



care for the wild times

WINTER 2010



WILD TIMES FOR VIOLET!

**Celebrating another successful
return to the wild**

Dear Care for the Wild supporter

As summer comes to an end and Christmas is once again just around the corner, it's time for us to reflect on the work of Care for the Wild International (CWI) over the past year. It has been another very tough year for CWI, as it has for most charities. The economic climate is difficult and uncertain, and we appreciate how hard it is for people to find that little bit extra to give to charity.

Ironically, this is precisely when the expansion of our work with wildlife is more important than ever. With ever-increasing human populations, wild animals are under mounting pressure from land use changes, infrastructure development, and mushrooming demands for bushmeat and other animal products. Added to this, governments all over the world are having to cut spending, the authorities' ability to respond to increasingly sophisticated poachers and illegal traders is ever more limited.

So please do consider helping us to continue our work by giving what you can, either through a donation, or by becoming a foster parent to one of our wild animals in need. You'll find details of how to do this in the magazine, and a coupon to complete inside the back cover. And don't forget to check out the wonderful ideas for gifts, cards and calendars in our Christmas catalogue.

We hope you enjoy the articles in this magazine, which will give you an insight into some of the work we've been doing. We also hope you like the brand new format, which we think is a big improvement, and also helps keep our costs down so even more of the money we receive can go direct to the projects we fund.

Thank you for helping us to protect, defend and rescue wild animals in need.

Yours sincerely,



Mark Jones
Programmes and Fundraising Director

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In and out of Africa

By Karen Pettman, Projects Manager



Left to right: Kimoro, Karen, Bet, Asgar, Kilonga, Elias

Kenya is a country renowned for its wildlife, attracting thousands of tourists each year to visit its beautiful national parks and their stunning inhabitants. However, it also attracts another type of visitor; the poacher. Many of these ruthless wildlife killers creep across the border from Tanzania to take advantage of Kenya's wildlife, knowing that if they are caught, the punishment will be less severe than in their own country.

Care for the Wild International (CWI) couldn't just stand by and watch this happen. For over 25 years we have worked to protect and care for Kenya's wildlife, supporting a range of projects and carrying out our own anti-poaching activities since 1993. We know that our work in this much

loved country is very important to many of our supporters and we endeavour to evaluate all of the work we fund there on a regular basis.

Earlier this year, I was fortunate enough to travel to Kenya to visit our projects and see the work CWI supports first-hand.

Accompanied by our Kenya Director, Asgar Pathan, I visited the Ol Pejeta Conservancy near Mount Kenya in which the Sweetwaters Chimpanzee Sanctuary is located. As our chimpanzee foster parents will know, this is the home of Tess and Naika and over 40 other chimpanzees rescued from either the illegal pet trade or

confiscated from bushmeat poachers. The chimps live in two large enclosures, with a third planned for next year. CWI's

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chimp foster parents support the lifelong care of both Tess and Naika and in the past have enabled CWI to fund a new vehicle for the sanctuary and a chimp house in which they sleep at night. The sanctuary not only acts as a safe refuge for these intelligent and endangered animals, it also aims to educate the public about the threats they face. I am sure Tess and Naika's foster parents will be happy to hear that I was lucky enough to see them both, along with Tess' daughter Joy, happily chewing on their sugar cane snack!

Next stop was The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust (DSWT) Nursery in Nairobi, home to rescued orphaned elephants, and of course Max the rhino on our adoption programme. It was wonderful to see Max who is growing into a fine adult black rhino. Although he is blind he did not have any problems moving around his stockade and can certainly identify where his food is! I had just missed our previous adopted rhino Shida, who now lives wild within the Nairobi National Park, making one of his occasional return visits to the nursery.

All of our CWI elephant orphans have moved on from the nursery to the rehabilitation stockades in Tsavo National Park so it was time for me to follow them and see how they are progressing on their journey back to the wild. The stockades at Ithumba are home to Kamboyo, Lenana, Meibai and Makena and at the time of my visit, Sian, who has since sadly passed away. In the heat of the midday sun, we followed the keepers into the bush and met with Meibai, Makena and Sian who were browsing noisily. It was a wonderful sight to see these amazing animals and I feel privileged to have met Sian and the other orphans. The DSWT's other stockade in Tsavo is located at Voi. This stockade is more accessible than Ithumba although none of CWI's adopted orphans currently live there.

At 5pm, the elephants return from their day browsing in the bush and rush excitedly towards their keepers who are ready and waiting with fresh milk before leading the orphans to their stockades for the night, where fresh browse awaits them. I found it quite surprising just how much noise there was as they fed! Seeing the work of the DSWT on the ground really does reiterate just how important the support of our foster parents is to these young elephants.

During our trip to Ithumba, Asgar and I also visited the current Head Warden for the Ithumba Ranger sub-station which was funded and built by CWI in 2000. It was a great achievement for both CWI and the Kenyan Wildlife Service (KWS) and we hope that we will be able to work closely with KWS again in the future on similar projects. You can read about the building of the station in the article "The spirit of Ithumba lives on" on page 8 of this magazine.

CWI's anti-poaching teams are an integral part of our work to protect Kenya's wildlife. Our Tsavo team operates de-snaring sweeps on the outskirts of Tsavo East

National Park, an area badly affected by poaching and human-wildlife conflict. The team experience a lot of problems with farmers trying to protect their crops and cattle from wild animals. They work very



The Tsavo
de-snaring team



closely with the local community to identify areas targeted by poachers and advise on ways to reduce intrusion or attack by wild animals searching for food. Our Tsavo team consists of the team leader Sylvester and three trackers who carry out 5 patrols per month. I joined the patrol one morning and within a short space of time we recovered several snares and animal remains left behind by poachers. The team currently rely on a vehicle provided by KWS and need to cover a large area in order to make any impact on reducing the number of poachers. We hope to expand their patrols in the future and provide them with their own vehicle.

My final visit was to meet our anti-poaching team in the Masai Mara Game Reserve. This five-strong team, led by Elias Kamande and accompanied by a Mara Conservancy ranger, carry out 15 days of patrols each month around the Olololo Escarpment and Mara River. Each day is different for the team and can involve anything from assisting the Mara Conservancy rangers with an animal rescue, visiting local villages, and conducting de-snaring sweeps.

On my first day with the team we were called to assist with an incident within the reserve. A female black rhino had been sighted the day before with a leg wound, thought to have been caused by a spear or arrow. We quickly drove to the area where she had last been seen, where we discovered that she was accompanied by a young calf. Stopping some distance from the pair so we would not upset them, we awaited the arrival of the vet who would be able to assess the seriousness of her wound. The vet approached the mother and realised that the wound did not appear too serious. He was reluctant to subdue the mother to treat her as this could confuse the young calf and possibly cause it to run off. It was decided to monitor the wound over the next few days before taking any action. Fortunately, the wound healed of its own accord and mother and calf were left undisturbed.

I spent several days patrolling with the team covering the two main areas that are



The Mara
team discover a
poachers camp

threatened by poachers. The first is the forest which marches along the top of the Olololo Escarpment. The area is riddled with animal tracks along which poachers set their snares. During the patrols, we stopped several people, in order to gather intelligence or to check whether they were smuggling bushmeat. We visited the home of a suspected poacher, removing several snares. We also witnessed areas of forest where the trees had been felled in order to build huge illegal charcoal kilns, a sad sight.

Patrolling along the river, we revisited the sites of abandoned poacher's camps. The team told me that they arrested 9 poachers at one of these the previous month. The remnants of a camp fire, personal belongings and chunks of burned hippopotamus meat were still lying around. The smell was overpowering. The poachers set their camps close to the tracks used by hippos on their way to the cooling waters of the Mara River. That day we could hear the hippos calling to each other as they wallowed, and see the snouts of crocodiles peaking above the surface. Poachers have been known to risk their lives by swimming across the river to escape capture. The team told me that if they had a better vehicle and the ability to conduct wider sweeps, then both sides of the river could be patrolled, blocking the escape route for poachers.

My visit took place during the long rains which turns the black cotton soil of this area into a treacherous mudbath. To navigate the roads safely requires a reliable 4 wheel drive vehicle. Our team were using an old Suzuki jeep, barely big enough to accommodate them and their equipment and not at all suitable for the terrain they need to cover in order to seek out poachers in more remote areas.

The thing that stuck in my mind most was how could we help our anti-poaching teams carry out their work more efficiently and expand the areas they patrol? On returning to our UK office our team sat down to discuss securing funding to increase capacity. We were fortunate to be approached by The Body Shop Foundation who invited us to make an application for



funding. We chose to seek funding for a better vehicle for our Mara team and to increase the number of patrols both teams carry out. In June we were delighted to receive the news that we had been successful! We have now purchased a vehicle and we hope that by the time you read this, it will be in service.

At a time when wildlife is increasingly threatened by man's demand for food and land, we hope that this wonderful support from The Body Shop Foundation will help us fight the poachers even more effectively, protecting wider areas and closing the gap on those who slip through the net as well as supporting the communities that live alongside Kenya's spectacular wild inhabitants. If you would like to support this work, why not adopt an elephant or rhino? Alternatively, please go to our website or look at the fundraising pages in this magazine to see how you can help.

Adopt an elephant or rhino for only £24.95* per year. The gift pack includes:

- Personalised certificate
- Cuddly toy
- Factsheet
- Adoption updates

*** Plus postage & packing**



Please complete the coupon at the back of this magazine or go directly to www.careforthewild.com/adoptions

THE SPIRIT OF "ITHUMBA" LIVES ON...

By Asgar Pathan, Care for the Wild Kenya Director



The journey leading to the construction of the Ithumba Ranger station in Kenya's Tsavo East National Park was a long and tiring one for many of those involved. The seemingly innumerable

trips leaving Nairobi at the crack of dawn to drive along the deserted, dusty and bumpy roads which nearly took the lives of four of us on one occasion, and spending uncomfortable nights along the route or camping at the Ithumba site, are experiences never to be forgotten.

Our patron Lord Gridley, who is well versed and experienced in the construction industry, was put in charge of the Ithumba project. He made several trips to Kenya to oversee the contractors and to ensure the project ran to schedule. Water was a big issue during construction, and many other challenges were faced, some of which were serious and sensitive.

But finally, on February 10th 2001, the new Ithumba ranger sub-station was handed over to Director Rotich of the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) at a colourful ceremony attended by Care for the Wild International (CWI) staff and a host of other dignitaries. The northern area of Tsavo East National Park used to be an important breeding ground for elephants. In the 1980's the high level of elephant poaching

in this area forced the KWS to close it to visitors because of the risks to security. In early 2000, the KWS approached CWI for assistance in reopening the area. CWI provided funding to enable roads to be graded, and for the rehabilitation of the whole sub-station including the replacement of the mud huts with grass thatched roofs that had been the rangers' accommodation but had deteriorated beyond repair.

The new accommodation consisted of an office block, radio room, canteen, armory, cell, ranger units, toilets, housing for a warden and his assistant, a hangar and a workshop. Building the facility in the sometimes unbearable heat required careful planning, and the laying of the first foundation stones by KWS Chairman Charles Njonjo and Lord Gridley didn't take place until September 2000. The rest, as they say, is history.

The name "Ithumba" comes from a Kamba tribe from the boundary of the northern area of Tsavo East, and means "Mould of Clay". The Kambas believe that the Ithumba hill possesses a spirit, which they used to pray to for rain. The hill has a crack in it which creates a "roaring" sound during high winds. The roaring of the hill was not heard during construction, but the spirit of the hill finally spoke to us on day of the opening ceremony just as all the delegates were leaving. I like to think it means "the spirit of Ithumba lives on".

