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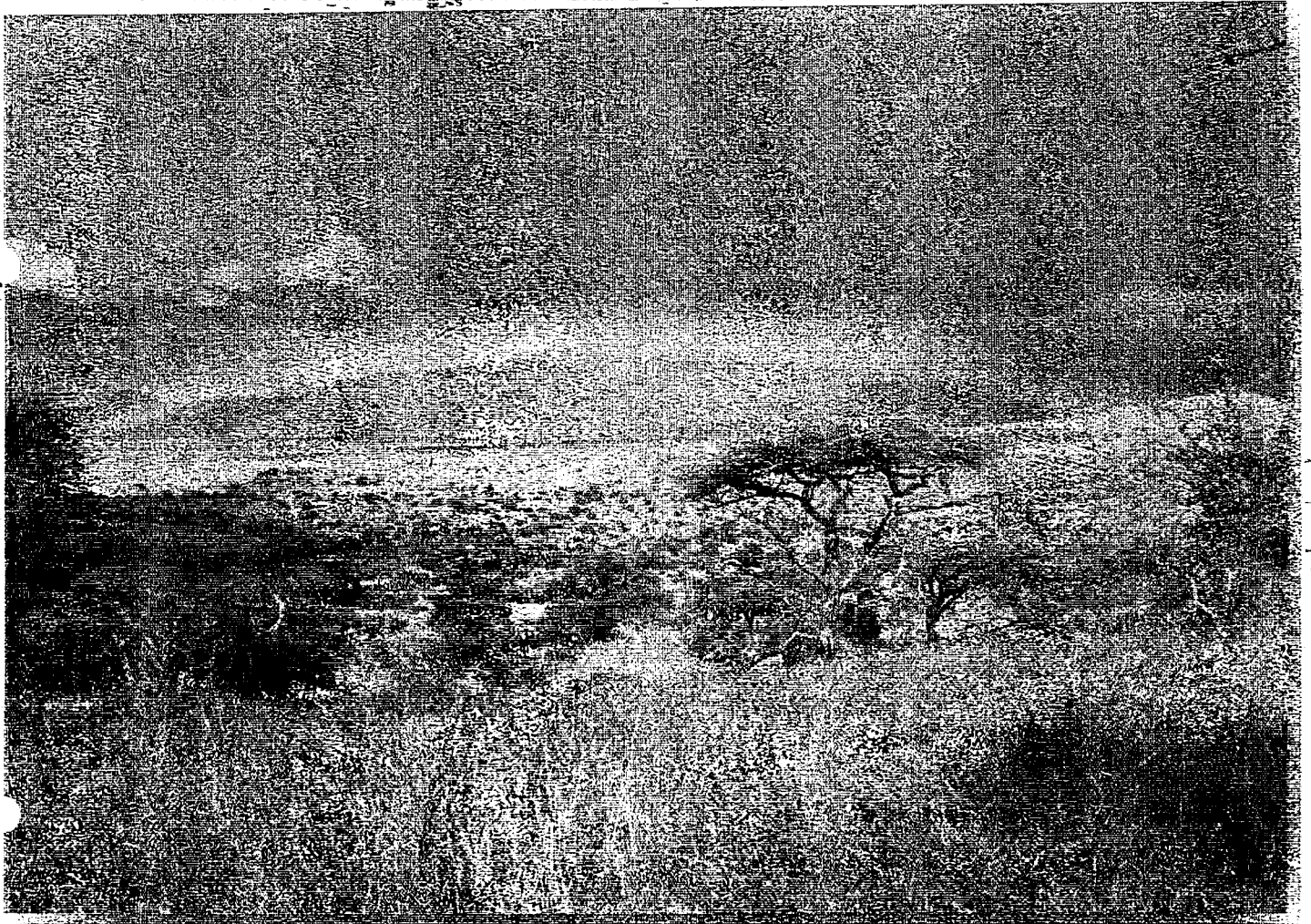


Photo: Dan Y

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UPDATE

In November the long-awaited rains at last broke on Lewa. Our worst drought in living memory was finally over. The good rains lasted through to the end of the year, and showers have continued into the New Year. There is an abundance of grass, and the animals have put back all the condition that they lost in the drought. We have been particularly lucky, because although the good rains extended to neighbouring areas such as Il Ngwesi, other parts of northern Kenya are still very dry. Since Lewa was so green, it attracted an amazing diversity of birdlife. Almost every tree seemed to have a breeding colony of chestnut weavers and its attendant cuckoos waiting for a chance to deposit their eggs, and there were over a thousand European white storks wintering on the Conservancy, as well as over a hundred Montague's harriers.

We carried out a game count in February, which confirmed that many species had suffered badly in the drought. Hardest hit were the waterbuck, which declined from 474 to 149, and hartebeest, which went from 28 to only 7 animals. We also lost about half our buffalo, and nearly half the eland. However, most of these will increase rapidly with a good year or two, and this reduction in numbers will give the land a chance to recover.

Luckily our two most important species, the black rhino and Grevy's zebra, have done well. The female black rhinos were given supplementary lucerne and managed not to lose too much condition, while to our surprise the numbers of Grevy's zebra increased from 497 last year to 556 this year. This is probably a result of the ability of this desert-adapted animal to survive drought conditions, and an influx of animals from further north through the game gap on our northern boundary. The preliminary results of a survey of Grevy's zebra throughout Kenya last year have just been produced. These show a continued decline to little more than 2,000 animals. This means that Lewa holds a quarter of the world population of this globally endangered species and must be considered its most important remaining refuge.



Waterbuck rest in the Swamp area

RHINO

Since the last edition of our newsletter, black rhinos Solio, Stumpy and Zaria have produced their 6th, 5th and 3rd calves respectively. Stumpy's calf has been named Tana. We lost one adult white rhino bull - Uthalume - from fighting with a dominant bull.

There has been some natural dispersal: four black rhinos are moving and feeding to the west of the Ngare Ndare Forest Reserve, an area with abundant browse which has not previously been used by rhinos. This means that we will need to deploy additional security in this area. All the rhinos increased their home ranges during the drought. We had to provide daily supplementary feed to the majority of both black and white rhino females to maintain their body condition. Much of this food was kindly given by Jeff & Nan Bennett.

Recognising the individual identity of all the sub-adult and some of the adult white rhino bulls has been increasingly difficult for the security patrols. Accordingly we have ear-notched 7 white rhinos following Kenya Wildlife Service coding guidelines.

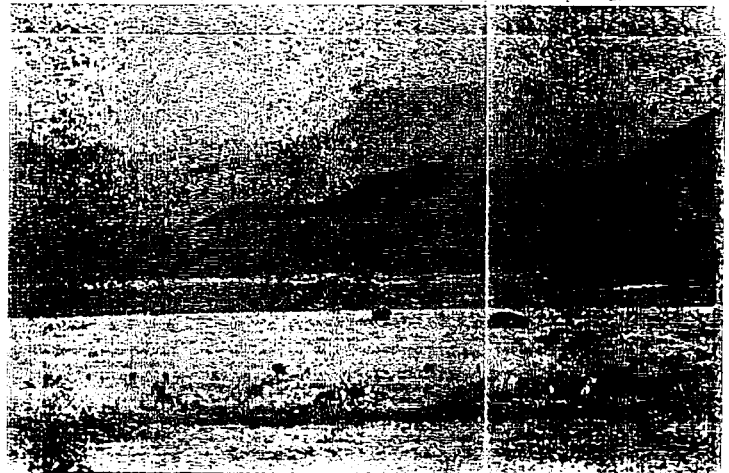
We are expecting 3 black and 4 white rhinos to calve during the year, and with the recent rainfall this should be perfect timing for the new calves.

Geoffrey Chege - Research Officer



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The chairman of the Namunyak Wildlife Conservation Trust and the local M.P. for Samburu East Hon. Leshore is finally back from hospital in England. On arrival he chaired the second board meeting this year. His return was greatly hailed and was a lot of relief to the trustees and the members of the community on problems related to poaching. The Namunyak Manager, Paul Leringato, started his Masters degree on wildlife conservation and tourism management at the University of Kent in England, funded by the African Wildlife Foundation. On his return, Paul is expected to beef up the management capacity of the Namunyak project.



Looking north from Lewa towards the community conservation areas of Il Ngwesi & Namunyak

Pasture and water related conflicts resulted in the death of two elephants between January and March 2001. One was killed by Borana herdsman and the other was killed by a Samburu moran during conflict over water. The moran was later arrested.

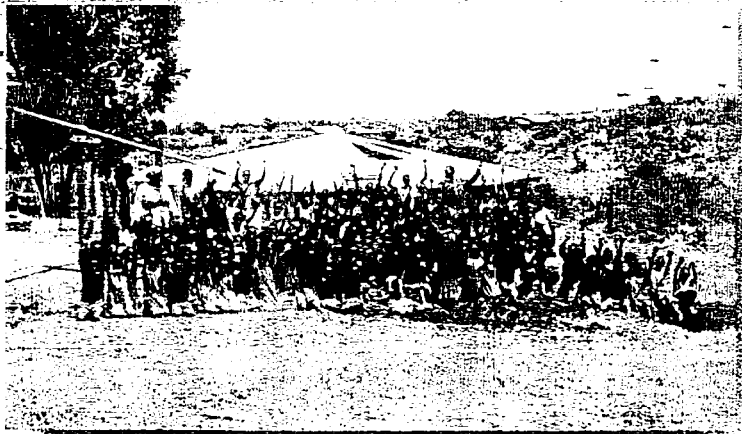
For some time Namunyak has been struggling with the use of a single Land Cruiser for tourism, administration and security. This was greatly improved by the donation of a new vehicle by the US Fish & Wildlife Service.

The Director of Kenya Wildlife Service and his HQ team visited Namunyak in February to discuss the future of wildlife in the area and possible collaboration. The team emphasised that due to limited resources, it was not possible for KWS to be everywhere. Partnership formation is therefore the key to success in conservation of biological biodiversity.

Tourism bookings at Il Ngwesi Lodge remained stable at about 70% occupancy. Three of the Il Ngwesi lodge staff and one from the Cultural Manyatta undertook a two-week refresher course at Utalii College, Nairobi. This has helped staff motivation and proficiency.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service donated a Land Cruiser aimed at strengthening security for both tourism and wildlife. This has been done as a joint venture between Il Ngwesi and Lekurruki Group Ranches.

The process of establishing the Ngare Ndare Forest Trust to manage the Ngare Ndare Forest on Lewa's southern boundary is progressing well. Thirteen trustees have been elected representing the four villages neighbouring the forest. This is the first such community forest trust in northern Kenya.



Ntugi schoolchildren in front of the tank funded by the Foundation for Wildlife Conservation

The LWC-supported schools continue to show an upward trend in exam performance. Four students were given bursaries to secondary school at the beginning of this year from Ntugi, Mutunyi and Lewa schools. Joint management meetings between the administration of the four schools and LWC are held regularly to monitor the progress of the schools on infrastructure and curriculum development. Infrastructure development was started in three of the schools - Leparua, Ntugi and Mutunyi from funds raised through the Marathon.

The water tank at Ntugi school funded by the Foundation for Wildlife Conservation has been completed and has proved a big blessing.

James Munyugi - Community Development Officer



Photo: Dan Watts

Elephant playing in the dam

SAFARICOM MARATHON

Following the success of last year's marathon, we are planning to repeat the event this year. The date is the 1st of July. Safaricom have again agreed to be the main sponsors, and a number of other corporate sponsors are showing interest. Contact us as soon as possible if you would like to run this year. Places are fast being taken up.

Last year's marathon raised just under \$50,000, which was shared between the Conservancy, Meru National Park, the Lewa-supported schools, Il Ngwesi and Namunyak. This year there will be the same beneficiaries, but we will also be supporting the Nanyuki Cottage Hospital, which is the local hospital that our staff use if they have serious medical problems.

WEBSITE

The updated web site is now online. Lewa News is a recent addition, which we will update on a monthly basis. A big thank you to Jake Kidde-Hansen of Watamu Web Workshop for all his hard work.

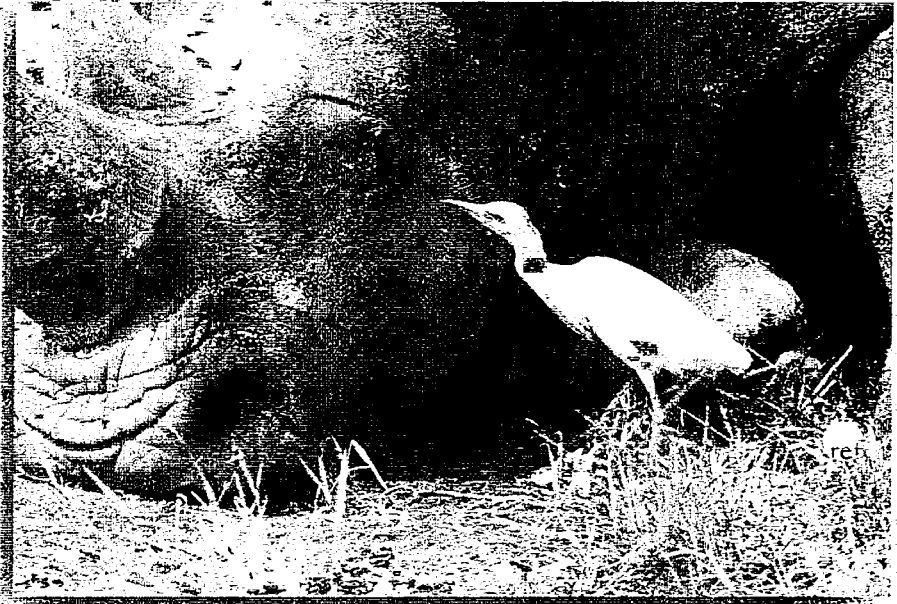
LEWA TENTED CAMP

Lewa Tented Camp - the former Lerai Camp—which is now run by the Conservancy under the management of John and Lulu Clark - has had a busy season. Repeat guests have been very impressed with the changes that have occurred since the Conservancy took over the running of the camp. Improvements continue, and we are now putting in a swimming pool. The pool will have a natural feel with a free form design and a saltwater cleaning system.



Photo: Dan Watts

Mukora, the white rhino who is resident in the area, has spent more and more time in the camp lately, because he has been fighting with another male who is keen to take over Mukora's territory. Mukora escapes under the electric wires that surrounds the camp and takes refuge in the camp. He is a great attraction for both visitors and workers alike and spends happy times drinking out of the pond in front of the lodge and grazing the lawns.



Mukora resting after a fight

The Conservancy is pleased to welcome Fran More who has come to assist in the management of the camp. Her presence will enable Lulu to concentrate on her new role as tourism co-ordinator, helping Lewa and the Group Ranches to the north to develop and promote their shared vision of ecotourism in aid of conservation.

WILDERNESS TRAILS

This season at Wilderness Trails has been particularly busy, with more repeat visitors than ever before. Game viewing is better than ever; there has been incredible big cat activity around camp with leopard and cheetah being seen at least 3 times a week. A group of 5 cheetah (a mother and 4 almost full-grown cubs) as well as a coalition of 3 large male cheetah have often been seen hunting near Will's airstrip. Entito (a resident female leopard) may be hiding cubs along the river below the dining room. At the beginning of the season, guests saw Entito with the black leopard, so we're eagerly waiting to see if any of the cubs are melanistic as well. Lions have been increasingly active during the day near camp—Lawrence the gardener has been surprised twice by a lioness and her cubs behind the water tank in the afternoon! Next season there are many exciting developments planned including 6-day walking safaris led by Phil, a brand new cottage overlooking the river, and several new horses in the stable for game rides.

MARCEL BURG AUER FOUNDATION FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE AFRICAN ELEPHANT

The Marcel Burgauer Foundation has been one of our most committed supporters over the past 4 years. Thanks to this support

the Conservancy has been able to employ the services of additional rangers who serve as eyes and ears in the protection of elephant and rhino both within the Conservancy and in the adjoining community areas to the north. Due to this increased presence and protection we are pleased to be able to report a *real decrease in poaching activities* and also a corresponding increase in the elephant numbers in both community areas of II Ngwesi and Namunyak. Wildlife is increasingly becoming a valued economic resource in these areas and with the community owned lodges proving such a success, the local communities enjoy a financial benefit as a consequence of protecting wildlife - which was never previously available.

Ian Craig

ZEBRA TRANSLOCATION

In mid-February this year the Conservancy conducted a mass capture of Burchell's zebra within Lewa, successfully moving 104 animals to Meru National Park. The operation took 6 days and involved a large amount of logistical planning. Using Alan Root's helicopter and a highly experienced game-capture pilot from South Africa, Vere (Feathers) van Heerden, the animals were driven into a large funnel 'boma' and then into tailor made containers. The containers had been chained onto the back of rented or donated lorries (thanks to Martin Forster of CMC, Nairobi), before being transported to Meru, where the zebra were released into their new home.

Thanks to generous funding from Tusk Trust, Betsy Reichert and the Youssef-Warren Foundation, we were able to buy and make the numerous items of equipment used in this operation. We now have the ability to catch and translocate all species of plains game anywhere within Kenya and hope to be able to consolidate on this experience, in the near future, with other similar operations.

Tourists in Meru Park have been seeing the animals on a regular basis and the only negative comments were questions as to why the zebra in the Park had pink or green ears. This was a cunning move by us to ensure that all the translocated animals could be easily identified by the Kenya Wildlife Service rangers, who were monitoring their daily movements.

Mike Watson



Photo: Dan Watts

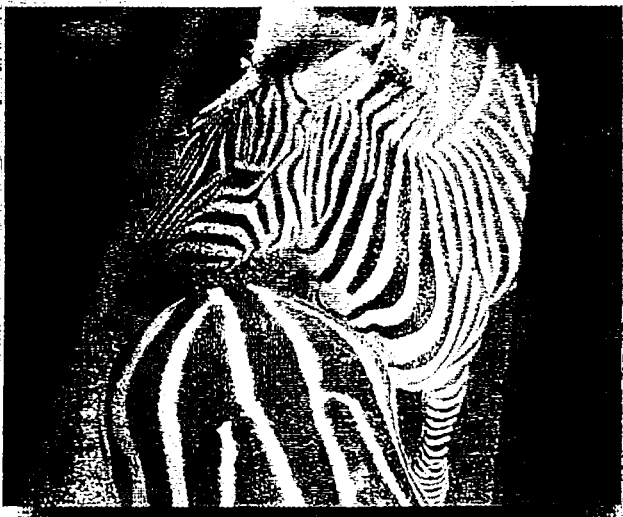
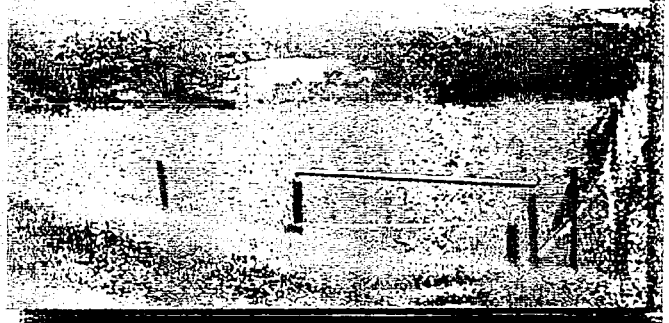


Photo: Dan Watts

Photo: Dan Watts



A helicopter is used to drive the zebra towards the funnel trap and into the container on the waiting lorry

Photo: Dan Watts



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Photo Dan Watts

The successes of the Conservancy would be impossible without the help of our many supporters around the world. The Conservancy would like to thank the following friends for their hospitality during Chris & Caroline Thouless's trip around the USA:

Richard & Jan Buthe and the Lulu Golf Club, Judith Heath, Debo Gage, Gil & Ildiko Butler, Johnny Beveridge & Lavinia Calva, Bruce & Alex Schnitzer, Holly Williams, Faanya Rose & John Reilly of the Explorer's Club, Gordon Pattee, Craig Potter, Richard Ruggiero, Marshall Jones, Karl Stromayer, Helen & Scott Christian, Tom & Henrietta Butler, Phil Osborne, Chip & Sandy Cunningham, Allan & Terry Axelrod, Jan & Bob Whitsitt, Tim & Di Lapage, Mac MacQuoid, Tom Fey, Utah's Hogle Zoo, Stacey Holland, Bihl Beckstedt of Charles Schwaab, Jerry Chamales of Rhinotek, Laura McCorkindale, Katja von Garnier, the Creative Artists Association, Stephanie Powers, Mandy Bell, the Board and members of the American Association of Zookeepers (especially Patty Pearthree), Mary McDermott Cook, Jim Webb, Rich Buickerood of the Dallas Zoo and Karen Hamilton and Jim Howard of the Dallas Zoological Society, Meg Gammage-Tucker & Anne Majewski.

We would also like to thank the following donors, who have helped to keep the Conservancy operational over the last year:

AAZK/Bowling for Rhinos Inc., John Paul & Kathy Abelaner, Billie Adelman, Allen Alder, Jim Antonides, Ross & Claire Arnold, Karl & Georgiana Aschelbach, Caren Banks, John & Ursula Banzhof, Delora Barchelor, Robert & Birgit Bateman, Mary Bauer, Ellen Beard, Chris Bobko of Denver Zoo, Gil Boese of the Foundation for Wildlife Conservation, Niles Bolton, Jim Brenneman, Toby & Irina Bromley, Joseph & Lucy Bruckner, Paul Bulman, Marcel Burgauer, Louise Charlton of the Kenya Wildlife Fund, George Chester, William & Judith Clements, Jan Collins, John Cook, Sherry Corbett, Jim & Elizabeth Cox, Kurt Culbertson, Anderson & Betty Currie, Michael & Margaret Dickson, Xavier Eckerenkoetter, Jenny & Richard Emerson, Tom Fey, the Flora Family Foundation Martha Fischer, Erin Bright Fleming, James & Dorothy Fluker, Valerie Gates, Martha Gaugher, Mitch & Kay Gilbert, Debra Glidden, Robert & Lorraine Goodwin, Ted Goss of the Eden Trust, Kathryn Graves, Ronald Gunn, James Hensler,

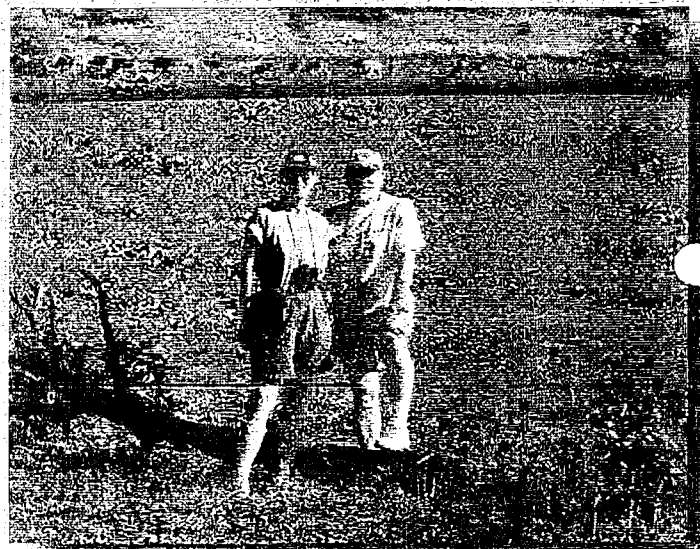
Jane & Michael Horvitz, Donald & Diana Humphries, Tim Jackson, Penny Jarrett of Cincinnati Zoo, Adrienne Johns, Dennis Johnson, Deryk Kemp of Rockin' for Rhinos, Pat & Rosemarie Keough, Kimberley Kezer, Don & Harriet Kirkpatrick, John Knowles of the Marwell Preservation Trust, Steven & Brenda Kreisher, Elizabeth Larsen of the Utah Chapter of AAZK, Jim & Julie Lays, Gaylord & Kathy Layton, Roger Lewis, Patricia Lewis of the Tapeats Foundation, Andy Lodge of the Ngare Sergoi Support Group, Stewart & Joan Long, Pamela Lunny, Susan Lyall Utsch & Hans Utsch, Milo & Jackie Marsden, Charlie Mayhew, Steve & Kathy McConackey, Kelli McNatt, Anna Merz, Victoria Milhorn, Ian & Eugenie Moore, Monica Morrison, William & Mary Murphy, Bernard & Margaret Nebel, Timothy & Marie O'Hara, James & Anna Ostervold, Ronda Planck-Preston & the Cincinnati schools, Mimi Prendergrast, Thomas Pohl, John Prince, Shari & David Quinney, Shelly Rabin, William & Christine Ragland, John Ray, Michael Reed, Jan Reed-Smith, Tom & Nan Rees, Betsy Reichert, Charlotte Rhodes, Patricia Robinson, Ross & Marcia Rogers, Alan Root, Robert & Susan de Rose, Neil & Connie Rossmiller, Mark Ross, Stephen Ross, Susannah & Bill Rouse, David Ryan, Winfield Shiras, Jeffrey Short, David & Sally Smith, Dante Stephenson, John & Carol Sullivan, Scott & Betsy Thornton, Caroline Truesdell, Geena Tweed, Benjamin & Diane Tully, Michael Weinman, Tom & Lyn White, Karen White, Norman & Barbara Wielansky, Lisa Wishnick, Carl Wolff, Ruth Wood, Richard & Arlene Wothers, Mary Wykstra-Ross, Robert & Emmakate Young, George & Susan Youssef, Wayne Zielenga.

The following people and organisations have also been of particular support to our associated organisations:

Namunyak Wildlife Conservation Trust - Save the Elephants, Hugo de Ferranti, International Fund for Animal Welfare, Tusk Trust, Halvor Astrup, Jeff Bennett.

Il Ngwesi and Lekurruki - Pan African Conservation Trust

... and a huge thank you to Delulu Upson for her help in doing the layouts for this and previous newsletters.



During January and February Dan and Sue Watts, who are professional photographers from Grand Rapids, Michigan, stayed on Lewa, taking a mass of photographs on their state-of-the-art digital equipment. Dan and Sue's stunning images have already helped us greatly with fund-raising and publicity, and their new set—a tiny selection of which illustrate this newsletter—are even better.

Find us on the internet at www.lewa.org

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