

A man wearing a tan hat, a blue patterned scarf, and a green tunic is walking on a dirt path. He is holding a blue and white striped umbrella. Next to him is a small elephant wearing a blue and white plaid blanket. The background is a lush green savanna with trees and bushes.

# THE DAVID SHELDON WILDLIFE TRUST

2004 *newsletter*



# The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust

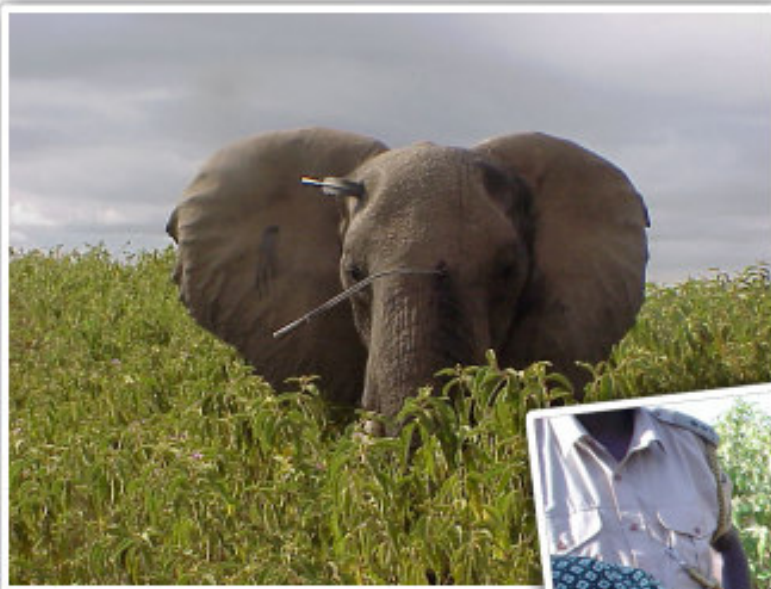
## 2004

The year 2004 now draws to a close, so it is time again to pause and reflect on events over the past months; time too to express heartfelt and grateful thanks to all who have helped us financially in our many endeavours this year and to wish all Supporters of the Trust worldwide a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous, healthy and happy 2005.

There are many things of which the Trust can be proud this year - satisfaction over the Trust's Saa Nane House, so named in memory of David, reflecting his affectionate Swahili name. The Trust House has brought untold joy to us and all who have experienced it, in addition to being a useful source of revenue for the Trust in the form of donations from those who spend time there. Built into a rocky kopje overlooking the Athi River with the Yatta Plateau and the vastness of the Northern Area beyond, it is all we envisaged and more, incorporating huge slabs of natural rock that mirror the geological birth of the Park, many studded with garnets and crystals of quartz. The mellow sound of running water in the river below soothes the soul in a hot and thirsty

boundary upstream on the Mtito watercourse. Tribesmen from whom the land was purchased struggled to scratch a living for themselves, other than resorting to poaching, so were only too happy to move to more productive pastures with some money in their pockets. Hence the deal benefited them and rid the Park of a problem!

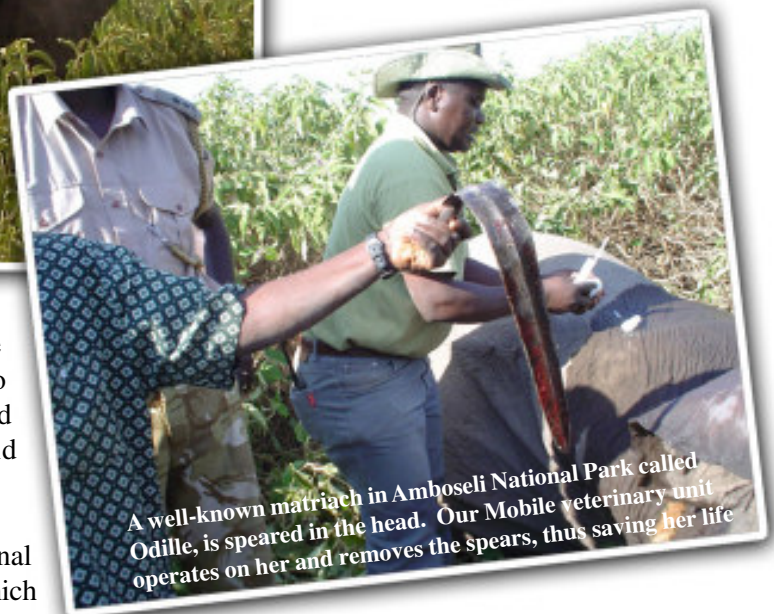
A wild bull rhino has recently taken up residence on the Trust land which is an exciting event, and wildlife generally is beginning to reappear in ever increasing numbers. Even the elephants are venturing back and beginning to show themselves in daylight, whereas previously we saw only their tracks and then just occasionally. Strategically placed midway between our two Orphaned Elephant Rehabilitation Centres, and providing a base from which three of our six de-snaring teams can operate, the Trust House and our land provides a very useful spring-board for the supervision of all our Tsavo projects. It also affords easy access for surveillance of a forgotten gem of the Park itself, the isolated "Triangle" sandwiched between the confluence of the Athi and Tsavo rivers. We even now have an airfield not far from the house itself, making the acquisition of a small plane a Wish List priority.



land and even more soothing is the knowledge that we now actually own a patch of Tsavo wilderness where we can afford protection and unfettered access to water to the land's wild denizens.

This year we have been able to purchase additional land to add to the Trust's existing holding, and which creates an important buffer to another sensitive river

The success of our now **six** De-Snaring Units has been another source of quiet satisfaction, though tempered by concern at the extent of the bush-meat menace. There is consolation however in knowing that just our presence is an ongoing inhibiting factor for the



A well-known matriarch in Amboseli National Park called Odille, is speared in the head. Our Mobile veterinary unit operates on her and removes the spears, thus saving her life

poachers and that we have been able to relieve suffering on a massive scale.

**O**ur Mobile Veterinary Unit, which works in tandem with our de-snaring teams, has accomplished wonders, saving the lives of numerous of animals, both large and small, that would otherwise have died in unspeakable agony. Responding to needy cases in both Tsavo East and West, the unit also covers the neighbouring ranches as well as Amboseli and the Shimba Hills. We are immensely proud of the impressive record of this most worthy initiative and happy to have been in a position to make it happen.

In all, therefore, for the Trust and for wildlife in general, it has been a momentous year, sadly for wildlife, more lows than highs. The “roller-coaster” events of last year rapidly became a “**Big Dipper**” this year, words beginning with the letter **D** featuring prominently in discussions on wildlife related issues, particularly at the field level of the National Parks.

**A**s the months passed, there was mounting **dismay** over the lack of field funding. Far from the Headquarters being trimmed to an affordable level as everyone had hoped, if anything the bloated bureaucracy of the KWS, swelled even further and more disconcerting was the re-appearance of wrong-doers who had previously been dismissed for corruption and fraud, including even rhino poaching and ivory deals, allegedly even compensated for “wrongful dismissal”. Field personnel watched and speculated as to the possible purpose of such a move, **demoralized** by repeated slashing of their field budgets to defray the Headquarters’ burgeoning expenses. As a result, the field end of the Service was rendered largely **dysfunctional**, something that was accompanied by a **drastic** fall in morale, which within an armed paramilitary unit could prove positively **dangerous**. Many good people within the

Service became **disillusioned** and either left, or took early retirement.

There followed a clandestine attempt to privatise the revenue earning arm of the Service, something that invoked a storm in the Press and sent alarm bells ringing amongst those familiar with the record of the players involved, especially in the wake of many other much publicised fraudulent dealings which had ignited public outcry. Whilst there were many people who approved of the concept, in view of the Service’s mounting deficit, the Government moved swiftly to halt the deal, **dismissing** the Chairman of the Board of Trustees and doling out a **dressing-down** for his Director.

By now there had also been changes at the Ministerial level. The Wildlife Docket was transferred from the Ministry of the Environment to the Ministry of Tourism, followed by a further unexpected upset when the new Minister suddenly collapsed and died whilst on an overseas marketing trip. Spirits were further **dampened** when in May the KWS’s one and only Helicopter was written off whilst ferrying the Director and other KWS officials to a function in the Aberdares, (all of whom fortuitously emerged intact) followed by the writing off of the Eden Trust Helicopter, which had been on loan as a replacement and had seen long and useful service in the past.

Then, in May, five Black Rhino were poached near the Tsavo/Athi junction in Tsavo East National Park, a shocking set-back for this severely endangered species. There was concern over the strategy of free releasing excess rhinos as opposed to holding them in fenced Sanctuaries, countered by the fact that confined rhinos with no possible means of escape were simply sitting ducks if armed poachers struck en masse – something that was a possibility if rhino had suddenly become a source

of funding for Al Queda operatives. The shortage of field funds precluded adequate surveillance and protection of all rhinos, whether in fenced Sanctuaries or not. One poacher was arrested, and the rest pursued to the Somalia border, but escaped with their booty by crossing the Tana river concealed amidst a large herd of cattle and their herders.

In all, Kenya is said to have lost some 33 Black Rhino this year, mainly from Solio Ranch in Laikipia District, which was the onetime breeding stronghold which yielded most of the rhinos returned back into Protected Areas from which they had been poached out in the late seventies and eighties.

**Decisions** emanating from this year’s CITES Convention, held in Bangkok, Thailand, in mid October, from the wildlife standpoint, can only be summarised by the word **disastrous** - particularly the decision to allow the Southern Africans a hunting quota of both Black and White Rhinos. Whispers emanating from within the KWS Headquarters alleged that the high powered delegation that went to Bangkok to represent Kenya, at no mean expense, failed to get its paperwork correct, and were not even accredited delegates of their country - a **disgrace** if true.

As the year progressed, there was mounting **despair** amongst KWS field personnel, exacerbated by the enormous toll of wild animals killed on a daily basis for the illegal bushmeat trade, which had become commercial Big Business. Bushmeat was now finding its way to the Middle East, Central and West Africa and even the capitals of Europe, and was widely sold in Nairobi butcheries as goat and beef. According to a recent survey as much as 30% of all meat on sale in Nairobi butcheries is that of poached wild game, despite the moratorium on legal “culling” imposed earlier in the year.



By November, the **Big Dipper** seemed to be at its lowest ebb, when suddenly there appeared the chance of an upward swing, as has happened so often in the past when things looked **desperate**. Following a much publicised recruiting scam, the KWS Director was relieved of his post, so yet again, we stand poised at the crossroads of conservation, waiting with baited breath to see who, and what next! With wildlife numbers in the country down by as much as 60%, it is imperative that this time round the Powers-that-Be get it right, for time is running out.

**Despite** the illegal and unsustainable toll taken of the country's wildlife for the bush-meat trade, lobbying to re-introduce sport hunting remained as tenacious as ever, amazingly endorsed by a vociferous arm of the East African Wildlife Society known as The Kenya Wildlife Working Group, something that lost that organisation many longstanding supporters. However, more pressing land issues emerged to divert the attention of the land-owning proponents and their puppets. Pastoral neighbours, whose patch had been reduced to a barren wasteland by over-stocking and over-grazing, marched en masse with their cattle onto productive private holdings, laying claim to what they claimed as theirs by ancestral right, 99 year leases issued by the Colonial Government said to be due to expire. Supposedly instigated by foreign human rights activists, the Government moved swiftly to bring what looked like turning into a volatile and dangerous situation under control, though not before there had been casualties on both sides and the confidence of would-be investors had been somewhat dented. There followed heated press debates about who owns what, when, how and if, which kept the public riveted to the daily papers for many weeks.

Meanwhile, just as tourism was beginning to pick up again following the **decline** in the wake of Travel Advisories issued against Kenya by the American and British Governments, worryingly, anti-wildlife rhetoric escalated as drought conditions took hold, and human wildlife conflict became an ever increasing problem, with famine providing a useful alibi for the bush-meat toll. Elephants were particularly vilified in the pages of the popular press and a shocking debacle involving three elephants who lost their way at night and ended up besieged by irate villagers in a densely



populated suburb of Limuru just outside Nairobi, made chilling reading. Two died tragically in a hail of rocks and gunfire and a third, which became trapped in a pit latrine, was barbarically butchered alive. Worse still, the culprits of this cruel act boasted in the Press about “feasting on delicious elephant meat” - hardly a good advertisement for a Nation that relies on its wildlife for an Industry which is a vital component of its economy. Whilst this did spark a public outcry of **disgust**, it was nevertheless **damaging** for the country's conservation image.

**M**eanwhile, yet again, the field end of the Wildlife Service and the animals needed friends as never before, so the Trust has had to be even more proactive in its support of Tsavo. Regular donations of fuel to keep the security wheels turning have been an ongoing commitment throughout the year, in addition to running both six anti-poaching, de-snaring teams on a



The Tsavo Orphans based at Voi

permanent basis, plus supporting 44 still dependent elephant orphans and all that entails. Nor has our community involvement been neglected, for all de-snaring team leaders are equipped with Video Projectors and environmental films which they show on a regular basis to schools along Tsavo's boundaries. Regular field trips for students are also undertaken in an attempt to educate the next generation about the importance of their wildlife heritage. The Nairobi Nursery continues its one open hour every day, something that is proving more and more popular with local school-children, who turn up on an almost daily basis in droves to enjoy watching the infant elephants' mudbath.

**O**ur Orphans' Project has mushroomed, with an influx of new arrivals, plus the establishment of the new Reintegration Facility at Ithumba

in the Northern Area of Tsavo East. This addresses the need to relieve the load on our Voi Unit, especially during the dry season and provide a base from which our young bulls can grow up further from tourist facilities where they can become compromised. In addition, the Nairobi Headquarters compound has received a much needed face-lift since the Orphans Stockades and Staff quarters had suffered extensive termite damage. A revamp of the Voi Orphans' Stockades and Stores is also planned, several of the buildings there dating back to the fifties.

We are, however, enduringly mindful that none of what we have managed to accomplish during this and previous years would have been possible had it not been for the

generous support we have enjoyed from many caring people and organisations world-wide. For this we are, indeed, most grateful. Credit must also be given to the popular appeal of our orphaned elephants, who continue to attract international support and who are the living symbol of our conservation efforts. Whereas orphaned elephants were reared in Tsavo during David Sheldrick's tenureship from as far back as the early fifties, the **Trust's first infant elephant ("Olmeg", now a bull of 18), was dumped on our doorstep in 1986 and since then to date we**



Tsavo Orphans' Voi Unit

**have managed to save 62, none of which would be living today had they not been rescued and mostly air-lifted in for hand rearing.** 62 Elephants represents a sizeable herd with sizeable needs requiring sizeable supervision! Add to this a staff of some 100 souls, all of whom also have specific and individual "needs" to maintain a happy and energetic work-force, not to mention the input it takes to ensure that the work goes according to plan; then interject a fleet of 11 vehicles, 4 tractors, a very large water bowser plus 2 smaller ones, submersible pumps, generators, windmills, computers and a mobile mechanic and his needs, who constantly does the rounds of all our stations servicing all these items, and the word "**hectic**" mildly sums up our year! No wonder time slips by so

rapidly for the three working Trustees who find they have so little to spare for recreational purposes! People often wonder if Daphne has dropped off the planet, but the fact of the matter is that she is early to bed and early to rise – a habit now ingrained over many years of overseeing the elephants' fragile Nursery period!

That said, no Newsletter for 2004 would be appropriate without acknowledging the enormous contribution made by our wonderful Canadian Web Master, Paul McKenzie, who burns the midnight

oil entirely voluntarily, and, in conjunction with Angela, has designed the new extremely informative and user-friendly website that is proving such a hit, and of which the Trust can be proud. To him, we owe probably the greatest debt of gratitude

for he has revolutionized our work. Nor would it be appropriate not to mention the input of Daphne's daughter, Angela and husband Robert, both of whom also burn the midnight oil to ensure the smooth running of the Trust's work-force and the supervision of our many projects. They shoulder a daunting work-load aside from, in Robert's case, his Safari commitments, and it is good to always know that the Trust will continue to grow in the safe and caring hands of those prepared to work beyond the call of duty, just as the older generation did before them.

Therefore, aside from a gnawing anxiety over ailing KWS, the Trust has had an extremely productive year. It is rewarding to have been able to make a significant **difference** in the



vast Northern Area of Tsavo which David always said was the jewel in the crown of Tsavo, and at a time when the Senior Warden had just a handful of Rangers and no budget to cover 3,000 square miles of prime elephant habitat. We have been able to produce additional working funds on a monthly basis and done our best to keep his geriatric transport functional, (one patrol vehicle having over 600,000 kms on the clock!) A defunct borehole has been brought back into production, and its saline yield made fit for human consumption through the addition of desalinating equipment. This has alleviated the necessity to truck in drinking water from Voi, 100 miles away.

*However, all this has been largely due to the generosity of Mr. Marty Moore and his Foundation, as well as Rettet die Elefanten Afrikas E.v, the Wildize Foundation and the Dutch Vrienden van der Olifant, and we thank them profoundly for making this assistance possible.*

**I**t was a red-letter-day indeed when our De-snaring Team Leaders were awarded Honorary Warden status giving them the same powers of arrest as serving KWS personnel and enabling them to extend their patrols beyond the boundaries deep into the Park itself, thereby increasing surveillance and security. This has been enormously important in trying to stem the bush-meat poaching.

**P**erhaps our most important contribution, however, has been the completion of 32 kms. of electric



A snared Cheetah cub. Tsavo West National Park.

fencing along the Park's very sensitive Northern boundary with Wakamba-land, including the installation of an aesthetic Park Entrance Gate-House to cater for visitors accessing the Park via Kibwezi rather than across Lugards Falls.

*Simon DeFrayne and his Company Sinyati Ltd., have done a very professional job for us with a minimum of fuss, as well as guaranteeing regular maintenance for a modest monthly fee. We thank them for this, and owe Care for the Wild*

*International a debt of gratitude for contributing a sizeable sum towards this project.*

*Furthermore, for pledging additional funding to enable us to embark on Phase II and extend the fenceline a further 35 kms, over the Yatta Plateau and down the other side through Gazi to the Athi river, thereby securing 65 kms. of Tsavo's Northern boundary to protect community crops from destruction by elephants, and the elephants from being shot as "problem animals".*

*Some of the funding for this extension is being generated by supporters of the German Rettet die Elefanten Afrikas E.v. to honour the memory and dedication of the charity's Founder, Mr. Hans Rohring, who tragically lost a long and brave battle against cancer on the 24<sup>th</sup> February. Hans had long been one of the Trust's most stalwart supporters, as has his widow, Barbara. She valiantly continues his work with the same enthusiasm, dedication and drive which would make him proud and for which we salute her.*

*Thank you, Barbara and all the supporters of Rettet die Elefanten Afrikas E.v. who are working so hard towards a project that was so close to the heart of Hans and also to that of Barbara.*

A great deal of community sensitisation was vital to ensure the success of the Northern Area's fencing project and detract from vandalism. This was carefully undertaken by KWS in conjunction with our Northern Area De-Snaring Team Leaders and it has paid off. On occasions when wire has been stolen, it has been returned along with the culprits. An added benefit to the community, aside from the protection of their crops, has been the employment opportunities the fence offers in terms of its maintenance.

**T**here was **delight** when in mid-year the Trust achieved charitable status in the U.S.A. something that promises to impact positively on our fundraising future. We owe this to a chance meeting with a generous lawyer, Mr. Stephen Smith of Krieg DeVault LLP, Attorneys in Indianapolis, U.S.A., who offered his services free and who has been the driving force behind the creation of The U.S. Friends of the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust. Through this initiative we have been granted tax exemption under Section 501(c)(3) of the Federal Internal Revenue Code and we are honoured to welcome him onto the Board of the Trust's US Friends, along with Mr. Martin J. Moore, Mr. Timothy Mott, Ms. Janet Berard Doyle, Mr. R. Brian Miller, Ms. Anne Doer and Ms. Chris Turner, all of whom bring energy and expertise that will be invaluable.

*We are grateful that they have agreed to serve, but we owe a great debt of gratitude to Stephen Smith*

*and to two of his colleagues, Ms. Kathryn A. Dunaway and Ms. Jeanie M. Hicks who*



*purpose. We are likewise indebted to his Assistant, Susan Fox for the many hours she devoted to the cause, and to Rosemary Hall of Jordans Ltd., who has been more than helpful with the legal issues, not*



Natural History Unit decided to embark on the "Elephant Diaries" series, featuring our orphans. This will entail a year's filming of some 5 episodes embracing all three of our Orphaned Elephant Establishments - the Nairobi Nursery, the Voi Unit and the newly established Ithumba Reintegration Centre. The series will illustrate the very human characteristics of these highly intelligent



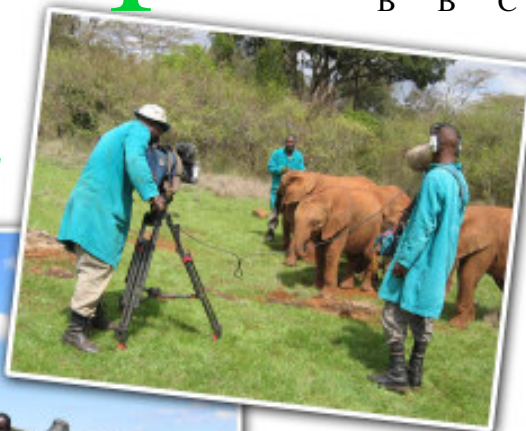
*worked so hard alongside him to bring about this benefit for us, not forgetting Stephen's firm, Krieg-Devault LLP who have also been most cooperative and supportive. Besides achieving charitable status, thanks to Stephen, the Trust has benefited from legacies which, without legal assistance, may never have been realised.*

*We are now also registered as Charity No. 1103836 in England We are enormously grateful to Mr. James Clark F.C.A., A.C.I.S., F.C.I.B., A.T.I.I., who has volunteered his services as Secretary and will handle tax claims as well as allowing us the use of his London Office for this*

*forgetting Mr. Arnle Mitchell of Veritas, Nairobi, who willingly acts as the go-between. Cath Mills, our Representative in Scotland, has, as usual, been an enormous help, also working in a voluntary capacity, fielding our posted donations and ensuring that they reach us intact via a Courier Service rather than risking them through the ordinary post.*

mammals, and engender empathy and a better understanding of them, besides benefiting the Trust through publicising our other conservation initiatives as well.

**T**here was surprise and further delight when the BBC



The BBC Crew enjoying time with the Orphan's and their Keeper's



## CITES 2004:

COP 14 (Conference of the Parties) this year took place in Bangkok, Thailand, encompassing 166 countries, all signatories to the International Convention on Trade in Endangered Species, as usual **trade** being the operative word. CITES falls under the auspices of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (I.U.C.N.) and as usual, yet again as in previous years, decisions were driven by trade and economics rather than the precautionary principle to safeguard dwindling numbers of many endangered species.



It is interesting that two arms of I.U.C.N., namely TRAFFIC and WWF, having analysed 9,400 illegal Ivory Seizures in 75 countries issued statements beforehand to the effect that poaching was on the rise throughout most of the African elephant Range States. They said that “*unregulated, domestic ivory markets in combination with poor law enforcement*” were the driving forces behind the illicit trade although perhaps the emphasis should be more on the rich Nations that are the recipients of the unregulated domestic ivory stocks rather than poor Nations where poverty, corruption and poor governance precludes adequate regulatory measures.

China, Thailand and Japan were identified as the main repositories of illegal ivory but even the U.K. was singled out as a “*problem country with a large domestic ivory trade likely to provoke illegal poaching*”, Portobello road market in West London being the single biggest source of illicit ivory in the U.K where up to 200 tons of ivory, (representing about 5,000 dead elephants), arrive at the Port of London every year. Incredibly a seizure of illegal ivory and tortoise-shell in November, worth approximately Sterling 85,000, went un-punished due to failure to endorse amendments to a Bill approved by Parliament exactly a year ago!

The fact that the illegal poaching of elephants still remains serious is highlighted by other flourishing domestic markets elsewhere, an example being that of Omdurman in the Sudan where huge quantities of raw ivory pass into neighbouring Egypt, or to China as carved pieces to be sold and reworked. Hard data is scarce, due to the illicit nature of the trade, but even so Sudan has been implicated in 58 recent seizures, including 1,500 kg. of raw ivory unearthed in Egypt an outlet believed to account for the lives of at least 12,000 elephants every year. Political turmoil in many elephant range States nurtures illicit poaching where ivory is bartered, moving easily across porous borders, where endemic corruption and poorly resourced enforcement agencies preclude control.

Three tons of poached ivory was seized in Spain in July, representing the death of 400 elephants. A highly structured syndicate of ivory poachers is known to operate in Tanzania between Kilwa and Dar es Salaam, where ivory hidden in sacks of maize or cassava is ferried on bicycles by night to village outlets. 17 elephants were poached in Samburu National Reserve, Kenya, earlier in the year and on November 8<sup>th</sup>, 10 people with 17 elephant tusks weighing 65 kg. were arrested in Western Kenya's town of Kitale. This haul, amongst which were the tiny toothpicks of babies, represents an ongoing toll of the famous cave digging elephants of Mount Elgon, whose numbers are dwindling rapidly.

Prior to CITES, KWS estimated that Kenya had lost some 150 elephants to poaching this year, but this is believed to be an underestimate in view of the incapacity

of the Service to monitor events even within the National Parks, let alone beyond due to financial constraints.

All this evidence adds up to the fact that the poaching of elephants remains a serious problem throughout most of Africa. Therefore, what was trumpeted as a victory for the elephant cause at CITES was hollow indeed, i.e. a crack down on unregulated domestic markets with legislation and enforcement strengthened at the border level. Everyone knows this will be impossible to achieve but perhaps it was aimed at softening the blow of CITES next move - giving the Southern African States (and the poachers) everything they wanted.

COP 14 in Bangkok gave the SADC States the green light to sell their ivory stockpiles, though not until 2006, since monitoring procedures are still not functional. Namibia was granted permission to trade in ivory “non commercially” but yet permitted to **sell** ivory carvings known as “ekipas” to tourists, and worse still, Southern African States were allowed a hunting quota of elephants and even Black and White Rhino, a startling decision that shocked the conservation world, and sent a sinister message far and wide.

There can be no doubt that the global ban imposed in 1989 which placed elephants on the fully protected Appendix I schedule served to slow the rapid decline of the species which had fallen from 3 million to some 270,000. Yet, despite the fact that just enough time has passed since the imposition of the Ivory Ban for each breeding cow (who has managed to escape a poachers' bullet or arrow) to produce just 2 calves, and the admission by both WWF and TRAFFIC that poaching is increasing over most of the Range States, (and totally out of control in war-torn Central Africa); plus the known fact that elephants in Zimbabwe have been subjected to unprecedented massacre, COP 14 in bowing to pressure from the wealthy States of Southern Africa has compromised the survival of an endangered species it is supposed to protect. Small wonder therefore that conservationists are **disillusioned** with CITES and feel that the money would be better spent on law enforcement back home.

As before, the European Union was largely responsible for the CITES **debacle**, unable to agree a consensus, and therefore when it came to the vote, abstaining as a group. In this, the U.K. was the main culprit, costing the elephants the support of many European countries who would probably have voted in favour of maintaining the global ban. But then Southern Africa has more to offer the West in terms of trade than the rest of impoverished Africa, so the endangered species are little more than pawns in a political game of trade.

It is a sad fact that **consumptive** utilisation and hunting (recreational pleasure killing) seem to have hijacked the very definition of the word “**conservation**”, which, according to the Dictionary, is “**preservation**”, not



“utilisation”. Hunting ethics and animal welfare do not exist where selfish self interest and greed eclipse human conscience. The year has seen the world becoming increasingly insensitive to animal injustice. Even fur, which at one time was off limits, is making a come-back within the Fashion Industry, with models again parading the catwalks draped in skins taken from rightful owners, and viewed as things of beauty instead of a symbol of cruelty and suffering.

Concerns that Africa’s lions were becoming a threatened species were brushed aside by COP 14, so that the Southern Africans could continue hunting these Big Cats, no dissenting voices heard about their infamous canned lion breeding centres nor their equally infamous trade in live animals, which continues unabated. Despite the Tuli scandal that generated an international furore, the South African government recently endorsed the export of live elephants to Zoos in China and Poland, both highly questionable destinations for any living animal, let alone an elephant. The litany of outrageous dealings under the guise of “conservation” is endless- Namibia’s hunting quota of leopards tripled, South Africa’s doubled, Nile Crocodiles downlisted etc., etc. No wonder people are calling for a tourism boycott of Southern Africa in an attempt to inject a little more humanity into their handling of animals.

In the book “For the Love of Wildlife” reviewed in the October issue of BBC Wildlife, game hunting farms in Southern Africa are described as “an affront to morality, spiritualism, and to all religions that regard brutality to living beings as atheist. By smashing up the wholeness of the natural world, most notably the magnificent predators, and recovering from the wreckage only those life forms which can be used

as alternative livestock, hunting farms trivialise the exquisite; de-personalise living creatures, reducing them to mere numbers which are harvested at the convenience of the master species and they normalise sadism by making cruelty routine”.

The Trust places great emphasis on the individuality of animals and consequently the suffering of individuals, just as do humans amongst their own kind. Having raised most species, the Trust recognises individuality as an important element within Animal Welfare.

### The Orphans’ Project:-

**T**he rearing of the orphaned elephants, even though we have been at it for a very long time, for us remains an ongoing learning experience and a source of wonder, filled with moments of joy and sadness, plus surprises on an almost daily basis. This animal duplication of a Big Brother series is recorded in the Keepers’ Diary which is posted on the Trust’s website monthly and keeps the elephants many foster-parents

childhood to a teenager, and eventually into adulthood, one gets to know each one intimately as one follows its daily activities and adventures. Friendships blossom and hit glitches, just as in human society, joy and happiness as well as sadness and grief at the loss of a loved one is evident, and one is amazed by the outpouring of compassion and caring for those younger or the less fortunate.

Just like human children, elephants feel shameful when reprimanded for misbehaviour; they take themselves off to sulk; they harbour grudges and feel the need to settle scores, they can be deliberately mischievous, and the little bulls are especially competitive, always striving for one-upmanship.

We know that elephants possess mysterious abilities alien to us, such as the programming of a genetic memory within the womb to endow them with elements important to survival; the ability to communicate over distance in mysterious ways and an unerring and uncanny ability to traverse alien terrain surely and accurately, despite the fact that they may never have set foot there before. These and many other mysterious



Orphans’ Ithumba Unit

attributes leave those of us who know them intimately, humbled, and those who don't, sceptical and disbelieving. Elephants are synonymous with a "trumpet" and speaking of "trumpets", do elephants dream? Now, we are sure that they do!

Normally a baby elephant cannot trumpet until it is about 6 months old, and then suddenly a squeaky trumpet sound just happens during times of extreme excitement, invariably startling the trumpeter! Yet, one night, when all the Nursery infants were asleep in their Night Stables, cosily tucked beneath their blankets, Daphne was awoken by a loud, full-blown elephant trumpet!

This was so unexpected in the Nursery environment that she braved the robbers to go out and investigate, and discovered that it was little "Ndomot". He could only have been dreaming, for he was still far too young to manage such a grown up sound, besides being still sound asleep beneath his blanket!

A full 8 months have passed since that night, and now "Ndomot" (whose name means "where two rivers meet") is able to sound a waking trumpet but only when hyped up chasing the new generation of piglet warthogs who always arrive towards year end. They and their mothers enjoy hanging out with our Nursery Elephants in the Nairobi Park forest, knowing that the presence of the Keepers offers them protection from predators.

Do elephants reason? Yes they do, examples constantly appearing in the Keepers' Diary. For instance, "Sosian" carefully positioning himself on a bank to gain the advantage of height over his larger rival, "Laikipia"; "Mukwaju" gripping "Nasalot" by the head so that his pal, "Nyiro", can have a chance to try and mount her and when the orphans confronted a cantankerous old buffalo bull at close quarters. Unusually, this buffalo would not respond to the elephants' threats, but instead lowered his head, preparing for battle. Appreciating the risk of injury this entailed, "Emily" spun round and retreated rapidly prompting her orphaned family to follow her lead. This they duly did, (since young elephants are essentially fearful) and having put a safe distance between her family and the adversary, she and "Aitong" together returned to expel the buffalo and remove the threat.

Do elephants have compassion? They certainly do and in abundance. Even at the height of the dry season, when

the need for food and water is paramount, there will always be one or two orphans hanging back to escort "Mweiga", a six year old female from the Aberdares who has always been a weakling, possibly suffering from a heart

complaint.

Consequently, she has difficulty keeping pace with the others and is always last at the mudbath, but never left behind to come alone. Whenever she stumbles, or is accidentally shoved, immediately another elephant will come to her aid, helping to lift her back onto her feet. "Emily" often accompanies her to ensure that she is undisturbed when taking her noon day ration of milk.

Are elephants jealous?

Yes, they can be. Aitong became visibly agitated when one of her wild boyfriends paid too much attention to Emily.

This year, both Emily and Aitong have been mated on several occasions, so we are wondering whether we can expect a couple of home-born additions in two year's time. 18 year old Dika, now of an impressive size, returned in April, mating Emily on the 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, but was chased off by a wild suitor on the 20<sup>th</sup>, who took Emily off alone for half a day out of sight of the others. Apparently, according to the Keepers, she went willingly, an event that unsettled the entire group, and especially Aitong. Nevertheless, Dika was back for another go on the 22<sup>nd</sup>, and again in May for another two day session on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> so we will never be sure about the father of Emily's calf if she has one in two year's time.

Aitong is more forward than Emily when it comes to sex and has often been mated by both Edo and Ndume, two of our Big Boys as well as spending time away from the orphans, the attraction being a wild bull friend. Her union with a very large such candidate was witnessed by the Keepers on the 31<sup>st</sup> May, dispelling the Keepers' previous assumption that she was probably already pregnant by Edo. We are inclined to think that the wild bulls will have more success with our orphaned females, because the ex orphan Big Boys are regarded more as brothers, having grown up with them as a bonded "family".

Do elephants have a sense of humour? We are sure they do, again examples of this appearing in the Keepers' Diaries. "Mweya", the little Ugandan orphan, is the main





prankster, always devising tricks to play on the others, surreptitiously hiding in bushes, and then bursting forth to scare the others as they draw close. Following an altercation between “Laikipia” and “Tsavo”, in which Emily intervened to protect Tsavo, “Laikipia” strolled off and took his revenge by casually picking up a stone with his trunk, and hurling it at Tsavo, hitting him fair and square and so hard that it made him bellow!

The Trust’s on-line digital Fostering Programme has proved immensely popular with the global public, and has been a very important aspect of our Orphans’ Programme, not only bringing in a steady stream of much needed revenue in support of the elephants but also generating interest and empathy.

*We are deeply indebted to Care for the Wild International for the sizeable annual grant they give the Project, and also The International Fund for Animal Welfare, who likewise contribute generously on an annual basis. We enjoy regular financial support also from Rettet die Elefanten Afrikas E.v. in Germany and Vrienden van der Olifant in the Netherlands, not forgetting the role of everyone who has fostered an elephant for \$50 per annum, and in this way helped us in our mammoth undertaking. Grateful thanks are due also to the numerous people who have ensured a steady supply of special formula milk for the orphans and in so doing have spared us many sleepless nights. Wyeth Laboratories in Taplow, Maidenhead and in particular Sharon John, continue their steadfast help that has spanned the past 18 years. We appreciate the enormous help of the Royal Air Force, both here and overseas, as well as M.K. Airlines Flower Planes that*

*have carried consignments for us. British Army personnel from the Kahawa Barracks have lent their muscle loading and unloading tons of milk in 25 kilo bags whilst it is the rhino orphans that have charmed the British Peace Support Team, who have taken both little “Shida” and feisty “Makosa” as their mascots.*

For a long time we have recognised the need to split our growing herd of orphans into two smaller more manageable units during the rehabilitation process in Tsavo. The forced deportation of “Imenti” from Emily’s unit in Voi to the North, and the need to anchor him there turned the issue of establishing this second unit at Ithumba into a “fait accompli”. A Night Stockade had to be hurriedly erected, as did Staff Quarters to house the Keepers for whom he had been searching outside the Park boundary. The Park Headquarters had to be secured by an electric ring-fence to prevent him wreaking revenge on what had turned into his pet hate - the vehicles, having found it difficult to forgive the insult of the ill-mannered van that ploughed into his “family” as they crossed the road near Voi.

It took Imenti almost a full year to settle down in the North, and begin fraternising with the wild herds. Happily, he is now amongst them, last

spotted with a huge bull carrying sizeable tusks, who has probably won his typical bull hero-worship. But before this all fell into place, every time Imenti just heard a vehicle approaching his Night Stockade, he returned at the double to try and deal with it – a glaring example of an elephant grudge!

As the dry season took hold this year, and the rain water tanks ran dry, so the acquisition of a large Water Bowser turned into a pressing priority, especially prior to the planned upgrading of six of the Nursery inmates to join Imenti in the North.

*Very bravely, yet again the children of the Bury Church of England High School, who were looking for another project having recently funded the new Dida Harea Windmill, gallantly rose to the challenge and resolved to try and raise the wherewithal - a staggering K. Shs. 4 million – no mean undertaking for a handful of school-children in far-off England. To date the Bury Church of England High School children, energised and motivated by their very dedicated teacher, Jackie Vet, and her husband, Ray, have raised, entirely through their own efforts, in excess of # 60,000 sterling pounds in*

The Trust’s water bowser is inspected by Emily



*support of Trust projects in Tsavo. They have covered the cost of 3 Windmills in Tsavo East National Park, as well as the orphans borehole; purchased the Canter that transports their night rations, and extended support to local schools, providing the funding for desks at Ore Primary School in Voi as well as funding for field trips. For many years, and every year, they have worked like Trojans, baking cakes,*



Ithumba Orphans' in their night stockade

*who allowed us to take possession of the tanker against easy monthly payments over a period of a full year. When the children came to see their latest Windmill, they brought with them 10,000 sterling to cover the initial instalments – yet another very stout effort!*

*holding sponsored silences, and other sporting events, shaved their Headmaster's whiskers, washed the Mayor's vehicle and the local Fire Engine, served in the Supermarket and raided their parents' belongings for Car Boot Sales, amongst numerous other innovative fundraisers - a stout effort indeed, for which we have deep admiration, demonstrating again that anyone and everyone, can make a difference, and that a lot of small contributions mount into something worthwhile.*

*Ask any wealthy individual to shoulder the cost of a Windmill, or a very large Tanker requiring K.*

*Shs. 4 million, and they would undoubtedly recoil! Not, however, that handful of stalwart English children who recently were rewarded for their efforts by a largely sponsored Kenyan Safari which was covered by the BBC's Really Wild Show. We salute the Bury children and their teacher who is the driving force behind their every venture, spurring the children to ever greater efforts. We are also extremely indebted to Martin Forster of Cooper Motor Corporation*

This Tanker has proved its worth over and over again, not least in June, for the transfer of the six Nursery elephants to the new Ithumba Rehabilitation Centre. Ripe for rehab promotion were "Napasha" and "Tomboi", both now 2 years old, 15 month old "Selengai" and 18 month old "Ol Malo", all orphans from Laikipia, plus 16 month old "Taita" retrieved from the Salt Lick Hotel cess pit in the Hilton Taita Sanctuary and our miracle baby, 21 month old "Wendi", possibly an abandoned "twin" retrieved brand-new from the Imenti Forest, who, like Imenti, was saved by an infusion of blood plasma.

It was a very forlorn little group of four babies left behind in the Nairobi Nursery when the six older inmates left early in the morning of **June 20th**, not to mention a depressed and saddened extended human family as well! The six travelled along with their Keepers in three large Safari trucks, two of which were kindly loaned by Sungelai Safaris and one courtesy of Ker & Downey. It was a very dusty 8 hour journey to reach their new home via Kibwezi, and having safely deposited them and introduced them to their new surroundings, the three trucks headed South via Lugards Falls to Voi in order to load



four older females from Emily's unit to take charge of the little Nursery group up North.

Deciding who to take from the Voi Unit involved months of thought and discussion, for there were many factors that had to be considered in order to minimize any anticipated disruption this might cause. Those orphans for whom Emily and Aitong had particularly deep attachments, were exempt; strong friendships forged in the Nursery between individuals were an important factor, as was the nature of the individuals to be selected. We were looking for particularly caring females to take on Matriarchal roles and in the end settled on "Yatta", "Mulika", "Nasalot" and "Kinna", all aged between 5 and 6, and all firm friends who had shared time together in the Nairobi Nursery from early infancy.

With the trucks in situ, parked against the Loading Ramp at the Voi Stockades, these four young females were held back at the Stockades when the rest of the group left in the early morning. Tempted by an unusual offering of milk, all save Kinna entered the trucks, albeit hesitatingly, no doubt still remembering the journey that took them from the Nursery. However, Kinna would have none of it, and in the end needed a mild sedation in order to be able to be physically shoved in. However, thereafter everything went smoothly and after the three hour journey to Ithumba, the four walked calmly out at the other end.

It was wonderful to witness the meeting of the two groups – the excitement, joy and instant outpouring of care towards the young from the older elephants and the rather hesitant greeting they received from the Nursery six, most of whom were orphaned too young to be able to recall an elephant larger than themselves! What surprised us most, however, was the reaction of Emily and Aitong at the other end, who simply unexpectedly accepted the loss of four of their number as though nothing untoward had taken place! Previously, on any occasion when one of the orphans remained behind amongst a wild herd, their absence was immediately detected, even ahead of the Keepers, and the older elephants would set forth immediately to bring the truant back into the fold. It was therefore another elephant "surprise" that on this occasion, despite the absence of not just one, but four of their number, Emily and Aitong accepted it without question, almost as though they understood what had been going on in the minds of their human family for so long and the reasoning behind it. For us, this was a huge relief.

Of the four that were transferred, only "Kinna" showed signs of emotional strain. For several weeks she spent quiet periods on her own away from the main group, visibly depressed, but the other three took the transition completely in their stride. In the beginning they shared the Matriarchal responsibility but gradually, "Yatta", being oldest, began to take overall charge. "Napasha", one that could remember his elephant family, and the biggest boy in the new unit, relished this position from the start, throwing his weight around "Tomboi" and "Taita" on a daily basis. In elephant society, it is the females who are the peace-keepers, and the presence of the older females has been important to keeping him in line for any bullying of those younger and smaller is not tolerated in an elephant family.

Back in the Nairobi Nursery, we were left with "Naserian", "Ndomot" and "Sunyei", as well as little "Madiba", a baby from Botswana who came into the fold as a Christmas surprise on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2003, since the last Newsletter was posted on the Internet. He was found abandoned in a riverbed, and his Rescuers must have had clout, because their wish that he be offered a quality of life in wild terms when grown, was granted. Thereafter he was sent to Wildcare in Pretoria, with this string attached, and placed into the care of Karen Trendler who contacted us, and gallantly resisted enormous pressure from a host of "utilizers", including one of the people involved in the Tuli Elephant case, who viewed the baby elephant as a lucrative money-spinner.

It took 3 months to arrange all the necessary CITES permits involved in moving a live elephant across International Borders, but on the 23<sup>rd</sup> December little "Ollie" (as he was then named) arrived at Wilson Airport



Madiba in October 2004



Madiba in January 2004





accompanied by Karen Trendler, something we doubted would ever actually come about!

*We thank everyone who was involved in securing his future freedom, not least Karen Trendler of Wildcare and the Bateleur Association of South Africa, an organisation comprised of pilots and their planes who fly free for conservation. The Tanzanian based Company, Coastal Air, very generously undertook to fly the elephant to Kenya free of charge whilst his upkeep at Wildcare was sponsored by IFAW.*

The Trust likes to give an orphan a name that will link it with its origin, so we asked to change the name "Ollie" to "Madiba", the name by which famous Nelson Mandela is affectionately known throughout the Southern African region and one that will always identify him with that part of the world.

He was tiny and resembled a miniature woolly mammoth, covered in a mass of unusually long hair. Too young to have any recollection of his elephant family, he was firmly attached to his South African blanket, from which he would not be parted, ignoring the other Nursery inmates, who viewed him with suspicion since his behaviour was so off-hand as though they did not even exist! However, in "Shida" the baby rhino, he took a great interest since apparently a rhino had been his closest companion at Wildcare. This, however, was an attachment we had to discourage having hindsight of the disaster that befell an earlier orphaned rhino called "Sam", who was killed by a wild bull elephant in Tsavo, refusing to vacate a contested mudbath. He paid dearly with his life for the close affiliation he had enjoyed with the Nursery elephants.

It took little "Madiba" a month or two to realise that he was actually an





elephant like the others, and that they were good company, as well as for us to wean him off his South African blanket, which was beginning to look the worse for wear! But, slowly and surely both transitions were accomplished, and today “Madiba” is very much an elephant, has lost his furry mammoth appearance, and is a forceful, playful and established member of the current Nursery group which has swelled since to 9 inmates. He is extremely competitive with “Ndomot”, with whom he tussles long and hard on a daily basis and very caring of newcomers until the females take charge.

**A**dditions to the Nursery in the months that followed the departure of Wendi’s six age-mates, were 14 month old “Galana”, (who arrived in August, a starvation case fortunate not to have made a meal for a pride of nearby lions); 6 month old “Buchuma” hauled (with great difficulty) from a jagged manhole in the Mombasa pipeline on 28<sup>th</sup> September); Tiny 3 week old “Jipe” (retrieved from the mud of drying Lake Jipe in Southern Tsavo West on the 3<sup>rd</sup> October); 3 week old “Nalitu” on the 11<sup>th</sup> November (who was washed down the flooding Uaso Nyiro River and 3 month old “Lualeni” on the 28<sup>th</sup> November, found alone sleeping beneath a tree in Taita Hills Sanctuary, with no sign of any other elephants in sight.

We suffered a particularly pathetic tragedy also on the 28<sup>th</sup> November – the death of tiny “Seyia”, a Mara infant retrieved as a newborn on the 7<sup>th</sup> November, whose mother had advanced septicaemia due to a huge abscess on her belly and consequently, no milk. Although this tiny calf was a brave little fighter, and tried so hard to live, we simply could not stabilize

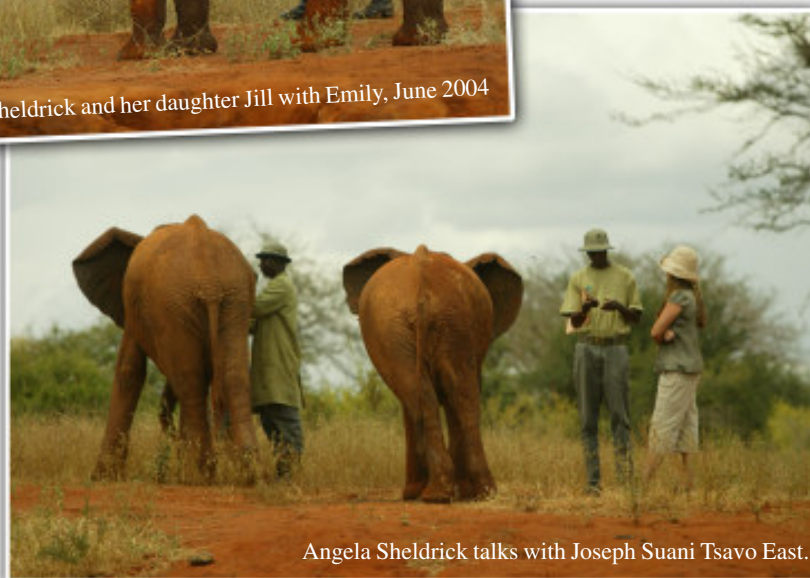
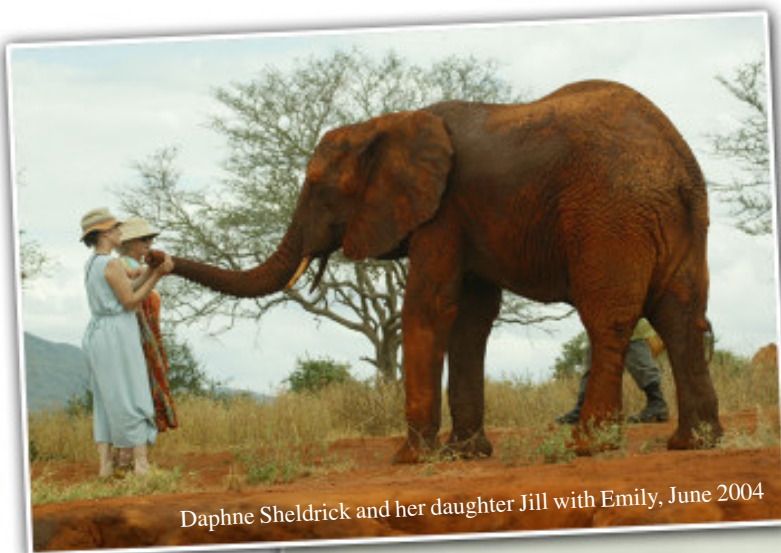
the stool, even after having resorted to what is always a last resort - an infusion of blood plasma, in his case taken from “Galana”. There is always a very real risk involved in anaesthetising a baby elephant, especially putting a healthy individual at risk for the sake of one that could be a “no-hoper”. Galana, his donor, took longer than usual to wake up having been given the antidote, which reduced us all to basket cases. Then little Seyia almost passed away whilst still “under”, but the Vet managed to retrieve him. Thereafter, he rallied for two days, giving us all great hopes for success, but then the diarrhea returned and took him from us overnight, reducing everyone to basket cases all over again!

*We owe a great deal to the expertise of our Nairobi Veterinarian, Dr. Dieter Rottcher and we thank him for the precious elephant lives he has been able to save.*

However, even Dieter could not prevent the death of 3 other elephant

orphans, all of whom died shortly after arrival in the Nursery, each too damaged for us to be able to retrieve. Two had serious wounds obviously inflicted by predation, one from the Mara and the other from Ziواني. The third was a tragic Amboseli baby named “Ol Tukai” who had multiple spear wounds inflicted by Masai tribesmen – a shocking indictment of this tribe’s professed love of animals. Two other orphans died before they reached us, and were unnamed, both from Laikipia.

*We are grateful to many of our supporters who practice alternative means of healing on our orphans, all of which definitely make a difference; and to Lesley Cooksley, our Homeopath, who donates all the pillules needed for every ailment, and who is constantly called upon to share with us her professional expertise in this field; Anita Graham, a Medical Herbalist in Ascot, has been kind enough to donate copious quantities of Calendular, Arnica and Thuya tinctures, all invaluable components of our Medical Store. The Calendular has miraculously healed a gaping wound that exposed the spine of*



*Ndara's back, and also helped repair the terrible bruising of "Buchuma", suffered as a result of his ordeal in the pipeline manhole. The skin damage was so severe that huge slabs peeled of his back and legs, leaving the flesh exposed and the elephant in a pitiful state. Happily, today he is almost completely whole again. The Thuya takes care of the huge warts that appear on our Tsavo orphans during wet seasons.*

*Mike Seton and his Company, East African Air Charters continue to airlift the needy orphans from far and wide, allowing us a sizeable discount on the charter cost of the rescue planes for which we are grateful.. On the odd occasion when East African Air Charters have not been in a position to help, Boskovic Air Charters have done the same for a like concession, and we thank them also.*

The main October/November/December rains of 2003 failed around Voi completely, causing us many sleepless nights. We even began contemplating having to walk the entire herd of orphans to the Northern Area which had enjoyed a good season, and where most of the wild herds now were. Then, on January 8th the heavens opened dumping 8 inches of rain around Voi in one night, disrupting communications, cutting roads and turning the Voi river into a torrent that inundated the shallow silt-bed of Aruba Dam in a night. For us, and our elephants, however, it was a life-saver, yielding what we needed most to avert having to take drastic action - a rich flush of green that eased many months of food deprivation for our Voi unit.

Elephants are essentially timid by Nature and very easily scared when young. The Diary highlights many examples of this; for instance when an orphan "trembled all day" from the touch of a chameleon or when a curled millipede unfurled at the tentative touch of an elephant foot! There was, however, good reason for Emily's unit to tremble all day when a hyaena literally ran through their legs as it was being pursued by another and when a pair of mating lions were disturbed, who charged with a deafening roar of fury! Only animals that will oblige by running away are normally chasing targets, dikdiks, squirrels and guinea-fowl being fair game! Anything larger



Ithumba's rabid dog

will definitely require a gang effort. Completely immune is the Stockade's resident Iguana Lizard who strolls disconcertingly amongst the orphans' legs, gobbling up the dung beetles, providing an ongoing reason to "tremble".

A dramatic and disastrous event involving the Ithumba ten occurred during the early hours of the morning of the 21st October, and left us all trembling! A rabid dog forced its way through the electric wires of the Elephants' Night Stockade, and before it could be despatched by the Keepers, using machetes and clubs, bit Wendi, Olmalo, Taita, and Selengai on a foot and jumped up onto Mulika, nicking her in the ear.

Our Mobile Veterinary Unit was hurriedly despatched to Mombasa to source sufficient vaccine to immediately inoculate the five elephants that had been bitten whilst we contacted our friends in the Indian Wildlife Trust for advice on how we should now proceed, rabies being prevalent in that country, and many captive elephants having been exposed to contact over the years. Meanwhile, as a precautionary measure, the five that had been bitten were separated from the others,

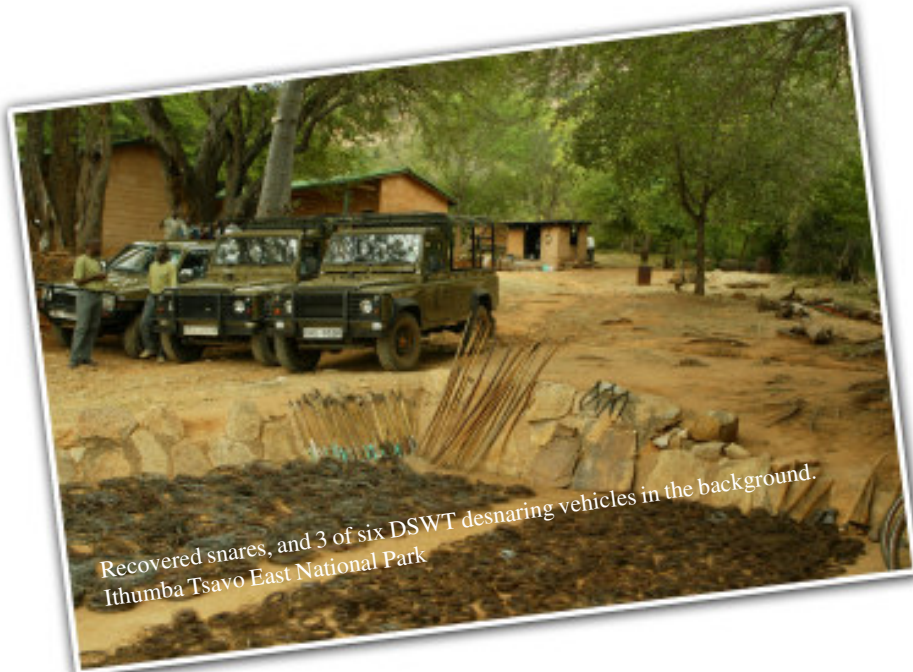


Lissa and her two wild born calves



Magnum and Makosa sparring





Recovered snares, and 3 of six DSWT desnaring vehicles in the background.  
Ithumba Tsavo East National Park

something that we knew would impose a great deal of added stress to an already stressful situation. Understanding this, it was a relief to hear that the risk of contamination through saliva was minimal, so instructions could be given for the elephants to be re-united. The advice given us was that the five affected elephants should undergo the same regimen as an exposed human, involving a 28 day course of weekly serum injections, plus two boosters later, whilst the rest receive the immunisation vaccine. Following this shocking incident, the Ithumba Night Stockades have been reinforced against all intrusion, even that of a rat!

**D**aphne and Angela's visit to India in February, where Daphne spoke about the orphans during a keynote speech at the Venu Menon Animal Awards, proved a Godsend in more ways than one, providing the Indian Wildlife Trust with advice about their own elephant orphans, particularly about rehabilitation strategies, and the contacts we made

proved invaluable in helping us to cope with a rabies crisis.

Back in Voi, 18 year old ex orphan, "Lissa", and her two wildborn female calves return regularly to spend time with the orphans, still very much part of an extended family, although they also belong within the wild herd headed by "Eleanor's" friend, the Matriarch named "Catherine".

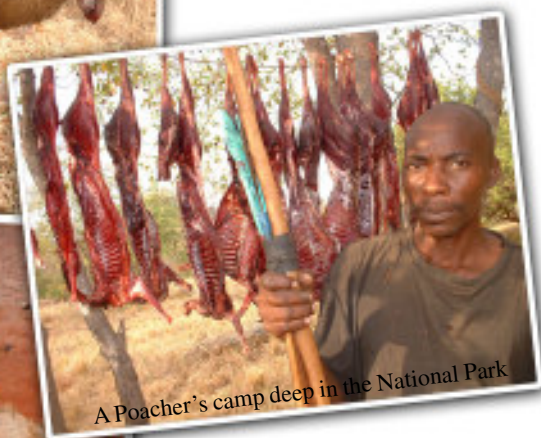


A Poacher's haul of snared Dikdiks

Often accompanying Lissa and her young are two other ex orphans, namely 12 year old "Mpenzi", who is her Nannie and an 8 year old bull named "Uaso", whose reappearance is usually somewhat disruptive for the younger set, since he throws his weight around both sexes, usually needing the intervention of Emily and Aitong to keep him under control.

Our orphaned rhino baby, "Shida", brought to us last August aged about 3 months after his mother died of old age near the Ivory Burn Site in Nairobi National Park, is now a strapping yearling sporting a sizeable bump on his nose. Having outgrown his Nursery quarters, he now occupies a large grown-up rhino stockade next door to that previously occupied by feisty "Makosa" who celebrated his 5<sup>th</sup> birthday on 1st August, and now rivals "Magnum" in size, who will be 8 at the end of January 2005. Both Makosa and Magnum are now fully independent of their Keepers, and part of the wild rhino community in Nairobi National

Park, yet each return on a daily basis, just to ensure that their respective Nursery Stockades have not been usurped by anyone else! They tend to try and avoid each other, being of very different temperaments, Magnum returning in the mornings, and Makosa in the



A Poacher's camp deep in the National Park

evenings. Whenever they do happen to meet, what begins as a friendly bout usually deteriorates into a full-blown punch-up, which is the last thing peace-loving Magnum needs, and usually ends up with him galloping



off down the hill with Makosa's very sharp horn either up, or inches from, his rear!

When he returns, Magnum normally presents himself at the front steps of Daphne's house for a banana, before wandering to the backyard in search of a Keeper to wheel out his barrowful of kitchen and canteen peelings mixed with coconut copra. A cavalcade then sets off down the hill – the Keeper and the wheelbarrow in front trailed by a full sized rhino plus an army of opportunistic warthogs of all sizes, with whom Magnum is happy to share the meal. Makosa enjoys a similar offering when he returns to his Nursery quarters in the evenings, when little Shida is ready and waiting for a spirited challenge through the bars of the Stockade as he passes by, bobbing up and down with pig-jumps of pleasure, and mewing a wanting sound when Makosa decides takes his leave. Rain turns Makosa even more exuberant and feisty than usual and then it is the Night Guards who have a hard time, often ending up at the top of the hay pile in the Hay Store!

### The De-Snaring Project:-

The commercial bush meat trade is undoubtedly the most serious threat to Kenya's wildlife today, jeopardising the very existence of many of the smaller antelope species, particularly those of a territorial nature, such as dikdik. It is unsustainable, incredibly cruel, and set to impact negatively on the country's vital Tourism Industry, let alone posing a health hazard to

more often than not it is condoned due to poverty, so perpetrators are usually given extremely light punishments involving just a short period of community service.

This indiscriminate form of poaching, which affects everything from elephants to small antelopes, is responsible for silent slaughter on a massive scale, the extent of which is exposed by the finds of our 6 de-snaring teams who continually patrol what boundaries of Tsavo we can repeatedly cover. They have lifted literally thousands of snares and released what animals have been found still alive. Assuming that the animal population of Tsavo East is some 800,000 we have estimated that at least 300,000 are being lost on an annual basis to bushmeat, so the toll is unsustainable, particular as wild populations are subjected to Nature's ongoing controls such as predation, drought and disease and Tsavo is an arid environment where survival is tough. Diseases are known to be exacerbated by a depressed immune system and this happens as a result of stress, both physical and psychological trauma. Wildlife is under siege and disappearing rapidly, so it is our belief that to even suggest introducing hunting, is sheer madness. Furthermore, hunting will benefit a few already wealthy individuals, yet the collapse of tourism will impact negatively on every individual of this and future generations.

By the end of October, a total of 13,775 snares had been recovered by our teams, who unearthed all sorts of horrors in the process - extensive meat encampments deep inside the Park, with rows of skinned carcasses hanging and people arrested with sack-loads of wild game meat. One poacher had 55 dead dikdiks, split open and laid out like drying fish, especially shocking in view of the fact that the gestation period of a dikdik is 6 months, and that these tiny, territorial antelope mate for life. Game meat is filling butcheries throughout the country, and because it comes free to the poacher for just the cost of a piece of wire, it sells cheaper than the meat of farmed domestic animals, putting many small farmers out of business, or forcing them to turn to bush-meat instead. It is no idle prediction

that dikdik and other small antelope species will become extinct in Kenya before the Big Five unless corrective measures are taken urgently. Yet, the Government seems to choose to remain in denial – in other words, what the eye doesn't see, the heart doesn't grieve! The grieving will come, and it will be devastating when it does!

consumers. The future prosperity of all Kenyans, both living and as yet to be born, is at stake if this scourge is not addressed soon by the Government through the imposition of deterrent sentencing. As things stand today,

We have been able to add two new De-Snaring teams to the original four, thanks to support

School field trip into Tsavo West National Park



Trees are distributed to the community from the Trust's tree nursery





f r o m

Safaricom, who have funded both the set-up and running costs of one and The World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) who have done likewise, enabling us to extend our tentacles and mobilize the new Ziواني team to cover Tsavo West, one of the worst hotspots. Previously our Mtito team managed only sporadic patrols in this Section of the Park, revealing an extremely serious situation – lines of bush-fences on the Ziواني border near Tanzania, and an enormous death toll of animals, including a baby cheetah cub, who had died just moments before being rescued alive. The Kenyan and U.S.A. branches of the The African Fund for Endangered Wildlife (AFEW) have very kindly funded the running costs of one of the other teams, which has also been an immense help.

*We are deeply indebted to Safaricom, WSPA and AFEW Kenya and USA for substantial support and we sadly miss the input of Joe Cullman III, a long-time past donor of the Mtito Team, who most sadly passed away this year. It was donations from him specifically for de-snaring that prompted us to take up this mantle in the first place. Rest in Peace, dear Joe, and thank you for all you did to help us help the animals..*

*At the community level we thank Sue and Joel Gilbert for*

*their tireless efforts with the Jambo Project, which connects schools from all over the world to those we support on the boundaries of Tsavo. We also thank SafariCom for their substantial donation towards the monthly field trips for students which are led by our Team Leaders into Tsavo National Park. We would also like to thank Kerrigan Savage Waves Trust for their support of the community by funding sporting equipment for the schools and a mobile cinema unit for the Burra desnaring team.*

This year the teams have also succeeded in bringing a total of 46 poachers to book, one a notorious offender whom they had been targeting for months, and who attacked James Mbutia, our Mtito Team Leader during the scuffle with

an axe, slashing his forearm to the bone. For his pains, the poacher was shot in the leg and we trust that he receives more than just a few days community service! Another even greater tragedy involved a member of Taita Ranch's Security team, who died from having been pierced by a poisoned arrow, there being no antidote for the Akokanthera poison used. Such incidents graphically highlight the dangers attached to those actively involved in the bush-meat struggle.

### **The Mobile Veterinary Unit:-**

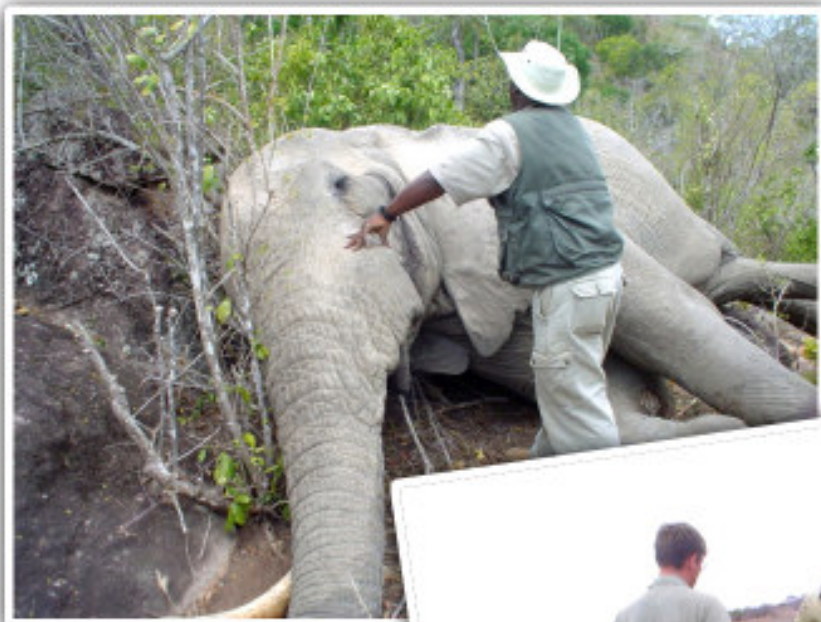
Whilst anxiety and depression over the bush-meat business undermines the satisfaction of success, the impressive record of our Mobile Veterinary Unit, is heart-warming indeed, something we owe entirely to a substantial three year grant from

Vier Pforten, an Austrian N.G.O. who can well be proud of their contribution to animal welfare. It is thanks entirely to them that we have been able to mobilize this fully functional and much needed Mobile Veterinary Unit for Tsavo and its environs, which has made such a difference to the sick and wounded. The Unit also covers the Ranches abutting Tsavo, the Taita Hills Sanctuary and the Amboseli and Shimba Hills National Parks, so it is kept pretty busy. One side of the custom built Landcruiser folds down to form a working table for the Vet, and the vehicle also has refrigeration and storage facilities for the drugs. A full time Veterinarian in the person of Dr. David Ndeereh, who was seconded to the project from the KWS Veterinary Pool, has a driver at his disposal and is based in what used to be the Assistant Warden's home, and which the Trust had to renovate in order to make it again habitable.

The Unit, which has been operational for just a year, since November 2003 had, by the end of October 2004, managed to save the lives of 24 elephants, 2 impala, 3 buffalo, 2 lions, 1 cheetah, 4 giraffe, 150 birds, 3 gazelles and 5 zebra, with the loss of just 2 elephant and 2 zebra, too damaged to retrieve and all this in addition to dealing with the rabies crisis of our Ithumba elephant orphans, and being involved in the rescue of 7 orphaned elephant calves all under two years old. We were proud that our

Mobile Veterinary Unit and Dr. David Ndeereh successfully managed to translocate several Rothschilds Giraffe from the Haller Park in Mombasa to Nguuni Nature Sanctuary. Giraffe are one of the most difficult animals to immobilize, so accomplishing this without loss was, indeed, a feat.

It was wonderful, indeed, when the Mobile Veterinary Unit was able to relieve the agony of a well known elephant Matriarch in Tsavo East, whose one tusk grew in a full circle penetrating her head on the opposite side and whom the Trust first saw some six years ago drinking at the Ndara borehole. On that occasion, we flew a Vet from Nairobi in order to try and catch up and help her, but sadly this quest proved fruitless, because the elephant could not be found. Then, this year, our Mobile Veterinary Unit chanced upon her and her family again in roughly the same area, and managed to immobilize her, remove about 10 inches of ivory from deep inside the honeycomb bone of her skull, and hack a sizeable chunk off the offending tusk, breaking a hacksaw in the process! It is gratifying to know that this elephant has at last been relieved of so much pain, a particularly happy achievement to add to many others, not least that of a well-known Amboseli Matriarch who had several spears sticking out of her head (again, the work of the Masai) who has since made a full recovery.



*We thank Vier Pforten most sincerely for funding a valuable contribution to the conservation cause, not forgetting to mention the excellent cooperation we have enjoyed from the KWS Veterinary Unit and to applaud the professionalism and commitment to duty of the*



The Mobile Veterinary Unit working on 2 of the 24 elephants the Unit has saved this year.





*Project Vet, Dr. David Ndeereh, who can be proud of his record and whose expertise has been vital to the success of the Project.*

We end the 2004 Newsletter on a note of apprehension over the future of KWS amidst a mountain of intrigue. The plot thickens on a daily basis, and meanwhile those of us who care, watch – and wait – and pray! Hopefully, the success of the Mara Conservancy which has brought such benefit to the community bordering this magic area, will point the way towards non-consumptive utilisation in areas beyond the Protected Areas, so that in Kenya, cruelty and killing will become a thing of the past.

**[www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org](http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org)**



### **IN THE U.S.A.**

We now have a “supporting charity” in the United States, the United States Friends of The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust (“U.S. Friends”). The organization has been recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a tax-exempt “public charity” to which contributions, gifts and bequests are deductible for U.S. income, gift and estate taxes. Because U.S. Friends is staffed with unpaid volunteers, substantially all amounts it receives are contributed to The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust. **Checks can be made out to U.S. Friends of The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust** and sent to:

**U.S. Friends of The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust**  
**One Indiana Square**  
**Suite 2800**  
**Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2079**  
**U.S.A**  
**Telephone: (317) 238-6218**  
**Fax: (317) 636-1507**  
**Email: [ssmith@kdlegal.com](mailto:ssmith@kdlegal.com).**  
**All contributions will be acknowledged in writing.**

### **IN THE U.K.**

The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust has recently become a charity registered in the U.K. Charity No 1103836  
Cheque donations made out to The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust U.K. should be accompanied by the Gift Aid form which can be printed off the Trust Website [www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org](http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org) The Gift Aid form can be located on the **HOW TO DONATE PAGE** under U.K.

**Donations can be sent to:**

**The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust**  
**7 Cambridge Square**  
**London W2 2PS**  
**Telephone: +44 (0) 20 7402 1027**  
**Email: [rc-h@africaonline.co.ke](mailto:rc-h@africaonline.co.ke)**

### **FOR THE REST OF THE WORLD OUTSIDE OF U.K. AND U.S.A**

If you live outside of the U.K. and the U.S.A. donations to The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust should be sent to our U.K representative, as cheques through the post directly to Kenya are not always safe. The cheque should be made out to The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust and sent to:



The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust  
1 Hunterfield Park,  
Gorebridge,  
Midlothian EH23 4AY  
SCOTLAND  
U.K.  
Tel:- +44 (0) 1875 821957

Email: [cath@sheldrickwildlifetrust.org](mailto:cath@sheldrickwildlifetrust.org)

OR

*Wire a donation direct to our Nairobi Bank, using our Bank's corresponding Overseas Bank, informing us by Email which bank the donation has been sent through and how much, so that we can confirm safe arrival.*

**Our Email address:- [rc-h@africaonline.co.ke](mailto:rc-h@africaonline.co.ke)**

**US\$ to Kenya:- Send through:-** The American Express Bank Ltd., American Express Tower, 23<sup>rd</sup> Floor 200 Vesey Street, New York, NY 10285  
**FED ABA ROUTING NO. - 124071889**  
**Swift Address AEIBUS33**  
**for the Credit of ~The Commercial Bank of Africa, P.O. Box 30437 Wabera/ Standard Streets, Nairobi, Kenya**  
**Account No. 731141**  
**Swift Address CBAFKENX**  
**For Final Credit of The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust Account No. 0-151-270-506 using FIN 103**

**Sterling £ to Kenya through the corresponding bank:-** HSBC bank Plc., 27-32 Poultry, London, EC2P 2BX  
**Sort Code: 400000 Swift Code: MIDLGB 22**  
**for the credit of The Commercial Bank of Africa Ltd., Account No. 38142142**  
**Swift Code: CBAFKENX**  
**For Final Credit of The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust Account No. 0-151-270-018 using FIN 103**

**Euros to Kenya through the corresponding bank:-**  
**Commerzbank AG, D-60261 Frankfurt am Main, Germany, Swift: COBADEFF**  
**For the credit of The Commercial Bank of Africa Ltd, EURO Account: 400 8770109 00EUR**  
**Swift Address: CBAFKENX,**  
**For Final Credit of The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust Account No: 0-151-270-018 using FIN 103**

The Commercial Bank of Africa's Kenya address details are :

**COMMERCIAL BANK OF AFRICA**  
**Commercial Bank Building, Standard/Wabera Streets**  
**Nairobi Kenya**  
**P.O. Box 30437 Telephone: + 254 20228881**  
**Cable Address "COMAFBANK"**  
**Telex: 22236, 23115**  
**Fax: + 254 20 335827**  
**SWIFT: CBAFKENX**