo, Cameroon and Nigeria were said to be the main source countries with China, Japan, and Thailand the main consumer countries. South Africa is also a conduit for illegal ivory smuggled out of the countries of Southern Africa, and Uganda the preferred route for illegal stocks from West and Central Africa.

Conflict within the Democratic Republic of the Congo threatens elephants there with extinction and has probably completely wiped out the few remaining Northern White rhinos, with gorillas targeted now as well. The Sudan provides an easy exit for illegal ivory stocks from Eastern Africa while Belgium is the main half-way house. Wherever there is conflict in Africa, wildlife pays the price, for ivory and horn is used as a currency to procure firearms. With insurgency in Somalia,



Removing a snare from Zebra



Treating a White Rhino



Removing snare from young Elephant's trunk



Treating a Lion with a broken tooth



White Rhino after treatment for fighting wounds



Stitching a Zebra's Wound



Removing a snare from a young Elephant's neck



Treating a spear wound

just next door to Kenya, the Congo, Sudan, Ethiopia and Uganda, the future for elephants and rhinos in Central and Eastern Africa looks bleak. Then, when all the elephants North of the Zambezi have gone, the complacency of the Southern African countries, who claim to have too many, and continually boast about better protective measures, will be seriously challenged.

In June 2007 signatory countries to CITES met in the Hague, Holland, and as usual ivory was a contentious issue. With major Ivory Busts in China, Taiwan, Singapore, India, Japan, Tanzania and even Kenya, representing the demise of thousands of elephants, and evidence that some of the crates had been used repeatedly, one would have thought that the all-out ban that brought reprieve to elephants, would be reinstated, for what has been intercepted is just the tip of the iceberg. For instance, the Explorer, Mike Fay, whilst flying over Chad came across three or four Elephant Massacre sites that no-one knew about, the ground beneath littered with elephant carcasses. So, in short, the illegal Ivory Trade is very much alive and well, and, if anything, set to escalate rather than any chance of being brought under control.

It came as no great surprise that at the 2007 June CITES Convention, a day before the Meeting was due to be officially opened, the Secretariat surreptitiously approved the sale of 60 tons of Southern African ivory to Japan, which is said to be the repository for 22% of the world's Ivory.

The Southern African countries, sought permission to sell an annual quota in addition to their existing Stockpiles accumulated over several years, while Kenya and Mali



argued that the resumption of any legal trade would open the floodgates to the kind of elephant slaughter seen in the 1970's, 1980's and early 90's. They fought for a 20 year closure on the sale of all ivory. However, it soon became obvious that the required two-thirds majority vote was unlikely for either of these two proposals to be sanctioned, so the African countries were pressured to come up with an African consensus that would be acceptable to all. Eventually, a compromise emerged - that over and above the 60 tons sanctioned prior to the opening of the Meeting, the four Southern African States (namely, South Africa, Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe) would be allowed to submit proposals to sell ivory registered before 31<sup>st</sup> January 2007, but after this, no further sale proposals should be submitted by those four countries for a period of **nine years**. **However**, other African countries would be free to request permission from the CITES Secretariat to sell their ivory stockpiles to Japan, so once again it was, in fact, a no win situation for the elephants, especially as Tanzania is said to hold a Stockpile of over 100 tons. Poaching is rife in Tanzania, so that figure will undoubtedly rise. Poaching has also escalated in Zambia, and appearing again in Uganda, a country that can ill afford any more elephant losses.

There is evidence to suggest that any legal sales of ivory open the floodgates to the laundering of illegal stocks, the Burundi debacle prior to the Ban being a prime example of this, still fresh in the minds of many concerned conservationists. That Zimbabwe was included in stockpile sales despite evidence that elephants are being slaughtered en masse in the turmoil of that ruined country, seemed misguided, especially as Zimbabwe is not known for sticking to the rules, having allegedly been selling Ivory to Japan in between CITES Conventions, despite being a signatory.

Here in Kenya, 52 Kilos of ivory was seized on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 2006 at the Frontier town of Isiolo, waiting to be ferried to a Dealer in Nairobi, probably the tusks of several elephants reported killed in Laikipia, Samburu., Marsabit and Meru North. Also in November last year 14 elephants were found poached in Shaba National Reserve, whilst in Tsavo Somali poachers who found themselves stranded by the flooded Athi river, raided Ngiluni village abutting the boundary of the Park. In December two Tsavo West Rangers were shot by an unseen marksman as they sat under a tree near the banks of the Galana river, and on the 15<sup>th</sup> of that month a notorious Somali poacher, possibly the man who shot the Rangers, was himself killed at Kulalu on the Eastern Park boundary. Another two managed to escape. A month later our Ithumba De-Snaring team found a dead elephant covered with brush, its tusks missing, just 8 Kms. from the Ithumba Headquarters, this time a victim of poisoned arrow poaching. In May KWS Rangers and Somali poachers were involved in a gun battle which ended in the death of 3 Rangers and 4 poachers and in June 7 elephants were poached in Tsavo West near the Tanzanian border. July saw the tusks of 3 poached elephants intercepted near the town of Kilgoris in the Masai Mara. In short therefore, this proves that poaching continues, even on our doorstep and Kenya was justified in seeking the 20 year ban on the sale of all Ivory from CITES.



## **The Ivory Ban of 1989**

This came about at the 1989 CITES Convention following 3 decades of rampant slaughter North of the Zambezi, and it halted the mass slaughter of elephants for almost ten years. However, in 1997, following a great deal of pressure, CITES sanctioned the sale of 50 tons of Government owned ivory to Japan from the Southern African countries of Botswana, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe. Then at the 2002 Convention the Southern African countries were given permission to sell 60 tons of Government owned ivory, on condition that baseline data on the illegal trade was available from MIKE (the organization established to monitor illegal poaching of elephants). Of course, in conflict zones where elephants (and people) were being massacred wholesale, MIKE personnel were conspicuous by their absence, so only some data was available for the June 2007 Convention, and was obviously not entirely accurate. For instance, where was MIKE when the Chad massacres discovered by Mike Fay came to light! As the saying goes, "You can fool some of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all the people all of the time". However, by the time all of the people wake up, it might well be too late to save both elephants and rhinos.

The illegal trade in wild animals has grown to more than \$10 billion per annum, orchestrated by well organized Crime Syndicates fuelled by enormous profits, making it the world's third biggest source of criminal income after drugs and guns. Over 20 tons of illegal ivory was seized in 2007, doubling the amount sized in previous years, transported in crates labeled "Sisal Fibre", "Household Goods", "Artificial Marble" as well as beneath Plywood, and closer to home, concealed in bags of charcoal, potatoes, or tankers carrying fuel. Law enforcement is lacking in many countries in Africa and Asia due to poor governance, mismanagement and corruption and this has allowed poachers, middlemen and ivory vendors to thrive. Furthermore, Ivory trinkets are sold openly in many African market-places, now being carved by Chinese craftsmen on African soil. Unregulated retail ivory markets also pose an ongoing threat to the elephants and must be addressed.

Then, there is the Internet. During a randomly chosen week in February 2007, the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) found 1,275 ivory pieces offered for sale on eBay, 94% of which lacked any certification. This disclosure prompted eBay Inc., to ban cross border trade in ivory but it served to highlight yet another loophole. Billions of people in the Far East, all wanting ivory, plus unthinking people elsewhere still buying ivory trinkets and carvings is a depressing reality of life in today's evil world.

## **CITES and RHINOS**

Rhinos are even more at risk than the elephants, simply because those that still exist today are so few. Even here in Kenya, rhino horn has mysteriously vanished from Government Armouries, and the rhino population of Nairobi National Park is certainly conspicuous by its absence these days making many believe that the Park is not the safe-haven for rhino that it once was. A physical sweep of the valleys and hills of the Aberdare National Park, where some 48 Black Rhinos were supposed to exist, instead revealed

a number that could be counted on the fingers of just one hand. Esmond Bradley Martin and Daniel Stiles who have long investigated both the ivory and rhino horn trade, discovered that between 2002 and 2007 the price of rhino horn in Yemen had risen by 40%, now fetching a wholesale price of US \$1,700 per kilo with some horns (mainly from the few remaining Great Indian Rhinos, whose horns are believed to be more potent) fetching as much as US\$3,000 per kilo. Again, Yemen is a country with a growing middle class, all of whom covet a genuine rhino horn dagger handle or jambiya. This plus the demand in the Far East for rhino horn for aphrodisiac and other supposed medicinal properties, is putting increased pressure on the few remaining rhinos both in Asia and Africa. In view of all this we find it outrageous that rhinos are offered for sport hunting in Southern Africa. Outrageous also is the continued abduction of baby elephants from their living families Tuli style in both South Africa and Zimbabwe, destined to be sold into bondage for personal gain for elephant-back riding and as Zoo and Circus exhibits. We hope that the philosophy that "If it Pays, it Stays" does not contaminate the Wildlife Service here in Kenya.

## **Wildlife Policy Review**

For a while, there has been mounting pressure for the need to review the country's Wildlife Policy, with calls to reinstate Professional Hunting and Commercial Culling as a means of making wildlife "pay for its keep". The Commercial Culling Pilot Scheme which was supposed to have lasted just two years, but went on for ten, highlighted the cheating of quotas and rampant abuse of the system by stakeholders. In short, KWS did not have the capacity to monitor what was going on and the same would apply were consumptive utilization and Sport Hunting reinstated in a country where corruption is still a way of life. Non consumptive utilization is not only far more lucrative, but also safer, for remaining wildlife numbers could not withstand the legal consumptive demands of a burgeoning human population in addition to the silent illegal slaughter that is taking place for a commercial bushmeat trade that has so far proved impossible to stem. "When in doubt, don't" would seem a wiser way to go.

Added to this, Kenya would gain immense global prestige by being the one country in Africa that is GREEN and which utilizes its wildlife in a compassionate and humane manner, capitalizing on the fact that it does NOT allow these cruel practices. This would enhance the country's tourist potential enormously, and benefit the country through trying to stem declining wildlife numbers, rather than adding additional off-take. Wildlife is under immense pressure as it is, not least because it will have to suffer the devastating affect of Global Warming. It is predicted that Africa will become drier as a result, and this alone will have a negative impact on the country's remaining wildlife.

The reintroduction of Professional Hunting South African style would definitely prove counter-productive to tourism for in this, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Sport Hunting is viewed as an out-dated, cruel, and unpopular colonial concept amongst the majority of Kenyans, as was illustrated when the notion was put to the vote at community level.



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**On line donations can be made directly through the website and all details regarding donations to The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust can be found on the website under HOW TO DONATE**

**IN THE U.S.A.**

We now have a "supporting charity" in the United States, the United States Friends of The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust ("U.S. Friends"). The organization has been recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a tax-exempt "public charity" to which contributions, gifts and bequests are deductible for U.S. income, gift and estate taxes. Because U.S. Friends is staffed with unpaid volunteers, all amounts it receives are contributed to The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust.

Checks can be made out to **U.S. Friends of The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust** and sent to:

**U.S. Friends of The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust**  
One Indiana Square  
Suite 2800  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2079  
U.S.A  
Telephone: (317) 238-6218  
Fax: (317) 636-1507  
Email: [ssmith@kdlegal.com](mailto:ssmith@kdlegal.com)

**IN THE U.K. AND THE REST OF THE WORLD (EXCEPT U.S.A)**

The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust has recently become a charity registered in the U.K.  
**Charity No 1103836**

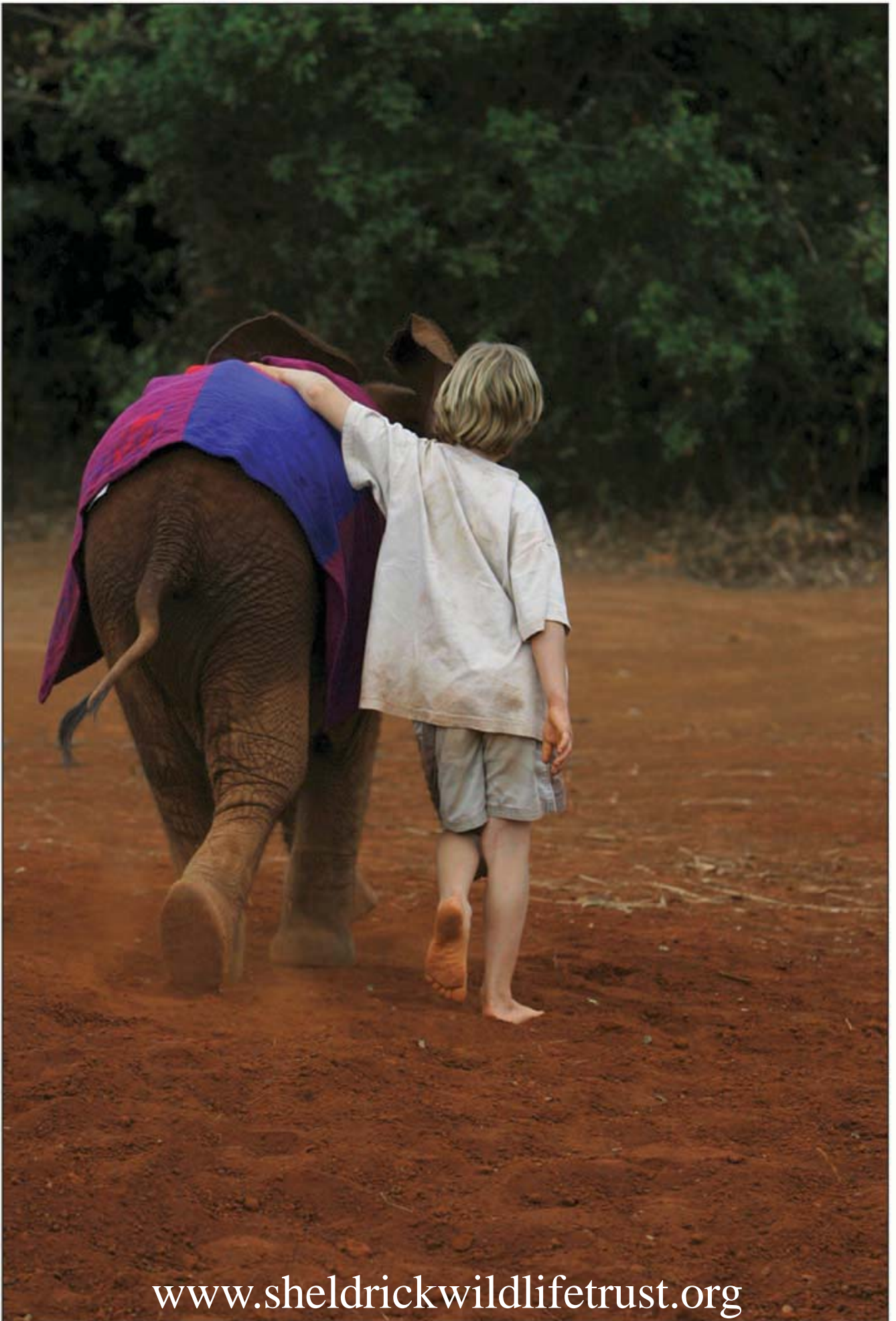
Cheque donations made out to **The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust U.K.** by U.K. Citizens should be accompanied by the Gift Aid Declaration, which can be printed off the Trust Website [www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org](http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org) The Gift Aid Declaration Form can be located on the HOW TO DONATE PAGE under U.K.

**Donations can be sent to:**

**The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust**  
PO Box 133  
Ashted  
Surrey  
KT21 9AB  
UK  
Telephone: +44 (0)1372 365186  
Email: [infouk@sheldrickwildlifetrust.org](mailto:infouk@sheldrickwildlifetrust.org)

**IN KENYA**

**The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust**  
P.O. Box 15555,  
Mbagathi 00503,  
Nairobi, Kenya.  
Telephone: +25 420 891996  
Fax: + 25 420 890053  
Email: [rc-h@africaonline.co.ke](mailto:rc-h@africaonline.co.ke)



[www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org](http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org)



## **THE DAVID SHELDRIK WILDLIFE TRUST**

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