

WILDLIFE • NATURE • CONSERVATION • PEOPLE • TRAVEL

# AFRICA

## Geographic

MARCH 2007



**HORSING  
ABOUT  
AT SONGIMVELO**

**CREATURES FROM  
ANOTHER TIME  
TENRECS**

**DUST & DEATH  
KALAHARI LIONS**

**SEYCHELLES  
ANCIENT ARCHIPELAGO**

*Saving Zimbabwe's*

# SECRET

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WWF-SOUTH AFRICA  
FOR A LIVING PLANET

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ADMAG BEST ENVIRONMENT & CONSERVATION MAGAZINE 2006

cover story

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ROOM FOR HOPE

Bookey Peek visits the Tikki Hywood Trust and is inspired by the work of the indefatigable Lisa Hywood and her team. By looking after some of Zimbabwe's endangered species, the Trust offers a positive vision for the country's future.

COVER  
Serval  
*Lepus arizonae*  
Photographers: Roger and Pat de la Harpe/  
africainmagery.com

TRAVEL

59 Naturalist and photographer Mark Tennant is leading three exclusive safaris for *Africa*

*Geographic* readers. Join him as he seeks out predators in Botswana, tracks primates in Uganda and follows the wildebeest migration in Kenya's Masai Mara.



features

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HIGHLAND FLING

Relatively few people venture into Mpumalanga's Songimvelo Game Reserve. Its dramatic landscape is inaccessible to all but the sturdiest 4x4s. Horses, on the other hand, can handle the terrain with ease, which is why Steve Rufus's horseback safari outfit is such a clever solution to exploring this incredible area.

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MAMMALS FROM ANOTHER TIME

Tenrecs in Madagascar

In a country renowned for its amazing animals, tenrecs reign supreme in the unusual ways they have adapted to their surroundings. Peter J. Stephenson reveals some of their secrets.

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DUST AND DEATH

Lions of the Kalahari

As a huge lion and his two lionesses stalked their prey around a waterhole deep in the Kalahari Desert, Tim and June Liversedge's cameras caught all the action. The resulting IMAX film *Roar: Lions of the Kalahari* made for riveting viewing, as these photographs show.

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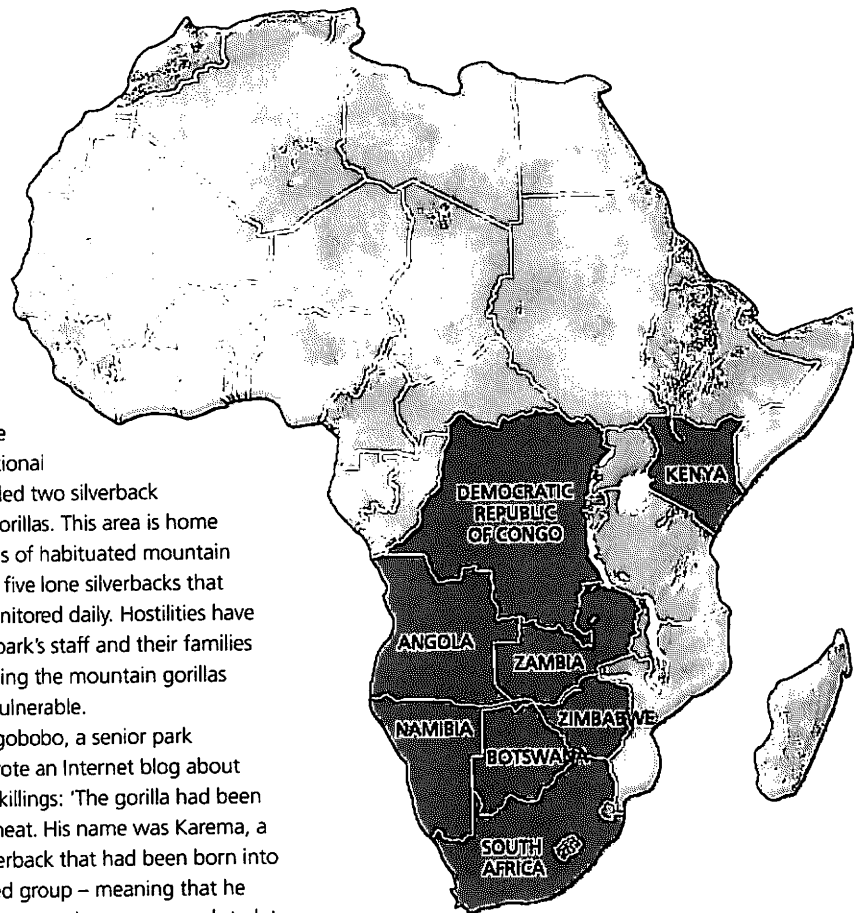
SUNSHINE, SEAFOOD AND SPICES

Is Seychelles really as idyllic as photographs make it look? Jeremy Jowell went there to find out.

mammals from  
another time  
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# africa at a



PEACE PARKS FOUNDATION

**Congratulations all round after government representatives sign a memorandum of understanding at Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe.**

## SOUTHERN AFRICA

### Big deal

In December 2006, the governments of Angola, Botswana, Namibia, Zambia and Zimbabwe signed a memorandum of understanding at a ceremony at the Victoria Falls (above) to establish what will become the biggest conservation area in the world. Called the Kavango–Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area, the park will be situated in the Okavango and Zambezi river basins and cover 287 132 square kilometres. It is likely to be formally established in 2010.

The park will link 36 national parks, game reserves, community conservancies and game management areas. Some of the most notable of these are the Caprivi Strip, Chobe National Park, the Okavango Delta and the Victoria Falls.

The sanctuary will provide free movement for the world's largest elephant population and may reduce pressure to cull. While the primary function of a transfrontier park is to conserve the natural environment, it also has positive spin-offs for tourism and job creation. *Peace Parks Foundation; www.peaceparks.org*

## DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

### Gorillas killed by rebels

Insurgent forces led by the dissident General Laurent Nkunda have invaded the southern

sector of the Virunga National Park and killed two silverback mountain gorillas. This area is home to six groups of habituated mountain gorillas and five lone silverbacks that are also monitored daily. Hostilities have forced the park's staff and their families to flee, leaving the mountain gorillas extremely vulnerable.

Paulin Ngobobo, a senior park warden, wrote an Internet blog about one of the killings: 'The gorilla had been eaten for meat. His name was Karema, a solitary silverback that had been born into a habituated group – meaning that he had grown to trust humans enough to let them come within touching distance. The remaining gorillas are extremely vulnerable – the rebels are after the meat, and it's not difficult for them to find and kill the few gorillas that remain.' *Read Ngobobo's blog at [www.wildlifedirect.org/gorillaprotection](http://www.wildlifedirect.org/gorillaprotection)*



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## KENYA

### Rhinos on the move

With a population of over 80 black rhinos, Solio Rhino Sanctuary is one of the country's most successful rhino sanctuaries. In fact, it had a surplus of 34 black rhinos which were moved to Ol Pejeta and Ol Jogi conservancies in February. Each animal was fitted with a radio transmitter embedded into its horn, then it was released and left to establish a new home range, a process that will be intensively monitored.

Ol Pejeta Conservancy now holds a breeding population of 79 black rhinos – the largest breeding population in East Africa. The overall carrying capacity at Ol Pejeta is estimated at 120 to 130 individuals, which the conservancy hopes to achieve within the next decade. For more information, go to [www.wildlifedirect.org/olpejetarhinos](http://www.wildlifedirect.org/olpejetarhinos); *Ol Pejeta Conservancy*

## SOUTH AFRICA

### Gone fishing

CapeNature, in partnership with the Robberg Shack Conservation Group, has launched an overnight facility at the Robberg Nature and Marine Protected Area near Plettenberg Bay

**ZIMBABWE**

**No thanks**

Government wildlife officials have blacklisted the Conservation Task Force after accusing it of making false reports about the management of the country's wildlife areas. A letter from the Parks and Wildlife Management Authority to the head of the task force, Mr Rodrigues, said, 'Due to continuous negative and false reports emanating from your organisation about conservation in Zimbabwe, the authority can no longer afford to associate with you, as this association is now a liability to the nation ... with immediate effect the authority will no longer accept any donations that come through your organisation.'

The Conservation Task Force was responsible for raising an international alert almost two years ago about conditions in the Hwange National Park, which was experiencing a severe drought, resulting in the deaths of thousands of animals. Concerned people from around the world sent more than US\$1-million in donations and The Friends of Hwange Conservation Society was formed to organise the delivery of the funds. *Independent Online*



CAPE NATURE

in the Western Cape. Robberg Point Shack (above) is a restored fisherman's cottage situated on the rocks at the eastern point of the Robberg Peninsula. It is fitted with the basic amenities and sleeps eight. Guests will have the entire point area and Robberg Nature Reserve to explore, and fishing is allowed with a permit. The hut is ideal for those who want to escape for a day or two and enjoy a rustic, back-to-basics experience. Call (+27-44) 802 5311 to book. *CapeNature*

**DAVID RATTRAY**

On Friday, 26 January 2007, one of South Africa's greatest ambassadors for tourism, Zulu culture and conservation was brutally gunned down and killed in his home during an attempted robbery. I, along with everyone else whose lives he touched, was stunned.

David Rattray was a big man with a strong physique and an even stronger personality, which he used tirelessly to communicate his abiding passion for the Zulu people, the military history of KwaZulu-Natal, his country and, indeed, all of Africa. David's skill at storytelling was legendary and, over the years, he held thousands of guests spellbound at his Fugitive's Drift Lodge as he built a theatre of words set in the surrounding hills and plains, introduced the historical players and wove the progress of battles such as Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift.

A stay at Fugitive's Drift became a high point on any South African travel itinerary and many people made the pilgrimage to hear him speak, among them Britain's Prince Charles, who became a family friend. His work went well beyond the telling of battle stories. He was, through various trusts, enormously active in helping to better the lives of his neighbours and he was equally concerned about conservation. He was an active trustee of the John Voelcker Bird Book Fund, which published the new edition of *Roberts Birds*.

In a sad irony, as the news of David's death reverberated around the world, it tarnished the very image of South Africa as a great tourism destination that he burnished so enthusiastically. David will be missed as a friend and fellow traveller and we can only hope that the boundless goodwill and respect shown for him will be of some comfort to his wife, Nicky, and their children. South Africa has not only lost a good man, we have lost a national treasure.

Peter Borchert, *Africa Geographic* Founder and Director



**David Rattray and the Hon. Celia Sandys, granddaughter of Sir Winston Churchill.**

**THE SEA CUCUMBER**

EARTHWORM OF THE OCEAN

Sea cucumbers are so named for their cucumber-like shape and leathery skin. They are generally scavengers, feeding on plankton and other organic matter found in the sea. Often referred to as the 'earthworms' of the sea, they constantly churn up sediment, thus assisting in the oxygenation of other species. This makes them particularly significant in contributing to the health of the marine environment. In some areas, over-harvest of sea cucumbers has caused hardening of the sea floor, which makes it impossible for certain bottom-dwelling organisms to survive there.

Matemo Island is one of three new additions to the Rani Resorts portfolio. Experience an island holiday of unspoilt beauty and an underwater paradise of spectacular marine life thanks, in part, to the local proliferation of the sea cucumber.



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