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KNIGHTHOOD FOR DAPHNE SHELDRIK IN NEW YEAR'S HONOURS LIST

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II appointed Dr Daphne Sheldrick to Dame Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, in the 2006 New Year's Honours List. Dame Daphne receives her honour for services to conservation in Kenya.

For more than 50 years, Dame Daphne has developed pioneering animal husbandry techniques, increasing survival rates of young wildlife orphans, with a view to their eventual release back into the wild. Dame Daphne has been involved with raising elephants since her and her husband, the Late David Sheldrick's, first orphaned elephant Samson, in 1954. Her success with rearing milk-dependent elephants and rhinoceros has made her an acclaimed world authority on the subject.

Once weaned, elephants are transferred to Relocation Units in Tsavo East National Park along with their keepers, or "surrogate human family", where they remain dependent on their Keepers until they choose to join the wild herds, once they have made friends with wild peers. Eventually, each orphaned elephant integrates into the wild herds in Tsavo in its own time. Dame Daphne, over the years, has successfully reared over 100 African elephants, 70 from early infancy and two from the day of birth, the first time this has been achieved. She has also reared 13 endangered black rhinoceroses as well as many other wild animal species.

The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust (DSWT), founded by Dame Daphne in her late husband's memory, has an extensive community outreach programme, which incorporates people living on the boundaries of protected areas. Through an elephant orphan "adoption" programme, DSWT has raised considerable funds for wildlife conservation work in Kenya. This would not have been possible without the extraordinary drive and determination of Dame Daphne, who has spent her whole life working tirelessly to ensure the continued existence of Kenya's wildlife for the benefit of generations to come, thereby making her late husband's vision a reality.

Dr Daphne Sheldrick has become a household name to many people throughout the world. Her elephant orphanage and release programme featured prominently in a major BBC documentary series, "Elephant Diaries" (July 2005).



Notes:

1. Daphne Marjorie Sheldrick was born in Kenya, on 4 June 1934. She was educated at the Nakuru Primary School and The Kenya High School, matriculating with honours in 1950. In 1960 she married David Leslie William Sheldrick MBE, founder Warden of Kenya's largest National Park, Tsavo East.
2. Daphne's early role in the Sheldrick partnership was to develop animal husbandry techniques to increase survival rates of young wildlife orphans, with a view to eventual release back into the wild. David took charge of their first orphaned elephant, Samson, in 1954. After more than 50 years of pioneering work in rearing milk-dependent elephants and rhinoceros, she is an acclaimed world authority on the subject. In 2000, Glasgow University awarded Daphne an Honorary Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine and Surgery, in recognition of her unsurpassed knowledge on raising elephants and rhinoceros. Daphne has successfully reared over 100 elephants and 13 rhinoceros, many of which are now living wild.
3. Daphne founded the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust (DSWT), in memory of her husband who died in 1977, to further the principles of conservation developed by David during his life. DSWT presently contributes in excess of \$750,000 annually to conservation in Kenya, mainly focussed on Tsavo, which suffers from high levels of poaching. Since 1999, DSWT has operated, in conjunction with the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), de-snaring teams that work the boundaries of Tsavo. These teams lift thousands of snares on a monthly basis. Working in tandem with the de-snaring teams, DSWT operates a Mobile Veterinary Unit which covers Tsavo, Shimba Hills Reserve and Amboseli National Park. In addition to running its own projects in Tsavo, DSWT has helped with the maintenance of KWS vehicles and has provided fuel for security operations in Tsavo, including aerial surveillance. DSWT has purchased thermal imaging equipment, to help with the anti-poaching effort, and this will be operated and maintained at DSWT's expense. DSWT has also provided the KWS anti-poaching patrols with radio equipment and rangers accommodation.
4. DSWT has an extensive community outreach programme, that focuses on communities living on the boundaries of Tsavo National Park. Graduate de-snaring team leaders deliver wildlife education and tree propagation skills to schools and wildlife clubs. Wind-pumped water from DSWT-funded bore-holes serves both wild animals and pastoralists, in order to reduce wildlife-human conflict. DSWT has installed 42 miles of electric fencing on the northern boundary of Tsavo East National Park, where human settlement is most vulnerable to marauding wildlife. In addition to funding valuable restorative work in Nairobi National Park, DSWT has also provided some funding for Meru National Park and Mount Kenya National Park.
5. Daphne's work was recognised by the United Nations' Environment Programme (UNEP) in 1992, when she was elevated to the prestigious Global 500 Roll of Honour. And her contribution to conservation in Kenya was recognised officially by the Kenyan Government, in 2001, when she was appointed a Moran of the Burning Spear (Kenyan MBE-equivalent). She received a BBC Lifetime Achievement Award in 2003. In addition to numerous articles, Daphne has written four books. Her first book,



“The Orphans of Tsavo”, won Le Grand Prix Verite literary award (1965). She is currently working on her memoirs.

6. Further information on the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust can be found at www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org. Photographs of Daphne Sheldrick with elephants are attached:
7. The Most Excellent Order of the British Empire, a British Order of Chivalry, was established by His Majesty King George V, on 4 June 1917. Dame Commander (D.B.E.) is the second highest class of the Order and entails admission into knighthood.

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