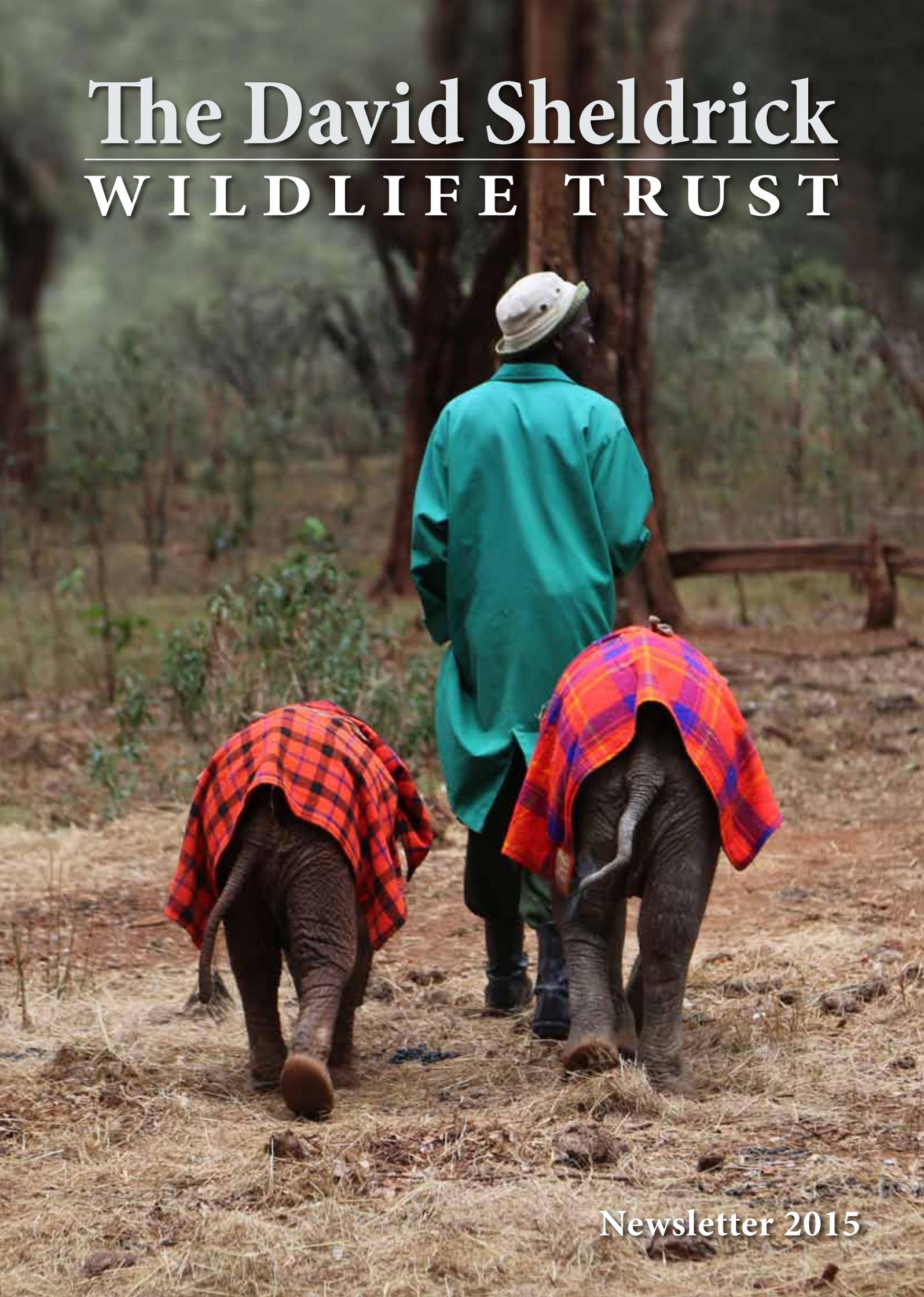


# The David Sheldrick

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# WILDLIFE TRUST



Newsletter 2015



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## Daphne's Overview for 2015



Dame Daphne Sheldrick

For me, 2015 has been a year of recovery following the empyema that assailed me the previous year, which led to major back surgery repairing a vertebrae damaged by the lung infection. I am now mobile again albeit still having to rely on the support of a crutch.

I am indeed so blessed not only to still be around, but to be able to enjoy the close proximity of my younger daughter Angela and son-in-law Robert Carr-Hartley plus their two sons Taru and Roan, now aged 17 and 15 respectively. These two lively youngsters are a source of great joy as I watch them morph into adulthood with a passion for wildlife and wild places that matches my own. Angela and Robert now handle the day to day running of the Trust and do so extremely proficiently, being of an IT-friendly generation conversant with all the modern technology that is alien to my generation who grew up only with land lines, manual typewriters and shorthand as office tools!

Both boys are also extremely proficient drivers of anything on wheels including tractors, heavy duty lorries (and of course motorbikes) even though they are still too young to undergo their driving tests. Both are also able to fly our Supercub aircraft using dual controls with their pilot father ensuring that they do everything meticulously and correctly. Both are eager to become more involved in the running of the Trust as they grow older and it is a comfort to know that the younger generation is at hand to take over when the time comes, thus ensuring continuity of the Trust, established to commemorate and perpetuate the work and vision of their illustrious grandfather, benefitting also from his vast experience, having pioneered the capture and translocation of all wildlife species long before the days of immobilizing drugs.

Twenty years separate my older daughter Jill and I, and nine years separate her and Angela. Jill was my right hand when Angela was still very young and was there to help me with the first orphaned elephants and others. She is equally passionate about all animals, but having married a Frenchman has chosen to make her home in his native France. Rather than elephants and rhinos she now focuses on the likes of cats, guinea pigs, rabbits and indigenous birds ensuring that all benefit from care and the necessities of life. That said, she still keeps in close touch with events here at home through the Trust's Facebook, Instagram and website pages. Her two beautiful daughters, Emily and Zoe, my grandchildren, are also equally as committed to the natural world and its wild denizens, saving every penny they earn at work to be able to return and savour the solace of nature and its wild wealth.

Our Ex-Orphans now living wild, and who have chosen to keep in touch, have taught us humans so much about themselves and the

real nature of elephants that could never have been known through pure observation of the wild population. It has helped too, to learn with an open mind without the ingrained constraint of "being too anthropomorphic", which has inhibited the understanding of animals among so many purist scientists. Having worked intimately with elephants now for fifty of my eighty-plus years I can categorically assert that "they are just like us emotionally but better than us in terms of forgiveness and caring".

But for the Ex-Orphans how else would we know that elephants can communicate sophisticated messages to one another – for instance, persuading wild friends who are intrinsically fearful of humans that not all are bad, and some (whom they recognise as surely as we humans identify different individuals) are true friends and saviours. Our Ex-Orphans habitually escort wounded wild friends (amongst whom have been huge tuskers) back to the Ithumba and Voi Stockade compounds so that the resident Keepers can summon the Trust's Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit to come and treat them by immobilizing them and removing the poisoned arrow heads, before packing the wound with nature's magic antibiotic green clay.

Similarly, without the Ex-Orphans how would we have learnt about the telepathic capabilities of elephants, which empower them to anticipate the arrival of new Orphans from the Nairobi Nursery and for that matter, our own arrival, so that they are at hand time and time again to greet and welcome elephant newcomers as well as ourselves.

I am incredulous and humbled by the support the Trust has enjoyed from the global public, which has enabled us to make a significant difference at the field level working in conjunction with the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) in terms of anti-poaching, financial assistance to keep wheels turning, Mobile Veterinary Units to heal the sick and wounded, and eyes in the skies to help keep Tsavo safe. All of this is in addition to having reared over 200 orphaned elephants through early infancy in our Nairobi Nursery, many now living wild, several with their own wild-born young, which they bring back to share with their erstwhile human family of Keepers who remain based at the Trust's elephant rehab centres, steering another batch of Ex-Nursery young back to a wild life – testimony indeed of the love and trust they have of their human family who reared them with the same tender loving care that they would have enjoyed from their lost elephant family.

Rearing and knowing elephants intimately has been a lifelong learning curve that I am privileged to have experienced and today be able to pass onto others thanks to modern technology.

## A message from DSWT CEO Angela Sheldrick

2015 has been a rollercoaster of highs and lows, a year that saw DSWT lose two dearly loved employees whose memories still burn bright, and whose contribution to the Trust will never be forgotten.

Lionel Nutter, a larger than life character, was my right hand and the Trust's Field Manager for close on ten years. A 'one of a kind' who is sorely missed, but we feel privileged to have benefited from his wealth of experience, wisdom and humour for so many years and to have been able to share in a mutual love of Tsavo.

George Vaulkhardt joined the DSWT admin team early in 2015, but died quite suddenly just four months later. A young inspirational man whose humility and sharp wit endeared him to everyone. He was someone who had so much to offer the conservation world, making his unexpected and untimely end very sad indeed.

2015 has certainly been a more positive year for elephants generally. Poaching numbers in Kenya are down compared to those of 2014, the price paid for ivory in China has fallen and Hong Kong has announced its intention to phase out their local ivory trade altogether. Despite these encouraging signs, Elephants and Rhinos remain threatened with the population of both species in decline throughout Africa, so there can be no let-up in our collective fight to save these magnificent animals.

Reacting to the ongoing poaching challenge, the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust has further

increased its support to the Kenya Wildlife Service, and also given additional assistance to the Mara Conservancy and the Mount Kenya Trust in the form of funding for security and a donation of two customised anti-poaching vehicles. We have increased our aerial unit significantly now comprising five aircraft and a helicopter; mindful of how vital it is to have eyes in the sky at all times to help keep the Tsavo Conservation Area and its wild denizens safe. Our planes and pilots provide much needed support to KWS while the presence and rapid response of our field Anti-Poaching Teams has, in no small measure, undoubtedly contributed towards the decline in poaching throughout Tsavo and its environs, since they provide an ongoing deterrent.

A new project for 2016 will be the DSWT-funded and managed Dog Unit with trained tracker dogs complementing the KWS/DSWT anti-poaching effort throughout the region, while the Trust's Air Wing will be on call to enact the timely deployment of Rangers, the dogs and their Handlers to wherever they are needed.

We have rescued and saved a significant number of orphaned infant elephants during 2015, and have watched our older Orphans grow and embark on the journey to a normal wild life once again. Three new babies were wild-born to our hand-reared Ex-Orphans in 2015, with a fourth born early in January 2016. Our Ex-Orphans have now added a total of 19 wild-born babies to the Tsavo elephant population, and it has been humbling, indeed, that

all the Ex-Orphan mothers have brought their new-borns back to the Rehabilitation Stockades to share with their human family of Keepers. This is a touching accolade from the elephants themselves – their way of saying "thank you" for giving them a second chance of life. Overseeing the growth of a new generation of elephants has been an extremely enlightening experience because the Orphans have been able to teach us so much about themselves that could not otherwise have been known simply through observation of the wild herds. We are mindful that this has been made possible by the incredible support we have enjoyed from a caring global public as well as the dedication of those who work with the orphaned elephants, bearing in mind that at any age an elephant duplicates its human counterpart in terms of age progression (and longevity) so it is an exacting and long-term initiative, made even more so because elephants are so essentially fragile in early infancy.

We are also, indeed, extremely grateful for the enthusiastic support we have enjoyed from supporters across the globe for our many other conservation projects, details of which are shared throughout the pages of this Newsletter. Specifically, we owe special thanks to DSWT Patron Kristin Davis for her tireless work and for embracing the elephant cause so whole heartedly. To the DSWT teams here in Kenya, as well as our UK charity and our US Friends organisation we thank you for your continued dedication that has helped bring about such tangible and positive conservation achievements.



Angela Sheldrick



## The Orphans' Project

### The Nursery

With so many elephants at the Nursery, the Orphans have been split into a baby group, a junior group and an older group. In some cases, the resident Orphans have had to double up in the night stockades to make room for the 28 new Orphans that have arrived over the course of the year. Thankfully today, most of these Orphans have recovered from the trauma of the ordeals that brought them to us. Many of the older elephants have now outgrown the Nursery, and this year 16 Orphans graduated from the Nursery, with Barsilinga and naughty boys Lemoyian and Kithaka heading off to Ithumba, while Nelion, Tundani, Lentili, Mashariki, Arruba, Rorogoi, Elkerama, Embu and Suswa went to Voi and Ngasha, Faraja, Jasiri and Ziwa joined the girls at Umani. Though we are always sad to see them go, this next step is a celebration of success as raising these tiny calves through the fraught stage of early infancy is always extremely challenging. To have young Kithaka, who came to us at just one day old, mingling with wild herds and enjoying the freedom of Tsavo National Park is truly rewarding.

This year we have seen Murit, Balguda and Ziwa thrive following a period of prolonged ill health. Ziwa recovered well enough to be relocated to Umani where he quickly became the cossetted favourite of Big Girls Murera and Sonje. Balguda had to be returned to the Nursery following his translocation to Umani due to a lengthy mysterious illness but he has since improved so we hope that he will be able to rejoin Ziwa early in the New Year. New Nursery arrivals, Alamaya, Mwashoti and Simotua, who came with horrendous life threatening wounds, have also made nothing short of miraculous recoveries.

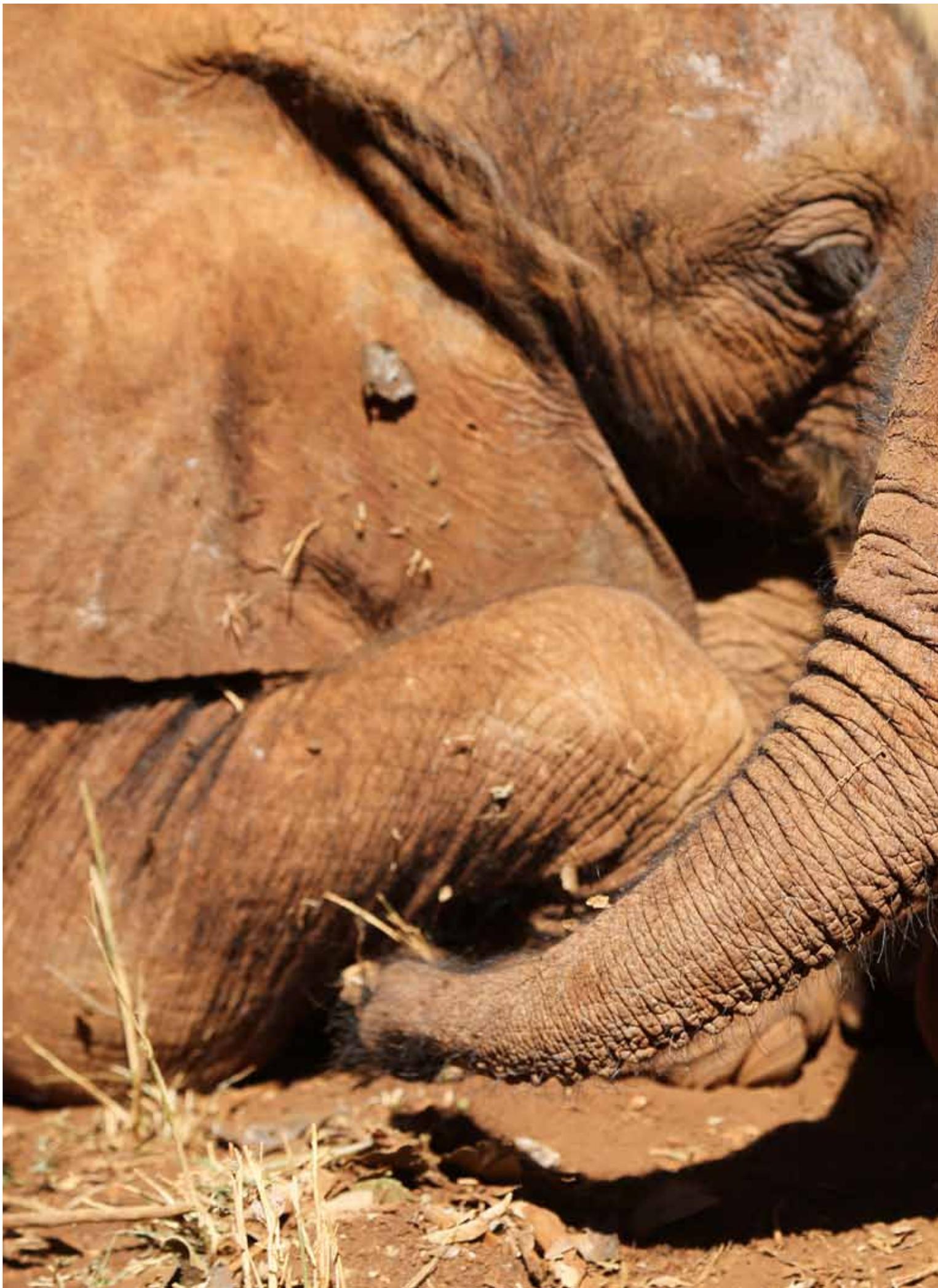
Sadly, we have lost some of the new Orphans in our care, who arrived too far gone for us to be able to retrieve. One of the saddest was that of Ashaka, who had been with us for over a year, but who was never as robust as her age mate and best friend, Kamok. Quite suddenly her condition deteriorated and she unexpectedly passed away from what appeared to be a chronic liver problem. Following the sad death of Ashaka, Kamok, Mbegu and Murit became even closer, comforting each other over the loss of their special friend.

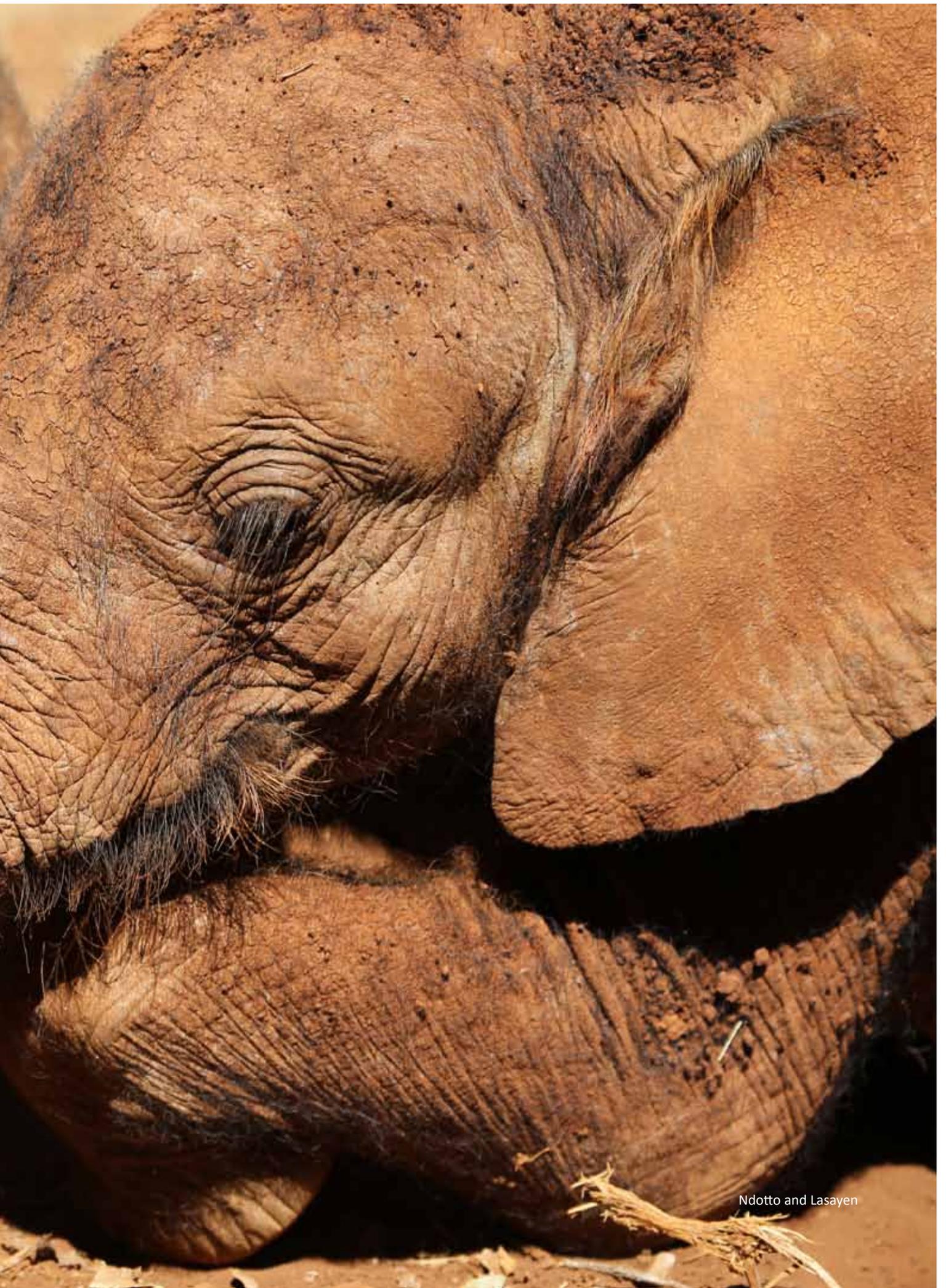
Budding Matriarchs Kamok and Mbegu are hooked on the baby group and love to spend time with them; letting them suckle their ears or laying on the ground so that the babies can play and clamber over them. Oltaiyoni is also a born Matriarch, always at hand to impart comfort and support. These three provide great companionship for the baby group and gently guide new arrivals into the Nursery routine, happy to alleviate some of the responsibility from older females such as Arruba, Suswa, Rorogoi and Embu, who were moved to Voi at the end of the year.

The Orphans are as prone to forming strong relationships with other individuals as we humans are. Upon arrival, Dupotto suffered from post-traumatic stress syndrome; rocking and crying out in her stockade at night, disruptive behaviour that proved challenging and upsetting to the others. However, thanks to the love from Embu and the Keepers, Dupotto finally settled and now appears to be a happy little elephant. Ngilai formed a strong attachment to Elkerama, following him everywhere. Elkerama was long suffering of his tiny shadow, even letting him suckle on his ears or escorting him into the forest for a mud bath and spraying him to make sure that he was covered in protective mud. Dupotto and Ngilai have adjusted more quickly than we anticipated following the move of Embu and Elkerama, which can only be contributed to the love and support they received during a traumatic time of loss.

Boromoko, Kauro and Mwashoti are close friends with the tiny loveable duo of Lasayen and Ndotto, who are inseparable. Lasayen and Ndotto are both still miniatures despite being now a year old, while Ngilai, who is much younger, is actually bigger than them both! These two rascals play together extensively and love a good rough and tumble, kicking a football then charging after it, clambering on one another in the mud and collapsing together in loose red soil. These tiny tots are such characters, and act like full-grown Bulls despite being pocket-sized. Kauro has undergone a growth spurt and possessed of impeccable genes, we feel sure will grow into a fine young Bull as he is already big for his tender age. He loves his climbing and mounting games and has become quite a feisty young member of the herd.







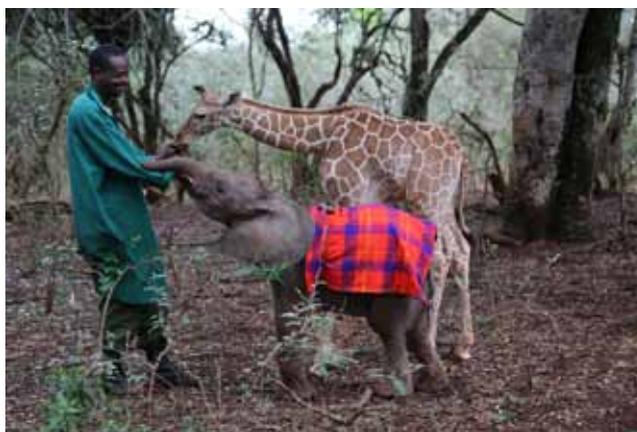
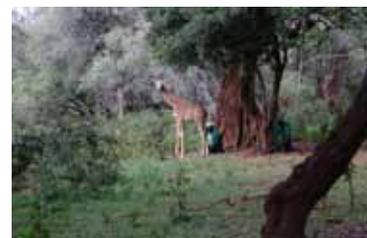
Ndotto and Lasayen

Boisterous boys Olsekki, Sirimon, Boromoko and Mwashoti, along with trouble makers Soketei and Enkikwe, spend long hours sparring and performing strength testing games. Soketei is missing the big boys who departed for Ithumba and has become quite the lone ranger, prone to bullying Orphans within the little group, but such unruly behaviour does not go unnoticed by the older group. Olsekki and Enkikwe have become particularly disruptive, especially at feeding times; even shoving the Keepers in an effort to snatch a milk bottle. Both are being considered as candidates for relocation to Tsavo next year where older Orphans can mete out some much needed discipline. Naughty Roi and Rapa have the potential of becoming a handful as well, while Roi and Kauro can never resist having a scrap with neither wanting to give in! However, Oltaiyoni is quick to put a stop to rowdy behaviour. Roi is the greedy girl who often sneaks around the milk wheelbarrow to grab an extra bottle of milk while the Keepers are concentrating on feeding the others. She then rushes off into the bushes with it, gulping the milk down in the process before tossing the bottle on the ground when finished! With so many mischievous elephants in their care, the Keepers certainly have had their work cut out for them this year.

In stark contrast, gentle Nelion sleeps in a stockade next door to Tundani and the two are extremely close. Nelion has by far the biggest tusks in the Nursery, but thankfully does not throw his weight around since he commands much respect due to that. His gentle and calm manner is mirrored in Tundani, so it is no surprise that these two elephants are firm friends.

Kamok allows Ngilai to suck on her ears as a special treat and sometimes even spirits him away so that they can frolic in the bushes and enjoy a joint dust bath, Kamok acting as a mother figure. Sometimes little Bulls can be rougher than acceptable towards the smaller Orphans, something that would not be tolerated in a wild situation. However, Suswa keeps an eagle eye on proceedings and is quick to intervene wherever necessary. However, the main disciplinarian in the group is Rorogoi, who, as one of the older females makes sure she keeps raucous Bulls in line.



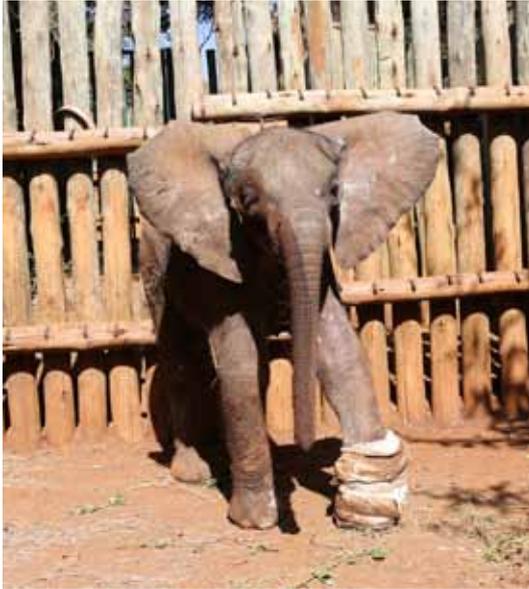






## 2015 Nursery Arrivals & their rescue stories

*Mwashoti* - Male, 10 months old, 9th March 2015



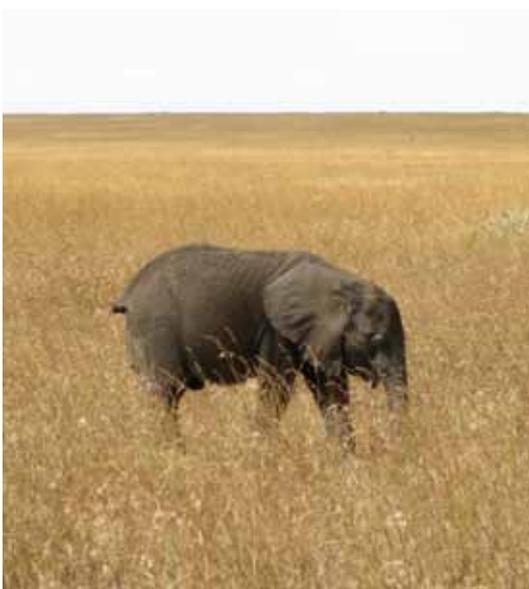
*Mwashoti* was treated for a horrendous snare wound by the DSWT-funded Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit. However, despite this treatment, his condition deteriorated and his mother was forced to drop out from the herd making them both vulnerable. In order for this calf to have any chance of survival, he had to be rescued before succumbing to such serious injuries, so the rescue team was mobilized. *Mwashoti* was airlifted to the Nursery and with intensive care, has made an almost full recovery.

*Ngilai* - Male, 3 weeks old, 9th March 2015

*Ngilai* was found down a well by *Ngilai* community members from the Molore Lorach area who decided to leave him, hoping that he might be able to extract himself and be reunited with his herd. However, the following day the stranded and exhausted calf remained in the well and his desperate attempts to extract himself left him with injuries. He was finally rescued the next day, wrapped in a blanket and given water and rehydration salts until the DSWT rescue team arrived at the Wamba Airstrip to airlift him to the Nairobi Nursery.



*Alamaya* - Male, 14 months old, 17th March 2015



*Alamaya*, which means "brave" in Maa, was found alone in the Masai Mara, ravaged by hyenas minus his tail and his genital area severely maimed. Another night alone would have proved fatal. After a quick rescue, upon arrival at the Nursery, *Alamaya's* injuries were found to be so severe that he was originally thought to be female and only found to be male following surgery to remove scar tissue and facilitate urination. *Alamaya's* wounds have healed well, and although he will never be able to mate, he should be able to otherwise lead a normal wild life.

*Elkerama* – Male, 2.5 years old, 15th May 2015

*Elkerama* was rescued from *Elkerama* Ranch in Laikipia where, all alone, he was vulnerable to a pride of lions in the area. Being too big to be airlifted, the rescue vehicle had to negotiate flooded roads from the recent very heavy rains in order to reach him. Whilst *Elkerama* made it to the Nursery safely, torrential rain had created a quagmire in his stockade, so he joined the others out in the bush when he was still fairly wild and, until he had settled, the Keepers had to hide behind trees in order to feed him as he would charge towards them when coming for his milk.

*Simotua* – Male, 12 months old, 23rd June 2015

*Simotua* was rescued from Rumuruti Forest with a spear wound in his forehead, and a snare wound on his leg. Due to his compromised leg and weakened condition, he was captured easily and flown to the Nursery where, upon arrival, his wounds were treated and antibiotics administered. However, having been helped to his feet, everybody had to make a hasty retreat to avoid being flattened as he was surprisingly strong for a thin and injured calf. Since then, *Simotua* has calmly allowed the Keepers to treat his wounds, seemingly understanding that he needed help, and he is now almost fully healed.

*Tusuja* – Male, 15 months old, 27th June 2015

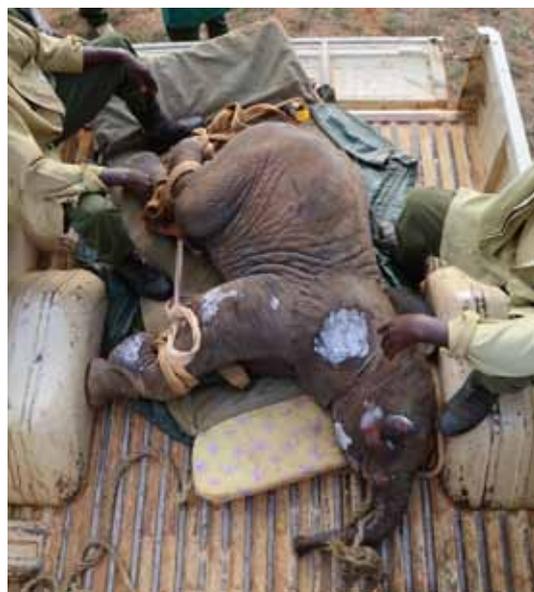
*Tusuja* was alone and extremely vulnerable to predation since predators are aplenty within the area of the Masai Mara in which he was found. A rescue team captured him and kept him overnight in the back of a covered high-sided trailer. Incredibly, during the night, *Tusuja* clambered over the trailer's high sides and jumped to freedom, necessitating a second search the next morning when *Tusuja* was eventually found, restrained and airlifted to the Nursery.

**Rapa** – Male, 6 months old, 1st July 2014

Samburu Scouts retrieved Rapa from one of the many wells in the area after his desperate screams alerted the community. Due to the presence of pastoral people and their domestic livestock, elephants do not linger long at water points and by morning any evidence of Rapa's herd had vanished. Once safely back in Nairobi, this very feisty baby was offloaded and was still full of fight despite his ordeal and it took the Keepers time to calm him down and get him feeding.



**Godoma** – Female, 6 months old, 14th August 2015



Godoma was found trapped in a steep-sided watering point in the Taita Hills, bruised and battered from her life-threatening struggle to extract herself. She was eventually pulled out and released under surveillance in the hope that her mother would return for her, but since there appeared to be no elephants in the area, the DSWT was finally called in. Throughout much of the first night at the Nursery she cried, and took a long time to settle, remaining fearful of the stockade until she was moved to a larger stable and the reassuring presence of Murit and Mwashoti next door.

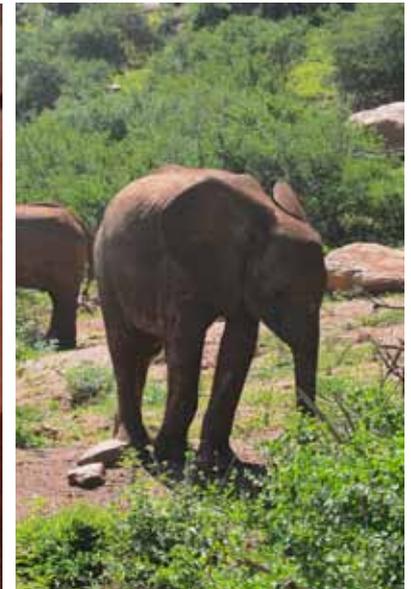
**Tamijoi** – Female, 2 months old, 16th October 2015

On the 16th of October a young female elephant was found trapped and abandoned in a well in Maralal in Northern Kenya, and was rescued by the Kenya Wildlife Service. She has been named Tamijoi, after the area in which she was found. She is in good condition and was remarkably tame and trusting of her Keepers from the onset. How long she had been without her mother, we cannot be sure.



*Araba* – Female, 23 months old, 19th Oct 2015

*Araba's mother died from septicaemia whilst being treated by the DSWT-funded Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit for a poisoned arrow wound. Araba stood vigil beside her mother throughout the treatment, but was in such poor condition that a rescue became obvious since she was still milk dependent but old enough to be taken to the Voi Stockades. At first she was very aggressive but has since settled and her condition is improving.*



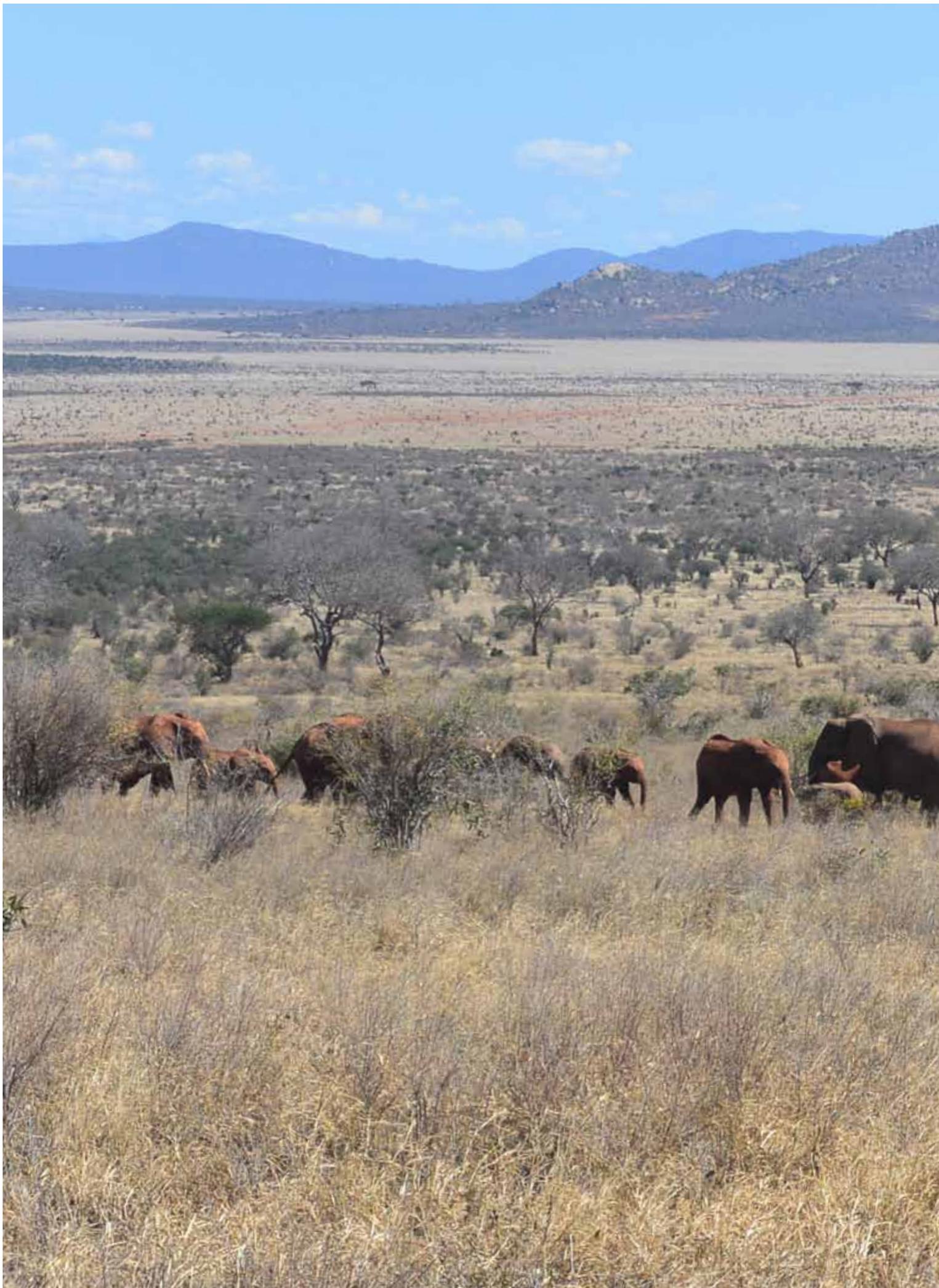
*Naseku* – Female, 18 months old, 2nd November 2015

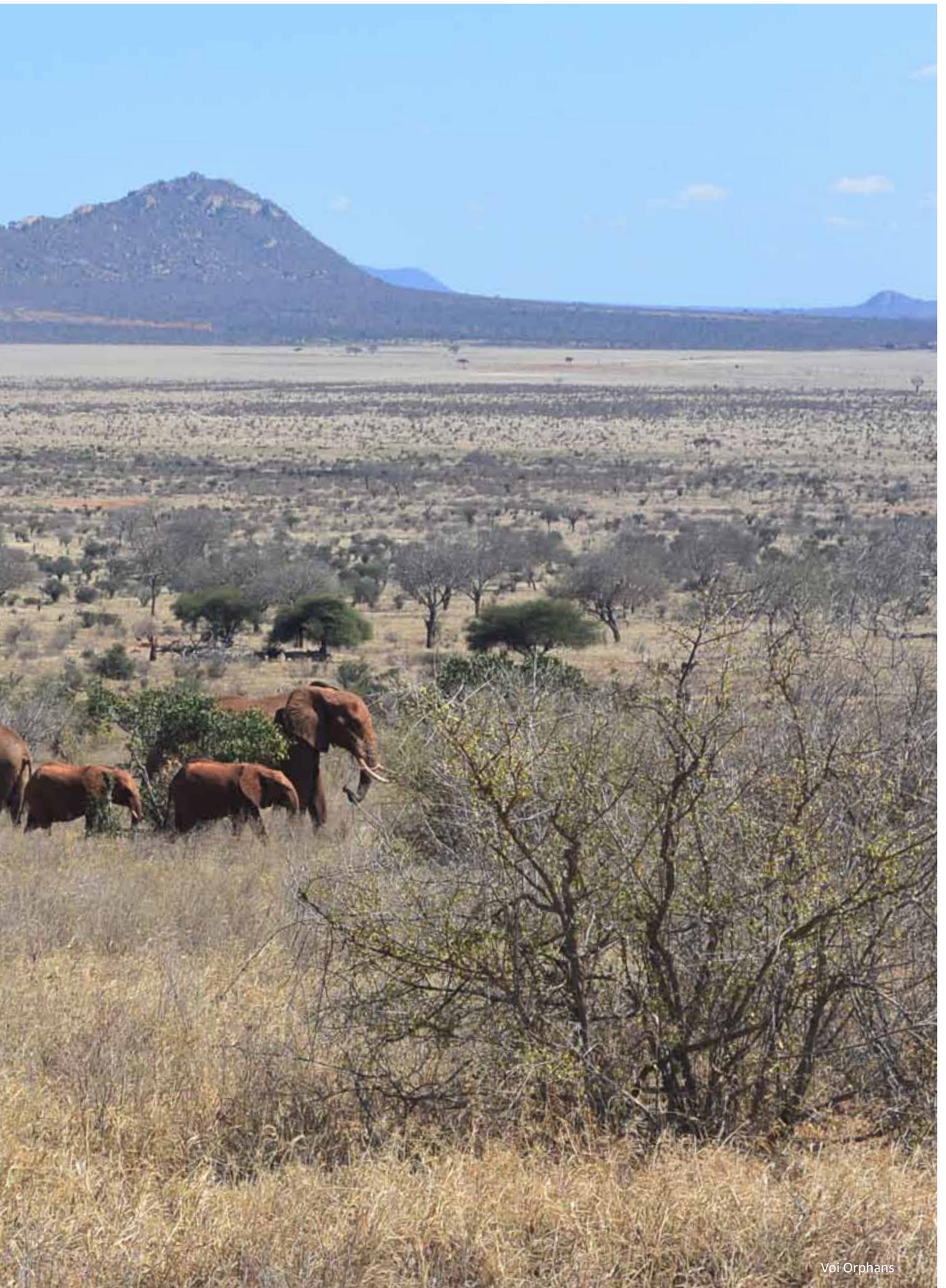


*Namunyak Conservancy Scouts retrieved Naseku from a well and kept her safe until help could arrive. She was surprisingly large for a well victim and had been trapped for at least 12 hours, rubbing her back raw in the struggle to extract herself. Since the nearest airstrip was challenging for a plane, even without a small elephant passenger, a skeleton crew was aboard to save on weight. Naseku was quickly prepared for the flight to Nairobi but still didn't make it to the Nursery until around 8.00pm.*



Edwin





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## The Orphans' Project

### THE VOI RELOCATION UNIT

Following little baby Emma, born to Ex-Orphan Emily at the Voi Stockades in December 2014, Edie gave birth to her second calf, a baby named Eden. Since then Emily's entire Ex-Orphan herd went missing across the great vastness of Tsavo for almost six months, so the Keepers were delighted when they returned in November, and especially so when they saw Sweet Sally with a two-week-old baby Bull in tow; her very first calf, named Safi which means unblemished in Swahili. Emily, Edie and Sweet Sally have been very relaxed mothers and have had no qualms about the Keepers' proximity to their calves.

The wild-born babies have been a great lure for the dependent Orphans and even Lesanju has been susceptible to baby time, despite usually being determined to steer the dependent Orphans away from the Ex-Orphans, paranoid that she might lose one of her cherished herd to the older Orphan herd. Despite Wasessa being the largest of the group and the dominating mother figure, Lempaute and Lesanju are the leaders of the Voi semi-independent Orphan group. Towards the end of the year Lesanju, Lempaute, Sinya, Wasessa, Kivuko, Mzima, Taveta, Rombo, Dabassa and Layoni, showed signs of becoming more independent and started ranging further afield. Mzima in particular follows his own path, sometimes browsing on his own for a couple of hours. Nevertheless, their daily visits back to the stockades and to check on the dependent Orphans continue, and it is clear they are not yet completely ready to be wholly independent, as they return to the stockades most nights.

When Wasessa arrived back after a long absence she was enveloped by the juniors who missed her terribly; all but Ishaq-B who fell in love with Bada and formed a strong bond with him in her absence. Wasessa then focused much of her attention on Bada, making sure Ishaq-B had limited time with this favourite calf. A wonderful friendship has developed between Kivuko and Ndoria, the former watching over Ndoria when Wasessa is more occupied with the young Bada and Mudanda.

Earlier in the year Tundani, Lentili and Nelion made the journey to Voi and are now totally at home. Mashariki, Arruba, Rorogoi, Embu, Elkerama and Suswa followed at the end of the year and for Mashariki, Arruba, and Rorogoi, this was a journey home as they all originated from the southern sector of Tsavo East National Park. In no time the newcomers had settled in extremely well, with Lesanju, Sinya and Lempaute bestowing constant love and attention and younger females such as Kenia, Ndii and Ishaq-B eager to babysit at any opportunity.

The Voi Unit's other new addition, Araba, continues to do well since her rescue and has slowly become more accepting of her new situation and family. We were cautious about letting Araba out too soon, mindful that she might be vulnerable to joining up with the wild herds as well as the Ex-Orphans, so it was almost a month before she was able to mix freely with the other Orphans. Ndii immediately took to the newest arrival, escorting her to the stockade water hole under the watchful eye of Mudanda, who jealously tried to push Araba away. Araba has since become very attached to the young newcomers, but despite this she has been successfully whisked away on a couple of occasions by wild herds as well as the Ex-Orphans which has kept the Keepers on their toes.

The Voi Orphans have been joined at the mud bath, while out browsing and at the stockades by numerous wild herds. Wild Bulls have broken away from their herds to dust bathe with the babies, something the young Orphan Bulls particularly enjoy as they love to challenge their larger counterparts to strength testing games. Wasessa has also become an attraction for Bulls as she is fast approaching breeding age. One day a wild boy fell in love with Bada and tried to steal him away but the protective older girls, led by Wasessa, Lesanju, Naipoki and Ndii, were quick to move in to retrieve their precious baby. This intervention required the help and strength of big boy Mzima who got several prods in his buttocks from the tusks of the older girls as they drove him forward on the recovery mission! There was another day when the Orphans joined a large wild herd close to the midday big mud wallow, but when the Keepers called out to the Orphans, signalling that it was time for milk, the wild herd spooked and Arruba, Mashariki, Rorogoi and Araba inadvertently became caught up in the mayhem and were spirited away. The Keepers had to spend the rest of the day retrieving their charges from the wild herd, separating them using a vehicle. Eventually, however, the babies came charging back for their milk bottles, very thirsty after their ordeal.

This year has been action packed with many elephant rescues especially during the dry months when small babies are more vulnerable to becoming trapped in drying watering points. The Voi Keepers were called to numerous cases and thankfully the majority of calves were successfully reunited with their families. Together with KWS, DSWT attended to these areas with the bulldozer but this is an on-going challenge as the Mzima Springs pipeline stretches hundreds of miles and the elephants like to wallow where the water seeps from cracks in the pipeline, causing deep-sided pools which, while great for older elephants, can be lethal for newborn babies.

Ex-Orphan Thoma has been the focus of enormous male attention, including that of Ex-Orphan Big Boy Laikipia, although he has had to resort to being an enviable observer most of the time that adult wild Bulls have been accompanying Emily's herd, clearly focusing on Thoma. One magnificent Bull seemed to win out, separating Thoma from the rest and taking her away on honeymoon for a couple of days.

To witness our hand-raised Orphans finally becoming mothers of wild-born calves themselves is a true measure of success. It's lovely to see how much little Emma and Eden have grown and we are looking forward to watching little Safi thrive in the years to come.

Both Keepers and Orphans alike were stunned when Sinya became involved in an extremely vigorous mud bathing session, since habitually she has always shunned the mud wallow having been trapped in a well and separated from her elephant family and mother when young. The possibility of being trapped again has never left her, and water is not something she gravitates towards willingly, on most days making do with a dust bath instead and happiest watching any mud bathing from a safe distance. However, this day was different - she savoured every moment of the midday mud bath playing with abandon. During the action Kihari accidentally slipped, splashing into the waterhole causing dramatic waves which intimidated many of the others, prompting some to hurriedly evacuate.

Mbirikani has enjoyed walking the dependent Orphans home to their night stockades most evenings, which is a role she now relishes since she was unable to walk for months due to a cable snare cutting through her foot to the bone. Now seeing her so well, able to set the pace and lead a completely normal life is extremely rewarding, and certainly not lost on the others, who know full well that leading the group is important to Mbirikani as she regains confidence once more.

The big independent Bulls in Emily's herd have been spending extended time away from the females who were so fixated with baby duties! Lolokwe, Laikipia and Morani have been seen alone or in the company of wild friends. However, Laikipia spends more time in the orbit of the Nursery Orphans which is especially appreciated by the younger dependent Bulls, since it is very normal for young Bulls to develop a "hero-worship" on the bigger guys, viewing them as role models. One day, Emily's herd arrived with a handsome Bull who was in hot pursuit of Seraa and given how tame he was, the Keepers felt sure he was an Ex-Orphan – Ajok, Olmeg, Chuma and Lominyek all being possibilities.



Emily with Eve



Joseph Sauni



## The Birth of Eden

Ex-Orphan Edie was rescued from a well in Namunyak Conservancy in Northern Kenya in 1999, with evidence at hand that her family had struggled long and hard to retrieve their lost calf. However, given that the well was frequented daily by pastoralist people, the elephant family had to give up and by daybreak the herd had left, leaving the baby stranded. Edie (which means 'over there' in Samburu) was reared in our Nairobi Nursery from the tender age of four months. Her early months were difficult as she deeply mourned the loss of her beloved elephant family but in due course she was transferred to our Voi Rehabilitation Unit in Tsavo East National Park and eventually became a member of the Ex-Orphan herd, living a normal wild elephant life, extremely close to Emily who is the Matriarch of the herd.

Edie had her first wild-born calf in May of 2009 when only ten years old. We named this little female baby Ella. Ella was welcome company for Emily's first born baby, Eve, born six months earlier. Life is fulfilled for the Ex-Orphan females when their own wild-born babies complete their family.

In December 2014 Emily returned to the Voi Stockades to give birth to her second baby, named Emma; an event that was filmed by the Keepers. Then on the 15th March Edie returned to the stockades along with the rest of Emily's unit dragging a loose wire snare around her leg which she allowed the Keepers to easily remove. They were however concerned about Edie's unusual behaviour, since she kept intermittently lying down and seemed exhausted. Little did they know that she was, in fact, in labour!

During the late afternoon of the 16th March, the Keepers returned to the stockades with their dependent group of Orphans and spotted Emily's herd clustered in a tight circle. They were concerned about the strange body language and approached to take a closer look and as they drew nearer, the group opened up to reveal the latest little treasure in their midst – Edie's second wild-born baby daughter whom we have named Eden. Emily's calf, Emma, born a few months earlier, was beside herself with excitement at having a younger playmate and Ella, Eden's older sister, relished taking on the role of Nanny along with all the other members of the herd.

## The Birth of Safi

In July 2015 Emily's herd disappeared and for five months the Voi Keepers anxiously awaited their return. On the 25th November the Keepers were amply rewarded by the reappearance of Emily's entire Ex-Orphan herd, including Emily's wild-born babies, Eve and Emma, and also those of Edie; Ella and Eden. To our great surprise we noticed another new addition, a little baby born to Ex-Orphan Sweet Sally. This boisterous baby boy, lovingly pampered by all the other wild-born babies of the herd, as well as all the adults, is already showing signs of being a forceful character! We have named him Safi pronounced 'Sarfi' - the Swahili word for unblemished.

Sweet Sally came from a Ranch near Nanyuki called Sweetwaters. She and her mother, along with 52 other elephants, were moved by the Kenya Wildlife Service to Meru National Park to alleviate human-wildlife conflict. This was mostly a successful mission, but for the fact that the lorry carrying Sweet Sally and her mother became seriously bogged down in mud. The revving of the vehicle as it tried to extricate itself under extremely difficult conditions, terrified an already terrified mother elephant so much so that when she was eventually released, she burst out of the travelling crate and fled, leaving her

bewildered baby behind. After a two-day aerial search failed to trace the mother's whereabouts, the Kenya Wildlife Service was left with no option but to treat the six-month-old, milk dependent calf, as an Orphan.

Upon arrival, Sweet Sally was a very sad little elephant, haunted by the memory of her mother and elephant family. Sweet Sally's grief was so profound that we doubted she would recover from her deep depression, but like the brave lady after whom she was named, Sweet Sally turned the corner with the help of the other three little Nursery elephants including Mulika and Mweya, as well as Keeper Mishak, who is loved unconditionally by every elephant Orphan that has passed through our hands.

Sweet Sally has been an integral member of Emily's herd ever since she grew more independent at the Voi Rehabilitation Unit. Since Safi's birth, Emily's Ex-Orphan herd have visited the Voi Stockades on a number of occasions and the Voi Head Keeper, Joseph Sauni, has enjoyed extremely warm welcomes from them all, with the young mothers happy to share their babies with the men who nurtured them into adulthood.

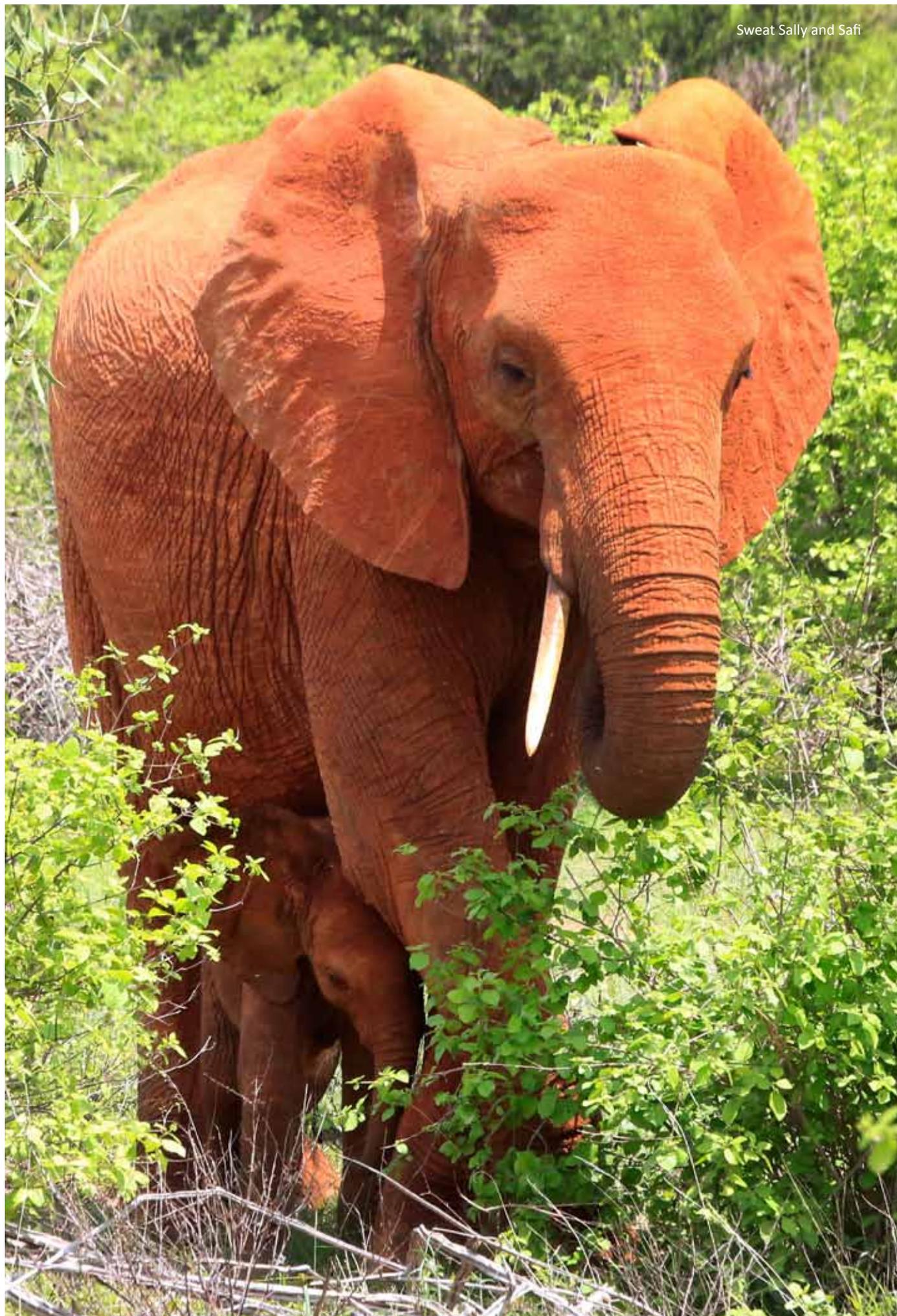


Baby Eden



Sweet Sally and Safi

Sweet Sally and Safi







## The Orphans' Project

### THE ITHUMBA RELOCATION UNIT

In May the Ithumba Orphans were joined by three naughty Bulls fresh from the Nursery; best friends Kithaka, Lemoyian and Barsilinga. Little Garzi was particularly pleased not to be the baby of the group anymore and thoroughly enjoyed playing with the new arrivals, sometimes becoming too rough, and then quickly reprimanded by Sities, Turkwel and Kainuk. The three boys are having a wonderful time in their new home and are favoured by the dependent females as well as the Ex-Orphans, Lemoyian being very sociable and a particular favourite of the Ex-Orphans, especially Chyulu and Lenana.

Kainuk is extremely attached to Lemoyian and whenever the Ex-Orphans come to take charge of him, she gets very jealous as she relishes playing "Mum". On the other hand, mischievous Kithaka has a mind of his own - usually first at the watering trough, first at the dust bath and first to head to the browsing field. He is still firm friends with Barsilinga and Lemoyian but apart from that tends to be quite a loner. Nevertheless, he is still up to his old antics, particularly when unsuspecting visitors are involved, but this is not without reprisal from the older Orphans and the Keepers. Kithaka has also taken to molesting the dung beetles, kicking them off their dung balls and scattering them and their dung balls with his flailing trunk! He can even be seen searching for them around deep waterholes, barely putting a foot in the water, since, unlike Bongo, Kithaka is averse to cold water! His friends, Barsilinga and Lemoyian take their cue from him and also seldom choose to wallow, happy instead to slip and slide on the muddied verges!

The dependent babies have been treated to many visits from Ex-Orphans, semi-independent Orphans and wild elephants over the course of the year. This interaction is a crucial part of their journey back into the wild, as the older elephants' knowledge and guidance is vital. They also provide entertainment for the little Bulls who love good sparing partners and worship their older counterparts. When Ex-Orphan Big Boys, Rapsu, Tomboi, Challa, Kora and Taita pass through, Bongo, Orwa, Vuria, Teleki and Bomani watch in awe and bask in any attention bestowed upon them by these older Bulls. The presence of a female herd with a baby is always a special moment, especially for the young females of the dependent group. The Keepers were also delighted to be visited by a one tusker Matriarch who was treated last year for a poisoned arrow wound by the Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit and with her was her new baby, born that very day.

In April there was great excitement when Napasha and Buchuma returned in excellent health after an absence of nearly three months. Big Ex-Orphan boys, Tomboi, Buchuma, Napasha and Challa often range separately from the main Ex-Orphan herd but sometimes check in at the stockades together with wild friends. In July, female Ex-Orphan Ithumbah also returned in the company of a wild female and her two calves, having been away for nearly two months. All the Ithumba Ex-Orphans have visited the Stockades over the year with many choosing to stay close to home, particularly towards the end of the year. Kinna, who was believed to be pregnant, was again courted by a majestic wild Bull with whom she eventually mated and this came as a surprise to us. During December, Nasalot also had six wild Bulls paying her a great deal of attention so perhaps we can expect another wild-born baby in two years' time!

More than 40 of our Ex-Orphans have slept lying down outside the stockades on several occasions, completely content while they wait for the dependent babies to wake. On one occasion there

were 25 wild elephants standing vigil over the sleeping herd and towards the end of the year a large group of wild elephants and Ex-Orphans arrived at the stockades and all lay down to sleep. This is not something you would normally see and only happens when elephants are completely confident that they are absolutely safe. It has not been unusual for 25 plus wild elephants to be present at the stockades on a regular basis and on one occasion the Keepers woke to find an elephant bonanza, with over 80 elephants in the stockade compound!

Suguta's partially independent group; Chemi Chemi, Ishanga, Kalama, Kandechea, Kibo, Melia, Naisula, Suguta, Tumaren, Olare, Chaimu, Kilaguni, Kitirua and Murka were absent at the end of 2014 but reappeared in January 2015. Makireti, Kilabasi, Kasigau, Chaimu and Kamboyo formed their own little unit but Kamboyo then began to venture further afield and spend time away with big Ex-Orphan boy, Kora. More recently Kilaguni, Ishanga and Chaimu have been appearing together, and it seems these three partially independent Orphans have become inseparable friends. These satellite groups prefer to travel as an independent group rather than assimilate into the big Ex-Orphan group, since identity is important to elephants. They have chosen to move further afield, sometimes disappearing for weeks at a time. More recently, Lualeni has also developed a new herd comprised of the loyal Ololoo, as well as Madiba, Kenze and Loijuk. Only time will tell if this group remains intact as Lualeni is unpredictable, enjoying leadership of her ever-changing herd and not entirely comfortable being subservient to the bigger girls, Yatta, and Mulika. Lualeni is also always looking to recruit new members but the Keepers are mindful of her baby-snatching tendency and keep a close eye on her. She is aware of this and responds by appearing completely disinterested in the dependent babies in an effort to outwit the Keepers!

On the 5th June, after a long absence, Loijuk and Madiba escorted Suguta home for medical attention because in her were two arrow wounds. Dr Pohon was called immediately to treat her. Following treatment, Suguta reverted to again being a dependent calf, enjoying the milk feeds, and the attention and tender loving care from all the Orphans and her trusted Keepers. She understood that she needed to remain close to home in order to heal and after some follow up treatments she has made a full recovery. Her herd of young partially independent Orphans have been led by Olare in her absence but hovered around for a time, trying to convince Suguta that it was time for her to re-join them, Kasigau being particularly persuasive. On a number of occasions, they have succeeded, spirited away some of the dependent Orphans, Suguta included, but have always brought them back to the stockades since Suguta has opted to spend nights in the stockades of her own free will. Olare has now fully settled into the role of the replacement Matriarch since Suguta shows no signs of re-joining the independent group.

Over the course of the year a number of injured Bulls have converged on Ithumba, seemingly knowing that their help would be at hand. This is no coincidence since our Orphans know full well that they and their wild friends will receive help at the stockades when in need. Thankfully we have been able to treat all the cases we have come across thanks to the timely response of either the DSWT-funded Tsavo or Amboseli Mobile Veterinary Units. News that elephant help is available has definitely got out amidst the wild elephant community. Water babies Bongo and Mutara can never resist the water, even on

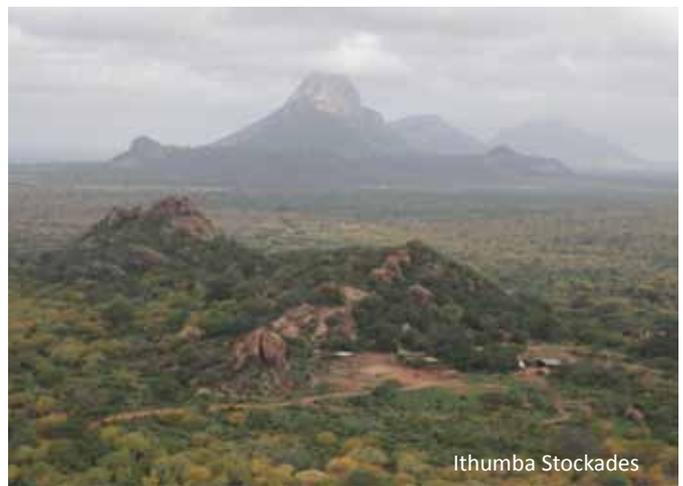
cooler days, which have been few and far between recently. Due to stifling heat both Keepers and elephants alike have had to rest in the shade during the hottest time of the day. On many evenings, the way back home has been punctuated with a second mud bath for the junior Orphans to cool off.

Dependent Orphan Orwa enjoys strength testing games and Vuria, Kanjoro, Garzi, Teleki, Bomani often oblige, since such games are extremely important to Bull development. Girls, Sities, Narok, Turkwel, Kainuk, Shukuru, Laragai and Mutara are long suffering and are often the targets for the boys' pushing and mounting games but do show their displeasure when not in the mood to be harassed. Orwa has been looking longingly at the independent big Ex-Orphan boys and is definitely contemplating a life out with his older more independent friends. However, at the moment his love of his milk restrains him. Bomani and Vuria continue to enjoy chasing all things small, such as warthogs and dikdiks, who obligingly run away leaving the elephants with a sense of victory.

Sities is growing into a dominant force amidst the Ithumba juniors and can be extremely grumpy. The others know not to incur Sities' wrath and take pains not to do so. She does however ensure that all games are played by the rules and is quick to intervene if things are getting out of hand, being particularly protective of Garzi.

Mutara has developed a trick of undoing her stockade door at night despite the live electric fence – something that has baffled us! Sometimes she lets her group out in the early hours long before the others are let out to face the day. However, once out, they do not venture far, still being needy of their Keepers, their milk and their younger friends, but it seems to satisfy the older ones knowing that they can go out and browse at will.

This year Bongo lost one of his tusks – the one that was already damaged when he first arrived with us. Obviously the nerve running through the tusk was compromised because the tusk became loose and eventually simply dropped out. The Keepers retrieved it and handed it in to the Kenya Wildlife Service authorities, so Bongo is now left with just one tusk. Thankfully during the process of losing the tusk he appeared to be in no pain.



Ithumba Stockades



Angela with Orwa



Benjamin and ex-orphans



Madiba and Buchuma



Ithumba babies with wild friends



Ithumba



Kristin Davis-DSWT Patron



Taru Carr-Hartley



Baby Wiva

### The Birth of Wiva

On the 13th October Wendi caused quite a stir when she arrived back at the mud wallow with a newborn baby girl. Wendi, who never knew her elephant mother or family, now has the joy of being a mother herself, accompanied by Nannies Nasalot, Sidai and Kinna who are all beside themselves with excitement and eager to take care of the newest arrival. While our Keepers did not witness the actual birth of Wiva, Wendi came to share her joy immediately after the calf was born. She allowed Benjamin, the Ithumba Head Keeper, to handle her precious baby, testimony to the love and trust she has of her human family who raised her from newborn. Daphne named the calf Wiva, since with rain threatening, the weaver birds returned back to the lone tree at the stockades and began rebuilding their nests.

The following day Wendi came to the stockades with her minute calf at her heels. Lucky Kithaka and Sities were allowed to touch Wiva, but they trumpeted in excitement and that frightened her. Mutara, still a dependent young female, responded to the baby's distressed cry and ran to comfort her but Wendi whisked Wiva away to a safe distance. Mutara and Sities tried to greet baby Wiva at the mud bath but this was not popular with her attendant Nannies who denied them access. However, on another day, Sities and Kilabasi were granted permission to touch and escort little Wiva to the stockades. This was a very big moment for these two mini Mums who savour every minute in baby Wiva's company. Wendi and Wiva, along with many other wild elephants and Ex-Orphans have frequently visited the dependent herd since Wiva's birth with Wiva always guarded by her strict security guards - Kinna, Sunyei, Sidai, Lenana, Galana, Chyulu, and Nasalot.

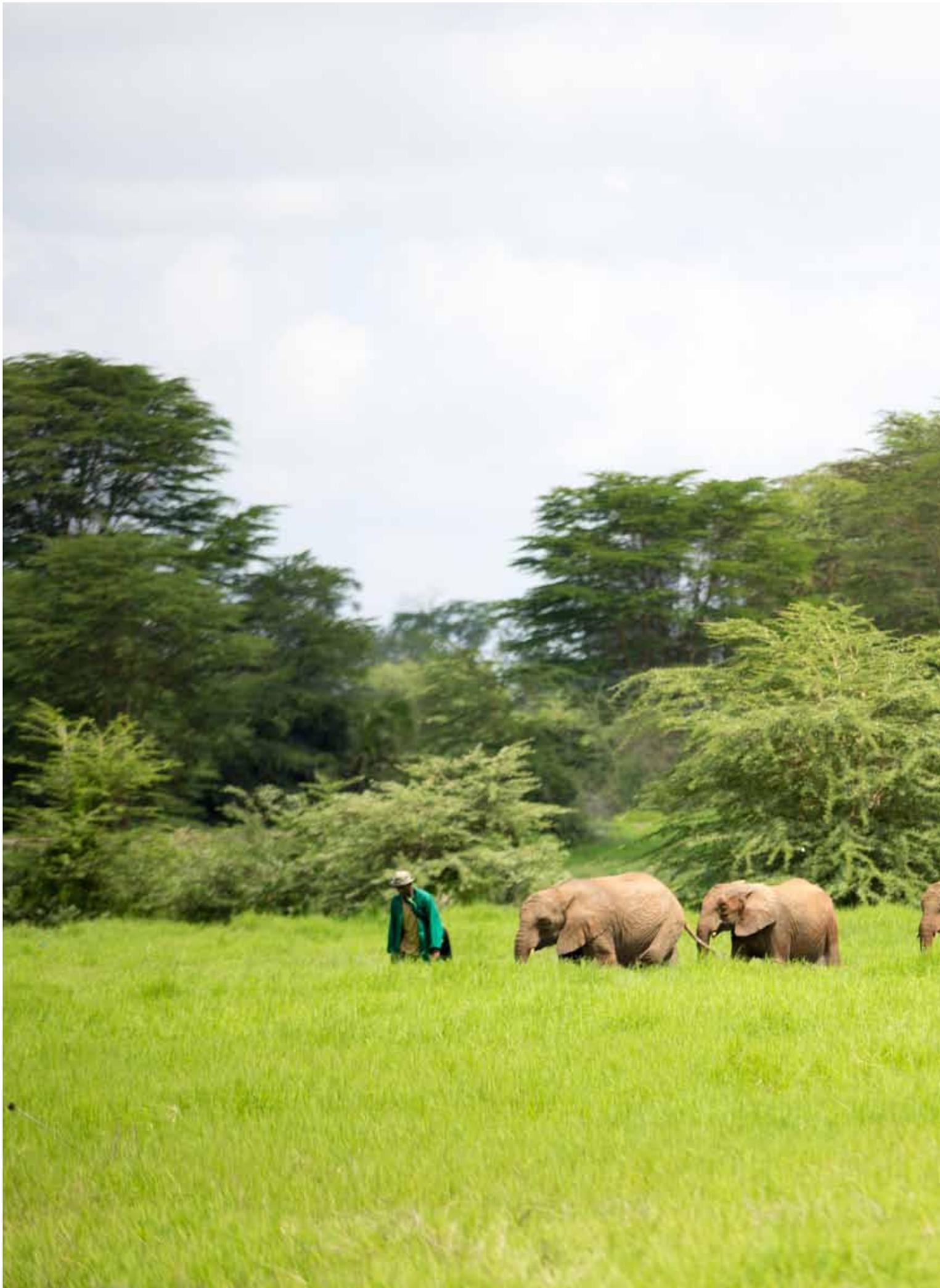


Robert Carr-Hartley meets a sleeping Wiva





Wendi with newborn Wiva







## The Orphans' Project

### THE UMANI SPRINGS RELOCATION UNIT

In June 2015 the Umani Springs Rehabilitation Unit celebrated its one-year anniversary since the arrival of the first Orphan residents, namely Murera with her broken hip and Sonje with her compromised knee due to a bullet wound. They were soon joined by their friends, Zongoloni, Quanza and Lima Lima, and together these five elephants and their Keepers learnt the ropes and rapidly settled into a completely new environment. The two little albino elephants, Faraja and Jasiri, with tender skins more suited to a forested environment, along with good friend Ngasha and then more recently Balguda and Ziwa, also joined the Umani girls. However, sadly due to an on-going medical condition, Balguda had to be returned to the Nursery, but with intensive medical care his condition is improving and we hope he will be able to re-join his Umani friends soon.

The Umani Orphans are extremely fat and healthy as Umani is the perfect habitat for Orphans who need a gentler environment; those with injuries sustained from poaching, or those with medical health issues. Umani has become a favourite destination for both elephants and their Keepers alike, as there is so much vegetation, wild flowers, lilies, fruits and soft grasses, even during the dry seasons. On hot days the generous forest canopy offers shade for the Orphans and natural mud wallows and watering points are readily available all year round. The Orphans are now entirely settled and are becoming more adventurous, undertaking frequent trips up Umani Hill and excursions into the adjoining Chyulu National Park; one day even going as far as Kenze Hill.

It's safe to say that none of the Orphans have looked back having arrived in such a Utopia. However, they have all had to adjust to new sights and sounds such as the call of the crested cranes, the alarm barking of the bushbuck and even baby crocodiles in their mud wallow which initially freaked them out! However, over the course of the year they have got to grips with the wildlife sharing their forest habitat and now it can be a fraught business for a crocodile sharing a mudbath with Jasiri, Ngasha, Ziwa and Faraja. On days when the bathing is particularly energetic both crocodile and terrapins have been forced to leap onto the elephants' backs in order to escape being crushed, but more recently the elephants have taken to dislodging reptilian occupants ahead of the mud bath, flailing the water with their trunks and feet. Both Lima Lima and Sonje have led the terrapin ejecting process after spotting their heads popping up or sensing their presence at the bottom of the pond.

Other wildlife encounters include stumbling across a troop of baboons which can sometimes be a daunting experience though occasionally Murera takes great delight in scaring them with charges and trumpets so that they scatter screaming in all directions. Whenever there is a general baboon retreat, the other Orphans are happy to partake in the chase. The Orphans have also encountered numerous buffalo, leopards, pythons and even a porcupine, often first sensed by Lima Lima whose actions alert the Keepers.

The wild elephants from the Chyulu Hills and beyond began by visiting the Orphans only at night. Many big Bulls came to the water trough outside the night stockades and were initially very wary of the keepers. However, as time has passed the interactions have switched from just night time to some significant day time encounters as the wild elephants become accustomed to the humans that accompany the Orphans everywhere. Murera is very interested in the wild herds, particularly the Bulls, whereas the younger Orphans are rather

intimidated by Bulls, but more interested in a female herd with little babies whom Lima Lima, Quanza and Zongoloni cannot resist. On a couple of occasions, the Keepers have had to hurry to retrieve the Orphans before they are spirited away by a wild herd - the human presence being a deterrent for the wild elephant residents. Eventually however, the time will come when all the elephants will intermingle as easily as they do at the Voi and Ithumba Stockades. In December, for the first time, the Umani Orphans were visited by a very big and extremely friendly Bull who was totally unperturbed by the presence of the Keepers who surmised that perhaps he was one of the early Ex-Orphans!

The two Matriarchs of the Umani group, Murera and Sonje, continue to be excellent role models and guides for the younger elephants while Ziwa enjoys the enviable position of being the cosseted calf of both, who shield him from the exuberance of older, rougher boys such as Faraja, Ngasha and Jasiri. However, despite this trio growing with age, they are still no match for Sonje in terms of strength and disciplinary ability. Unlike Murera, she is, however, incredibly patient with all the babies, prepared to allow them to take rides on her back, and resorting to lying down so that they can clamber all over her. Being patient and tolerant, she is the favourite of naughty boys Faraja, Jasiri and Ngasha while Quanza, Lima Lima and Zongoloni have developed a strong bond of friendship and spend most days close together. Lima Lima is undoubtedly a budding leader, often trying to take the group in a different direction with the obvious approval of the main Matriarchs, Murera and Sonje. Quanza has grown more trusting of humans over the past year after having witnessed her family brutally killed by poachers. It has taken her a very long time to trust human company, but now she seems to be genuinely interested in seeking out the Keepers, and even visitors, for closer contact.

Faraja has the unfortunate reputation of being a tail-biter, Jasiri often the target of this bad habit. Lima Lima keeps a close eye on the boys who are prone to becoming lost and disoriented having ventured too far. She is quick to respond to their bellows, locating them and escorting them back to the Keepers. Faraja, Jasiri and Ngasha are all thriving and exuberant, but sometimes their physical antics can become somewhat overbearing, necessitating intervention from the Keepers or the bigger females.

Lima Lima is a marvel - the brightest most human-like elephant of them all. She constantly entertains all with her antics, taking charge when she needs to, yet deferring to the seniority of Murera and Sonje when necessary. When Amos (her favourite Keeper) went off duty for a short time, upon his return he found he had a veritable elephant shadow as Lima Lima would not let him out of her sight! She and Quanza are best friends, while Jasiri is the greediest, prone to snatching food from the others, be it acacia pods, grass, browse, lucerne and even their milk bottles. However, Sonje and Murera do discipline him by pushing him away when he oversteps the boundaries of good behaviour.

In her quiet way, Zongoloni has mastered the art of kneeling down to pick up her own milk bottles. Quanza and Lima Lima have attempted this a few times but unsuccessfully, yet Jasiri learnt the technique very quickly. One day he was determined to demonstrate this to the Keepers and became very agitated when they attempted to hand him his milk bottle, until they understood what he wanted! He is turning

into a dominant Bull; sometimes more dominant than is welcome due to his game of mounting the ladies! Whilst at times they accommodate such antics, Murera is quick to intervene if necessary.

The Umani Orphans have recently been enjoying more wild elephant interaction than ever before as they explore further afield. One day while in the neighbouring Chyulu National Park, Ziwa found himself surrounded by three huge wild elephant Bulls, something that daunted him and sent him running back to the Keepers. The close proximity of the Bulls unsettled the Keepers as well so they decided to steer their Orphan herd back to their waterhole. Quanza sensed their fear and while the group ran down the hill towards their familiar waterhole, her trumpets of distress echoed throughout the forest.

Bushbucks like to hang out with the baboons who provide excellent sentries and also dislodge the much-loved acacia pods. The Orphans have worked this out too, and they often trail baboon troops, congregating under the Acacia tortillas trees hoping for tasty dry season treats. The Keepers collect sack-loads of this favourite snack whenever the pods are falling, so that they can be enjoyed by the Orphans later in their night stockades.





Umani Springs relocation unit

## The Orphans' Project

### THE ORPHANED RHINOS

This year Maxwell's stockade boma was enlarged, creating much excitement for him as he could sense all the activity during the construction process. The addition was completed in April, doubling up his space, but being a rhino, and as such a creature of habit, he remained totally fixated on the familiar section of his boma. Being blind it took time for him to work out the new extension but gradually after a thorough and minute investigation he adapted to the challenge and is now totally familiar and at home in the new space.

Despite being unable to be released into the wild because he is blind, Maxwell has many friends and enjoys interactions with a host of other Orphanage residents. Wild warthogs and their comings and goings always provide good entertainment for Max - the 'ever hopeful' warthogs (as they are known) often squeezing through the bars of his gate to share his lucerne. Most of the time Max is extremely tolerant of his pig friends, but on occasions when not in such a generous mood, he sends them packing, searching for a gap wide enough to accommodate them during their hasty exit! Maxwell can also accurately keep time positioning himself strategically at the gate for the 5pm foster- parent visiting hour so that he can meet the guests and enjoy some much appreciated attention. He definitely misses the three naughty boys, Kithaka, Lemoyian and Barsilinga since they left for Ithumba because over the years they have encouraged him to gallop up and down his boma, with them on the opposite side winding him up into quite a frenzy! Thankfully, however, they have taught the others these games so the fun for Max is ongoing. Solio, and a few wild Nairobi Park rhinos also visit Max regularly, something that is very important for him and vital for his psychological wellbeing, since just their scent imparts a sense of community.

Solio now enjoys a free wild life and is completely integrated into Nairobi National Park and the territorial wild rhino community. Whilst she often keeps company with other rhinos, she has not forgotten her home or Maxwell, and on a number of occasions has been happy to spend a long time sparring with an extremely happy Maxwell and even overnighing in her old stockade which abuts his own. He relishes time near her, but can become overly excited when she is around; charging around his stockade huffing and



Maxwell



Maxwell



Puk



Solio

puffing, enacting excited jumps during the process and urinating to further endorse the marking of his territory.

Solio will also hook up with, and spend time with the Keepers and the Orphan elephants out in the bush, enabling the Keepers to monitor her body condition, which, happily, is excellent. She saunters between the orphaned elephants and even lets them caress her with their little trunks. On the odd occasion the older Orphans have tried to frighten Solio off by charging her with outspread ears, but she has seen all this before and so simply doesn't respond, waiting patiently until the elephants decide to focus on a new game.

### THE OTHER ORPHANS

The ostrich chicks Pea and Pod have grown extremely fast amidst the elephant Orphans over the past year. They came to us as small "knee-high" chicks but now tower above both the Keepers and the elephants. However, they are very much part of the Orphan baby herd and spend their days browsing with them in the forest and even joining them down at their midday mud bath. Pea and Pod have developed some fun games with their elephant friends and like to charge them with their wings out whilst, in turn, the elephant's dash at them with outstretched trunks to pluck at their feathers, providing endless hours of mutual entertainment. The ostriches seem to love this interaction and even tempt the elephants to continue with their chasing games. Pea and Pod are now full grown and will probably soon start to venture further afield to live a natural life, but for now they seem content to remain with the Keepers, and their tiny elephant friends. A more recent addition has been Kiko the giraffe and it is endearing how these unlikely animal friends are so totally at ease in each other's company. It is almost as though Pea and Pod believe they are actually elephants as well, which may well be true, since birds are believed to imprint!

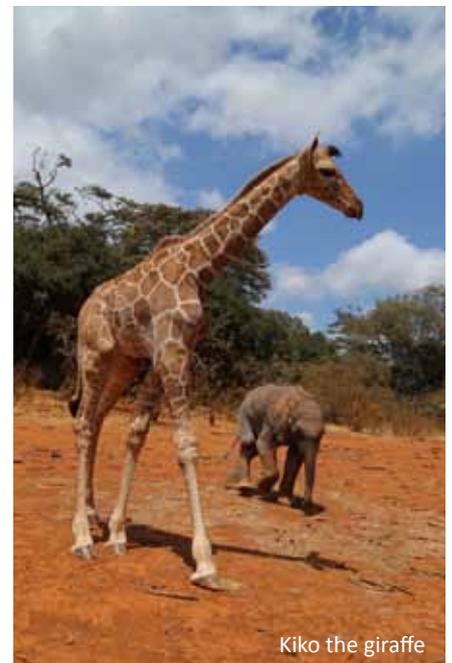
Kiko, was rescued in September in Meru National Park by the Meru Vet Team when he was just a week old. The fate of his mother is unknown but what is known is that the area in which he was found is fraught with human – wildlife conflict. Upon arrival Kiko took his milk eagerly and immediately settled, totally trusting and loving of the Keepers and indeed anyone passing by. He is also extremely playful and with limbs splaying in all directions, hurtles around the car park and in the open forested glades, letting off steam! Kiko, Pea and Pod, and the baby

elephants are inseparable spending long hours together out in the bush - making up quite a diverse herd! However, Kiko's relationship with the babies has led to some discord, with Kamok and Mbegu who one day were eager to gang up on him, trying to intimidate him by charging him with outspread ears. However, he stood his ground in his usual laid-back manner, and at the last minute enacted an unexpected jump, lashing out kicking with both front and back legs. The two young girls were quick to take note of this and since that day have avoided confrontation with Kiko! He is an incredibly loving individual who enjoys human company and even that of the resident wild warthogs who join the baby herd daily. Playfully he jumps over them whilst they are kneeling down to feed which they find disconcerting prompting them to move further away!

DSWT opens its doors to all species, great and small, so long as they can be rehabilitated to lead a wild life when grown. This year proved no exception. Hyrax, buffalo, zebra, porcupine, hartebeest, eland and a serval cat have all been granted a second chance at life under the care of the Trust. Spike, the porcupine, is now completely wild and is often seen cruising with a wild porcupine friend. Puk, the serval cat, is now almost full grown but still remains very attached to her human family and her home. Ngulia the orphaned female zebra rescued in 2014 and raised at Voi often gets into all sorts of mischief, irritating the elephants whilst they feed and chasing the baboons who scrounge the elephant supplements. With her gnashing teeth and flattened ears, she is a very effective baboon deterrent and often the Orphan elephants take their cue from her and join in by ambushing the baboons from the lower side of the stockade. Initially Ngulia, showed no end of jealousy towards Kore, the orphaned baby eland, even going to the extent of blocking the Keepers from feeding the young eland milk! However, after a couple of weeks, Ngulia decided to drop this act and instead embrace the eland, much to the delight of Kore. A further addition to the Voi Stockade menagerie is a Coke's Hartebeest, named Kasigau, rescued when just one week old on the 29th November near Kasigau Hill. She is doing well in the company of the inquisitive Ngulia, and Kore.



Roan Carr-Hartley with Puk



Kiko the giraffe



Solio



## Mobile Veterinary Units

The DSWT's four full-time Mobile Veterinary Units, headed by Kenya Wildlife Service veterinary officers, and the DSWT rapid response SkyVet initiative are all heavily in demand throughout the country, relied upon by a host of organisations, tourism entities and private institutions who need support in protecting and providing veterinary assistance to the wildlife they are striving to conserve. Without these fully-funded veterinary teams, the lives of hundreds of elephants and many other endangered and threatened species would have been lost.

The Tsavo Unit, headed by KWS Vet Dr Poghon, has been in operation for over 12 years now, having been established in November 2003. The Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit was the DSWT's second unit to be deployed and has been operating for nearly nine years since March 2007 under Dr Limo's guidance. The Meru Unit, headed by Dr Rono, was established in February 2013 and the DSWT's most recent unit to be deployed is the Amboseli Mobile Veterinary Unit, headed by Dr Njoroge which became fully functional in May 2014. The DSWT Sky Vet programme was created in support of the DSWT/KWS Mobile Veterinary Units and also works closely with the KWS Veterinary HQ in Nairobi. Established in early 2013, Sky Vet actions rapid aerial and veterinary response to emergency wildlife cases that cannot be attended to by one of the mobile units due to distance or time constraints. The DSWT helicopter, based in Tsavo East, has been critical to locating cases for the Sky Vet and to the successful darting from the air of many wounded elephants throughout the year.

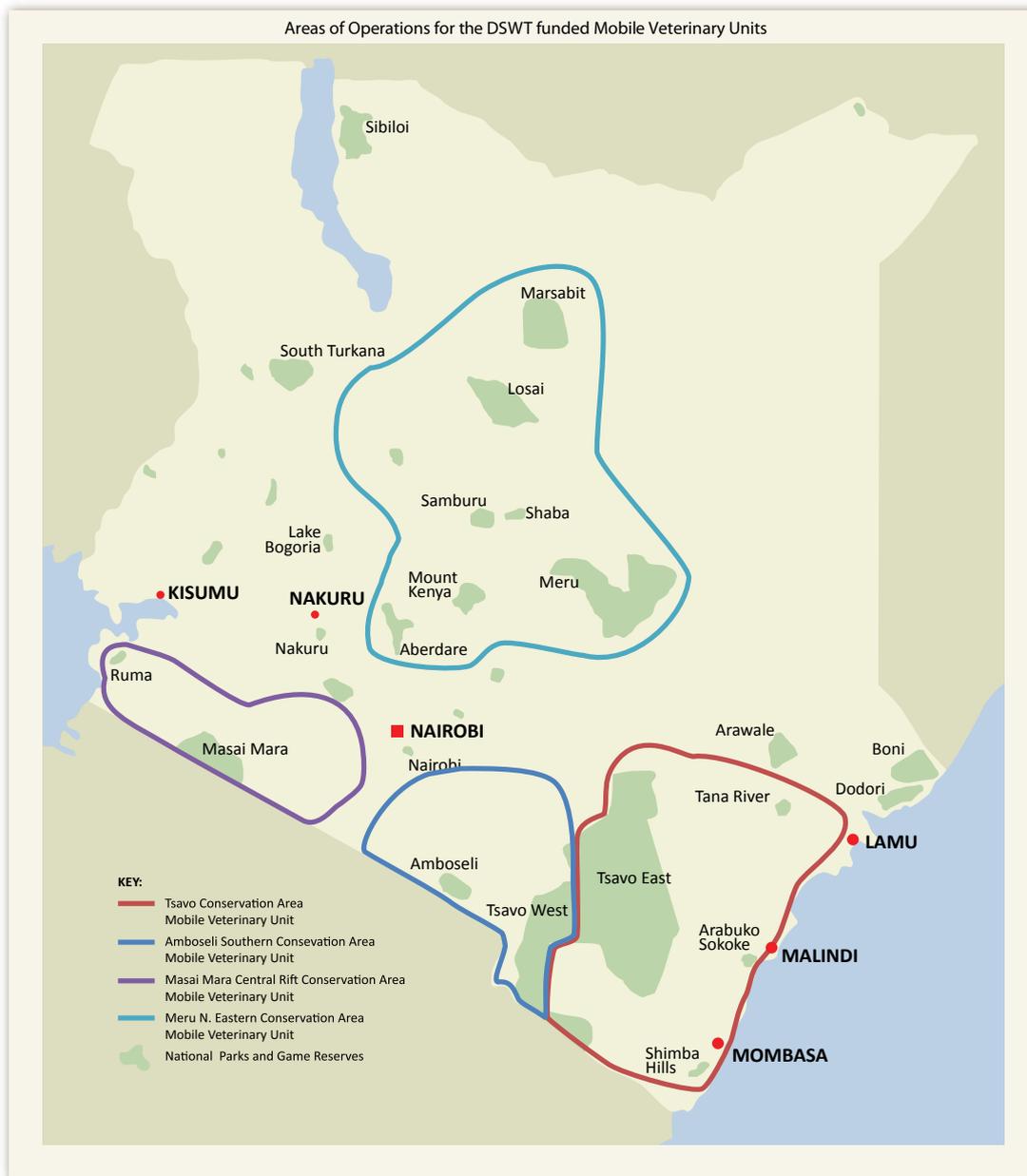
The DSWT continues to improve and enhance its response in terms of time and effort to each and every report received of an injured wild animal, ensuring that each case has the very best chance of recovery and survival. In pursuit of this, the DSWT has substantially increased its aerial and ground support to the Mobile Veterinary Units based within the greater Tsavo region and the Southern Conservation Area. The Trust's MD500 Helicopter, three Supercubs and two Cessnas are on standby throughout the year to assist wherever necessary, supporting the Veterinary Officers in terms of transportation, aerial darting and follow-up monitoring for ongoing treatment when necessary. The DSWT/KWS Anti-Poaching ground teams are also at hand should the veterinary units need support, which is often the case when treating wounded elephants.

In 2015 the DSWT's four mobile veterinary units, and the Sky Vet program, attended to 446 wild animals. These cases involved 219 elephants, 36 rhinos as well as 33 lions amongst many other species. Of these cases 44% were directly related to poaching activities, with 121 involving elephants, only 17 of which died, while a further 11 were given a guarded prognosis of recovery. These figures illustrate the success of these veterinary units and the need for rapid response deployment. Other activities performed by the KWS vets seconded to the DSWT units this year included the collaring of lions and elephants, relocations, rescues, disease research and management surveys.

Since the establishment of these units the DSWT and KWS Veterinary Officers have attended to 4,256 animals. Since 2012, taking into account the expansion of our Mobile Veterinary outreach to areas throughout Kenya, we have seen a steady increase of cases almost year on year, with 381 animals treated in 2012, 411 animals in 2013, 548 animals in 2014 and 446 animals in 2015. The rise in wildlife treated in part can be due to the increased reach of our veterinary teams but also to continuing illegal wildlife activities such as poaching,

human-wildlife conflict, and loss of habitat due to human expansion. There have been many veterinary success stories during 2015, always imparting hope and strength to the teams who work so hard, 365 days a year, as they fight to counteract the toll taken on Kenya's wildlife through poaching, bushmeat snaring and human-wildlife conflict.





### SAVING BLACK RHINO BARAKA

One such story was that of the well-known black rhino Bull named Baraka, who was born in Nakuru National Park in 1976 and later moved to Ruma National Park in Western Kenya. On the 10th October a rhino was reported to be dragging a log attached to a tight cable snare around its neck. The Sky Vet was mobilized to attend to this emergency, and an aircraft was dispatched immediately with Nairobi-based KWS Veterinary Officer Fred Olianga on board, heading to the Masai Mara to collect Dr Limo from the DSWT funded Mara Veterinary Unit.

Once the team reached Ruma they were directed to where the injured rhino was last sighted. Baraka was successfully darted on foot, since thick vegetation cover inhibited the use of a vehicle. Baraka ran for quite a distance before finally collapsing, but thankfully with aerial support, the veterinary team were guided to where he had fallen.

The winch snare strangling Baraka had caused a deep fresh wound around his neck and was removed using cable cutters, after which the wound was cleaned and treated. Once the revival drug took effect Baraka was back up on his feet, no doubt feeling untold relief to be free of the crude snare, which would ultimately have cost him his life. Had the veterinary team not attended to this rhino in good

time, Baraka would most likely have ended up becoming yet another poaching statistic. It was rewarding for all involved to have had a hand in saving one of Kenya's greatest icons.



Saving Baraka

## MWENDE'S FATHER

Poaching activities, particularly poisoned arrow poaching, were frequent in August 2015 throughout Tsavo East and West. During the first two weeks of the month both Dr Poghon of the Tsavo Veterinary Unit and Dr Njoroge of the Amboseli Veterinary Unit treated 15 injured elephants, whilst attending to numerous other cases throughout the wider Tsavo Conservation Area.

At Ithumba, on the 12th, it was a relief to finally see Mwende's father return to the stockades with a number of his male friends. This huge Bull, who fathered Mulika's calf, Mwende, as well as Yatta's baby, Yetu, hadn't been seen by the Keepers for over a year but upon closer inspection the Keepers were disturbed to see that both Mwende's father and two of his Bull friends had septic arrow wounds. We are confident that Mwende's father knew that help would be at hand should he and his wounded friends return to the Ithumba Stockades.

The Keepers immediately notified the DSWT Aerial Unit who arranged for Dr Poghon of the DSWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Veterinary Unit to be collected from Voi and flown by Helicopter directly to Ithumba for immediate veterinary intervention. On arrival at Ithumba and after an aerial search of the area, two of the other injured Bulls were spotted, but there was no sighting of Mwende's father. Dr Poghon was dropped at the scene and met by one of the DSWT's vehicles, successfully darting one of the injured Bulls from the vehicle, the helicopter flying overhead to prevent the elephant from running into thick bush. Upon inspection it was found that an arrow had penetrated the left abdominal wall and once it had been removed, the wound was successfully treated.

Having finished with the first elephant, the team embarked on treating the second one - a huge Bull with large tusks who also had severe arrow injuries. Again the elephant was darted from the vehicle whilst the helicopter was used to keep him from hiding in thick bush. However, after immobilization the elephant landed on its injured flank, necessitating the use of ropes and a tractor to turn him over in order to access the injured side. Dr Poghon was able then to treat the arrow wound, successfully removing all the pus and necrotic flesh before administering the necessary healing medications and the revival drug. Daylight was fading after the first two successful treatments, leaving Mwende's father still injured somewhere in the area.

At first light the Ithumba Keepers had sight of Mwende's father again so Dr Poghon immediately was flown in one of the Trust's Supercub to Ithumba with the helicopter in attendance for additional assistance. This familiar big Bull was soon tracked down and immobilized by Dr Poghon using a dart rifle from a vehicle whilst the helicopter was used to keep the Bull in a clear area for treatment. After 12 minutes he went down, firstly lying on his chest but finally falling on his injured side, again necessitating the use of ropes and the tractor to turn him over. The arrow wound on the abdominal wall was deep and an incision was made at the lowest point of the wound in order to drain away the pus and cut out necrotic flesh before cleaning the wounds, administering antibiotics and finally packing the wound with green clay to aid healing.

All three veterinary treatments were a success thanks to brilliant teamwork, skill, experience and the support of the DSWT's dedicated network of Veterinary, Aerial and Anti-Poaching units. Mwende and Yetu's dad remained in the area with his friends for many days after their treatments, and the teams at Ithumba were soon able to report that all their wounds had healed well and each Bull had made a full recovery.

Being in a position to administer timely and effective action, the DSWT works closely with KWS daily throughout the Tsavo Conservation Area, and has been able to contribute in saving so many wounded elephants, including iconic huge tuskers, all of whom would otherwise have perished. These are gratifying accomplishments, especially so in the case of the magnificent Bull that fathered two of our wild-born Ithumba babies. We know, through years of experience raising and rehabilitating the elephants, that it is no accident that they return to us for help. However, we are extremely mindful that none of this would be possible without the support of Vier Pfofen, Jorge Companc, Alexa Renehan, The Minara Foundation, The Samuel J. and Ethel LeFrak Charitable Trust and the Trust's many other donors.



Mwende's father



### VETERINARY NOTES FROM THE FIELD

I joined the Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit in March 2013 having previously worked at the KWS Veterinary Department HQ in Nairobi for four years. I now head the DSWT-funded Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit ably assisted by one veterinary assistant and two rangers. The unit is fully equipped with a serviceable 4x4 all weather vehicle, adequate veterinary drugs and equipment with a very dedicated team. Response to emergencies has been superb, especially when working alongside the Sky Vet programme when the unit is overwhelmed with cases, or has taken a brief break.

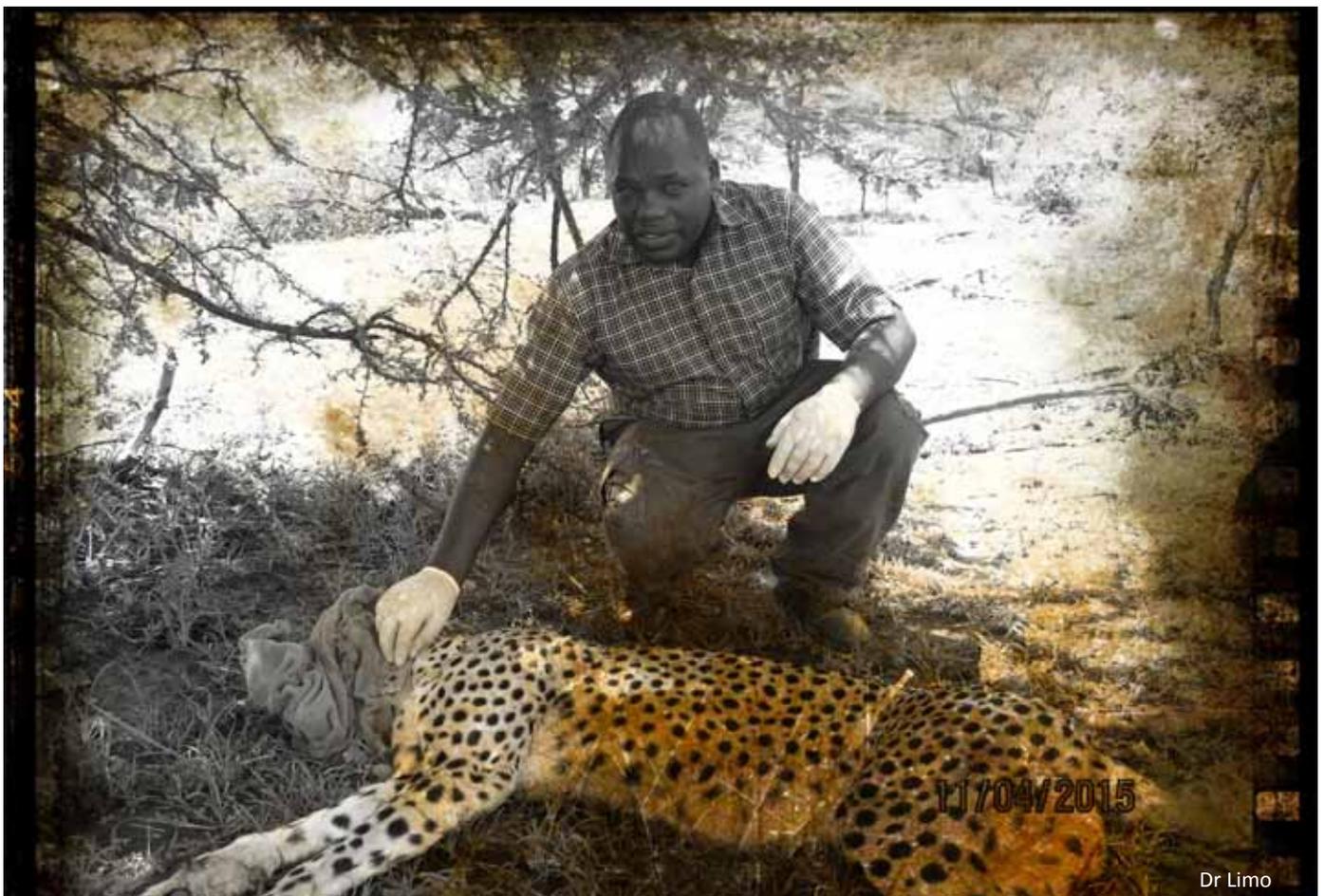
Though not without challenges, I have enjoyed every bit of my work here as a wildlife veterinarian. The Masai Mara is one area with spectacular wildlife where you encounter almost all species in Kenya, many of which I handle frequently as a vet. Apart from veterinary clinical interventions, we also carry out wildlife rescues, sample collection for disease investigation and research, post mortems to determine causes of death and other activities that assist with wildlife management and monitoring, such as ear notching of rhinos. The elephants and lions make the biggest number of clinical interventions in the Mara followed by a variety of other species.

Though based at the KWS Mara Research Station within Masai Mara National Reserve, our area of coverage goes beyond the reserve, including work within many conservancies and community areas, which benefit from our intervention activities. Once in a while we go further afield to places such as Ruma National Park and Lake Nakuru National Park for emergency veterinary intervention.

Determination and will to save Kenya's wild species has pushed my team and I to deliver in even the most challenging situations. The 'wild' always remains wild and is not for the faint hearted. Some interesting episodes include having to work deep in dense thickets dealing with big Bull elephants while unsure of what their next move will be, and also in treating the renowned marsh pride of lions who are so popular that each of the members is known and any problem with them is almost instantly detected.

The Nyakweri Forest in Trans Mara is one especially wild place with big elephants who occasionally get injured as a result of conflict with communities. I have been called on several occasions to treat these elephants who are extremely difficult to flush out of this big forest even with the use of helicopters. This forest of indigenous trees forms a continuous canopy leaving the only option to approach the elephants on foot. Out of determination and a love for these animals, we do it and it is truly terrifying sometimes because these elephants threaten and sometimes charge. It requires a lot of caution and courage but at the end of it all you feel greatly satisfied that you have helped to save one of these massive animals whose kind are dwindling rapidly.

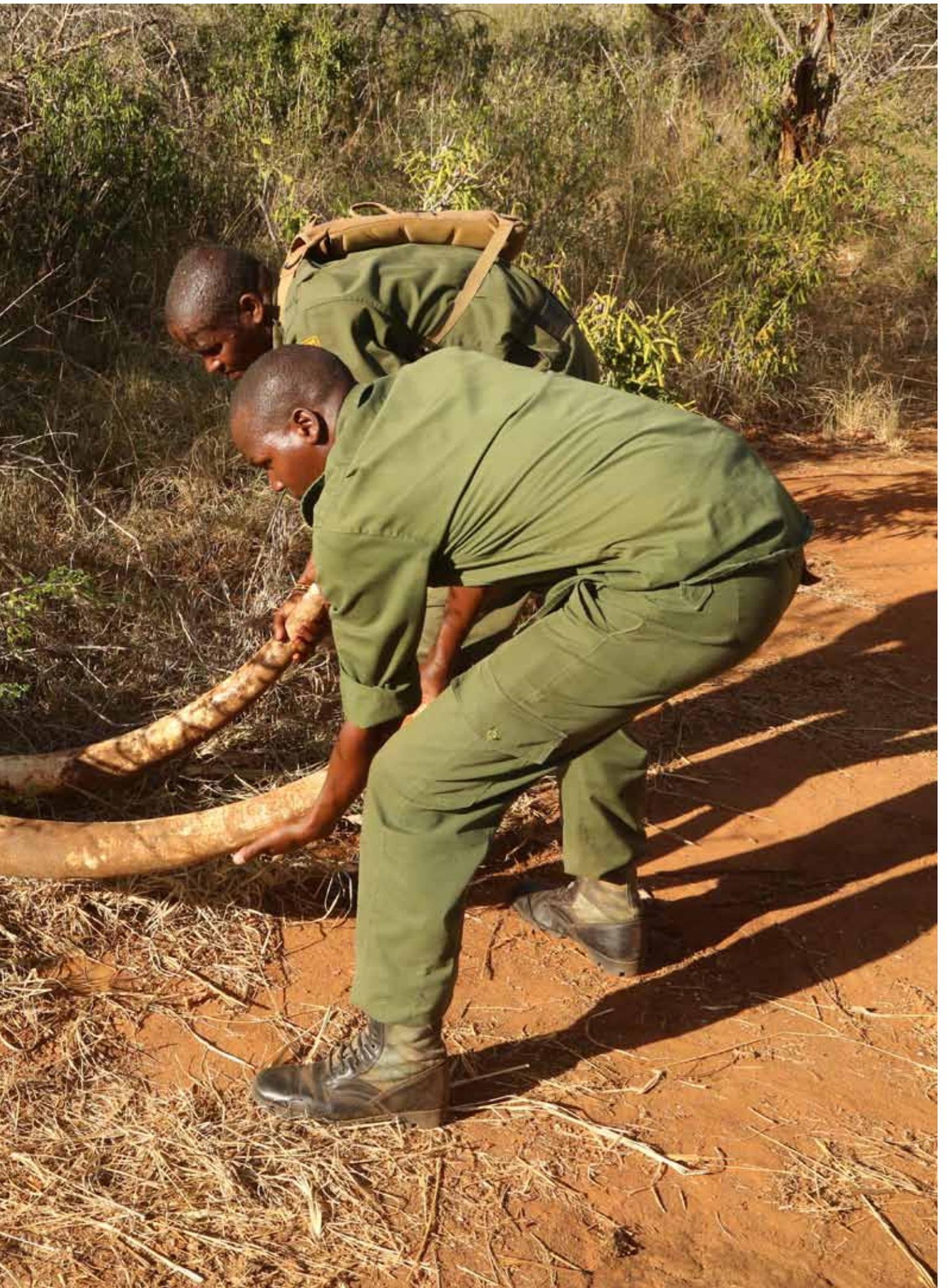
Let us all make this world a better place for everyone and conserve it for future generations to witness and enjoy. A big thank you to the Minara Foundation who have now funded this unit through the DSWT for nine years. **Dr Limo**

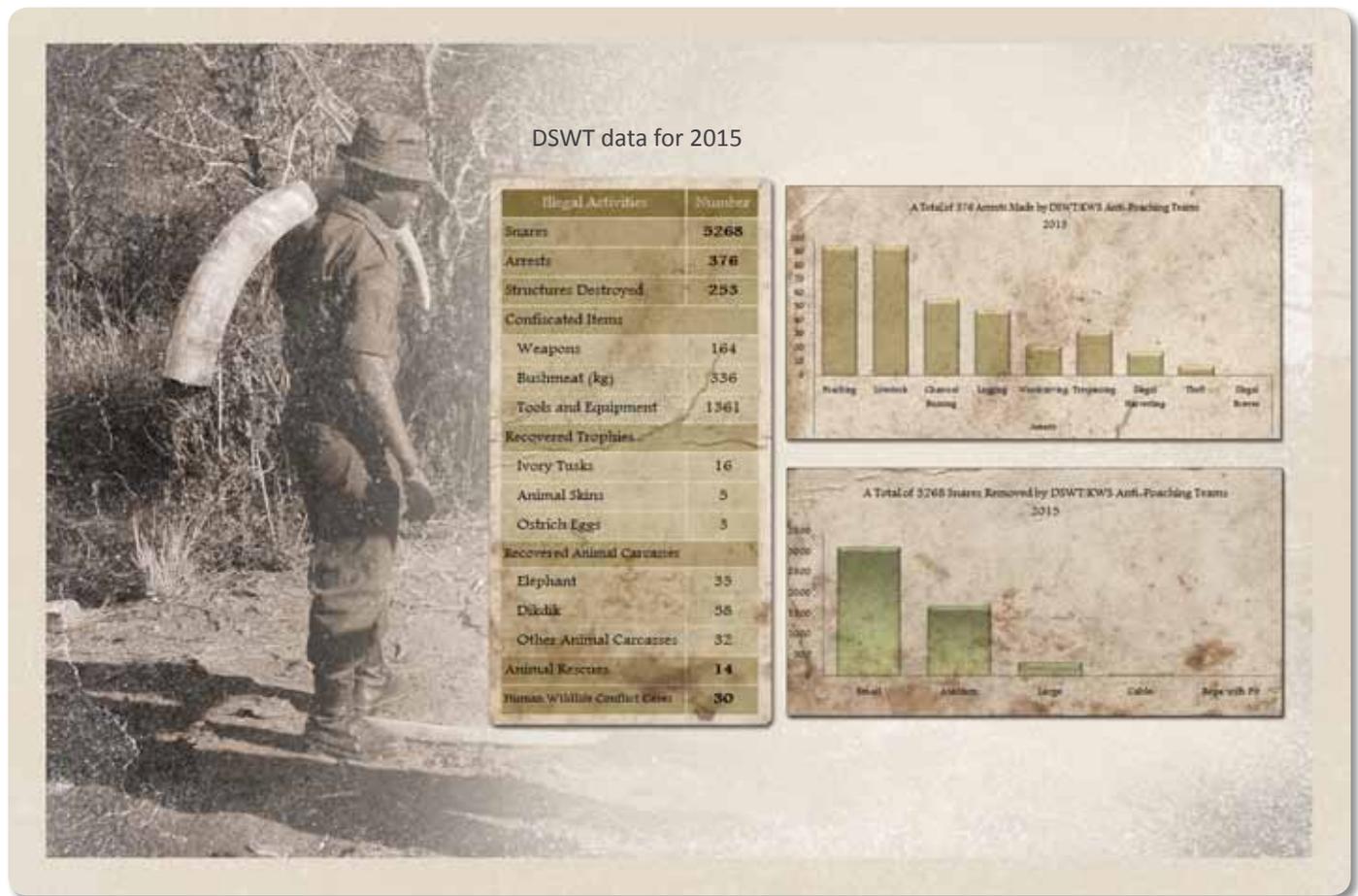


Dr Limo









## Anti-Poaching

With an anti-poaching taskforce of over 55 KWS Manyani trained and graduated rangers who patrol with armed KWS Rangers, the DSWT continues to expand its security presence over the Tsavo Conservation Area. These mobile units operate within strategic zones, often targeted by poaching and bushmeat syndicates but also deal with other illegal activities including charcoal burning, logging and livestock encroachment.

Working together with the DSWT’s Aerial Surveillance Unit, the ground teams can effectively follow-up on reports of poachers in the Parks, the presence of poaching shooting platforms and hides seen from the air, as well as elephant carcasses with or without tusks intact. The Anti-Poaching teams can also effectively track and monitor the condition of injured elephants needing veterinary intervention or follow-up treatment.

Whilst ivory poaching continues to threaten Tsavo’s elephant population, large-scale bushmeat trading, illegal logging and extensive charcoal burning have proved to be some of the greatest challenges in the Tsavo ecosystem this past year. Yet, due to more stringent fines and sentencing

in the courts, increased DSWT and KWS rangers on the ground following significant recruitment, training and commitment from KWS management, as well as increased aerial coverage, there has been a positive impact and reduction of these activities including that of elephant poaching.

During the year after daily patrolling on foot, the DSWT/KWS Anti-Poaching Units collected and recovered 5268 snares including wire and cable snares of various sizes, all set to trap and kill wildlife ranging from dik-diks to elephants, mostly to supply the demand of a growing commercial bushmeat trade. 253 illegal structures discovered in the Parks and protected areas were destroyed by the teams, of which 54 were shooting blinds, 40 poachers’ hideouts and a large number of charcoal kilns and logging sites.

The teams were also active during the year with ambushes and apprehensions, having made a total of 376 successful arrests, 95 of which were bushmeat poachers and 16 notorious ivory poachers. Many arrests were made following intelligence reports voluntarily given by informers and community members sensitised to wildlife conservation and the work of the DSWT and

KWS. When dealing with criminal activities, the DSWT units are also supported by a KWS Rapid Response Unit, comprised of highly trained KWS personnel. Through a generous grant from US Friends of the DSWT this specialised squad received a Land Cruiser in 2014, and have since received a fully-fitted trailer to ensure that they are self-sufficient and totally mobile. They have been stringently trained in the protocols associated with working in field conditions as well as working in conjunction with the DSWT helicopter and fixed wing aircraft. In the future this team will also complement the DSWT’s newest project, the Tsavo Dog Unit.

### ESTABLISHING THE DSWT TSAVO DOG UNIT

The DSWT is excited to be launching a new Anti-Poaching Dog Unit in Tsavo East in the New Year. The use of dogs in the tracking of poisoned-arrow poachers as well as other wildlife offenders is a vital tool, and one that can be used seamlessly with the support of the Trust’s aircraft, enabling rapid response and access to any area. Dog units throughout Kenya, when managed and deployed effectively and with the necessary support, have proved extremely successful.

In August 2015 the KWS's dedicated sniffer dogs assisted in the capture and arrest of six poachers in Tsavo East with support from the DSWT helicopter and rangers, proving the huge potential of such units.

During 2015 the DSWT sourced and purchased three tracker dogs from the Netherlands, which were raised and trained onsite before being relocated to a renowned Special Forces dog trainer in Tanzania. These dogs are at present being put through a training programme in Tanzania and have since been joined by six DSWT rangers, who for three months will go through lengthy training exercises with their dogs to gain knowledge, skills and trust in order to become certified Dog Handlers.

Construction of the kennels for the dogs, which are located close to the DSWT's field HQ at Kaluku in Tsavo East, and include feed stores, and training area are nearing completion. These buildings are being designed and implemented to the highest standards including all the necessary kennel and grooming fixtures, fittings and supplies needed. Accommodation for the staff is similarly nearly finished, alongside a mess area, an office and a small laboratory. An electrical fence has also been erected, which is a necessary security addition surrounding the perimeter of the unit to safeguard against wild animals and any potential security threats.

The DSWT hopes for this new unit to be the finest of its kind. These dogs will provide enormous support towards the KWS/ DSWT's anti-poaching ground efforts and will also become a very intimidating factor throughout the TCA for those committing wildlife crimes, in particular ivory poaching, given that the dogs rarely lose a scent and cannot easily be evaded.

One of the DSWT's many missions



Canine Unit

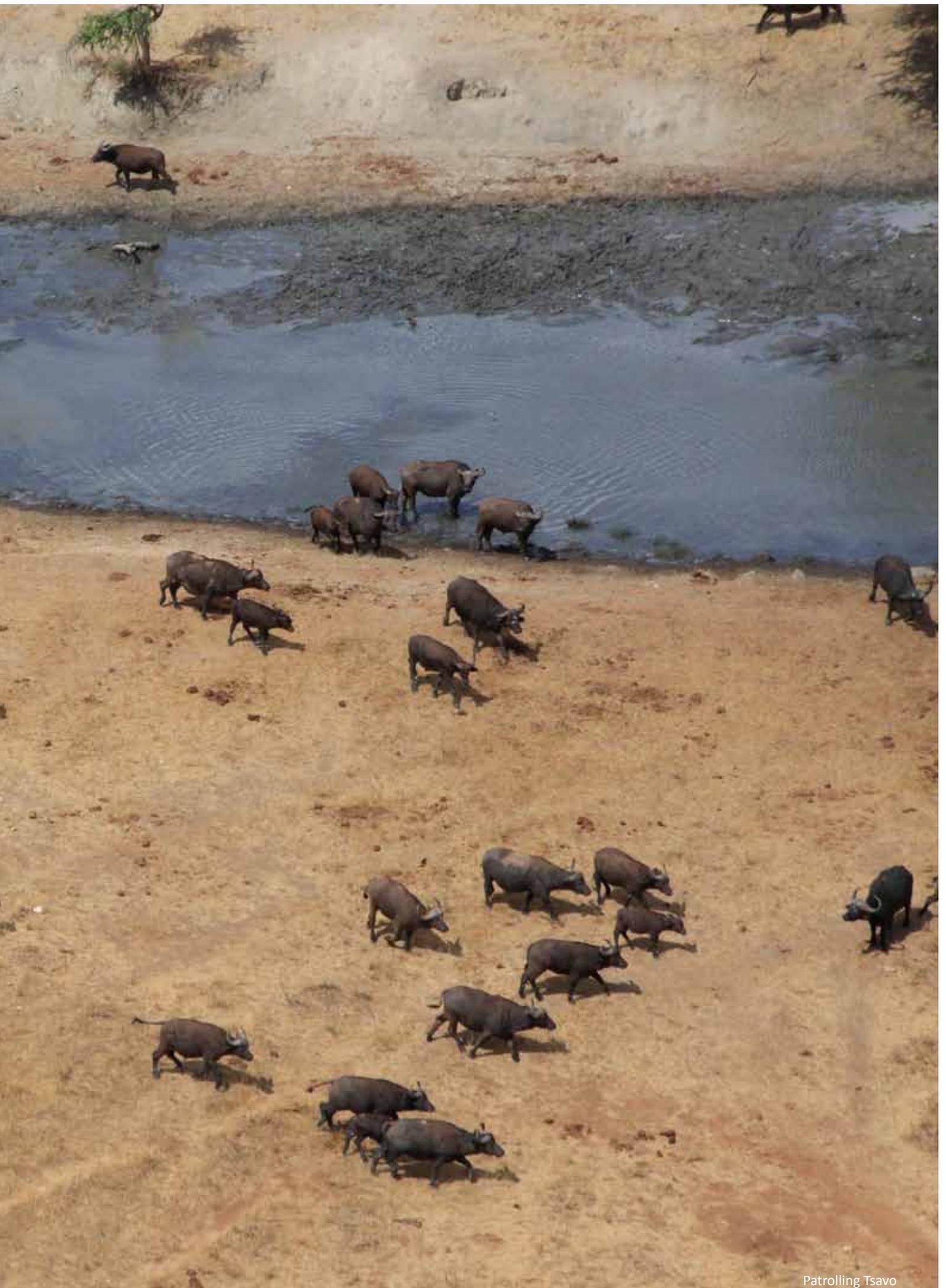


Poached Elephants



Aerial Unit supporting ground teams





## Aerial Surveillance

throughout 2015 was to further utilise the power of Aviation for Conservation, as it is from the air that most illegal activities and potential threats are first recognised. Whether it is sighting illegal activities such as poaching, snaring, logging and charcoal burning, or injured wildlife and Orphan rescues, aerial units have revolutionised the ability to conserve large tracts of land, whilst an aerial presence has the ability to keep ecosystems more secure.

The DSWT's Aerial Surveillance Unit based at the Trust's Kaluku HQ in Tsavo East has been active in many operations during the year, with its three Supercubs, Cessna 185, MD500 Helicopter and recently acquired Cessna 206 all participating in anti-poaching activities, mobile veterinary treatments, human-wildlife conflict mitigation and saving habitat programs. During 2015 alone the Aerial Unit flew over 1,200 hours covering over 165,000kms throughout the Tsavo Conservation Area, areas bordering Parks and ranches as well as the coastal Lamu District.

The Supercubs are excellent aircraft for regular aerial patrols conducted across Tsavo, due to their ability to fly slow and low, allowing the aerial team to locate shooting blinds around water holes or to identify an injured elephant in amongst a herd. The fact that they can also be landed on rugged bush strips means they can easily support ground personnel in anti-poaching and darting activities.

The Cessna 185, which has the ability to operate out of short runways with heavy loads, has proven essential in assisting with elephant treatment exercises. Its speed and eight-hour endurance means the

aerial team can support the anti-poaching teams in Lamu and Meru, and carry equipment and supplies. With six seats it can carry KWS officials who need a bird's eye view of their operating zones, and it will be very useful for transporting the new tracker dogs. The Cessna 206 is a newcomer to the fleet. It will be used for transporting the Dog Unit as well as for veterinary operations, while at the same time it will be valuable for ferrying supplies and dignitaries around.

The helicopter with its field agility, is extremely valuable during darting operations. For example, when one of the Supercubs identifies an injured elephant, the helicopter can transport the vet to the area, dart the elephant from the air and drop the vet onsite to treat it in the most remote locations. This means that the ground team and vet are kept safer than they would normally be during darting exercises conducted on foot or from vehicles, making the process more efficient. With a couple of rangers on-board, the helicopter can also conduct surveillance missions and undertake spot checks of illegal activities in areas inaccessible to vehicles and fixed wing aircraft.

Regular aerial patrols have resulted in reduced elephant poaching and illegal activities, enhancing the effective deployment of anti-poaching ground personnel by locating illegal activity and wildlife movements, assisting in gathering management data provided to KWS officers and decision makers, whilst substantially improving response times, and success rate, of injured elephants.

### FIELD NOTES FROM A PILOT

The last year has had its share of ups and downs, but has been encouraging on so many levels. In the Aerial Unit, we are afforded a great perspective of the environment as a whole. Where our ground teams really understand the situation on the ground, their work limits them to a relatively small area of operation, whereas we have the amazing opportunity to experience every corner of the Tsavo ecosystem and beyond. Whether we are responding to findings from the ground or making discoveries during our own patrols we begin to get a feeling for where the current threats are and how severe they are. What I think we are witnessing is a gradual decline in poaching, especially of elephant in Kenya. Of course the situation is always changing, and there is a natural ebb and flow to illegal activity that centres around the presence of water, but the overall trend seems to be down. There is still a sick feeling in the gut when a fresh carcass is sighted, but I take pride in the knowledge that my efforts and the efforts of DSWT are helping to make that a rarer occurrence. Although I know that the act of aerial surveillance is a major deterrent to poachers it is infinitely more satisfying when a sighting from the air leads to an arrest or alternatively, when I am able to assist the veterinary teams in saving the lives of injured elephants.

This year, our aircraft were instrumental in a huge number of veterinary cases. Without the aircraft, many injured elephants would die undiscovered. Even those elephants that are sighted by rangers on patrol or by tourists on safari, often disappear and cannot be found again without the use of a plane. Injured elephant sightings are also an early indicator of poaching activity. In March this year, sightings by the aerial unit alerted DSWT to the presence of a poacher operating in the Kamboyo area in Tsavo West. Not only were we able to treat more than 10 elephants with poison arrow wounds, but a joint operation between our team and KWS resulted in the successful apprehension of the poacher responsible. He did have ivory in his possession, meaning that he did successfully kill at least one elephant, but without the help of the Aerial Unit, he would have killed many more.

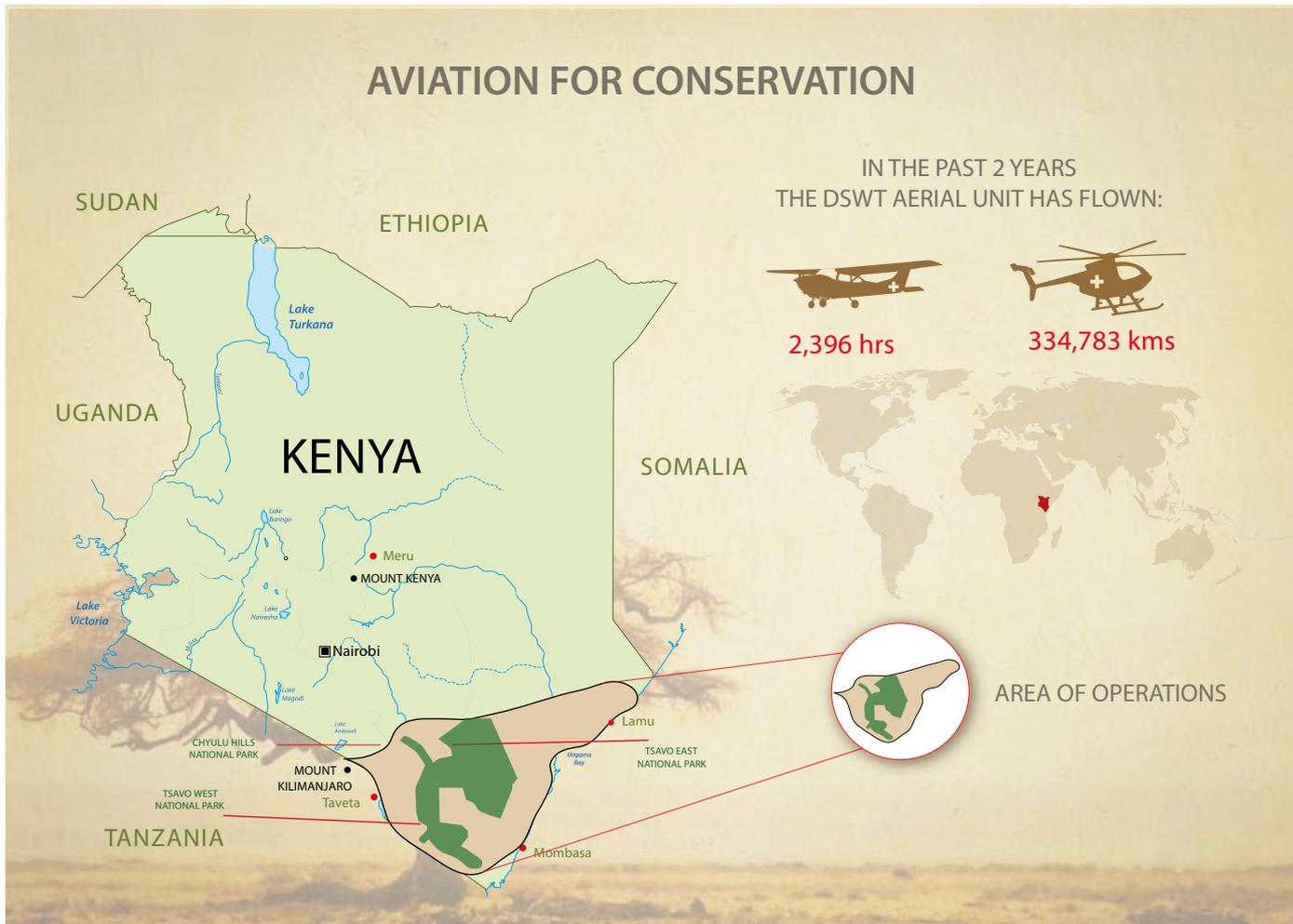
Other non-flying aspects of my work with DSWT have also yielded encouraging results. I have been fortunate in having the opportunity to help expand our work with the communities whose lives are so inextricably linked to the health of the Parks. Among our new community projects is a beehive fence that aims to provide a natural solution to elephant-wildlife conflict. At the moment it is a relatively small project, but it protects a number of the hardest hit subsistent farmers in the area from elephants and provides income in the form of honey sales as well.

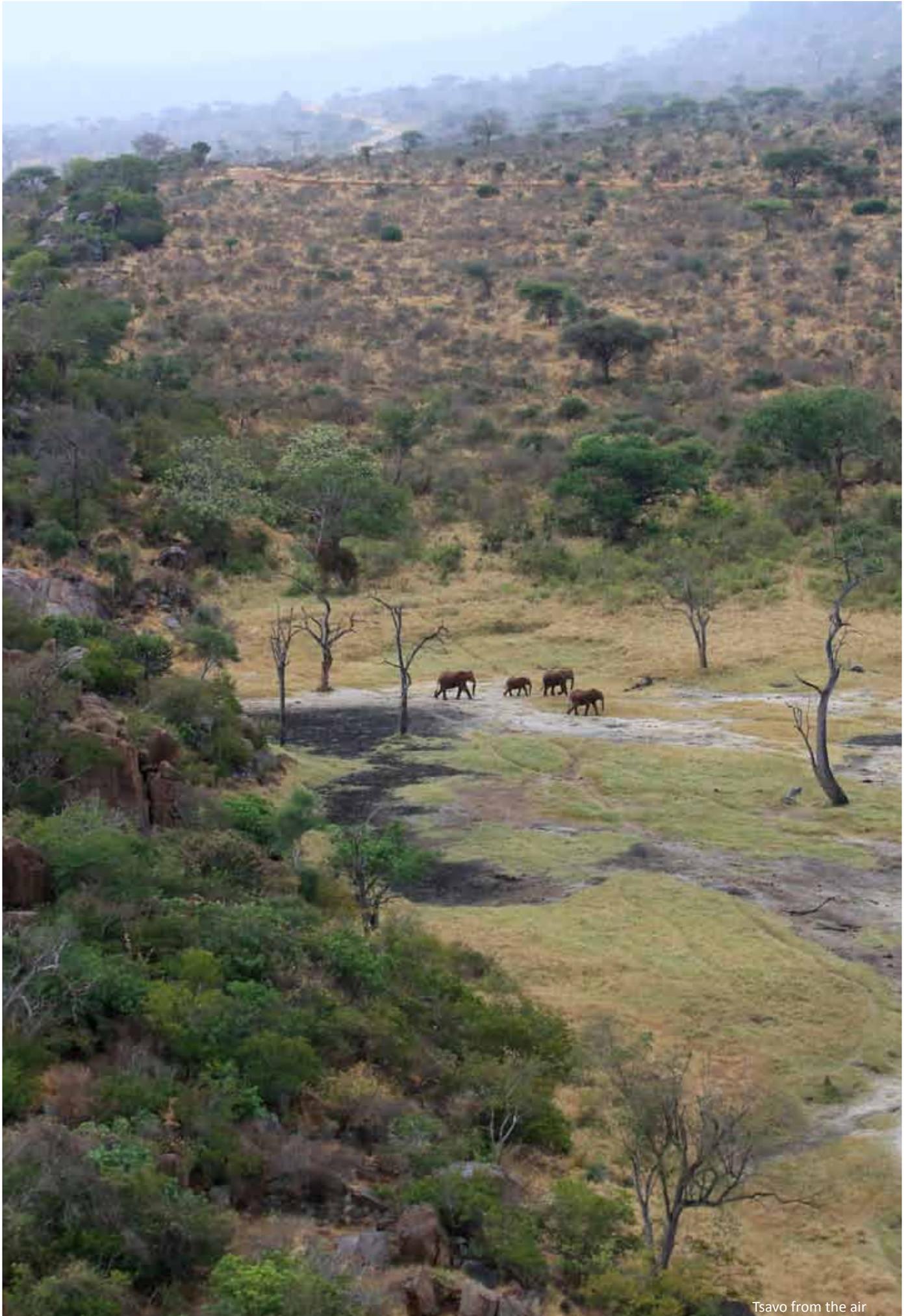
My work at the Trust this year has also enabled me to pursue one of my greatest passions – forests. We have been busy planning and seeking funding for a large scale reforestation project in the Chyulu Hills, which will provide new habitat for wildlife, reduce erosion, improve the capacity of this important water catchment and create employment for people living along the boundary of the Park.

As I reflect on the year, I am thankful for the chance to not only enjoy such a diverse job, but am also excited about the future. I am excited to be a part of so much amazing work. **Neville Sheldrick**

**KIBWEZI FOREST**

# AVIATION FOR CONSERVATION





Tsavo from the air



DSWT Airwing



Neville Sheldrick



## Saving Habitats

The Kibwezi Forest is now protected along three boundaries by 55.6kms of human and animal proof electric fencing, this year having seen the completion of another 8.6km added along the northern boundary of the forest bordering the eastern side of the Chyulu Hills National Park. This was not an easy task as the Chyulu Hills NP boundary cuts straight through a recent lava flow where the holes for each fence pole had to be painstakingly carved out of rock. This additional fence-line is key to providing increased security over the Forest and the growing numbers of wild elephants within, as well as the nine elephant Orphans who have since been translocated to the new relocation stockades constructed near the Umani Springs.

Just as crucial, this fence will begin to address the issue of human-wildlife conflict, which is a major threat to the community and the forest's wildlife. In the last 12 months, the DSWT has responded to over a dozen incidents, mostly involving elephants from both the Kibwezi Forest and the greater Chyulu Hills Area. Responding to these cases involved the use of vehicles and aerial support from both the DSWT's fixed-wing aircraft and the helicopter, in order to effectively chase elephants back into the Forest or the Park. In October 2015, three giraffes found themselves caught in community land. A DSWT pilot was called to push the giraffes back into the forest to protect them from the gathering crowd who wanted to kill them for meat. One of the giraffes was successfully herded back into the forest, but unfortunately the other two were butchered, one having been attacked and killed by the crowd and the other falling badly on sharp lava. This incident highlights the increasing pressure surrounding this valuable protected area and the importance that a fence will have in ensuring the safety of all wildlife within. The fence will also provide an effective deterrent for armed poachers that may search for the few remaining black rhinos inhabiting the area.

The DSWT continues to do what it can to protect the ground water springs, but continues to strongly oppose the over-utilisation of the springs by outside entities, as the importance of protecting wetland ecosystems is well-documented and far-reaching. Since reports of these wetlands drying up with large acreages of trees beginning to die out within the Kibwezi Forest, there have been recent indications that this destructive trend is reversing thanks to support from Cabinet

Secretary Prof Judy Wakhugu. It is not too late to restore water to the wetlands to enable them to regenerate should better management decisions be made by those in overall authority.

Our anti-poaching efforts in this area have resulted in a total of 11 arrests so far this year, the majority of which were for logging. Five of these arrests were made with assistance from the team that normally operates out of the Chyulu Hills National Park. The team also managed to lift 165 snares and confiscate another 10 from poachers before they could be installed.

This year the Forest also hosted the training of the new Dog Handlers, who will eventually head the DSWT's new Dog Unit, based near the DSWT Field Headquarters in Kaluku. This unit will be operating throughout the Tsavo Conservation Area, including the Kibwezi Forest and the Chyulu Hills to assist in tracking poachers and wildlife criminals. These trainees were evaluated over the course of three months before being sent to Tanzania for training.

During October, Makueni County Government, in consultation with the National Government, suspended firewood collection and cattle grazing in the Kibwezi Forest until further notice. The reason for this decision was that resource utilization was unsustainable and increasingly detrimental to the health of this important forest ecosystem. There was also evidence that firewood collection was not being done in accordance with KFS regulations. Specifically, live wood was being harvested illegally, with collectors venturing further into the forest and out of approved collection zones. The DSWT will continue to monitor the forest closely to assess the impact that this decision has on the health of the ecosystem.

Rehabilitation efforts will be aided by this recent decision from the County Government to put a hold on resource utilization within the forest as firewood collection and livestock grazing were significantly hampering vegetative regrowth. To further accelerate regeneration, the Kibwezi Forest team, along with community members, have continued to improve the Forest's tree-planting programme and have planted over 10,000 trees in degraded areas during the course of the year with many more saplings planted during the November rains. The trees planted include the indigenous

*Acacia mellifera*, *Trichilia emetic*, *Acacia xanthophlea* and *Newtonia hildebrandtii*.

The roads within the Kibwezi Forest are being constantly maintained utilising six community workers to manage this extensive network, clearing long grass and fallen trees and cutting back encroaching vegetation. A crew of fence attendants also are also responsible for maintenance of the electric fence. A huge improvement to the road system this year was the addition of signs at all major junctions, whilst key sights have also been mapped including the locations of several giant ficus trees.

Bush fires in the Chyulu Hills have been particularly fierce this year, burning large swathes of dry deciduous forest and lapping at the edges of the cloud forest. However, the Kibwezi Forest has fortunately been spared, the Kibwezi team continuing to maintain many kilometres of roads/firebreaks, confident that any rogue fires that may slip into the area will be contained.

During 2015 an international exchange programme took place in the United States for teachers from the local Kibwezi community. The teachers of this joint sponsorship programme between the DSWT and the US Government have since returned from the United States and are now educating their communities.

There are currently a total of nine Orphan elephants living happily in the Kibwezi Forest and adapting to life in the wild. Since these young elephants do not have wild Ex-Orphans already in situ, it is expected to take longer for them to reintegrate into the wild than typically takes place at the Voi and Ithumba Stockades, where in these two locations, there are established Ex-Orphan herds that help encourage young Orphans to venture away from the comfort of the stockades and start interacting more with their wild brethren.

This year has witnessed a marked increase in the number of guests staying at the DSWT's self-catering Umani Springs Lodge. This is attributable in part to the presence of the elephant Orphans, which draws foster parents and supporters of the DSWT, but the lodge is also becoming popular with local tourists as well as high-end safari operators due to the Forest's unique wildlife and exclusivity.



Chyulu Hills National Park



Kibwezi forest



Amu Ranch

## Saving Habitats

The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust is deeply involved in supporting this community conservation project home to some of Kenya's greatest biodiversity. LCT/ DSWT has continued to build on good working relations with County and National Government in an effort to harness the energy and goodwill of the communities to preserve this extraordinarily important eco-system.

### PROJECT AMU

Daily patrols continue to be conducted by the LCT's Rangers in vehicles and on foot, where several arrests have been made of poachers, loggers, livestock herders, wine tappers and other wildlife offenders. Deterrent sentences have been given to many of the offenders in courts of law whilst there are still several cases awaiting judgment.

Wildlife numbers have continued to increase despite sporadic illegal activities, especially in the case of giraffes, hippos, topis, buffaloes, warthogs, wild dogs, lesser kudus and zebras among other species. The numbers of zebras now within the ranch is incredible. Large herds have been sighted in wider ranging areas of the ranch.

The Ranch has a network of over 200km of roads and security tracks. The tracks are constantly being maintained, as with heavy rains during the year ongoing maintenance is necessary. Two ranger houses have this year been constructed and completed at Faruq Camp, which have the capacity to accommodate 40 KWS or KPR rangers. These houses have also been provided with beds, mattresses and bedding, mosquito nets and lockers. A large workshop has also been built at Faruq's Camp with two side stores; one store for spare parts and a workshop office, as well as another store for fuel storage. A full-time mechanic was employed in January to maintain the project's vehicles and machinery.

The indigenous tree nursery has been revamped at Faruq Camp with a dedicated member of staff employed in January 2015 to manage it, whilst a well has been deepened at the camp to provide water for it throughout the year. There are currently over 10,000 indigenous tree seedlings being nurtured at the nursery whilst nearly 3,000 seedlings have been planted with a further 800 planted at schools within the greater area to encourage children and the community alike to protect their trees and forested areas.

Conservation education programs have been carried out by LCT staff in neighbouring schools and villages utilising lectures and film shows to raise awareness on the importance of conservation amongst the communities. As a result, many school children and villagers have been volunteering information on any illegal activity taking place within the Ranch and this has led to an increased numbers of arrests.

LCT continued to partner with the Lamu Cultural Promotion Group and the Lamu County Government participating in this year's Lamu Cultural Festival by becoming a sponsor. The Lamu Conservation Trust had a stand in Lamu Old Town during the festival, displaying images of the environment and wildlife protection activities, whilst also providing information on the Trust's other conservation initiatives which interested both residents and visitors. Mr Robert Carr-Hartley, Trustee of the Lamu Conservation Trust, gave a public lecture on environmental conservation during the festival. The lecture was well attended by many visitors as well as senior officers of the Lamu County Government, members of parliament, religious leaders and elders.

At the close of the festival Mr Robert Carr-Hartley gave another lecture on conservation with a direct link to ecotourism, attended by the Lamu County Governor, some visiting Governors, several County Ministers, the National Managing Director of the Kenya Tourist Board, tourism stake holders and many other important guests. Recent meetings with the County Governor H. E. Issa Timamy and relevant County Ministers has greatly widened the scope and future efforts of the LCT towards the conservation of natural resources, whether that of wildlife, marine habitats and cultural heritage.

### WITU FOREST & WITU LIVESTOCK COOPERATIVE

The DSWT has once again partnered with the KFS in a public-private partnership to manage Witu Forest Reserve in Lamu County, which is a 17,000-acre indigenous forest and a vital biodiversity reservoir. Since establishing a partnership with the LCT, Witu Livestock has been successful in preventing further poaching activities deterring deforestation by averting fires set deliberately by encroachers. The team heading the Witu Livestock programme has also been active in community outreach initiatives, working together with

the communities of Pandanguo, a ranch near the North West of Witu Livestock. Several discussions have taken place with community elders with agreement to collaborate fully in the environmental conservation programmes proposed by the LCT.

Each month the team, including DSWT-funded community rangers, take part in a number of joint patrols in conjunction with Kenya Wildlife Service Rangers throughout the greater ecosystem. Many such patrols take place following tip-offs from local informers concerning illegal activities. Two poachers were caught by the team red handed in possession of fresh buffalo meat. They were prosecuted and found guilty by the District Magistrates court and sentenced to three years in jail or a fine of ksh 200,000 each. However, a week later the offenders seemed to have been set free contrary to the court verdict. An offender was also arrested for mass indigenous tree destruction being in possession of 243 pieces of timber and a brand new power saw. He was arrested and escorted to Witu police station and subsequently charged in court with the case still pending at the Witu District Magistrate Court.

With such security measures in place Witu Livestock Cooperative Group Ranch is experiencing positive results in terms of a significant decrease in unmanaged livestock grazing, logging and bushmeat poaching and as a result are experiencing an increase in wildlife numbers.

Since establishing these partnerships, information is received instantly from members of the community showing successful cooperation and goodwill and this is a significant achievement. Herds of elephants have been sighted within the Witu Forest during team ground patrols in August 2015, indicating that the wildlife in the area is feeling more at ease in a safer environment.

### PANDANGUO BONI COMMUNITY LAND

The Pandanguo coastal forest ecosystem contains a wealth of biodiversity, much of it endemic and endangered. The forest is home to the Aweer or Boni People, who have been stewards of the forest for generations. Historically, the Boni have been semi-nomadic forest dwellers whose livelihoods have depended on wood, meat, honey herbal medicines and the fertile soil of the

Pandanguo forest. The Boni people were forcibly resettled in the 1960s and 1970s and much of their forest gazetted, alienating their right to the land and its natural resources and undermining their culture, which included traditional resource usage. Destruction of large parts of their forests along with the marginalization of the Boni communities by the Government, plus lack of education and health care has left them struggling to forge new livelihoods.

The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust through the community Lamu Conservation Trust, wishes to propose an agreement with a committee of elders from the Boni community to establish a system of payment to the Boni people to encourage conservation practices. The concept behind this proposal is recognition that the Boni people are renting and/or selling their birth right to external populations in order to improve their living conditions, and this is resulting in the destruction of the Pandanguo Forest and the erosion of their traditional livelihood. Recognising the inherent right of the Boni people to improve their quality of life, The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust wishes to propose an alternative means through which this can be achieved. Rather than renting or selling the land to external agriculturalists, the DSWT would seek to establish an agreement in order to create a system of payments through which the Boni people can be rewarded for maintaining the ecological integrity of their forest. The DSWT would also seek to encourage, through further benefit payments, the reforestation of previously deforested areas and the reclamation of land currently utilized by external agricultural entities. The goal of this proposal is to protect the ecological integrity of the Pandanguo Forest Ecosystem under the umbrella of the LCT and to support the historical role of the Boni people as the stewards and protectors of the Pandanguo Forest.

**PEREGRINE CONSERVATION AREA**

Because the Tsavo Conservation Area is too



Lamu



Amu Ranch



arid for farming, much marginal land is for sale around the Park boundaries. Any land that can be purchased and set aside for wildlife is an effective conservation initiative. The Trust is in the process of enlarging its conservation area on the Athi River boundary of Tsavo, which is known as the Peregrine Conservation Area.

Elephants are swiftly returning to populate this area, which had been abandoned for three decades. There has also been a marked increase in plains game and smaller browsing species, such as kudu and dikdik. Increasing the DSWT's land holding would benefit wildlife and act as an important security buffer zone for two segments of Tsavo's boundaries. The Peregrine Conservation Area, which is also the location of the DSWT's Kaluku HQ in Tsavo East, is a vital boundary for Tsavo East National Park and the DSWT has been carefully acquiring parcels of land now amounting to some 4,000 acres.

**THE MWALUGANJE ELEPHANT SANCTUARY**

In 1995 the Mwaluganje Elephant Sanctuary (MES) was officially opened by the Kenya Wildlife Service as a community ecotourism project. The project was established to combat severe human-elephant conflict within the area, which in 1972 had been allocated as farmland despite the land being unsuitable for any meaningful crop production due to crop-raiding elephants from the Mwaluganje Forest and Shimba Hills National Reserve.

To resolve this conflict, the KWS, government agencies and NGOs decided to seek community grassroots support through education and mobilization persuading the communities and landowners to lease part of their land to create a migratory corridor for the elephants between the Mwaluganje Forest Reserve and the Shimba Hills National Reserve, and thus forming the Mwaluganje Elephant Sanctuary, which would hopefully allow the communities to grow their crops on the rest of their land without elephant interference.

This sanctuary and bordering forest reserve are critical habitats for wildlife in the ecosystem. Approximately 300 elephants are believed to reside within the area, while an impressive number of migratory and endemic bird species have been recorded within the habitat. The MES is also home to "Kaya Mtae" and "Chitsanze forest grove", which are gazetted by the National Museums of Kenya as National Monuments.

The project now has 264 community members, the vast majority being local subsistence farmers, owning approximately 7,000 acres of land. Due to low visitor numbers, caused by tourism-related challenges in Kenya and poor infrastructure, since 2013 the DSWT has been supporting the Sanctuary by funding its annual 'compensation pay-out' to the landowners for the land they have allowed to be utilised by the sanctuary, whilst also providing funding for salaries of the MES employees, including wildlife rangers and support staff.

According to KWS records, human-elephant conflict cases in the surrounding areas have significantly declined since the establishment of the sanctuary, further underscoring its importance in elephant conservation and protection of local community livelihoods, whilst no reports of elephant poaching incidents have been reported since 1st June 2014. This is attributed to improved security in the Sanctuary provided by MES and KWS rangers as well as co-operation from the community in providing information to the Sanctuary staff and KWS security personnel. KWS patrols in the MES have also stopped local people from illegal fishing and over extraction in the Manolo river, revealing a noticeable increase in sightings of game utilizing this water resource, including buffalo, warthog, impala and waterbuck.

**CHYULU ANTI-POACHING VEHICLE**

In an effort to contribute towards the protection of wildlife and its



Athi River



Peregrine conservation area



Mwaluganje elephant sanctuary



Mwaluganje elephant sanctuary

## Support for the Kenya Wildlife Service

habitat, The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust has donated a new customised Land Rover to the Kenya Wildlife Service during 2015 earmarked for the Chyulu Hills National Park. Working in partnership with stakeholders, the DSWT is committed to supporting this important and picturesque National Park. With its mist forests, it is not only a vital water catchment for the region, but also home to some of Kenya's last remaining free roaming black rhinos.

### WINDMILLS AND BOREHOLES IN THE SOUTHERN SECTOR OF TSAVO EAST

To meet water demands throughout the dry seasons, the DSWT has been building water troughs and installing solar power to operate the new Kanderi borehole as well as support water projects in the Voi, Ndara, Aruba and Dida Haria areas. Additionally, this year a number of the DSWT's heavily relied upon boreholes and their windmills within the southern sector of Tsavo East National Park failed due to the corrosive nature of the underground water. This necessitated the replacement of moving parts, yet thankfully, due to the hard work of so many, the boreholes were up and running without too much delay, filling the water troughs and overflowing into the mud wallows beyond. These provide vital and much relied upon water for all animals, from the elephant herds of Tsavo to the plains game and predators.

Not only did the Trust fund the drilling of these boreholes, but has also provided on-going maintenance to help alleviate Tsavo's water challenges. The DSWT commissioned a fifth borehole near Kanderi where fresh water now spills into three water troughs and a waterhole beyond. With droughts becoming more common within these arid regions, investing in water programmes is of the utmost importance.

### TSAVO FENCE-LINES

Fence-lines are a long-term commitment for the DSWT, as they need constant monitoring and maintenance in order to be effective, and this entails a significant and on-going financial commitment, as a fence is only as effective as its maintenance. Local community members are employed by the Trust in order to effectively maintain these fence-lines, which not only offers much needed employment but creates both cooperation and goodwill within communities bordering the protected areas. Over the years the David Sheldrick Wildlife

Trust has constructed 63km along the Tsavo East National Park northern boundary, which the DSWT in the future wishes to upgrade in phases to an un-shortable fence, which will entail a significant investment. This upgrade is necessary as both an elephant-proof fence and to prevent human intrusion as well.

### CONSERVATION BURSARY AWARDS

The DSWT financially supports further training and education for staff and special candidates. This year the DSWT has supported its Kibwezi Forest Field Manager James Mbuthia to undertake a Master's degree in Wildlife and Conservation whilst continuing his role in the field. Similarly, Moses Wakesa, an ex-Burra team leader has been supported for further studies.

### SECURITY FUEL

The DSWT donates fuel to the KWS in the Tsavo Conservation Area in order to 'keep the wheels turning'. The KWS regularly appeals to the DSWT for fuel supplies due to a shortage of funds dedicated to field activities. Fuel is vital for all anti-poaching and field activities as well as for generators and other equipment.

### MECHANICAL SUPPORT

The DSWT has provided four new engines/gear boxes as well as spare parts in order to keep KWS vehicles in working condition so that anti-poaching patrols continue in the protected areas under KWS control. The DSWT has also rehabilitated a number of fuel pumps at the KWS HQ in Voi to ensure that their diesel tanks continue to be operational.

### REHABILITATED KWS NDII NDAZA CAMP

The DSWT has supported the re-drilling of a borehole at Ndi Ndaza, which is located in a remote corner of Tsavo East National Park, and is where 13 Kenya Wildlife Service rangers are now permanently stationed in order to patrol this sensitive area. The DSWT have also supplied tents and enhanced the security of the camp by enclosing the two-acre site within an unshortable electric fence.

The DSWT is involved in numerous projects aimed at raising conservation awareness and sustainably improving education and



Vehicle donation



Borehole drilling



Electric fence lines



Water for Tsavo

# DSWT COMMUNITY OUTREACH WORK

2015



1,775

SCHOOL CHILDREN  
visited Tsavo National Park  
on our dedicated school field trips



71

FIELD TRIPS  
arranged and operated by our  
Community Outreach team



54,525

SCHOOL CHILDREN  
visited our Nairobi elephant orphanage

## DONATIONS



327

DESKS DONATED  
to local schools bordering  
Tsavo National Park



14,000

TREES & SAPLINGS  
DONATED



140 kms

FENCE LINES  
to prevent human/wildlife  
conflict

PAST 5 YEARS



84

SCHOOLS SUPPORTED by DSWT



226,274

SCHOOL CHILDREN  
visited our Nairobi elephant orphanage

## DONATIONS



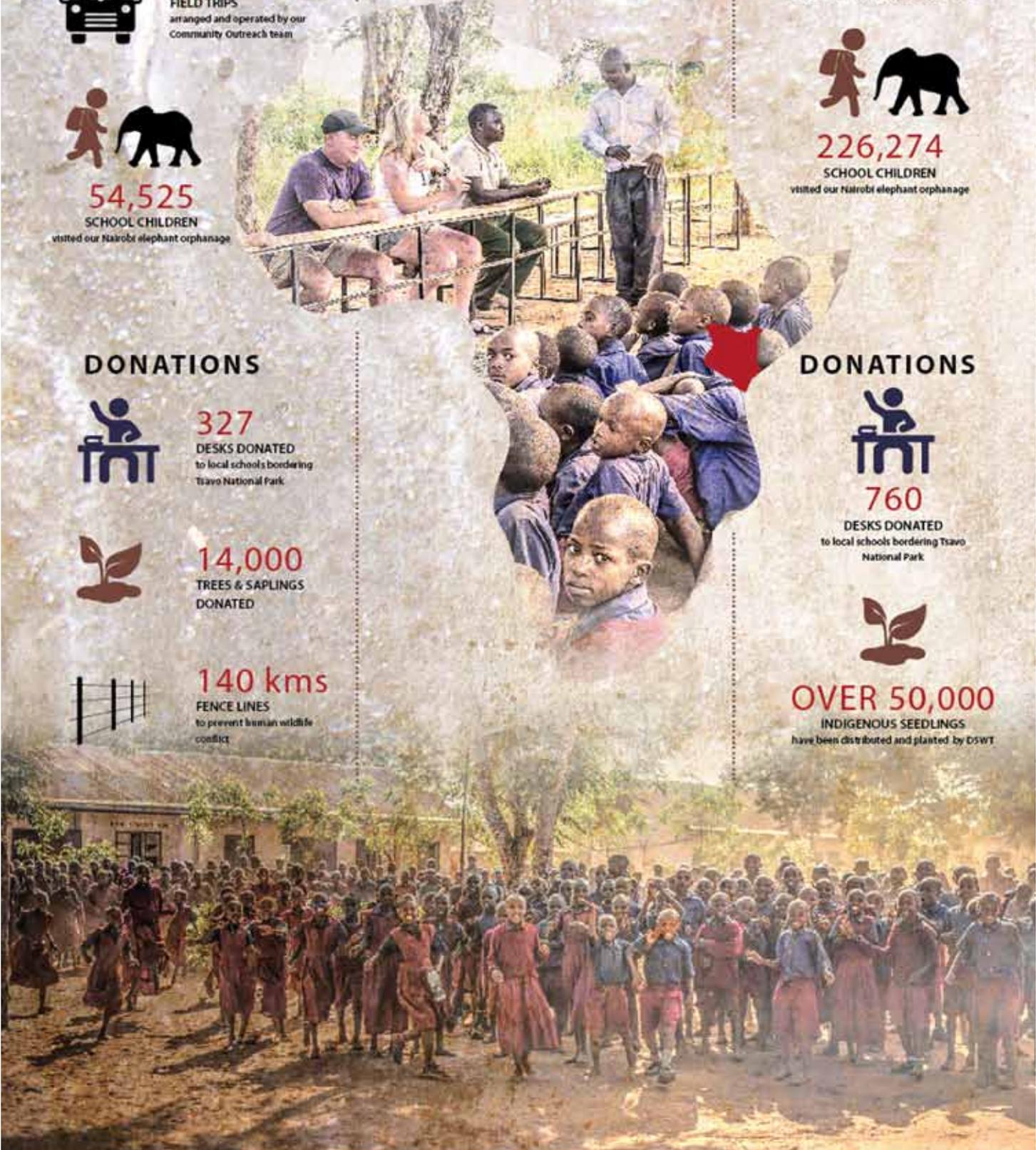
760

DESKS DONATED  
to local schools bordering Tsavo  
National Park



OVER 50,000

INDIGENOUS SEEDLINGS  
have been distributed and planted by DSWT



## Communities and Education

living standards of communities in the greater Tsavo Conservation Area. Throughout 2015 the Trust's Community Outreach team worked together with communities and over 80 schools bordering the Parks and protected areas providing support to community groups and schools.

In total the team donated over 320 sustainably built desks, sports equipment, books and teaching aids to a number of the neediest schools within the area. The DSWT's Community Officer also organised conservation film shows throughout the year at different venues and schools reaching over 4,000 children and 110 teachers with messages on wildlife protection and the devastating effects of poaching and the bushmeat trade, endorsing ways in which communities can help protect their natural heritage.

The DSWT continues to operate School Field Trips within Tsavo East and West National Parks, engaging underprivileged schools and children from the bordering communities. This past year 1,775 school children received the opportunity to visit the Parks in the Trust's dedicated School Field Trip Bus which undertook 71 field trips arranged and overseen by the Trust's Community Outreach team.

Daily at the Nairobi Nursery, during the elephant Orphans' 11am-12pm public mud bath, the DSWT continues to host up to 200 local school children, inviting them to meet the Orphans and their Keepers and learn about the work of the Trust and why these innocent animals have been orphaned, whilst teaching them the importance of protecting not only Kenya's elephants but all of the country's wild animals. During the last year the DSWT welcomed 28,525 children during 2015's school visits.

The Trust's tree nursery programme also continues to provide thousands of tree saplings to schools and communities every year, helping replenish forests whilst teaching children about the importance of nature. Tree programmes have also been created at many schools within the TCA, where the DSWT has donated nearly 1,000 saplings in the past year, most of which are Neem trees (*Azadirachta indica*).

### ELEPHANT BEEHIVE FENCE

In the communities bordering Tsavo East along the north-western side of the Mtito River, the DSWT is working together with the Mtito Andei Human-Elephant Conflict Resolution Self Help Group to come up with an affordable and non-aggressive way of curbing human-elephant conflict. One such way is a beehive-fence installed on farms on the frontline park border. With support from the DSWT, and initial funding from British Airways, this community group acquired 83 modern langstroth beehives, a 12-gauge tensile wire fence (for hanging the hives), and other modern beekeeping equipment. The Trust also provided a three-day training course for the farmers with a professional beekeeper who taught them how to maintain the hives and harvest the honey safely.

Since installation, many of the hives are already occupied with the trend indicating further occupation with time. This project has multiple benefits to the farmers. Not only are their farms guarded against elephant invasion, but their crops are being better pollinated as the bee population increases locally and, of course, they benefit financially from sales of honey. In addition, the DSWT's Community Outreach team has also identified two new farms in the Ngiluni area that are to also receive beehive fences in 2016. The hives for this

project have been purchased and distributed in places where they can attract wild colonies, whilst three hives so far have already been occupied and are soon to be installed in the new fence.

The farmers who are working with these new beehive fences have been collecting data on visitations by elephants, and feel confident that the method works. This is evidenced in areas where elephants have walked up to the fence and have eventually turned around and returned into the Park when they couldn't find a way into the farm. Dr Lucy King, who pioneered the concept, has been collecting data for a few years now and reports that the fences are 80% effective, suggesting that out of every 10 attempts by elephants to get into the farm, only two are successful.

One challenge that was faced in 2015 with the beehive fences was a group of three honey badgers (mother and two cubs) who managed to get into and destroy several hives in the search for honey. The team have therefore had to modify the method being used to keep the honey badgers out of the hives, with success.

### TSAVO EYE MISSION

In pursuit of the DSWT's objective to support communities bordering the Tsavo Conservation Area through education, improved livelihoods and healthcare, a free eye and dental programme was organised during the month of May 2015 with support from staff and surgeons from MEAK (Medical and Educational Aid to Kenya). This programme, which was instigated for the first time during 2014, has the power to give back sight for those suffering from cataracts as well as addressing serious and debilitating dental problems.

In total, 2,978 patients were checked and treated for minor eye problems and given the necessary medication. Patients were treated throughout the TCA including communities from the Chyulu Hills, Kibwezi, Muusini, Kalakalya, Metava, Kithasyo, Mikuyuni, Soto and Kaunguni villages. The team also visited Nthunguni and Ngiluni villages, which are DSWT priority areas bordering Tsavo East National Park as well as attending to a group of desperate patients who live in remote areas of Makueni County.

Out of all these patients 51 were diagnosed with sight-altering cataracts and were successfully treated, many of whom had been blind or partially sighted for many years. The dental team treated 168 cases during this period dealing with a range of complaints, ailments and long-term disorders.

### TSAVO SPORTS DAY

The annual Tsavo Sports Day took place on the 23rd October 2015 at Gideon Moi Primary School thanks to the Waves Charitable Trust and the DSWT. This sports tournament, which first began in 2014, brings together four schools to compete in netball and soccer sporting events. This year the competing schools included Kalambe, Gimba, Sowa and Gideon Mosi Primary Schools, which all border the south-western corner of Tsavo East National Park.

Apart from taking part in sporting events, children from these underprivileged schools had an opportunity to interact with each other whilst the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust could use this fun occasion to further educate Kenya's next generation on the importance of wildlife conservation to all in attendance including parents, teachers and other community members. Funded by The Waves Charitable Trust, the children competed for the Netball and



School visit to the Voi orphans



Sports day

Football Tsavo Kerrigan Cup, so named in honour of the Waves' family son Kerrigan who passed away in Kenya and who always had a passion for sports and working with Kenya's children. After the speeches, the match officials, who were drawn from the participating schools, took charge, arranging the tournament matches.

After the match events, winning schools in the respective games were announced with Gideon Mosi winning in both netball and soccer. The 'Fair Player Awards' were awarded to Serah Mghoi from Gideon Mosi and Simeon Mwakale from Gimba Primary, being deemed the fairest players in netball and football respectively. Events such as these are not only great fun but hugely effective in building school and community spirit. As in the previous year, this annual Tsavo Sports Day event was a great success and the participating schools were very grateful to Waves and the DSWT for making it all possible.



Beehive fences



School field trip

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## Tourism & Eco-Lodges

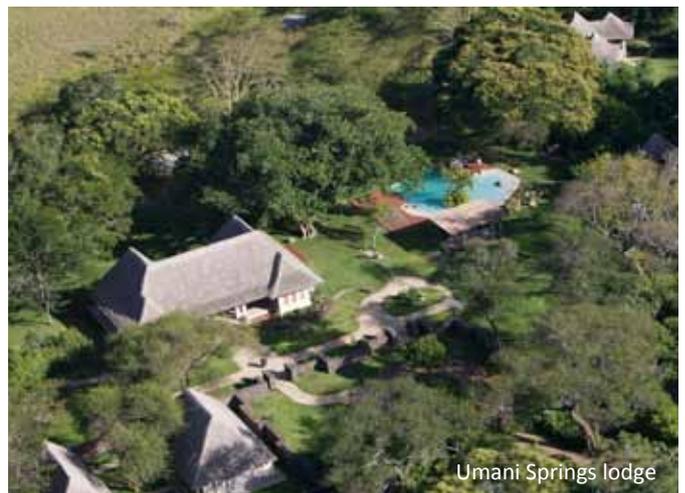
The DSWT now boasts three stunningly unique eco-properties, all designed comfortably yet considerably to merge into their surrounding natural environments. The Trust's first camp, 'Ithumba Camp', opened in 2005 in Tsavo East and was an immediate hit with tourists and foster parents alike who loved the intimate access to the Ithumba elephant Orphans. To this day the rustically stylish Ithumba Camp continues to be the original favourite destination receiving hosts of repeat guests.

In 2011 the Trust then created Umani Springs, which is an elegant and tranquil property hidden away in the Kibwezi Forest, bordering the Chyulu Hills National Park. Made possible by a financial legacy left to the DSWT, Umani Springs works towards providing financial stability for the ongoing protection of this diverse groundwater forest, whilst it has also become home to the Trust's newest Orphan elephant relocation stockades, where guests are given exclusive access to the Orphans during the day.

The newest of the DSWT's self-catering retreats, Ithumba Hill, opened in 2015 and has been created to offer increased luxury for guests exploring Tsavo East's remote northern area whilst enjoying visits to the Trust's Ithumba elephant Orphans. From its elevated position halfway up Ithumba Hill, this private luxury tented camp enjoys breath-taking views across Tsavo's vast landscape, and like the Trust's other two properties, has been designed for the more intrepid traveller who relishes being off the beaten track.

Ithumba Hill came about in order to protect this untouched area of Tsavo East as well as the Ithumba Elephant Stockades from insensitive tourism. The Kenya Wildlife Service originally tendered for a 30-bed lodge on this site, but thankfully the DSWT was able to win the tender with a superior four-bed tented camp, which can match the financial income the KWS was hoping to acquire, whilst keeping the area as exclusive as possible. Ithumba Camp and Ithumba Hill can both be booked simultaneously so as to still ensure exclusivity to the Ithumba elephant Orphans.

A small portion of the camp's accommodation fees are reserved by the DSWT for the camp's running and maintenance costs, whilst the rest of the funds are paid directly to the KWS specifically for conservation initiatives.



Umani Springs lodge



Umani Springs bedroom



Umani Springs bathroom



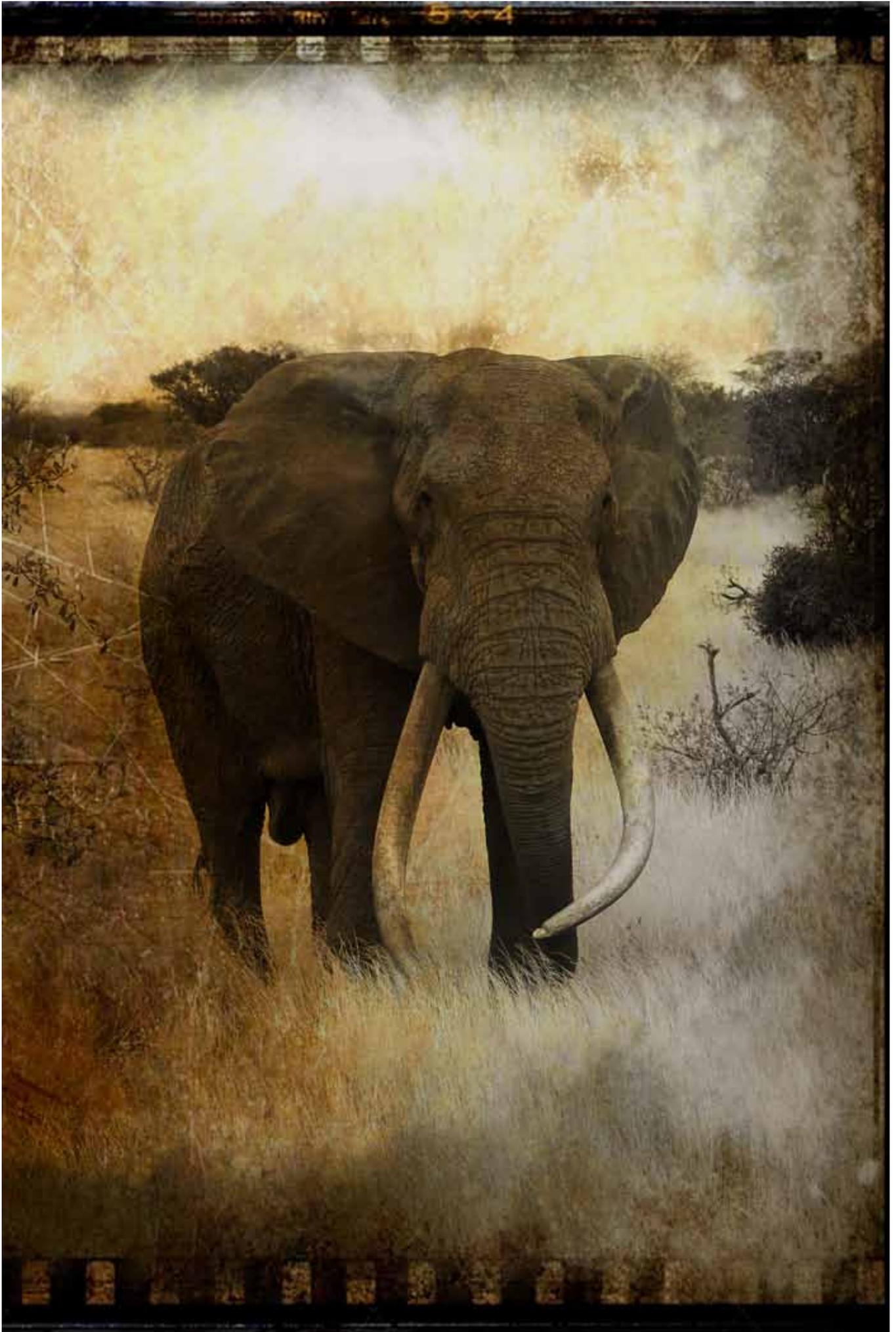
Ithumba Hill Camp



Ithumba Hill bedroom



Ithumba Hill pool



# Elephants and Ivory

## A year for elephants

The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust has been an ardent voice for elephants since its inception in 1977 and both David and Daphne Sheldrick long before that. For in living side by side with elephants one is not only witness to the intelligence, beauty, complex social dynamics and majesty of the species, but to the critical role elephants perform in shaping eco-systems and bringing new life; they are the Gardeners of Africa.

The DSWT has always spoken out for elephants and stood firmly opposed to any trade in ivory. Since 2011, the launch of the DSWT's international iworry campaign, the DSWT has actively campaigned against the ivory trade and a series of actions and announcements in 2015 marked a turning point in global efforts to stop all trade in ivory. As we saw influential figures and national leaders speaking out against the ivory trade, and most importantly, Governments commit to ivory bans.

Arguably, public commitments by China and the USA, the two largest markets for ivory, to enact nearly complete bans on the import and export of ivory were the most noteworthy steps we've seen so far in protecting elephants. These commitments, when enacted, will play a significant part in helping end a trade that killed more than 100,000 elephants in three years, and they are the outcome of several years of dedicated international campaigning.

Without a roadmap to put these words into action however, the killing of elephants for their ivory will continue. Though ivory poaching has fallen in Kenya by 80 percent (Kenya Wildlife Service figures), our Anti-Poaching Teams continue to be ever vigilant and confiscated in excess of 3,640 snares in the year. Demonstrating how critically important it is to continue, and to enhance, 'boots on the ground' initiatives, which keep populations of elephants, and other wild species, better protected.

Meanwhile, a high profile visit by HRH Prince William to China, followed later in the year with a speech by the Prince against the ivory trade, which was broadcast on Chinese TV, presented a hugely influential voice in the call for a permanent ban on all trade in ivory. Joining other advocates including our very own Patron Kristin Davis, Leonardo Di Caprio and UK Media Personality Nicky Campbell OBE, as well as the many thousands that have signed our iworry campaign petition, during 2015 it has become ever clearer to Governments that the future of elephants rests in the hands of this

generation. Leaders, in Africa and across the world, recognise that they must act now and while the wheels of governments can be slow to turn, they have begun to and momentum is now building.

More developments on the international scene have been just as promising. The Great Elephant Census, a Pan-African population count, funded by Microsoft billionaire, Paul G. Allen, was underway in 14 African countries and in Spring 2016, when we expect figures from the full census to be revealed, we will have the most comprehensive insight yet as to how Africa's elephants have fared in the face of rampant poaching.

Sadly, however, it's not just poaching that is a major threat to elephants; human-wildlife conflict continues to kill many elephants every year, and brings the importance of our wider projects, such as beehive fence lines, Community Outreach and Saving Habitats, into sharp focus. Of growing concern on the international scene has been the policy by some Southern African states to capture and sell wild elephants, ostensibly under the guise of raising funds for conservation. The DSWT and our iworry campaign were among those who spoke out against the shipment of the captured elephants to a Chinese safari park in July, which worryingly under CITES (Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species) regulations, was entirely legal but would have caused huge psychological damage to the captured calves, torn from their families, and to the rest of their herds. The infant elephants essentially forcibly turned into orphans, placed in holding pens and then shipped half way around the world to be put into enclosures.

As we move into 2016, we will continue to address the various threats facing elephants, leading as we have always done from a field level. While working through our campaigning arm, iworry, with international supporters, to ensure National ivory bans are not only considered, but implemented, that State bans are enacted in the USA and that all realistic means are implemented to prevent the future capture and sale of African elephants into a life of misery in far flung places.

## A year for rhinos

In 2015 we were powerless as the Northern White Rhino population fell to just three aging individuals, two females and a single male, all in Kenya and the last members of a species now classified as extinct in the wild. We are not however powerless to save the Black or

Southern White Rhinos, but their future is in the balance, with less than 5,000 black rhinos remaining, and an estimated 20,000 southern white rhinos left. While rhinos continue to be poached for their horns, falsely believed to cure all manner of ailments and diseases, including cancer, they remain under serious threat.

At the heart of the rhino horn poaching crisis is South Africa, which has seen an increase in the number of poached rhinos year on year from 2007 to 2014, with a staggering 1,215 killed in 2014. 2015 has however brought the first ray of light for rhinos in over eight years, with 40 fewer rhinos poached compared to the year before. 1,175 rhinos killed for their horns is still outrageous and taking a devastating toll on the species, but any decline in poaching is positive news and a sign that we are on the right track and so we must continue, and develop, the field based and international efforts taking place to save the species.

Closer to home in Kenya, five rhinos were poached in 2015, whilst the last male Northern White Rhino in the world remains under 24/7 armed guard, underscoring how close the species are to extinction.

Anti-Poaching patrols, increased inspections at airports, ports and borders, trade bans, strict sentencing of those associated with rhino poaching and rhino horn sales, and the use of modern technology are among the weapons available to conservationists and used together, with demand reduction strategies, can ensure we don't see the rhino go extinct. At The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, we know these strategies that utilise 'boots on the ground' work: as a result of our Anti-Poaching Teams, poaching rates fell to zero in the Kibwezi Forest thanks to regular patrols.

Yet the question of legalising the trade in rhino horn persisted in 2015, thrust into the spotlight when, in October 2015, a trade ban was overturned by a South African court. The topic of the rhino horn trade will most certainly be a key conversation at CITES CoP17, which takes place in South Africa in September 2016, where all eyes will be on decisions taken by delegates in respect of the trade in all wild species.

At the DSWT we remain committed to opposing any trade in rhino horn, in order to ensure the long-term survival of the species and continue to campaign against any attempts at legalisation.

## Special Thanks

### Trusts and Foundations

Aktionsgemeinschaft Artenschutz (AGA) e.V.  
 Argus Fund  
 Barry & Jody Turkus Foundation  
 Bob & Eileen Gilman Family Foundation  
 Bodhi Tree Foundation 'SAFE'  
 Body Shop Foundation  
 California Community Foundation  
 Candis J. Stern Foundation  
 Capricorn Foundation  
 Care for the wild Germany  
 Charles Engelhard Foundation  
 Cornwall Trust  
 Craig Newmark Philanthropic Fund  
 David and Claudia Harding Foundation  
 Defend the Elephants Sweden  
 Dharmaraj Family Fund  
 Diane Warren Foundation  
 Eden Wildlife Trust  
 Eranda Foundation  
 Estate of Valerie J. Smith  
 Forsava Elefanterna  
 Fredman Family Foundation  
 Harriet E. Pflieger Foundation  
 Hollis Stern Charitable Fund  
 IFAW  
 Kidder (Strong Body, Strong Mind Fund)  
 Sauvez les éléphants d'Afrique  
 Lombard Charitable Trust  
 Lurie Family Foundation  
 Lynne Leakey Revocable Trust  
 Mactaggart Third Fund  
 Maue Kay Foundation  
 Minara Foundation  
 Nabu  
 Norah Hamblin Memorial Fund  
 Pattee Foundation, Inc.  
 Pearson Family Foundation  
 Pengo Life Project  
 Rettet die Elephanten  
 Rolf and Elizabeth Rosenthal Family Fund  
 Samuel J. and Ethel LeFrak Charitable Trust  
 Savage Waves Trust  
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**A huge thank you also goes to our anonymous donors as well, we received many extremely generous donations during 2015 and are truly grateful for your support.**



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