

THE DAVID SHELDRIK WILDLIFE TRUST



NEWSLETTER 2010

NEAR THIS SPOT ARE DEPOSITED THE REMAINS OF ONE WHO POSSESSED BEAUTY WITHOUT VANITY, STRENGTH WITHOUT INSOLENCEN, COURAGE WITHOUT FEROCITY, AND ALL THE VIRTUES OF MAN WITHOUT HIS VICIS – LORD BYRON

For the Trust, this year seems to have flown by in a frenetic whirlwind of activity and before we even know, it is already time to again send best wishes for the year ahead to all our Supporters worldwide. We thank all for another year of generous support that has empowered the Trust to achieve a great deal, despite a difficult economic climate. We are most deeply grateful for whatever help, however modest, comes our way, for above all else it is the thought and motivation that counts.

This year many Supporters have organized special fundraising events in support of the Trust. We are indeed honored to have been selected as the catalyst through which they, too, can make a difference. Board members of our US Friends have been active in this respect, as have caring supporters in Germany, Hong Kong, and elsewhere not forgetting Rob Brandford of our U.K. Trust who did all the ground work for the Exhibition that accompanied Daphne's October presentation at the Royal Geographical Society in London.

The Trust is diligent about remaining faithful to its Mission Statement and ensuring that every cent entrusted to us for disbursement leaves its impact on wildlife conservation in the most practical and positive way.

There have been changes this year, with Stephen Smith, President of our US Friends Board stepping down to take a well earned break, handing over the Presidency to Brian Miller, another founder Trustee of the US Friends. We remain deeply grateful to Stephen for not only establishing our US Arm and the advantage of tax deductibility from donations made in the United States, but also guiding the US Friends so professionally due to his legal background. We warmly welcome Brian Miller as Stephen's replacement.

Richard Moller, joins the fold and will be based permanently at our Kaluku Field Headquarters abutting the Athi boundary of Tsavo East National Park. In conjunction with Lionel Nutter, he will oversee the Trust's field

projects specifically concentrating on managing the anti-poaching teams. Richard brings with him an exemplary conservation record of practical field expertise and experience, along with hundreds of hours piloting tail dragging aircraft such as our Top Cub. He will be cooperating closely with field personnel within Tsavo and its environs and hopefully his experience and initiative can help the Trust effectively increase its anti-poaching assistance in the region.

This year marked the 20th Anniversary of the Gaia Symphony, a Programme in which Daphne and the early elephant Matriarch "Eleanor" featured in the first of seven Gaia Symphony series around environmental issues, filmed by Jin Tatsumura, whose name is a household word in Japan. The Gaia Symphony has run in Japan ever since that first Programme on Elephants was done some 25 years ago, and has proved enormously popular there. The Anniversary celebrations, sponsored by Shumei International (famous



Dr. Roger Payne and Dame Daphne Sheldrick
in front of the Silk Screen at the Miho Museum



Dame Daphne Sheldrick delivers a lecture in Japan



Jill Woodley with Daphne and Jin Tatsamura and Dr. Roger Payne

for organic farming) centred around an ancient silk screen which has just come to light, and which currently hangs in the prestigious Shumei Miho Museum. This screen depicts an elephant on land communicating with a whale in the ocean and since it has now been proven that both elephants and whales communicate over distance using low frequency infrasound, Daphne's return to Japan focused on elephants while Dr. Roger Payne, an expert on whales, covered the whales.

Daphne traveled to Japan with Jill, her elder daughter, who came from France to accompany her. With Professional Interpreters she and Dr. Payne lectured audiences as large as 4,500 people in three very prestigious venues, and in between these public functions were exposed to beautiful Temples and stunning formal Japanese Gardens. They even went to the Imperial Palace compound to meet Her Imperial Highness Princess Takamado an expert on the birds of Japan. They were taken to an amazing forest right in the heart of High Rise Tokyo where tree seedlings planted by the people of Tokyo some 100 years ago, have been left to evolve naturally without human intervention into a magnificent natural forest. This incredible forest in which stands a holy Temple is a celebration in itself of the power of Nature, and the wisdom of accepting that humans should not try to play God, for Nature knows best how to adjust to changing circumstances, something the late David Sheldrick recognized a long time ago. A celebration of Nature has been the theme of all the Gaia Symphony Programmes over the years.

CONSERVATION OVERVIEW

Designated by the United Nations as the year of Biodiversity, 2010 has highlighted time and again the threat facing many species on earth, not least of which is the Northern Serengeti Highway proposed by the Tanzanian Government which will run in an east/westerly direction just 30 – 40 kms south of Kenya's famous Masai Mara. The Masai Mara, which enjoys a higher rainfall than the Serengeti, is the dry season grazing reserve for the Serengeti migratory species which incorporates over 1 million wildebeest and 500,000 zebra, plus thousands of small gazelles and attendant predators. It is the most important tourist attraction Kenya has and is the lifeblood of the tourist industry which is the country's main foreign exchange revenue earner. This highway will threaten the very survival of the spectacular annual migration, the last remaining migration of large herbivores on the planet and acknowledged as the greatest wildlife spectacle on earth. With this highway will invariably come roadside development - human habitation, roadside kiosks, domestic predators, disease transmitted by the domestic animals to those living wild, fences, and worse still, wholesale illegal poaching for bushmeat. Since the alternative option of a highway south of the Serengeti would serve ten times more towns and people, many conservationists in Kenya view the proposed highway as a deliberate strategy to try and prevent the wildebeest migration from accessing Kenyan territory, even though it is difficult to even imagine how a responsible Government could contemplate disrupting such a wonderful natural phenomenon purely out of spite and for selfish reasons.

Scientists and Naturalists now conclude that the human species has wrought such unprecedented changes to the planet

that the Earth is moving into a new geological period – the epoch of “New Man”, which has triggered events that may well be irreversible. Uncontrolled human population growth in Africa, coupled with mass urbanization and resulting pollution have transformed once clean and beautiful landscapes. Corruption, avariciousness and the greed of those in Power has contributed to the malaise. Now, there is even talk of trying to accumulate DNA samples of threatened species which can be stored in a “Frozen Ark” hoping that one day the technology might exist to recreate species that have been driven to extinction! One should not forget, however, that perhaps most threatened of all could be the human species itself, which has stepped out of Nature and no longer fits in. Evolution has demonstrated that those that don't fit in usually end up being taken out!

There have apparently been 5 previous mass extinctions on earth, the worst being 251 million years ago when 54% of the world's species were lost. Now human related changes to Planet Earth

could trigger the 6th Great Extinction when 90% of earth's current species could disappear, vanishing at the rate of 30,000 per year (or a staggering three every hour!) In East and Southern Africa, already severely threatened are 32% of amphibians; 20% of mammals; 12% of birds; 4% of reptiles and 3% of Fish according to Climate Change Researchers at the University of Capetown. As one year ends, and another dawns, everyone should pause to think about such issues and consider what they, as an individual, can do about it, because everyone can at least do something, even if it is only just speaking up and speaking out. People power is needed now as never before, because we all have only One Home that we must share with all the other forms of life which have evolved to contribute towards the wellbeing of the whole. A reverence for all life on our planet is a philosophy that needs to be embraced by all.

In Kenya, 2010 began with thousands of fish dying mysteriously in Lake Naivasha and water levels of all other

Rift Valley lakes such as Nakuru, Bogoria and Elmenteita receding due to human destruction of their catchment areas. Lake Nakuru was down 40% and Lake Elmenteita 50% putting at risk 4 million of the world's 6 million flamingoes, who rely on the nutrients provided by alkaline Rift Valley lakes. Lake Tanganyika straddling the border between Tanzania and the Congo and which is the second largest in the world and also the second deepest was found to be warmer than it had been for the past 1,500 years which will bring about changes in its productivity.

A UN backed study indicated that tropical forests provide benefits worth an estimated \$6,120 per hectare (2.47 acres) per year, in terms of food, building materials, water purification, habitat for wildlife and insects etc., genetic biodiversity all vital to the overall wellbeing of the planet plus the ability to improve human food output in the future, which will be much needed. Storing heat trapping carbon dioxide and rejuvenating the human spirit are other aspects of a



Tsavo in the rains

forest's worth. Insects provide pollination services and other natural systems such as coral reefs provide nurseries for fish, and protect coasts from storm, aside from offering holiday destinations that generate revenue.

It has been painful to have to stand by helplessly and watch the desecration of Kenya's forest environments, and the burgeoning charcoal trade which is denuding the landscape of all its hardwood trees, the mass intrusion of domestic livestock into the fragile ecosystems of arid National Parks such as Tsavo compromising the survival of wildlife within their last refuge areas, and introducing disease to add to the decline, said to be



as radical as 60%. Where cattle have congregated, they have scarred the land with erosion trenches that will take years to heal. The will to address all these problems has been woefully absent under the current Coalition Kenya Government.

But then the rains came to temporarily ease the doom and gloom and Nature again demonstrated its incredible powers of recovery, lifting spirits and instilling hope. The Uaso Nyiro river rose 30 ft. in less than one hour, destroying riverside tented Lodges and Camps in Samburu National Reserve, so rather than the drought, suddenly floods became a topic of conversation! However, whilst flooding brought misery to some parts of Kenya, Tsavo was again covered in a healing profusion of snow-white blossoms of the creeper *Ipomoea mombassana* reminiscent of what followed the terrible 1970 drought. The land was transformed and hummed with life, and the animals that had survived the terrible 2009 drought

feasted after a period of privation and famine. At such times the wise words of ancient Confucius always come to mind – “if you would predict the future, take a look at the past”. There is truth in that for hidden within the bad news, is always some good and a glimmer of hope that things might get better in the future!

For us the good news of 2010 is that the Trust prospered and forged ahead throughout the year, irrespective of the challenges we have had to face and which are never far removed – for instance power outages on a daily basis, sometimes lasting all day long and obstructive petty officials



who try and thwart at every turn rather than help! The up and coming younger generations of Kenyans who will one day occupy the corridors of power are a source of real hope, and are well represented amongst our dedicated Staff, earning for the Trust the ultimate accolade from a famous National Geographic photographer, Nick Nichols, who this year has spent many months immortalizing our work for that prestigious magazine. He said that throughout his extensive working career in many parts of the world, he had never come across such an efficient organization as The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust! That utterance was an honor that left us all extremely proud.

Mercifully Kenya has a free Press so Kenya's youth is better enlightened about environmental issues and make use of the power of the Internet to broaden their horizons even further. They are aware of the challenges plaguing their

country. Amongst our Staff are many post graduates who are learning a great deal from the natural world and feel fulfilled by the impact they are making. Almost every Kenyan, even those in remote rural communities, has a Mobile Phone and most tune into the radio regularly. Many even have access to Television. More accountability is being demanded of the country's Politicians, since the promulgation of the country's new Constitution, so People Power is demanding changes within the corridors of power. Many pastoral communities are now protecting and nurturing their wildlife rather than neglecting or killing it. In fact, tribesmen that rescue orphaned elephant babies from remote wells are now largely aware that elephants are intolerant to the fat of cows' milk. They nurture the rescued calves tenderly keeping them re-hydrated with only water until they can be airlifted to the Trust's Nairobi Nursery. Our Elephant Keepers are drawn from many of Kenya's 47 different tribes, and they reach people in the far corners of this country by participating in regular Phone-In Programmes. These have proved immensely popular amongst their rural outlying communities, so much so that many tribesmen journey to Nairobi especially to see the orphaned elephants. Nor are they alone, for many other overseas visitors do the same, some even choosing Kenya as a holiday destination simply in order to be able to include in their Safari schedule a visit to the orphaned elephants.

This year, the focus of the Trust has shifted due to the sharp and very noticeable decline of wildlife both outside and within the Protected Areas due to poaching for bushmeat as well as for Elephant Ivory and Rhino Horn. We have been active working with local communities and private stakeholders to protect as much wild land and what wildlife is in it as possible. The

Trust has added to its own holding abutting the Athi Boundary of Tsavo whenever opportunity and funds permit and we have actively worked with the Kenyan Forest Service to secure a concession to manage and protect the Kibwezi Forest and all that it harbours, 15,000 acres in extent. The Trust has also been working with communities around Lamu to help them safeguard what lies within their jurisdiction. In this we have had a positive impact and left our mark, so we look back on our 2010 achievements with enormous pride, tempered of course with deep sadness for the plight of wildlife in today's avaricious world. We are always mindful of the fact that we owe our success to the support we have received from a caring global public whom we simply cannot thank enough.

Many projects have come to fruition thanks to funding from either our US Friends organization in the United States, our U.K. Charity based near London, and support from many other Organizations and Foundations. We are deeply grateful also for the support of our Orphans' Project through the Digital Fostering Programme which has empowered us to save and hand-rear from early infancy a veritable **herd** of elephants, as well as critically endangered orphaned Black Rhinos, none of whom would otherwise be alive today. That, in itself, is an achievement of which we, and all our Supporters, can be extremely proud as 2010 draws to a close and we embrace 2011.

THE TRUST'S 2010 ACHIEVEMENTS

- With cooperation from the Forest Service, we have negotiated a 33 year lease on the important Kibwezi Forest, home to endemic species of butterflies, frogs, fishes and probably many others, as well as the unique heritage of one of the last surviving Ground Water Forests in the country. Within the forest is the crucially important Umani Springs - the only Groundwater for the entire Chyulu Hills National Park and the source of water for Kibwezi town on the main Nairobi – Mombasa road..
- Using a legacy left to the Trust, we have built an attractive Self Help facility within the Kibwezi forest to generate funds for the protection of the forest and its denizens. We have funded a new anti-poaching team based at Umani, and have been able to control the illegal logging of hardwoods within the forest, previously out of control, as well as the illegal poaching of animals for bushmeat. A network of bush game viewing tracks have been opened up for visitors to utilize once the Lodge becomes functional which will be during the first half of 2011.
- Currently, we are in the process of fencing the entire Kibwezi forest, Phase 1 of which is completed and has been fully funded by our US Friends. In the past human/wildlife conflict has been a major problem in the area so this initiative is proving immensely popular with the neighboring communities. The Public/Private partnership of this crucially important Groundwater forest is the Forestry's Pilot Scheme for the better protection of Kenyan forests and the Trust is proud to have been selected by the Forestry Service as the pioneer of this brave new initiative. Above all, it will provide a safe haven for the wildlife, which hitherto has suffered immense depredation and harassment but which is now beginning to return in numbers to shelter in the forest and drink at the Springs.

- A comprehensive Management Plan has been drawn up for the Kibwezi Forest by Dr. Ian Games which has been exceedingly well received by all stakeholders and will be implemented in full.
- A Professional inventory of the forest trees within the Kibwezi Forest undertaken by Quentin Luke revealed some surprises, not least the number of Ficus species to which it is home. The Kibwezi Forest obviously holds many other surprises which will come to light after surveys are undertaken of the amphibians, reptiles, mammals and insects, all of which will involve professionals in the various fields in the fullness of time.
- The Ithumba Camp has again enjoyed great occupancy throughout this year and is seldom vacant. It has been an important revenue earner for KWS to help manage the Northern Area, generating a sizeable sum of money paid quarterly to them by the Trust. We ensure that standards are maintained within the Camp, that water is trucked in, and that fridges, cookers, and everything is in working order making it comfortable for visitors, who enjoy exclusivity, since they book the entire Camp. It is fully furnished, with linen, cutlery, crockery, and cooking utensils all provided, along with three resident Staff members who take care of guests. Visitors merely bring their own food and drink and the establishment operates at its own unique simple rhythm.



The Volcanic Chyulu Hills with Mt. Kilimanjaro behind

- This year, our Kaluku Field Headquarters on the Trust Land has been further upgraded. The complex is now powered entirely by Solar energy, complete with V Sat and Internet facilities, Workshops, Stores, and Water Storage Tanks. The Pilot's house has been completed and a small waterhole in front of the Pilot's house provides a drinking place for buffaloes, antelopes and ground birds, while resident dikdik, amongst whom are several orphans hand-reared by the Staff, stroll around unconcernedly. The Pilot's House is now occupied by Richard Moller as he tackles his new role as part of The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust team. The Kaluku field Headquarters enjoys a wonderful ambience and all who live and work there, love it.



- The Vegetable Garden at Kaluku has been productive for a long time, and has proved a Godsend for the local communities who can buy Sukuma Weeki and other vegetables at a subsidized price, saving them the long hike into Mtito Andei town some 40 kms away. Now the Fruit Orchard is also becoming productive, which will allow access to citrus fruit and contribute towards better community health. This facility which has benefited the local people so much has generated immense goodwill for the Trust as has the employment we provide. The Peregrine De-snaring Team that patrols the Trust owned land and its environs benefits from this goodwill.
- The Trust's Seven Anti-Poaching De-Snaring Teams were not permitted to work in the Park for awhile but found themselves much in demand beyond, lifting snares in neighbouring community lands and on the private ranches that surround the Parks. But they were desperately needed back inside the Park where bushmeat snaring now had free reign, and eventually pressure from the field persuaded the Trust to sign a Memorandum of Understanding which, although restrictive about what we were at liberty to reveal, at least allowed the Units back in. Since the Units that work within the Park are accompanied by armed Kenyan Wildlife Service Rangers who have powers of arrest, they have since been able to be very effective in saving the lives of hundreds of animals and bring at least some of the perpetrators to book.
- Both the Ithumba and Voi Stockades have had a facelift this year, much needed at the Voi Elephant Stockades especially, which have been in use since the early 50's during David Sheldrick's Wardenship of the Park. Special "Taming Stockades" have been erected at each venue, where older newcomers can be confined in order to be tamed down and fed milk and rehydrants without the risk of sedation which often has a negative affect on elephants.
- Aside from the additional De-Snaring team mobilized this year based at Umani within the Kibwezi forest we are working closely with Wildlife Works Carbon. Their work covers Rukinga Ranch and more recently an additional five other ranches within that ecosystem. The vehicle for this team was purchased and specially customized by funds provided by our US Friends.
- The Trust has funded the establishment of a very detailed Data Base designed by Fran Michelmores for all our anti-poaching teams, aimed at capturing important trends relating to wildlife within the areas in which the teams operate, including location of snaring hot-spots, poachers' hideouts, sources of permanent water etc. etc. Such data will become very valuable over time and help maximize output and provide more detailed and effective reporting for ourselves, KWS and the scientific community.
- After a great deal of debate, the Kenya Wildlife Service agreed to a Conservation Fee paid by the Trust monthly from funds generated by Our Orphans' Project, as an alternative to imposing Nairobi

Park Entrance fees via their Smart Card system at the Service Entrance, as was their intention, something that was tried once before with disastrous consequences. This came into force in October 2010. Visitors come to our premises for just one hour a day to enjoy the orphaned elephants being fed their midday milk feed and take a mudbath (weather permitting) and the numbers could not be processed in time through the Smart Card process, which would leave many disappointed and disgruntled people who would be turned away, as they were before. The new arrangement negotiated between the Trust and KWS will spare inconvenience to our daily visitors, and avoid congestion and long cues at the Gate. During the Open Hour we host hundreds of local school children who are allowed in free as an important public relations exercise, as well as sizeable numbers of visiting tourists against a modest donation in support of the Project. Foster-Parents who are already supporters of the Orphans' Project are by appointment allowed to visit in the evening to watch the elephants returning to their Night quarters. We are grateful to those within the Service who worked closely with us to find a workable solution rather than initiate a system that would stifle the success of the project.

- With support from our US Friends, we have assisted The Kenyan Wildlife Service by re-building the electrical fencing around the Voi Headquarters in Tsavo East National Park and installing an un-shortable fence from the Rongai river to the Banda Gate of Nairobi National Park. This is patrolled daily by the Contractor against a monthly payment shouldered by the Trust. The same maintenance arrangement applies to the 64 kms of fence-line along Tsavo East's Ithumba Northern boundary installed by the Trust with help from Care for the Wild and Rettet Die Elephanten several years ago. In this way fences remain fully functional at all times. The Northern Boundary fence has been enormously successful in limiting human/wildlife conflict and has enabled the neighboring Wakamba community to harvest the crops they are able to cultivate in that area of extremely marginal rainfall. Furthermore, local people are employed by the Contractor to undertake the surveillance of the entire line, so it provides a livelihood for an impoverished rural community.
- Maintenance of the five Tsavo East National Park Windmills installed by the Trust, has been an ongoing and extremely crucial commitment of the Trust's this year, especially now that the Aruba Dam has silted and is no longer a permanent source of water for wildlife within the Southern section of Tsavo East National Park. There are only two permanent river systems that serve Tsavo

East - the Tsavo and the Galana, so water generated by the Trust's Windmills has been the only source available for wildlife within the main tourist circuits of the Park during the dry season. Without maintenance on these Windmills, the main tourist circuits of the Park would be devoid of all surface water, as well as all water dependent wildlife species which would be forced to fall back on the permanent rivers many miles away. This would deal a major blow to the Park's tourist revenue.

- Our maintenance now covers nine boreholes, all of which have been funded by the Trust over the years. In addition to those in Tsavo East, we also maintain the borehole in Nairobi National Park. This is an ongoing commitment for the Trust which has spanned many years.
- Thanks to two generous grants from caring Supporters and the Serengeti Foundation, the Trust has also drilled two new Boreholes in 2010, one on the Trust's land to avert another water crisis should the Athi River again dry up, which it is sure to do. During the 2009 drought the river dried completely, and we only managed to save the forty two resident hippos, and all the animals in the area by "bowsering" water in on a daily basis from the Tsavo River 60 miles away. A large tank sunk into the sands of the riverbed then provided the water needed to keep the resident pod of hippos alive, all of whom would otherwise have perished, as did large numbers in Tsavo West. Water troughs were strategically placed throughout the area to serve the other animals.
- Again, sponsored by a couple of valued donors, another borehole was sunk at Ithumba since the existing one has also been taking the strain, especially now that so many wild elephants make use of the water trough at the Stockades in addition to the 37 orphaned elephants who were, or still are, based there. We operate the De-Salinator on this borehole which provides potable water for the KWS Ithumba Headquarters. The new borehole will service the Ithumba Camp, and the Orphans' new concrete drinking pond established at the mudbath venue, which is also widely used by wild elephants. To date water for the Ithumba Self Help Camp has had to be trucked in regularly, so the new borehole will save the Trust this expensive commitment as well as relieve the pressure on the existing Stockade borehole.
- The Trust has continued to help The Kenyan Wildlife Service when called upon with donations of Security Fuel, Aviation fuel and by repairing vehicles and equipment, and servicing roads and some of the Park's infrastructure, aside from all the field projects we run in support of the Parks.



The Ithumba Orphans and their Keepers



Umani Springs



The Umani Springs self-help lodge



Kibwezi Forest and the Umani Springs Lodge



Ithumba Camp



Ithumba Camp bedroom tent by night



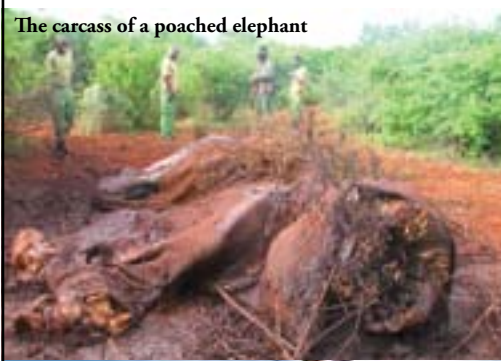
Umani Springs swimming pool



The Ithumba borehole being drilled



The Kibwezi Forest fence line, phase 1



The carcass of a poached elephant



The Mtito Borehole being drilled



The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust Mobile Veterinary Unit treating an injured elephant



A wild elephant herd, Tsavo East National Park

- Our two Mobile Veterinary Units, one that covers the Tsavo Conservation Area and one that covers the Central Rift have been very busy throughout the year. With the increase in poaching cases they have been called upon all too often to treat spear wounds, poisoned arrow wounds, snare wounds and bullet wounds and have been able to save a life that without their timely intervention would have definitely been lost. These Units are fully funded by Vier Photen and the Minara Foundation respectively.

THE ORPHANS' PROJECT

ORPHANED RHINOS

Keeper Dependent, and at our Nairobi Nursery at the beginning of the year was **Maxwell**, born blind in Nairobi National Park in December 2006 and lacking both an optic nerve and retina. He was abandoned by his mother in the Park forest adjacent to our base when very young. As bull rhinos have to fight for territory and rank, Max will always need a protected and sheltered life, but to compensate, he is spoilt rotten. We have given him as much space as we can, provided a concrete drinking trough within his Stockade which is filled with clean water, plus a delicious mudbath made from trucked in red earth. He still enjoys cooked oatmeal bottle feeds at four hourly intervals throughout the day, and cries his “wanting” mew if one does not appear on cue, so even though he no longer really needs it, we have not had the heart to remove it from his diet. Whenever a Trust vehicle is returning from Tsavo, it brings a load of delicious gruyere branches rich in minerals for the orphans, which Max also relishes. He has his very own Mineral Block to lick, plus fresh cut greens placed in his Stockade on a daily basis along with a handout of Lucerne and Copra cake daily.

Although blind from birth, Max gallops round his Stockade at speed, expertly avoiding every obstacle, so one would be excused for not noticing the fact that he was sightless. Above all, he lives for the usual twice daily visits of Ex Orphan Shida who, although now a wild rhino in every respect is still a stickler for routine, opting to return to his old Nursery Stockade to be viewed by human visitors during the Open Visiting hours where he also partakes of a hand-out of Copra and Lucerne. Both Maxwell and Shida clearly enjoy the attention of all the visitors, Max pressing his huge frame up against the bars of his Stockade hoping for a “rub” under the tummy, so irresistible that he collapses in a state of blissful torpor. Shida also enjoys a nose rub, but because he has a long protruding horn, which he sharpens against the steel bars of the Gate to his Stockade, we have had to “box” off a patch to ensure that unsuspecting visitors don't find themselves disemboweled during the sharpening process!

Shida, orphaned at 2 months old in 2003 when his mother (named Stella) died of old age in Nairobi National Park, is now virtually full grown at seven years old, but probably won't qualify as a breeding bull until the age of 10. He is short for his age, but has been well endowed horn-wise, so we are happy to “view” him on a daily basis and know that his horn is still where it ought to be rather than winging its way to South East Asia, as have so many others this year. Whenever Shida returns and puts himself back in his old Stockade, we close the Gate and put the ropes in place to box off the square within reach of his horn, and when the spectators have departed, his Gate is opened up again, and off he goes, all the rhino exclusion zones demarcated with string (once a hot wire) to protect our cars and equipment from his attention. Rhinos are extremely inquisitive and few changes within the yard escape his notice.

Blind Max now has a new passion, and that is another recent rhino arrival - little **Solio** whose mother was shot in self defense on Solio Ranch in mid September 2009. When she first arrived in the adjoining Stockade, sensing a stranger, Max was bent on either killing or ejecting her, believing that she did not “belong”, threatening to demolish the poles that separated him from her. However, after the introductions were done, rhino style, through an exchange of dung, he has fallen in love! He sleeps as near to her as possible on the other side so a corrugated iron overhang shelter had to be erected to protect him from the rain on cold wet nights.

Solio, a female believed to have been born on the 1st April, 2010 was detected by a visiting wildlife photographer who heard a snort coming from a nearby bush, and went to investigate further. The wounded mother rhino was then apparently still standing, but had collapsed by the time the Ranch patrol and a Kenyan Wildlife Service Vet arrived to assess her injuries. Lions and other predators were already in the process of homing in on the dying mother and her six month old calf, so the mother was euthanized and the rescue of little “Solio” was initiated. However, this proved extremely difficult because



Baby Maalim, just days after his arrival at the Nursery

she was so feisty, charging everyone in sight, so that she had to be tranquilized. Being so dehydrated and stressed, when she eventually fell unconscious, she actually stopped breathing for 20 long minutes and everyone present was convinced that she had been lost. It was much to the KWS Vet's credit that he would not give up, but instructed everyone to pump her body using their feet to try and stimulate the beating of the heart again and her lungs to begin breathing. Meanwhile, he administered adrenalin directly into the tongue, having been unable to raise a vein and then, suddenly, to everyone's immense relief, the calf emitted a high-pitched squeal and literally came back from the dead! She was then roped, bundled into a travelling crate and driven to the airport to await the arrival of the rescue plane, only to find that the crate was too large to fit through the door of the plane. The Trust Keepers who came with the plane were therefore left to guard the crate and its precious cargo until road transport could be arranged to drive the orphaned rhino to the Nursery overnight. Thanks to Lewa Downs, this was organized, and Solio arrived at our premises at 5 a.m. during the morning of 23rd September – a pocket rocket, who was so aggressive that no-one could get near her for two full days!

Repeatedly she bashed her head at full charge against the restraining poles of her Stockade until we feared that her button horn might become detached. However, rubbing a rhino's body, especially under the stomach, is a sure way to the heart, and by attaching a bottle brush to the end of a broomstick, the Keepers persevered, at the same time offering her milk via a long rubber hose attached to the end of a bottle! Finally, the "scratching" as the Keepers called it, and the smell and taste of milk calmed the little rhino down sufficiently for someone to actually enter her Stockade and substitute a human arm for the bottle brush "rub" and a rubber nipple for the milk hose-pipe. However, it was a good 10 days before little Solio plucked up sufficient courage to actually follow her attendant Keeper beyond the confines of her sleeping quarters, the secret to this being the special Rhino Coat carrying the specific scent of one Surrogate Mother whom she recognized as being the person who could provide the milk she needed and whom she should follow, as she would have done her own mother.

Today, Solio is a calm and loving little rhino, eager to be out and about every morning doing the rounds of the resident Nairobi Park rhino dungpiles and urinals by way of introducing herself into the Park's resident rhino community, first having made herself known to our other two rhinos, blind Maxwell and Shida, through a similar exchange of "Visiting Cards".

Tragically, one that didn't make it was our beloved little **Maalim**, aborted prematurely by his Ngulia Rhino Sanctuary

mother in Tsavo West National Park at a time when some of the rhinos within the fenced Sanctuary were being removed for free release, numbers supposedly having risen beyond the carrying capacity of the area at their disposal. This miniature was found by a Kenyan Wildlife Service Ranger called Maalim in the Sanctuary on 17th December, 2008, and came in more dead than alive and could have fitted into a lady's handbag, but was instead airlifted back to the Nursery in style by a Caravan aircraft, since the signal alerting us to the need for a rescue plane was too poor to describe the size of the orphaned rhino in question! We never expected the tiny apparition that appeared that day to survive even a night, let alone almost two years, but survive he did from day one, until September 2010 when, sadly, he developed pneumonia having ingested milk into premature lungs that were unable to cope. We lost Maalim on the 17th October, 2010 but only after putting up a very brave struggle. It was a devastating blow, coming at a time when we believed he was improving, and also on the same day that elephant orphan "Kimana" also died.

The story of Maalim and His Mattress which was posted on our website, captured the imagination of all his many foster-parents and even larger fan Club. The mattress upon which he lay as a tiny, wizened premature being as he was massaged with Coco-butter oil to alleviate his dry skin, took on huge importance in his daily life. Every night when he returned to his Night Quarters, he would heave it around until it landed on top of him, and only then would he settle down to sleep with his nose poking out one end, and his tail at the other!

On a happier note, it was a great thrill for Daphne and Angela to be able to see "Hoshim" again up at Solio Ranch, who grew up in Tsavo with Angela and who, along with another early rhino orphan named "Stroppie", was transferred to Solio just before David Sheldrick left Tsavo having been posted to Nairobi in November 1976. At Solio, Stroppie and Hoshim were afforded a safe haven, secured in a 50 acre paddock abutting the main Solio Wildlife Sanctuary which was home to the largest population of Black Rhino left on earth, where an earlier ex Sheldrick orphan named "Reudi" grew up to become the dominant breeding bull who has probably fathered most of Kenya's remaining rhinos. Sadly, at the time of Daphne and Angela's recent Solio visit, Stroppie was no longer alive, having died of old age last year in her early forties. At 37, Hoshim is now possibly one of the oldest living Black Rhinos left on the planet, having been dumped on Daphne's doorstep all those years ago as a newborn.



Maalim playing June 2010



Shida making his daily return to his stockade



Maalim playing with his Keeper



Archival image of Angela Sheldrick with Hoshim



Solio with Emanuel



Shida in Nairobi National Park



Maalim just days before he passed away



Maxwell still having his porridge



Maxwell

ORPHANS' RE-INTEGRATION OVERVIEW

2010 began with 20 infant elephants in our Nairobi Nursery; 13 ex Nursery reared Youngsters based at the Voi Rehabilitation Centre in Southern Tsavo East National Park, and another 33 at the Ithumba Rehabilitation Centre in Northern Tsavo East. Most of the Ithumba orphans were either already Keeper Independent and fully rehabilitated back amongst the wild elephant community, or else in the process of becoming so, with just a handful still completing their milk dependent period, (which in elephants, spans the first three years of life) who returned with their Keepers to the Night Stockades each evening.

Elephants still resident in the Nursery at the beginning of the year were Chaffa, Dida, Kimana, Suguta, Mawenzi, Ndi, Sabachi, Kibo, Nchan, Kudup, Kalama, Kilaguni, Chaimu, Turkwel, Olare, Melia, Tumaren, Tano, Mutara and Shukuru.

Already based at the Voi Rehabilitation by January 2010 were Shimba, Wasessa, Mzima, Siria, Lesanju, Lempaute, Sinya, Taveta, Tassia, Kenia, and Shira who were joined by Dida, Ndi and Kimana on the 11th May 2010.

At the Ithumba Rehabilitation Centre, home base to a further 28 orphans, the number occupying the Night Stockades changed all the time, with regular comings and goings taking place with every passing month, some of the Juniors being taken by the Seniors for a trial night's outing away from the safety of the Stockades. Alternatively, some of the Seniors occasionally opt for a quiet and more peaceful night back in the shelter of the Stockades and return to join the Juniors.

The Senior and overall Matriarch of the Ithumba Orphans was, and still is, "Yatta", now 11 years old and leading a perfectly normal wild life in amongst the wild elephant community of Northern Tsavo East along with others that have accomplished the transition and joined her. She is ably assisted by three other older elephants transferred from the Voi Unit along with her to oversee the Youngsters when the Ithumba Stockades first became functional – namely Mulika, Nasalot and Kinna. By year end both Yatta and Mulika were showing signs of definitely being pregnant, their breasts filling up and becoming visually prominent, which is a sure indicator that a happy event is not far off.

69 of our Ex Nursery reared Orphaned Elephants were independent of their Keepers and living perfectly normal wild elephant lives amongst the wild elephant community of Tsavo East National Park by the end of 2010, a figure that does not include others reared previously who were orphaned

older and could bypass the Nursery stage.

"Emily" remains the overall principal Matriarch of all the Ex Nursery Voi orphans now living wild, with Splinter Groups breaking away periodically usually led by Junior Matriarchs who replace those that upgrade themselves to a Keeper independent wild status. For instance, Edie often travels separately to Emily with whoever wants to come along with her, whilst Natumi has another bunch with her who originally formed part of Emily's Group. However, Splinter Groups obviously keep in close touch with one another and with the main herd, all our hand-reared orphans viewing each other as members of a bonded "family" irrespective of their varied background.

The Rehabilitation process of the Ithumba Orphans in Northern Tsavo East National Park has mirrored the same pattern as that of the Voi Unit. Yatta's main group fraternizes on a daily basis with members of the wild elephant community, and often travels with wild friends. In fact, Yatta has recruited older orphans she has come across during her wanderings into her unit one of whom, named "Mgeni" has remained on a permanent basis, but for a short spell whilst Yatta was being attended by a very large wild bull who obviously proved a deterrent. Mgeni is now an entrenched member of her herd, intermingles with the Keepers and even responds to their commands, as do all the orphans, even those now living wild lives.

As at Voi, Splinter Groups peel off frequently from the main Ithumba herd to travel independently of Yatta and her satellites, again usually led by Sub Matriarchs who were Junior Matriarchs in their time, and again accompanied by whoever feels like coming along. "Wendi" (hand-reared from the day she was born) is the Chief Splinter Group Leader, but other ex Junior Matriarchs such as Sunyei, Galana, Naserian and Lojok sometimes do the same, obviously with the tacit approval of Yatta and the older members of the main group. All the Ithumba Ex orphans keep in much closer touch with the milk/Keeper dependent Youngsters secured at night in the Stockades, turning up regularly to escort them out to selected feeding grounds, or meeting up with them out in the bush, at the noon mudbath or during the afternoon browsing session in order to spend time with them, always paying particular attention to their selected favourite calves amongst the dependent Youngsters.

