

# The David Sheldrick WILDLIFE TRUST



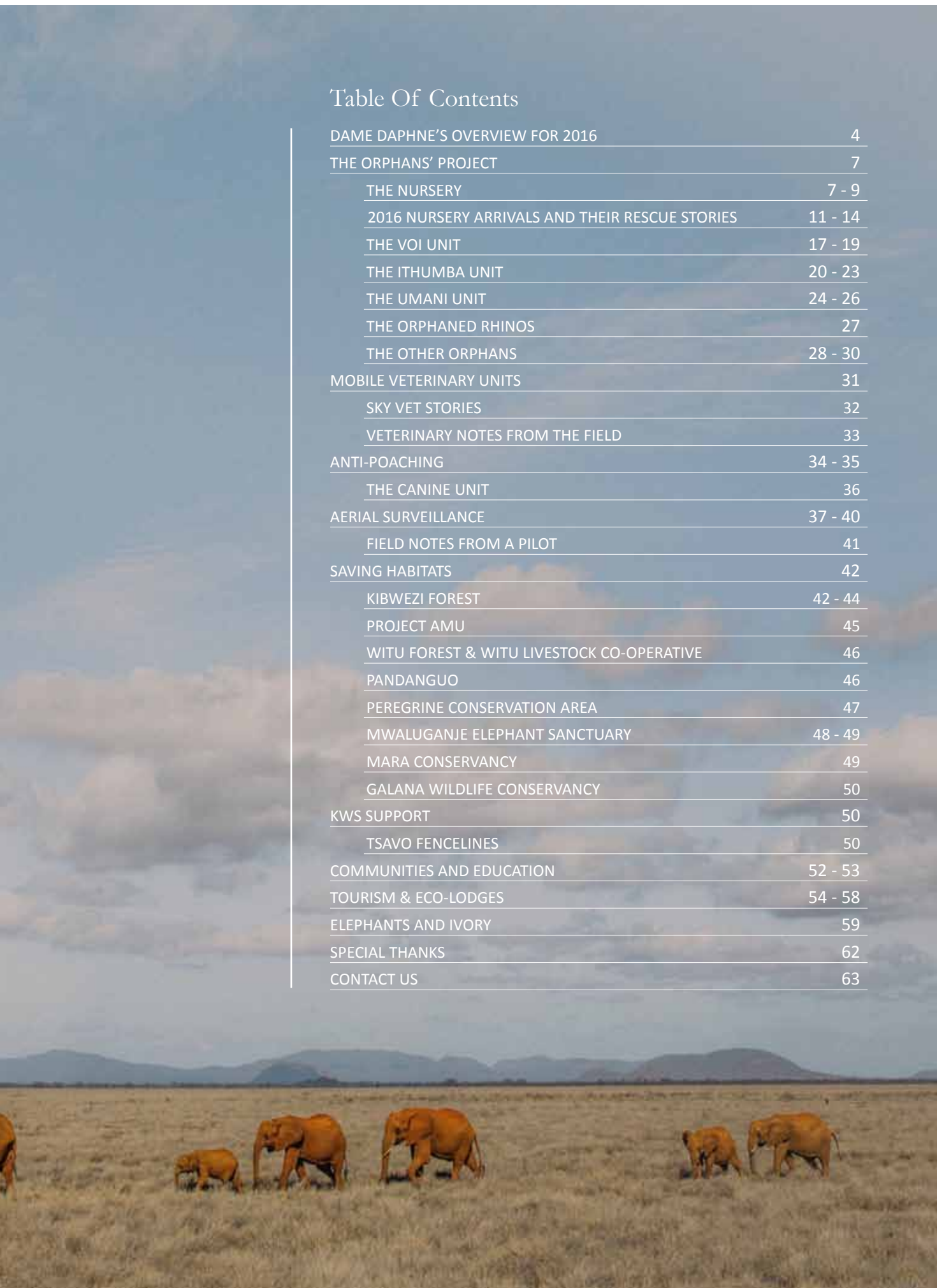
Newsletter 2016





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## Dame Daphne's Overview for 2016

An extremely emotive event at the beginning of the year was the burning in Nairobi National Park of the ivory tusks of some 10,000 elephants, amongst which were probably the tusks of the mothers of our orphans. Perhaps this was more affecting for us, since we had shared the grieving of the orphans left behind, which often proves so severe that it can be fatal. The announcement that China was to ban all trade in ivory by the end of 2017 was also viewed as a major step forward in the fight for elephants, although many commentators believe that this was merely a policy motivated by self interest in an effort to improve China's image in Africa, where it now commands a sizeable presence.

My daughter Angela and her husband Robert Carr-Hartley now very ably, professionally and proficiently, run the Trust, being much more compatible with modern technology than my generation who grew up with only shorthand and typing and a manual telephone at our disposal. I am immensely proud of what they have been able to achieve in the name of the Trust and the amazing contribution the Trust has been able to make towards the protection of wildlife and saving wild habitats in both Tsavo and Lamu as well as elsewhere. Angela and Robert share a similar wildlife-based childhood, and both remain passionate about the Natural World and its wild denizens, as do their two sons, Taru and Roan, whose sole ambition is to continue the legacy and work of the Trust. Taru despite just finishing high school in June 2016 is already a fully licensed pilot having trained in the United States during his gap year, proficient in flying tail dragging aircraft such as the Trust's Super Cubs. Roan is currently doing his A levels and will most probably also aspire to being a part of the Trust's work in the future.

Having now achieved the octogenarian stage of life, the passage of the years has naturally and inevitably taken a toll on mobility, not helped of course by the effects of the life-threatening Empyema (septicaemia of the lungs) that almost took me out two years ago, and resulted in the destruction of a vertebrae in my back, necessitating major back surgery in South Africa. I still remain

very involved with all aspects of the Trust, helping where I can, particularly when it comes to writing the foster parents' orphan elephant updates, which is my way of keeping up with the progress of all the orphaned elephants in our care, as well as those now grown and living wild. I never miss an opportunity to accompany Angela and the family to Tsavo whenever they have reason to go there for that is where my heart sings. I derive immense pleasure and joy from the news of every new baby born to our Ex Orphans now living wild, which now number 23 in all, with others due and on the way.

The wild environment and its denizens today face many new challenges that crop up in the name of "progress" for the benefit of the burgeoning human population, not least the new raised Standard Gauge Railway linking the port of Mombasa to the interior and beyond to landlocked countries such as Uganda and Rwanda. Alongside this runs a very busy highway, where mounting numbers of huge trucks also ferry goods inland and beyond. Both the railway and the road dissect the ancient traditional migratory route of the elephants from Tsavo West to Tsavo East National Parks, and whilst a limited number of underpasses have been included beneath the railway embankment to accommodate the elephants, they still have to source these and negotiate the busy road in order to undertake their travels – journeys that are ingrained in their genetic memories since "elephants never forget". Like us humans, elephants have limited night vision and can become easily confused by headlights. Such obstacles take a heavy toll through collision; one such casualty is currently recovering at our Voi Rehabilitation Unit. Now a similar Chinese built SGR railway is planned to cross the Nairobi National Park, which will undoubtedly negatively compromise both the environment of the Park and its indigenous wildlife, amongst whom dwell a very important population of black rhinos, said to number some 70. Whilst alternative routes do exist that would bypass and save the park, these would involve the government in compensation claims from affected property owners. So, the government plans to take the easy option and instead compromise a jewel of public land, and with it the very lungs of the busy adjacent city that is home to millions of humans whose health will undoubtedly suffer in the long term as a result.

Having now worked intimately with elephants and rhinos for 50 of my 80+ years and pioneered both the hand rearing and rehabilitation back to living wild when grown of both species, I can claim to know them well. It has, and continues to be extremely educational to be in a position to interpret their moods and behaviour accurately, always based on a human interpretation since nature duplicates many aspects of emotion and behaviour in all animals, and that includes the human type as well. I have never accommodated the scientific anthropomorphic block that has long negated such understanding due to the scientific belief that we humans are above and better than others of the animal kingdom. This certainly does not apply to the elephants who are just like us emotionally, duplicate us in terms of age progression and longevity and are much better than us when it comes to caring for one another even when just infants themselves. They are also extremely sophisticated in terms of communication capabilities. These include the scientifically proven low frequency infrasound that is hidden to human hearing and covers distance, but as our orphans have taught us, telepathic abilities as well.

Rhinos are more complicated, but equally as fascinating – ancient animals who in terms of nature, are perfect for their allotted role within the environment, evolution having seen no need to adjust the model over millennia. In my time, I have hand reared some 16 orphaned black rhinos and also successfully achieved the reintegration of these hand reared orphans back into highly territorial wild communities. This is a complicated process that involves escorting the orphan round the dung piles and urinals of the wild community for some three years before the scent becomes accepted as rightfully "belonging". Before this every

resident wild rhino will be hunting down what they perceive as an intruder, bent on either evicting or killing it. Our blind orphaned bull rhino Maxwell, who can never live wild where the bulls have to fight for territory and the right to breed, continues to teach us about what goes on inside his head – for instance anticipating the arrival of another rhino, long before it even comes within human sight. This makes him wildly excited, particularly if the approaching rhino happens to be our Ex Orphan Solio, now living wild within Nairobi National Park. Solio grew up based in a stockade next door to Maxwell and whenever they do meet a rigorous play fight takes place between the bars of Max's stockade, which could leave one wondering whether, in fact, they actually do know one another!

2016 is believed to have been the hottest year on record; global warming has taken a toll in Kenya with large swathes of the country in the grip of drought. Since many tribes are pastoral by nature, shortage of livestock grazing always triggers conflict, with the incursion of cattle into the Protected Areas as well. This is a thorny issue that the authorities are reluctant to tackle, especially in an electoral year when votes from other tribes can influence the outcome. The incursion of cattle into Tsavo has long been of great concern to the Trust and we continue to urge that action be taken to halt this illegal activity.

And so, we now face 2017 and all that it will throw at us, confident that thanks to the amazing support we enjoy from a caring global public, the Trust will rise to the task. We are always extremely mindful that we owe all the success we have been able to achieve to such incredible support, for which we are enduringly grateful. In conclusion, we wish all our supporters all the very best for 2017, may it be healthy, happy and a prosperous year for all.







# THE ORPHANS' PROJECT

## The Nursery

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Our Nursery elephants are a content and happy herd, enjoying browsing, mud bathing, playing and the safety of their home within the Nairobi National Park forest. The beginning of the year started off with the typical beautiful weather of blue skies, no wind and the occasional shower. By mid-February we had some unseasonal heavy rain showers which ensured that streams began flowing again and rejuvenated the forest before the hot weather of March set in. This year the April/May long rains caused flooding in most parts of Nairobi city. After days of non-stop continuous rain, the Nairobi Nursery became a muddy quagmire, especially around the mud bath area where milk feeding takes place and at times the elephants had a difficult time staying upright as they rushed to their milk bottles, slipping and sliding in the process. Needless to say, that whilst such conditions have been extremely challenging for the Keepers, the elephants savoured every moment and the vegetation was abundant and lush, with wild flowers and soft fresh grasses everywhere. Despite the incessant rain we still had plenty of visitors at the 11am mud bath who relished the elephants muddy antics despite being rather soggy themselves. The Nursery had begun to dry out by July/August, much to the relief of our keepers and the many visitors to the nursery during our busiest season. July is actually the onset of Nairobi's cold season so we all wrapped up warm, including our youngest elephant babies who need extra protection from the elements as in a wild situation they would have the body heat of an attentive herd. Throughout the year there have been many sunny days which the elephants have made the most

of, relishing their mud baths and dousing themselves with thick mud, however on chilly days the water and mud is avoided at all costs! When the orphans have been less enthusiastic about the mud wallow, they opt instead for a red earth dust bath and lorry loads of red earth have been brought in for them, which gave them hours of joy.

One exciting event that occurred this year was a visit from nine First Ladies from various African Countries, including our own, H.E. Margaret Kenyatta, and the Japanese First Lady. It was wonderful for the First Ladies of so many African nations to be able to visit the orphans and see for themselves the direct result of the Ivory Trade in such a tangible and graphic way. Our orphans imparted their magic to everyone and the visitors were visibly moved, particularly the Japanese First Lady who later stated on Facebook that she was moved to tears and felt a connection with the orphans.

During the First Ladies' visit five of our naughtiest orphans were kept away from proceedings, namely Rapa, Kamok, Roi, Naseku and Galla, as they are quite the handful, especially around milk and visitors. Naseku has devised all sorts of tricks in an attempt to get more than her fair share of milk, including military-like moves of crawling along the ground in a bid to elude the Keepers and steal milk straight from the wheelbarrow! Sometimes such antics have the Keepers collapsing in hysterics! Kamok is another wily one who likes to indulge in tricks and is an expert at avoiding the Keepers in order to embark on a mission of her own. Kamok

loves to entertain the visiting public and the Kenyan school children always provide an animated audience that guarantees a response. However, she is always looking for an opportunity when she can escape the keepers notice and circle behind an unsuspecting visitor to rummage in bags or create general mischief.

Little bull Rapa remains a naughty boy and continues to bully others younger than himself or those with a timid nature. He is a rambunctious calf, full of attitude and the other orphans tend to abandon games and walk away at Rapa's approach, knowing from experience that he might play rough! His best friend is Tusuja who is a gentle and calm elephant, extremely polite to the younger boys, even when he is sparring. Although very tolerant of Rapa's naughty behaviour, he does not stand in the way when the older girls mete out discipline! It is our hope that Rapa will eventually emulate Tusuja's more gentle character and become more manageable as he grows.

This year the keepers have been kept on their toes with numerous naughty babies in the midst of the orphan herd. Boisterous bulls Olsekk, Enkikwe, Sokotei, Boromoko and Sirimon, much to the keepers relief, made the move to Ithumba where it is hoped they will receive some much needed discipline from the older elephant orphans. This left big girls Oltaiyoni, Kamok, Dupotto and Mbegu enjoying a more peaceful time in the Nursery whilst Tusuja and Kauro embarked on sparring games to determine who was the strongest now they were the biggest bulls of the nursery. At the end of





the year, Kamok, Oltaiyoni, Kauro and Tusuja, along with friends Naseku and Roi, also joined the naughty boys at Ithumba. It will be interesting to see who fills the matriarch and mother position left behind by role model Oltaiyoni as well as how the bulls Murit, Lasayen and Ndotto adapt to being the new big boys of the nursery. Since the older females have left, Mbegu is the main matriarch of the orphan herd. However, it has become clear that Mbegu has been trying to train Godoma into being a mini mum in charge of the little ones. She has been escorting Godoma to the babies and watching her in a supervisory capacity with interest as she interacts with them.

Whilst it has been sad to say goodbye to the older orphans, it is necessary for their wellbeing and development and also to make room for the many new faces we have welcomed to the nursery this year. Some of the older rescues such as Galla, Maramoja and Wanjala took a while to settle down and trust the keepers, obviously having a clear memory of their family and the events leading to their rescue. Galla, found companionship with gentle Murit, who helped him tame down enormously. He has turned into quite the water baby, unperturbed by rain and even rolling in the mudbath during thunderstorms. Mbegu looked after Maramoja and she was much more settled out in the bush than she had been in her stockade, responding to Mbegu's love and attention. Surprisingly one elephant who has been particularly welcoming towards Maramoja is Ngilai and when newcomer Malkia, was placed in the stable next to Ngilai, he was both comforting and welcoming, reassuring her so that she tamed incredibly quickly.

Esampu is like no other before her - despite being very little she has been quite the handful at feeding times, noisily barging the others, which is extremely challenging for the Keepers. Another new arrival, Sana Sana has been on a mission to look after Esampu as outside of feeding times, she is quiet and withdrawn, obviously traumatized and grieving for her family. Sana Sana used to behave similarly and seems to empathize with Esampu's psychological struggle and has stepped in to provide the necessary understanding and care needed to heal emotional scars.

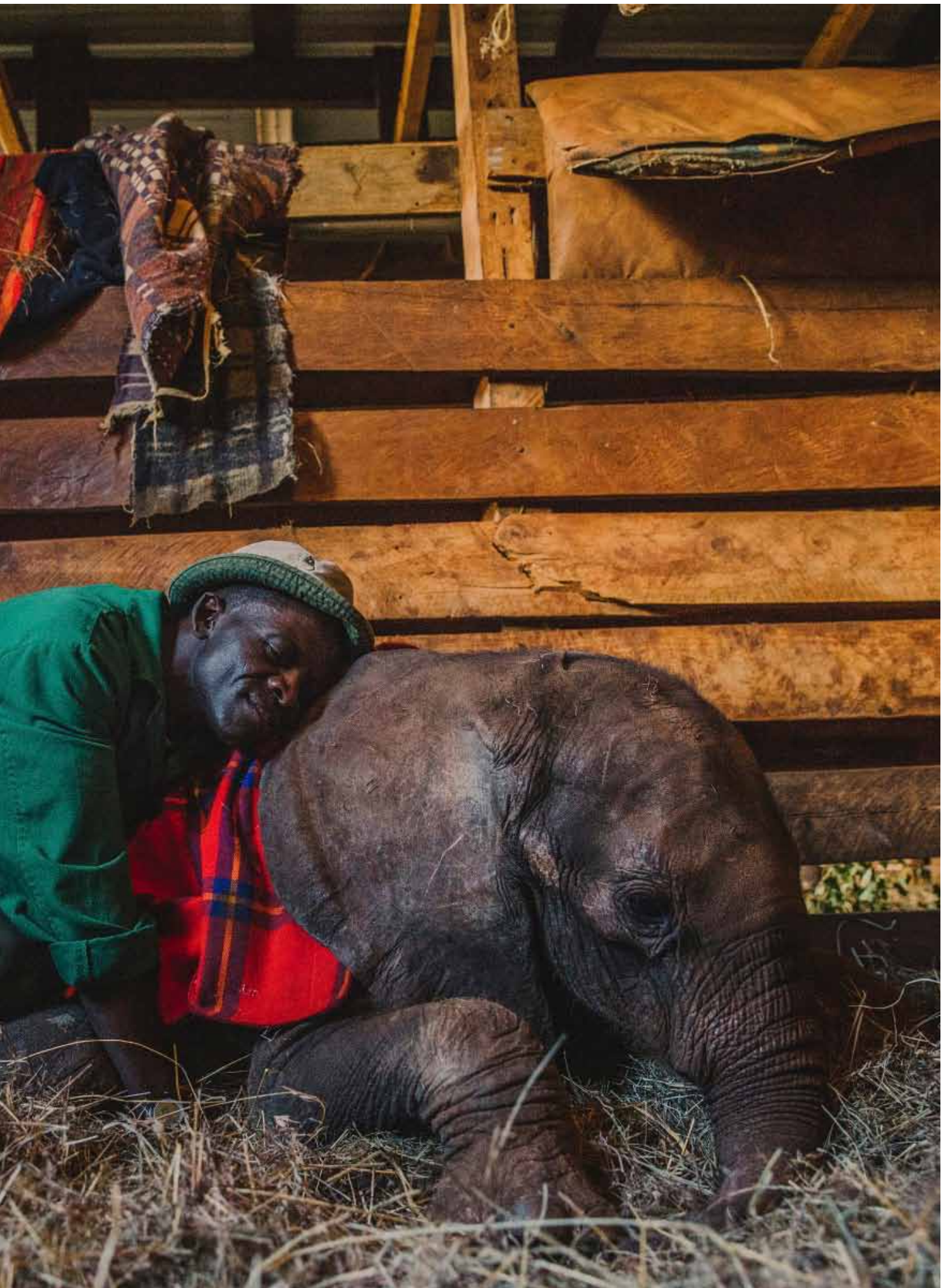
Baby boy, "Ambo" is a character full of life, and a much loved favorite of the older females, especially Oltaiyoni who doted on him, although he has become rather spoilt with all the attention. Ambo's best friend Jotto prefers the company of his keepers but Mbegu has taken a shine to him and both Mbegu and Oltaiyoni mother their youngsters as though they were their own. These two tiny tots have stolen the hearts of all the visitors at the nursery, and are much like the loveable duo Lasayen and Ndotto when they were still miniature.

We also have a little treasure in our midst - one with the heart of a lion, Luggard, who was rescued after suffering gunshot wounds that resulted in a broken leg. Luggard will be left with a compromised leg and will never have full use of the knee, but this brave little baby has shown staggering courage and strength to overcome the odds and his will to live is inspiring. Now Luggard is roaming the forest and loves his mud baths, clambering all over the other elephants and sliding in the mud, seemingly pain free and happy despite his injury.

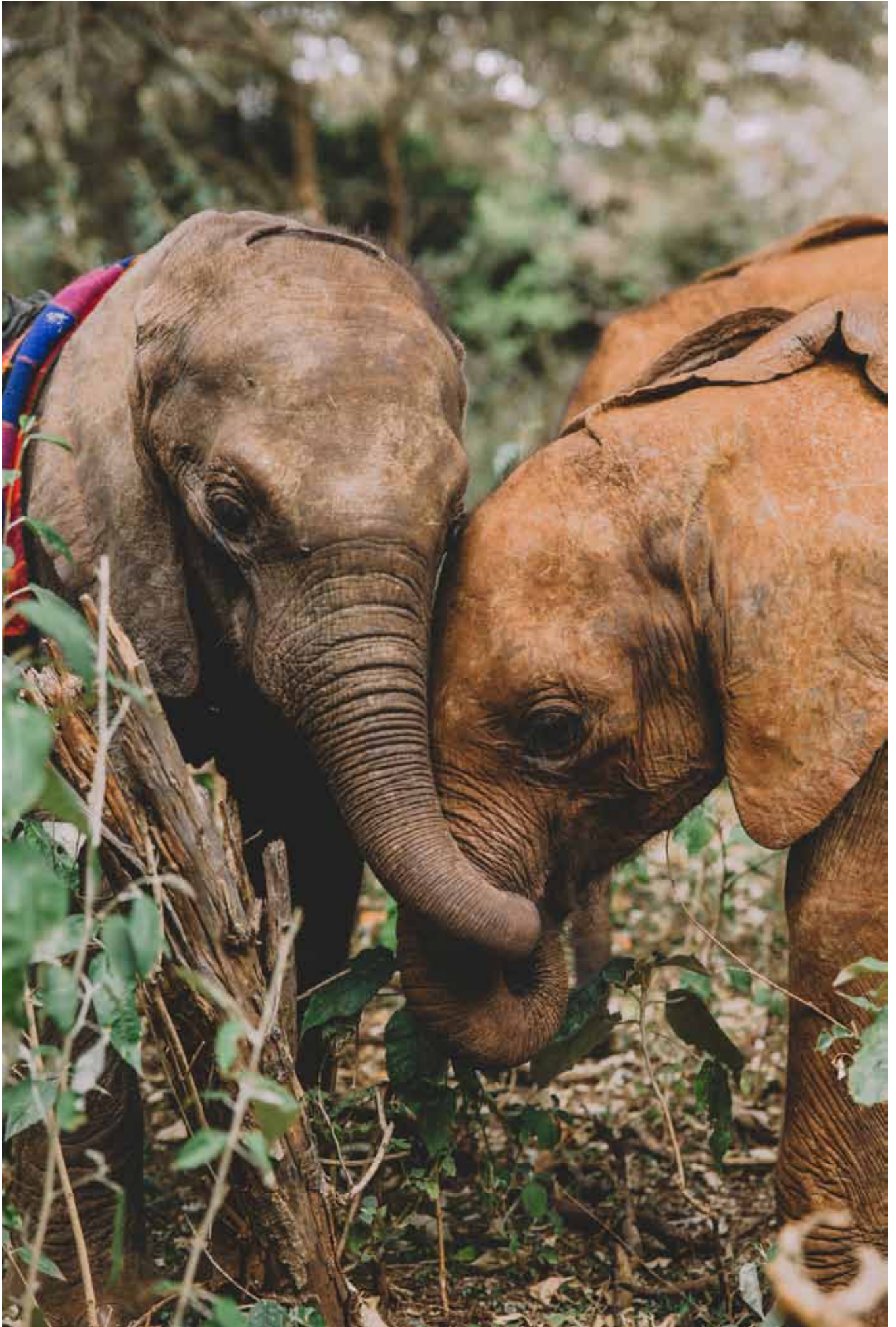
It will be a blessing to watch the new arrivals and youngsters grow and thrive over the coming months and years, and also to watch how the resident orphans adapt to changes in the herd dynamics with the departure of so many key figures. As we have seen before, new matriarchs will step in and often this is a surprise to us as orphans that previously took a back seat now step forward as mini mums in the absence of older and more dominating females. Each orphan will find their niche in the herd and develop their own unique character as well as special bonds that will last a lifetime and we look forward to following their progress and to what the New Year brings.













# 2016 ORPHANED ELEPHANT ARRIVALS

## Successful Rescue Stories

### Galla | Male | Rescued 21st March | Poaching

Galla was seen alone by KWS Rangers in an area where a lactating female carcass had been found a week before. Our Voi keepers responded swiftly and following his tracks they managed to locate him standing under a tree shading himself from the unforgiving sun. He cut a very forlorn and lonely figure and being under a year old he was already showing signs of being extremely thin. He has been named "Galla" after the pastoral tribe that once traversed Tsavo at the turn of the 20th Century, and whose pebble stone cairn graves can be found throughout what is now the Tsavo East National Park.



### Jotto | Male | Rescued 21st March | Well Victim

Jotto was found stranded down a well by herdsmen watering their cattle. The Namunyak Conservancy Rangers extracted him from the well and stayed with the calf whilst a search was mounted for his mother. When the attempt to reunite the orphan with his mother failed the DSWT were contacted to come and rescue the baby. On arrival, Jotto was passing liquid mud and in the midst of teething, making his first weeks at the nursery fraught. March is always the hottest time of the year in Kenya, and this year temperatures countrywide have been a lot warmer than anyone can remember. For this reason, we decided to name the well victim "Jotto" meaning heat/hot.

### Luggard | Male | Rescued 31st March | Human Wildlife Conflict

Luggard had an extremely traumatic beginning, suffering two bullet wounds, one to his left foot and another shattering his right leg just above the knee joint at just a few months old. Over the ensuing months Luggard improved enormously, with his indomitable spirit prevailing throughout. Luggard is now able to bear much more weight on his leg, and he does not let his condition inhibit him, determined to be an enthusiastic part of all activities.



### Ambo | Male | Rescued 25th April | Well Victim

Ambo was discovered trapped in a well, but by the time help arrived the calf had already extracted itself and disappeared. With night falling fast, the rescue teams followed the muddy tracks and finally found him after an extensive search. With no elephant herds in the area he was rescued before he fell prey to predators. By the time Ambo arrived at the nursery he was swaying on his feet, fighting fatigue. Eventually he was calm enough to lie on the soft hay and have a well-deserved sleep.

**Tagwa | Female | Rescued 7th May | Human Wildlife Conflict**

Tagwa was found alone in the community lands of Mount Kenya, thankfully an elephant friendly area and they sought to find assistance for the stranded calf. With heavy rain storms in Nairobi the rescue was delayed but fortunately the weather improved. Coming from a forest Tagwa is covered in a protective blanket of dark fuzzy hair all over her body. We chose the name Tagwa for this little girl, after an area on Mount Kenya not far from where she was rescued.



**Sana Sana | Female | Rescued 19th May | Unknown**

“Sana”, in Swahili means ‘very much’ and the keepers choose the name Sana Sana for this little elephant as her rescue required a lot of effort and long negotiations. She had already survived one hyena attack and had been without her mother for a long time judging by her emaciated condition. There was strong resistance to her being removed from site in case she could be reunited with her herd. Thankfully, it was eventually agreed that Sana Sana could be taken to the Nursery.

**Maramoja | Female | Rescued 1st July | Suspected Poaching Victim**

Maramoja was observed continually being rejected by passing wild herds by The Tsavo Trust who got in touch with DSWT. She was thin, weak, extremely disorientated and despite being approximately 18 months old, put up little resistance during capture. As an older orphan it took her longer to tame down and join the others out in the forest.



**Pare | Male | Rescued 2nd July | Suspected Poaching Victim**

Pare was found alone by community members three days prior to being rescued; dense bush and lack of roads made locating him challenging. Given his weakness he was easily overpowered and captured for his trip to the Nairobi Nursery. Pare’s condition remained precarious for a long time due to his emaciated state. However, he was extremely affectionate from the outset and eventually began to improve, growing strong and more confident. He is named after the Pare mountains.

**Esampu | Female | Rescued 6th July | Unknown**

Esampu was found alone, clearly abandoned, with no other elephants in the area. She had obviously been without her mother for a while and was in an emaciated state. At the Nursery, she immediately began to feed on the greens that were cut for her, which was surprising for one so young, but clearly during her ordeal she had survived alone by eating vegetation. We called her Esampu, a Maa name for light and shade and also the name of the area from where she was rescued.







**Wanjala | Male | Rescued 3rd September | Drought Related**

Wanjala was weak, extremely emaciated and obviously, an orphan who had been without its mother's milk for some time judging by his condition. Wanjala was found near one of the remaining waterholes and was orphaned due to the brutal dry season, abandoned simply because he could no longer keep up with the herd. He was very weak and as the days passed he collapsed a number of times requiring emergency attention to retrieve him, but thankfully he began to regain his strength.

**Nguvu | Male | Rescued 15th September | Stuck in Mud**

Nguvu was stuck fast in a small drying mud wallow, exhausted from his struggles. With a rope around his haunches the Voi Keepers could heave him out, but he had little strength remaining and was unable to stand. Clearly if he was left there he would have died so he was taken to the Voi Stockades to recuperate.



**Malkia | Female | Rescued 16th September | Drought Related/Mother Illness**

Malkia's mother was found recumbent on the Dika Plains, withered and gaunt with extremely poor body condition due to her age and the ongoing drought. Her family stood vigil but it was clear her life force was ebbing away and it would be necessary to rescue her young milk dependent calf, who was already undernourished.

We have called this gorgeous little girl Malkia, which means 'queen' in Swahili in honour of her mother, who for sure walked the Tsavo plains even in David Sheldrick's time, when he was warden of Tsavo some 40 years ago now.

**Ukame | Female | Rescued 25th October | Drought Related**

Ukame was observed for three days in the hope that she would assimilate into a herd, but she remained alone with little food or water. She was a big calf, with tusks an inch long, but totally weakened from the drought so she put up little resistance. After 48 hours she collapsed as is so often the case and required IV drips to revive her and assist her strength. We have named her "Ukame", the word for drought in Swahili



**Malima | Female | Rescued 30th October | Drought Related**

Malima was found on a mound of earth in a collapsed and desperate state. She was immediately placed on IV fluids before being transported to the Nursery. She was hardly responsive to begin with, desperately thin due to the drought, but eventually began to respond. She continued to collapse over the following days, her body spent of all its reserves. However, she finally regained strength and is now doing well. We have called her "Malima", meaning mound in Swahili, aptly named after help came before it was too late.



**Ajali | Male | Rescued 3rd November | Human Wildlife Conflict – knocked by a car**

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Ajali was hit by a car on the Mombasa highway and treated by the DSWT/KWS Tsavo Mobile Vet. The prognosis for his recovery was extremely guarded and he was taken to the Voi Stockades for intensive care. Ajali has grown stronger by the day, and despite broken ribs he has healed well and successfully joined our orphan herd.



**Karisa | Male | Rescued 23rd November | Human Wildlife Conflict – mum euthanized**

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Karisa's mother was euthanized after her femur was shattered by a bullet in a horrendous case of human-wildlife conflict. Our rescue team, accompanied by a KWS Vet found her completely unable to move and seemingly being protected by her two-year-old calf. Karisa, who stood vigil by her side. He was subsequently rescued and taken to the Nursery and his mother humanly euthanized.

**Kelelari | Male | Rescued 25th November | Suspected poaching victim – attacked by lions**

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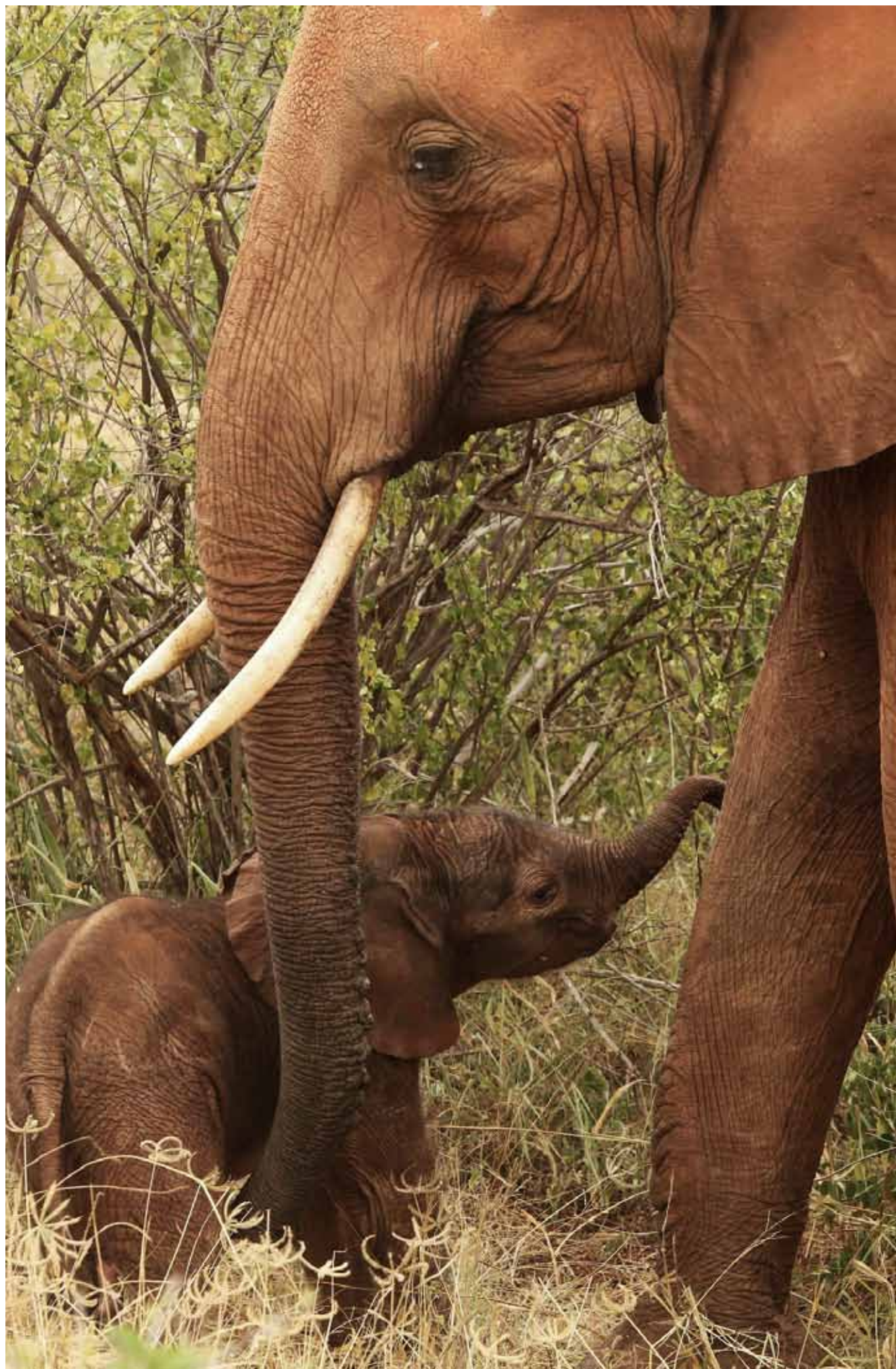
Kelelari was orphaned at four years old and it was hoped that he would be old enough to survive without his mother and assimilate back into his family herd. However, he lived an isolated life on his own and he soon became a target for lions. He survived three separate lion attacks with the last leaving him without a tail and with serious wounds to his rump and back necessitating his immediate rescue.













# THE ORPHANS' PROJECT

## The Voi Rehabilitation Unit

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There have been many changes in herd dynamics for the Voi Orphans this year, as well as reunions and new arrivals. Lesanju, Lempaute and other older females have remained dependent much longer than usual due to their devotion towards the younger orphans. Their presence has been invaluable for both the keepers and all the juniors of the Voi Stockades. However, this year they finally struck out on their own and became independent of the keepers and no longer spend their nights in the stockades. The transition of Lesanju's herd, consisting of Lempaute, Sinya, Kivuko, Taveta, Mzima and Dabassa, to a wild life is certainly assisted by the presence and guidance of Emily's herd and surprisingly Wasessa has opted to join their herd rather than Lesanju's.

It has been clear from the outset that Lesanju is a natural matriarch born to lead and she takes great pride in leading her own herd rather than joining with another. Over the past year Lesanju's herd's independence has grown as they ventured far and wide, sometimes disappearing for days or weeks at a time. On their return the junior orphans are always ecstatic to welcome back their old friends, all except Kenia and Ndii who have assumed the matriarchal role in Lesanju's absence. Kenia has grown used to leadership which is always compromised when Lesanju and Lempaute return and usurp her role over the other junior orphans. Much like Lesanju once did, Kenia goes out of her way to move her herd out of the compound quickly in order to avoid a reunion! However, the dependent orphans enjoy being with the older group since they respect them and can learn a lot from them. Kenia especially wants to keep her adopted babies Araba, Bada and Mudanda to herself, but Lesanju adores Mudanda, and vice versa, and spirits her away whenever she can, bringing her back to the stockades in the afternoon.

Kenia and Ndii thoroughly enjoy being the leaders of the junior group although they allow the other females to take on this important role as well, Lentili being a key player who loves leading the orphans out to browse. Kenia's obvious affection for Araba continues to be a source of jealousy for young Ndoria, who often seeks out Araba to exact revenge by biting her tail, a notorious habit of Ndoria's. As a result of being the cossetted favourite, Araba is also prone to jealousy when Kenia pays attention to other little orphans such as Mudanda! Thankfully, however, since there are many loving females in the group, the

youngest are far from being deprived of love and care from the others.

The orphans have had plenty of opportunity to mingle with both the ex-orphans and the wild elephants particularly during the dry season which progressed into drought conditions. The ex-orphans came almost daily to the Stockade compound for water, to socialize and enjoy the supplement hand out.

We believe the ongoing drought resulted in many old faces returning to the stockade looking for water and the keepers were delighted at the surprise arrival of ex-orphan Lissa who had been missing for three years. The greatest joy was that Lissa returned with a new-born male calf just a few months old, whom we have named Leo. Lissa has now given birth to five wild born calves! She then again surprised the Keepers by returning with her entire family amongst whom was her oldest calf Lara with her very own baby daughter whom we named Leah - Lissa's first grandchild. There is no greater reward for the Keepers than seeing their old charges return to show them their very own wild born babies!

During 2016, Tsavo East endured an extremely severe drought period that took its toll on a number of wild elephants that died as a result. Never have the Taita Rangelands that border both Tsavo West and Tsavo East National Parks been more important as food was scarce through much of Tsavo with food and water plentiful in the rangelands. We were relieved to learn that during those drought stricken months, Emily and her entourage had managed to access Taita Conservancy along with over 300 wild elephants, despite the challenges of a highway and the newly built Standard Gauge Railway.

Once the drought ended and the rains began Emily's herd returned to the Park and the Stockade area's once natural waterholes were filled, and food was plentiful allowing them safe passage home. When they did reappear, they were often in the company of wild elephant bulls along with our own ex-orphan big bull Laikipia. The youngest members of the herd, wild born babies from last year and early this year, namely Emma, Eden, Safi and Inca, continue to grow and delight us with their antics. Mzima, from Lesanju's independent group can often be spotted in the company of the ex-orphans and in particular playing with these young babies whom he adores. Morani, another of our

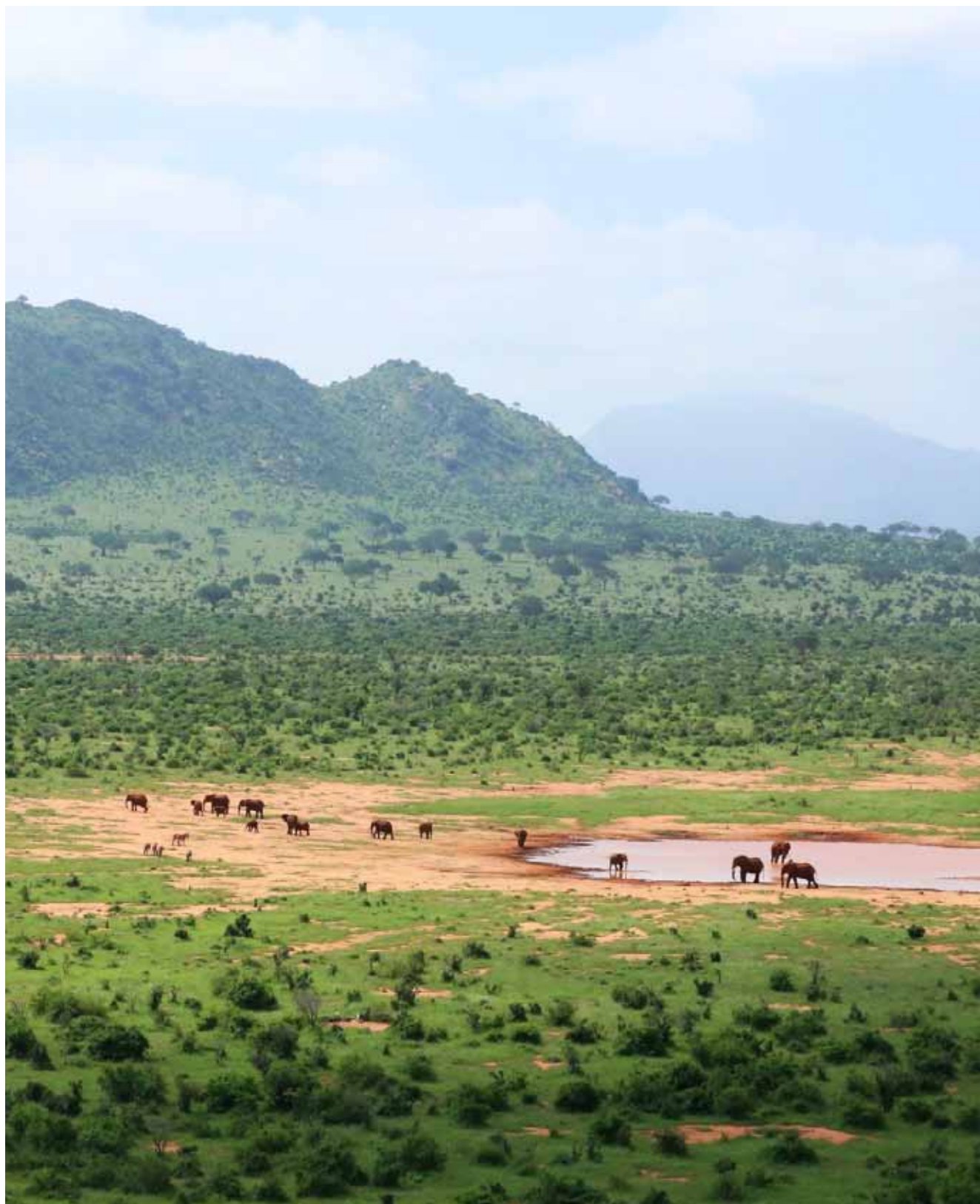
ex-orphan bulls, is also particularly fond of these young babies. Panda's great friend, ex-orphan Taveta, is still a daily visitor to the stockades, especially in the mornings when the copra cake and lucerne is distributed by the keepers. Some evenings Taveta even tries to sneak into Panda's stockade, but is told by the keepers that he is now a big boy and should be outside with his wild friends. In June, Tassia arrived alone at the Stockades in the middle of the night having disappeared with a wild herd several months before. The Keepers were awoken by his arrival when he was welcomed by loud greetings from the dependent babies, rumbling with delight.

Due to the severe drought throughout Tsavo, the Voi Keepers were called out to many elephant rescues this year. Most were found already in a state of complete collapse; some sadly too late for us to be able to save, but at least some have survived after much effort. Sadly dry seasons also see an increase in poaching and human wildlife conflict cases for the vet units and an elephant cow was reported in Taita Sisal Estate with a recent arrow wound which our Mobile Veterinary Unit headed off to immediately treat. Upon arrival, however, it was ascertained that the elephant in question was none other than ex-orphan Emily. She was immediately operated on, and thankfully the extracted arrow was devoid of poison, making the process fairly straight forward. Mercifully Emily was back on her feet in no time. The DSWT team were relieved to know the whereabouts of Emily's ex-orphan herd, and that they all looked in good condition despite the drought. The Keepers were happy to see that Icholta's baby, named Inca, was growing and looking very healthy, happy and content with best friend Safi, Sweet Sally's little wild- born calf.

The anxiety over Emily's treatment was soon eclipsed by delight when ex-orphan Thoma gave birth to her first wild- born, a baby bull whom we named Thor, who was just hours old when she appeared with him. The entire herd of ex-orphans rejoiced with trumpets and rumbles celebrating the arrival of this new member to their unit and that day Rombo and Wasessa, who are sometimes part of Lesanju's herd, arrived to join Emily's herd.

Thoma's baby boy is extremely healthy and playful and both mother and baby are doing well, with Nannies Mweya, Seraa and Ndara taking their duties very seriously.

The orphans have interacted with many wild elephant herds over the year, sparring with youngsters of their own age or doting on small wild babies. On occasions they mischievously tried to spirit these calves away in order to play and browse with them away from the watchful eyes of their mothers, but the mothers and older siblings were aware of such intentions and thwarted their efforts. Youngsters Arruba and Suswa are often guilty of this, along with Rorogoi, Mudanda and Ndii, who relish the wild interactions. One herd whisked away Embu, who was later found alone and suffering from injuries due to a lion attack. When the orphans met the same herd again, Embu immediately moved towards them giving them warm trunk touches and two wild elephant calves also recognised Embu who tried once again to encourage her to follow them and leave the Voi orphaned herd behind. The call of the wild is obviously very strong for Embu and she seems not to have learnt her lesson as she moved off with them once again. Ndii and Naipoki were quick to see the danger and swiftly cornered her and pushed her back towards the safety of the Voi orphans.













# THE ORPHANS' PROJECT

## The Ithumba Unit

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2016 has been an exciting year for the Ithumba Unit as the orphans have welcomed new arrivals, basked in the attention of the ever-present ex-orphans, whilst the older juniors have embraced their independence.

Cold and miserable weather heralded the onset of the New Year with the Ithumba Mountain shrouded in mist most mornings. However, by February, temperatures soared and the landscape took on a yellow hue as the vegetation began to dry out. Following excellent rain at the end of 2015, the area remained greener for longer than usual, which made life easier for our dependent orphans and ex-orphans alike but by March, the whole of Kenya was gripped by a heat wave which necessitated several wallowing sessions a day, as well as prolonged siestas under trees with ample shade. Ambient temperature was such that even Kithaka, who usually has an aversion to water, ventured into the mud bath to cool off! With the failure of the April/May rains there was much activity around the Ithumba stockade as the wider Tsavo region remained dry and elephants continued to frequent the stockade and mud bath daily for water. On numerous occasions, the Keepers awakened to find the area flooded with ex-orphans and wild elephants, sometimes over 80 in number!

The Ithumba Unit desperately waited for the onset of revitalizing rain as did the ex-orphans and wild elephants. One morning there were over 120 elephants waiting for a refreshing drink and we calculated they consumed over 30,000 litres of water in just one morning. Finally, the humidity began to build up and the acacia trees came into leaf, indicators that rain was imminent. The rains eventually broke in November bringing much relief and happiness to the elephants who relished the soft wet earth and new water puddles. The vegetation slowly recovered from the dry season and the orphans could be seen stretching high into the trees to reach the most succulent new leaves sprouting on the high branches, or searching for fresh green roots that emerge following the rains.

As vegetation was sparse throughout much of the year, the ex-orphan groups and lone bulls such as Tomboi, wild elephant Half Trunk and his friends, visited the Stockade Compound frequently not only for precious water but to enjoy left over lucerne as well. The older elephants presence creates stiff competition for our resident dependent orphans and on busy mornings they always

pick up their share of lucerne to enjoy in seclusion, allowing the seniors to eat their fill in the main feeding area. The orphans understand the need to give way in respect of their elders in order to avoid a standoff which they would certainly lose. With the sheer number of elephants around, it is interesting to watch the social dynamics unfold between dependent orphans, semi dependent orphans, ex-orphans and the wild elephants, especially wild bulls. Whenever wild bulls arrive on the scene the juniors are certainly more wary, cautiously approaching or leaving the mud bath in order to give way, mindful of elephant protocol. Mostly, the wild bulls are friendly and happy to share the water, however, on occasion there is a grumpy individual who refuses to tolerate the orphans' presence and they simply have to wait their turn. Garzi is perhaps the most interested in learning all he can from his seniors as well as the wild elephants. He can often be found gazing in awe at the older wild bulls and we can't help but think that he is wondering when he too will be that size. Often, he engages his older friend Kenze, who is always willing to oblige and demonstrate pushing and wrestling tactics, which is a favourite sport of the young bulls.

Mulika's ex-orphan herd still fluctuates in terms of membership; normally she is with her calf Mwende and Zurura and sometimes with Nasalot, Makena, Ishanga, Kilaguni, Chaimu, Makireti, Kasigau and Kilabasi. The most exciting news for the ex-orphans was a surprise from Galana on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September when the 13 year old arrived in the early morning with her first tiny wild born calf. The baby was only hours old and barely stable on her feet - a little girl whom we named "Gawa" meaning "to share" in Kiswahili. Galana remained around the Stockade for the first few weeks as Gawa became stronger and steadier on her feet, surrounded by the attendant Nannies; Sidai, Loijuk, Lenana, Naserian and sometimes with Chyulu and Meibai. The dependent orphans loved coming across this ex-orphan herd during the day to try and get close to Gawa, but they were more often than not warned off by watchful Nannies such as Sidai who are extremely protective of their newest little charge. Wendi's wild born baby Wiva, now a year old, has been the ex-orphans "pampered princess", basking in the attention from the Nannies and junior orphans and is a very playful spoilt "brat". Wiva was the youngest baby until Gawa's arrival and she has been seemingly put out at having to share the spotlight and attentions of

other females. At the beginning of the year, Suguta and Mutara became more independent and chose not to return to the stockades after Ishanga left the company of Yatta's herd, and whisked them away for a night out. The next morning Ishanga and her two new recruits turned up and re-joined the dependent orphans out in the bush. Ishanga left Mutara and Suguta who recruited dependent orphan bull Kanjoro and attached themselves to ex-orphan bulls Taita and Rapsu. Later, Sities, Turkwel and Kainuk also decided to join up with this trio and they formed their own little semi-independent herd.

There has been a lot of subgrouping and movement between the partially-independent groups this year, with Chaimu and Kilaguni spending time in Mutara's new group and Kibo, Murka, Kitarua and Naisula separating from Olare's group and arriving at the stockade as their own little herd. Olare's group as well as Ishanga, Kilaguni, Chaimu, Kilibasi, Kanjoro, Makireti, Kasigau and Kilabasi all returned after a long absence and were greeted enthusiastically by their younger friends. Kilaguni, Chaimu, Makireti, Kasigau and Kilabasi then separated from the others and also formed their own little group. When the groups are all together a lot of socializing games ensue as everyone tries to figure out the hierarchy, who is in charge, who commands respect and so on.

Many of the Nursery babies have graduated to Ithumba this year. Sirimon, Boromoko and Sokotei, followed by Enkikwe Olsekki and Siangiki arrived earlier in the year and have all settled in remarkably well although Sokotei felt slightly uneasy at first when faced with new and fairly large elephants compared to those in the Nairobi Nursery. The older orphans have been welcoming, with Independent orphan Sities particularly adoring of the new trio though Siangiki prefers the company of older female Laragai. Lemoyian has been less than friendly as for a long time he enjoyed being the privileged "baby" and he often throws his weight around the new arrivals. The newcomers have enjoyed the awe-inspiring company of many huge bulls that have visited the area which must be quite a sight as they may not even remember having seen such large elephants before!

The boisterous Nursery bulls have continued with their naughty tricks, giving their new Head Keeper as much of a headache as they did the Nursery keepers! Sokotei, Olsekki and Enkikwe are

particularly naughty around feeding times, often trying to snatch an extra bottle from one of the other orphans or even stealing from the milk bottle crate and running off with their prize. The Head Keeper has had to resort to feeding them last because of their tendency to be so naughty whenever milk is present.

In December, Kamok, Roi and Oltaiyoni, three of the Nursery's oldest females, and big boys Kauro and Tusuja as well as young Naseku also made their way to Ithumba. The first few days were spent close to home, without venturing too far as the newcomers concentrated on feeding and becoming familiar with their new surroundings. Narok was particularly taken with Naseku and followed her everywhere as she moved about feeding. In the evening the new arrivals share the electrically fenced Night Stockade with the established orphans, the six Nursery orphans sleeping together. Such Nursery friendships span a lifetime illustrated by the fact that our ex-orphans now living wild are with the friends they made when babies in the Nursery all those years ago.

Kamok is another naughty elephant that always has wily tricks to play on unsuspecting visitors and Roi is also prone to being pushy around feeding times and with visitors. With previous naughty boy Kithaka and all these cheeky new arrivals the Ithumba Keepers really have their work cut out for them and we can only hope one of the disciplinary matriarchs or ex-orphans can help instil some discipline into this unruly bunch!

It is truly rewarding to follow the orphans from their arrival at Ithumba to their first tenacious steps at becoming an independent and wild elephant. It is fascinating to watch friendships formed in the Nursery endure as well as new bonds blossom as each elephant grows and finds their own niche in the orphan and eventually ex-orphan herds. This transformation from the young and cheeky elephants that arrive to the majestic creatures that roam the great wilds of Tsavo with their dominating presence is something we are ever grateful to be part of.



Angela's sons Taru & Roan













# THE ORPHANS' PROJECT

## The Umani Unit

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The orphans enjoyed a fun filled start to the year with rain showers keeping the vegetation lush and green. During the wet season the Kibwezi Forest resembles a Garden of Eden, adorned with butterflies of every colour on water puddles and fresh elephant droppings. Kibwezi Forest has always been known for its butterflies some of which are endemic, but this year butterflies of all colours, shapes and sizes have been especially abundant, particularly the white variety who cluster at the edges of the mud wallow and fly up in clouds as the orphans approach. Despite this year being particularly dry, the sporadic and unseasonal rain showers kept the forest from drying out and provided endless puddles for the elephants to play in. During the hotter times of year, the orphans tend to spend more time resting under shady trees especially the little albino bulls, Jasiri and Faraja, who are particularly careful about keeping out of direct sunshine at such times.

Fortunately, they are spoilt for choice with plenty of cover in this forested area. The mud bath is a favourite too; thick mud provides an important insect proof layer on their skin, as well as acting as a natural sun screen while the moisture keeps them cooler for longer. There are days when the mud settles to the bottom of the wallow and a clear layer of fresh spring water covers the top of some of their spring fed waterholes. At such times the elephants like to stir the mud up which also dislodges any resident reptiles. Most of the waterholes are also home to terrapins and baby crocodiles and such inhabitants are long suffering and know the routine, often choosing to exit the water rather than being flattened by a fat elephant bottom! Chasing the resident crested cranes who live around the mud bath is another favourite pastime for the youngsters but the birds are accustomed to the orphans and seem un-perturbed by antics such as trumpeting, water kicking and mock charges aimed at scaring them off.

The Umani orphans have encountered a host of wild animals during their days out in the Kibwezi Forest and Chyulu Hills National Park. Most of the time the animals are harmless, such as bushbuck, dik diks and duikers, but the sudden appearance of any creature can send the elephants fleeing in fright no matter how harmless they are! Lima Lima is the eyes and ears for the Keepers and she is quick to sense any potential danger from wild elephants, buffalos, leopards and even snakes, giving her human family timely warning.

One particularly misty morning, when visibility was extremely limited, the orphans and their Keepers headed up Umani Hill and the Keepers were surprised to notice the orphans kept unusually close to them at all times. As the mist lifted, it became evident that they were surrounded by a herd of buffalo also browsing on the hills and clearly the orphans were providing protection for their Keepers, understanding that the buffalos could pose a threat to their beloved human family.

Murera and Sonje, the two oldest females, are the accepted leaders of this herd, but since they have both been left physically compromised due to poaching injuries, they are not able to keep the required leadership pace. The herd remains mindful of Murera and Sonje and so they adapt a pace that is appropriate for the two disabled females, with Lima Lima coming to the fore to take the lead when required. Sometimes the orphans undertake long treks into the Chyulu Hills National Park, something that is not easy for Murera and Sonje to achieve. Occasionally, they choose to remain behind leaving Lima Lima to escort the little herd and the keepers high into the hills in search of new adventures, and interesting browse.

At the beginning of the year, Ziwa enjoyed the role of being the pampered baby and when the naughty boys Ngasha, Faraja and Jasiri played too rough or clambered over Ziwa in the mud bath, it just took a squeal from Ziwa to prompt Murera and Sonje to come to the rescue. The naughty boys are always quick to disperse, fearful of the discipline that could be meted out for their actions. However, Ziwa's life was turned upside down when Umani welcomed two new additions, Alamaya and Mwashoti, in May this year. The older girls, particularly Sonje and Zongoloni were overwhelmed with the excitement of receiving two new, much younger babies and abandoned little Ziwa. Ziwa is old enough however to fend for himself and over time has learned to play with the other bulls and now joins in the pushing games between the bigger boys Faraja and Jasiri. As time wore on Ziwa became friendlier towards them both, particularly Alamaya and abandoning any previous resentment enjoys browsing with him in the forest. One day he took Alamaya and Mwashoti along with him as partners in crime to steal some lucerne from the hay store, but when the keepers shouted a reprimand, the younger bulls dropped their prize and retreated understanding what they were up to was not allowed, but Ziwa was less obedient and needed further

prompting! Murera and Sonje immediately took to the new youngsters, and after a few days started to concentrate their attention on Mwashoti, leaving Lima Lima to dote on the young Alamaya. Lima Lima has thrived in her new role of caring for Alamaya and protects him from the boisterous antics of the older bulls in the group! Some of the orphans have shown curiosity in Alamaya's missing tail, but where Jasiri the 'tail puller' has been trying to grab it, others like Quanza have just been touching the stump, trying to understand where it has gone - either way Alamaya usually does not like it! There is no doubt they have been enjoying their new environment immensely, thriving in the thick forest with an ample variety of vegetation and permanent water sources. Murera and Sonje have also shown Mwashoti the best routes around the lava rock due to his compromised leg, and taught him ways of approaching more difficult obstacles like climbing up hills and inclines. Alamaya and Mwashoti have been keen to show off their amazing swimming skills, unlike their new friends Ngasha, Faraja and Jasiri who tend to shy away from the water. The Keepers were very happy to see Mwashoti playing in the mud with such abandon that an onlooker would not know he had a disability. The Keepers were surprised when Alamaya began picking up and holding his milk bottle with his trunk independent of anyone, just like Zongoloni and Jasiri. He continued to practice his new skill over the following weeks and is now quite an expert, and extremely proud of himself.

Over the past year, there have been many encounters with wild elephants, who have slowly become used to the presence of the Keepers and are more comfortable exposing themselves during the daytime. At night, wild elephant herds love to drink the fresh spring water from the orphans' trough situated close to the stockade entrance and have even shared the orphans Lucerne laid out by the keepers in the morning. Some female herds with tiny babies spend time close to the stockade perimeter fence, communicating with our orphans for hours while the Keepers observe the exchange from the safety of their night duty tent perched on a platform. However, Murera still wants to protect her herd from being hijacked by these wild herds and is disapproving of prolonged interactions. The keepers were delighted when the orphans managed to fully interact with a wild herd and play with wild babies of similar age for the first time as this is a necessary step to their successful reintegration back into the wild.

The orphans always appear excited to come upon elephant dung or follow tracks recently frequented by wild elephant groups all except Murera and Sonje who take great pains to steer clear of the wild bulls who have begun to follow them around while Ziwa and Zongoloni have been much friendlier and try to make new wild friends.

One bull, bolder than the rest, began to join the orphans sometimes for their midday mudbath and is fast becoming a special favourite with the girls Zongoloni and Quanza. Everyone was quite taken aback, including the Keepers who gathered around Murera and Sonje, the first time he boldly made his presence known. At first the Keepers thought the bull was the one known as Osama, who has been troublesome in the past, but it was a new bull who has been named Ndugu (the Swahili word for brother). He has slowly become more accustomed to the presence of the Keepers, and the babies are now much more comfortable around him. He is clearly fascinated by this unusual herd of young elephants accompanied by their two legged friends, and is learning to trust both. Just as the wild bull named “Rafiki” was the catalyst who introduced the wild elephants to the Ithumba orphans and forged understanding between the wild elephant herds and the orphans’ Keepers, this wild Umani bull is now doing the same. Through him and his inquisitive nature the message will reach the other wild elephants in the area that these humans can be trusted, something that month on month is becoming more evident.

It’s hugely encouraging to see wild elephants repopulate the forest since it has become a protected area, and especially important for the orphans who will learn in time to integrate with the wild herds of the Kibwezi Forest and Chyulu Hills National Park. Such wild interaction is crucial for the successful rehabilitation of the orphans as it provides vital experience and learning opportunities for our younger orphans. For the orphans to be able to smell and taste what some of the wild elephants are eating, particularly during the dry seasons, is valuable information and only something they can learn once they reach the rehabilitation units in Tsavo and Kibwezi.





# THE ORPHANS' PROJECT

## The Orphaned Rhinos

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Our blind rhino, Maxwell, thoroughly enjoys the wet weather and during rainy mornings gallops up and down the full length of his enclosure, huffing and puffing, full of joy, so much that he ends up exhausted. During the rainy season when much of Nairobi was flooded Maxwell had a very muddy time in his large stockade! However, he seemed to enjoy the endless downpours and churning up mud pools in his “boma” during the rain storms. Maxwell does have a sheltered area in which to retreat and he sleeps under cover on a bed of hay whenever he wants to remove himself from the wet conditions. Maxwell’s stockade required much attention after the sodden conditions of so many months, and needed a rebuild with him in residence. This obviously caught Solio’s attention as it affected her stockades where she grew up as a baby. Rhinos hate change and so Solio returned numerous times to her stockade in the early evening or early morning hours, to demand lucerne from her keepers, who are always delighted to see her again, and to check on proceedings.

Maxwell has also had great fun terrorizing the warthogs who enter his boma to share his lucerne. On one occasion he chased them around for some time then let them relax and return to feeding on their bended knees while he circled and approached cautiously from behind, following the crunching sounds as they feasted. Once he had them lined up, he charged them and this unexpected charge frightened them terribly and they took off in all directions with one dashing through Max’s legs and the second one getting stuck in Maxwell’s gate. Luckily the one stuck in the gate managed to eventually extract itself before Max became aware of its plight!

Other than Solio, Maxwell has other friends within the orphan elephant herd. Our quiet little elephant orphan Murit and Maxwell enjoyed a lovely game during the early hours of one morning when Murit came straight out of his stockade and walked up to Maxwell’s gate where he was sleeping. Pulling on Max’s ears to wake him up from his peaceful slumber; Maxwell appeared to have been waiting for a friend to play with. Both charged at Maxwell’s gate from opposing sides and Maxwell spun around in delight after which they played for quite some time until both tired and Max went back to sleep, leaving Murit to join his friends out in the forest. On another occasion, Roi also pulled Max’s ear

with her trunk whilst he was sleeping which made him jump up in fright and embark on racing around his stockade, whilst Kamok and Roi ran alongside trumpeting, exciting Max even further! This game continued for some time until the orphan elephant girls decided that they should join their friends who, by this time, were deep in the forest, browsing. The elephant orphans regularly socialise with Maxwell but often this is purely to sneak some of the tasty lucerne put out in his stockade for him. Mbegu and Murit have learnt to snatch pieces of Lucerne through the bars of his stockade gate early in the mornings and Maxwell doesn’t seem to mind since their scent is familiar to him and he regards them as friends. However, when Mwashoti, Kamok and Alamaya ran up to Maxwell’s gate in order to try and steal some of the lucerne whilst he was eating, Maxwell wasn’t so pleased. After failing to scare them away by charging at his gate, Maxwell resorted to drastic measures and sprayed urine in Kamok’s face! This tactic did the trick, leaving Kamok dashing off into the bush trumpeting in protest, with Mwashoti and Alamaya in hot pursuit.

Solio, our female rhino orphan who is now comfortably integrated into the wild Nairobi Park rhino community, living a totally free life, continues to visit Maxwell, usually under cover of darkness. She can often be heard huffing and puffing around in the dark, curiously investigating anything that might be new within her well-trodden territory. When she arrives at the compound, she always greets Maxwell first and they communicate at length through the bars of his gate by touching lips and locking horns, or by running up and down the length of his stockade, before Solio returns to her old stockade and calls for lucerne to be brought to her by the keepers! Her visits are hugely appreciated by Maxwell who gets very excited by the interaction and whirls around his stockade then comes back to the gate so they can spar and savour each other’s scent. We provide lucerne for Solio so that she can linger longer, but eventually she ambles away leaving a disappointed Maxwell who would enjoy even more of her company. She is often accompanied by a wild female friend who has a sub-adult calf and they have all been seen at night visiting the compound, and Maxwell. Solio has also befriended a wild Nairobi Park female black rhino who is very pregnant and we cannot help but wonder whether our precious Solio will also soon produce a calf of her own.







# THE ORPHANS' PROJECT

## The Other Orphans

We rescued Pea and Pod in October 2014 when our team of Keepers retrieved a little orphaned elephant from Northern Kenya. On the dry and dusty Milgis airstrip, our Keepers were unexpectedly handed two orphaned ostrich chicks by KWS Rangers who knew we could offer them a safe haven. These two tiny ostriches grew up in the company of our orphan elephant herd, and orphan infant giraffe Kiko. During their time here at our Nursery, they became very much part of the elephant herd, dwarfing their elephant friends at only 16 months old. An adult ostrich can grow to over seven feet high, and Pea and Pod were not far off that. Pod, began to wander further afield and showed signs of becoming restless. Due to his behaviour, we are certain he was male and finally, in May, he didn't return to the stockades and hasn't been seen since. We are hopeful that he has joined his own kind on the Park plains. Prior to Pod's departure, the two ostriches developed a dislike of raincoats and umbrellas, which was most unfortunate for the keepers since Nairobi was experiencing some of the wettest weather ever recorded. Whenever the green-jacketed Keepers changed their 'plumage', it triggered rage in Pod, who became aggressive at the sight of the Keepers wearing raincoats. Pea, the other orphan ostrich, remained close to home joining the orphaned elephants whilst they are out browsing and playing. However, Pea's story ended sadly when two years since she first arrived at the Nursery, the orphans and Pea were feeding in the forest, when they were panicked by three Nairobi Park lions chasing a herd of impala and in the process scattering the orphans, including Pea. After the Keepers managed to round up their elephant charges they grew concerned when they could not locate Pea. While continuing with their search they came to a glade where the lions, two females and a male, were feasting on a kill. Unable to get close enough on foot to see what they had killed they returned in a vehicle, only to have their worst fears confirmed, when they discovered that the lions had killed Pea. When one has nurtured and raised an orphan animal from an early age and loved it, a natural end is no less painful as is a natural end of a human family member.

"Shabby", our sacred Ibis orphan who was hand raised as a chick now has a multitude of differing relationships. He is extremely attached to Daphne, following her every morning as she walks onto the veranda to feed him and share his food with a myriad of smaller bird opportunists who join

them both each morning. Shabby has wild sacred ibis friends who also join him at the mud bath and waterhole areas, searching for frogs. He also has a special attachment to Maxwell, often sitting close to him while they both rest sometimes for hours at a time. This relationship has spanned many years and is mutual.

Orphan giraffe, Kiko, is growing huge, almost dwarfing his extended and very tall stable. He is also hilarious and we can't help but laugh at him! He loves to chase warthogs at every given opportunity and antagonize the elephants because he knows his presence annoys them. He will provoke them intentionally and then run away as they chase after him! He teases them for some time until he grows tired, and wanders off searching for acacia trees to feed on, able to reach branches beyond the reach of the elephants. He spends a lot of time in the stockade compound of his own free will, making short work of the pot plants, despite many gates and fences being erected to deter him. Kiko continues to do what he likes, despite pleas and temptation of a milk bottle offered from his keepers; at times he complies, other times he flatly refuses. He particularly likes taking himself back to the Stockade area to feed on the acacia tree by Edwin's office, after which he must be escorted back out and then refuses to come back at the correct time in the evening! Sometimes when he is particularly obstinate, the Keepers just leave him to himself rather than try and persuade him against his will. Sometimes he shows how much he really does depend on the keepers and one day he kept running away, until he ran into a herd of wild giraffes that appeared from behind the bushes. This caused him to make a quick U-turn, promptly running back to the company of his keepers and the baby elephant group, to watch the wild herd from afar! He has had various encounters with wild giraffe, including one with a young baby much smaller than himself. The wild mother giraffe was very interested in Kiko and repeatedly tried to approach him, but he kept running away whenever she got close. Her little baby boy managed to get much closer to Kiko before he fled. On another occasion, Kiko met with a nursery herd of giraffes including three very young ones, which Kiko approached and even interacted with. He is still nervous of wild giraffes but the more encounters he has on a regular basis, the more he will learn that he is in fact a giraffe! As he is of the reticulated variety he will eventually be translocated to join his northern race of brethren. We are therefore actively





seeking a good home for Kiko given how fast he is growing. This is something that needs to be done sooner rather than later.

The DSWT opens its doors to any orphaned wild animal in need, and throughout the year has welcomed a variety of species whilst continuing to offer around the clock care to the ones already at home in the extended family. Members of this family include Ngulia the orphan zebra, as well as Jamuhuri the female buffalo, Tawi our orphan male eland and Kore our female eland, who all call the Voi Stockades home. The teams on Amu Ranch in Lamu also care for three orphan baby buffaloes, an oribi, a Suni, and a zebra, whilst at Kaluku the team there cares for a duiker and several bushbucks and a number of Kudus. The newest arrival to the Kaluku family is 'Humpty' just days before Christmas a report was received from Lamu regarding an orphaned hippo that required rescuing. This tiny hippo calf had been found stuck in the mud of a drying pond within the large Kiunga Forest by the forest rangers and there were no other hippos to be found in the area. The rescue team, comprised of two DSWT keepers and KWS veterinary officer Dr Njoroge, flew from Nairobi to an airstrip nearby, where upon arrival they touched base with the rangers who had found the calf. Without wasting any time the team boarded a helicopter and after a ten-minute flight they reached the point where the hippo was.

The calf was darted to sedate it throughout the rescue process and to prevent it from potentially moving further into the mud; she was then wrapped in a wet blanket to keep her cool throughout the rest of the journey. She was placed into another transport bag and secured to the skids of the helicopter as there was not enough space inside to fit her! The helicopter took off safely with the hippo calf hanging in the big rescue bag between the skids and everything went according to plan, with the hippo calf arriving safely at the airstrip where she was loaded onto the awaiting caravan aircraft. The whole rescue operation took around 45 minutes from arriving at the scene to returning to the airstrip. From Kiunga Forest the hippo calf was then airlifted to the DSWT Kaluku HQ in Tsavo where she is now being hand raised. The calf was identified as female and seemed in okay condition overall, though a little weak. She was happy to walk about the area that had been created for her and enjoyed being showered with water to remain cool in the high temperature of the afternoon in Tsavo! She was aged to be around one month old, and was named Humphretta - Humpty for short. At first she was quite aggressive to other people and kept on charging everyone who entered her temporary enclosure, but since the employment of a full time Samburu keeper she has calmed down and grown very tame, drinking approximately 6 litres of milk per day from a bottle. She has subsequently had a customised pool made for her which she loves.





# VETERINARY PROJECTS

## Mobile Veterinary Units

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The DSWT and the KWS continue to jointly operate four successful Mobile Veterinary Units with Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) Field Veterinary Officers within the Tsavo Conservation Area, the Masai Mara and Central Rift Valley, the northern Meru ecosystem and within the Southern Conservation Area based in Amboseli National Park. During August 2016, Dr. Njoroge of the Amboseli Mobile Veterinary Unit was replaced by KWS Field Veterinary Officer Dr. Ndambiri Ephantus, who has since settled in well as part of the extended mobile veterinary team.

### Commencement Years of Units:

Tsavo	–	November 2003
Mara	–	March 2007
Meru	–	February 2013
Amboseli	–	May 2014

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These life-saving units are on call 365 days a year with emergency backup support from the DSWT funded Sky Vet program. Our assigned KWS veterinarians handle a diverse range of cases, attending to any wild animal in need, varying from aardvarks to elephants. The teams are also often called to harsh and remote areas where at times they must go on foot through desert, river and forest to reach their patients. Where possible the DSWT gives the veterinary teams aircraft backup, especially support of the DSWT helicopter, which is best suited for tracking and darting an animal in need of urgent treatment.

Many cases the teams faced during 2016 were due to poaching activities, with elephants predominantly being targeted. The methods poachers have been using continue to follow the traditional trends of spearing, which is most common in the Mara and Amboseli ecosystem, whilst snaring and poisoned arrow poaching continues to plague the Tsavo Conservation Area as well as within the Meru and northern ecosystem, which also receives the most cases of bullet wounds.

Another concern is the increasing reports of cases involving human-wildlife conflict throughout Kenya, but certainly within the Tsavo ecosystem, where burgeoning human populations and settlements, new infrastructure as well as the new Standard Gauge Railway are creating yet more barriers for wildlife. This

conflict is affecting not only elephants, but many species including predators. Within the greater Tsavo area the DSWT is working hard to suppress further conflict issues, with the ground teams and Aerial Unit on standby to remove wild animals from problem areas and divert them back into the Parks for their safety and that of the surrounding communities.

In total throughout the year the four Mobile Veterinary Units alongside the Sky Vet program, attended to 452 wild animals. Of these cases 212 included elephants, 47 lions, 43 rhinos amongst a host of other species. Many of these cases were caused by poaching activities, followed by a high percentage of human-wildlife conflict cases as well as collarings, relocations, research cases and situations where animals had injuries triggered by natural causes.

The vital work of these dedicated units relies upon teamwork and collaboration, from those who first sight an injured animal to those who conduct the monitoring and surveillance by foot, vehicle and aircraft, before the veterinary team is called in and the operation takes place. Throughout this process there is an ops team online synchronising all those involved to ensure the best outcome, as efficient coordination is key to a successful treatment. With such systems in place the DSWT is proud to be able to save the lives of countless wild animals which would otherwise be lost.



# VETERINARY PROJECTS

## Sky Vet

Since inception in 2013, the hugely successful Sky Vet initiative, which sees KWS Veterinary Officers flown to all corners of the country on emergency veterinary cases, has attended to 198 wild animals throughout Kenya. These cases have included 157 elephants and 17 lions as well as rhino, buffalo, giraffe, hyena, hippo and zebra. Out of these cases 144 were caused by poaching injuries including 38 spear cases, 28 snare cases, 59 arrow cases and 19 bullet wound cases. 76% of these cases since inception were given a good prognosis by attending vets for a full recovery; the majority of these animals would not have survived their wounds had it not been for rapid response veterinary intervention from Sky Vets.

### Sky Vet Stories

On the 20<sup>th</sup> May 2016 tourists in Tsavo sighted a bull elephant with a severe leg injury; the leg was extremely swollen and on closer inspection a cable snare was found cutting through to the bone. A KWS vet was flown down under the Sky Vet program to administer timely treatment before the bull could disappear. After darting from the DSWT helicopter the team got to work removing the cable snare, which was deeply embedded in the soft tissue. The cable was cut loose using heavy duty wire cutters before being cleaned thoroughly. Long-acting antibiotics were then administered before his wound was covered with green clay, promoting rapid healing thanks to its remarkable antiseptic qualities. After a successful operation, it has been comforting for all to see the bull has chosen to remain in the area, and on a few occasions, has visited the orphans' waterhole at Ithumba, allowing the team to monitor his progress. By the end of May, he was hardly even limping with his wound healing beautifully, free from infection.



On the 16<sup>th</sup> June, Loisaba Ranch contacted the KWS after an adult elephant was found trapped in one of the wells on the ranch. Given the distances involved and the need for a hasty response, the DSWT's Sky Vet team collected KWS vet Dr Bernard Rono and flew him to the site. Once the team had arrived, they were able to ascertain that the elephant was a young bull around 18 years of age, and that he had become severely lodged inside the concrete walls of a very small well. With the assistance of the Loisaba team and KWS Rangers the DSWT's Sky Vet team decided to try the conservative approach, bringing sand and rocks collected by a digger and placing them into the well to raise the ground level. It was soon evident that this approach was proving hopeful with the elephant being able to struggle onto his side leaning on the outside of the well and finally climbing out by himself. Although there were superficial wounds to his legs, the bull was able to walk away without any further treatment required. Had rapid response to this case not been possible this young bull would have had a much worse fate.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> June, a rhino was seen by the Masai Mara Rhino Monitoring Team severely limping with fresh blood coming from his left hind leg. They requested the services of Sky Vet to help immobilize and treat him. Given that this rhino was out of sight from everyone, it was only feasible to use the support of a helicopter for search and darting. The rhino was finally located not far from the edge of the bush, limping severely. Darting was carried out from the air and it took ten minutes for the drugs to take full effect. Examination revealed a deep wound on the inner side of his left hind leg about half an inch in diameter. There was a crack to the tibio-fibular bone that was evident on palpation via the opening of the wound. Luckily there was no complete fracture. Probing could not reveal any foreign object but the wound appeared very deep. This was considered to have been caused by a high velocity projectile, possibly a gun shot. Treatment involved stopping the bleeding, cleaning the wound and disinfecting it. Cloxacillin ointment was then used and the wound was packed with green clay. A follow-up not long after the initial treatment showed the rhino had improved greatly and had managed to move more than two kilometres from where he received treatment. Close monitoring by the rhino team continues with regular updates on his progress.





## DATA FOR VETERINARY WORK MOBILE VETS AND SKY VETS IN 2016



**452**

Wild animals treated

### THESE INCLUDED



**212**

Elephants treated



**43**

Black & white rhinos treated



**47**

Lions treated

### OF THE ELEPHANTS WE TREATED



**46%**

were successful



**11%**

guarded prognosis



**9%**

poaching death

**RIP**

**21%**

other types of death



**2%**

reunited with their mother



**10%**

taken to the orphanage

### INCREASE OF CASES PER YEAR



### PIE CHART CASES

#### SNARE CASES



#### ARROW CASES



#### BULLET WOUND CASES



#### SPEAR CASES



## Veterinary Notes From The Field

By Dr. Ndambiri-Amboseli Mobile Vet Unit

"What a change?! I was transferred barely four months ago, from the Central Conservation Area to the Southern Conservation Area. Formerly I was heading the Naivasha Mobile Veterinary Unit sponsored by Animal Rights Reserved Foundation based at Kongoni Game Valley for four and a half years. Now I am heading the Amboseli Mobile Veterinary Unit sponsored by David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust (DSWT) based at the Amboseli National Park Headquarters. I have been encouraged by the admirable working relations exhibited by the different teams and stakeholders within the entire ecosystem and more so by the enormous support by the KWS and DSWT, through which many animals have been relieved of their suffering. The new posting is intriguing as it gives me an opportunity to have wild encounters with the big species on a daily basis.

The Southern Conservation Area is vast with many different animal species with hotspots where wild animal interactions with humans are inevitable. Human-wildlife conflict forms the backbone of most of the clinical cases experienced within the ecosystem. Humans respond harshly to wild animals following crop raids, competition over water and vegetation and worse after injury or death. As a result, arrowing and spearings are experienced. Poisonings have also been witnessed either through poisoned arrows or baits (meat or watermelon) laced with poison. 'Remote' poaching attempts have also been encountered- especially elephant snaring using heavy duty winch wires. We have also stumbled upon the use of guns in poaching attempts, but on a lesser scale. It has been observed that most of the injuries are aimed at lower limb joints and sadly they end up with a very poor prognosis. This is exacerbated by the fact that these wild animals are spotted when their injuries have severely affected ambulation due to resultant irreversible pathology in joints involved.

Challenges encountered in execution of the duties include difficult terrain comprising of thick bush, rocky terrain and impenetrable bush. Also, the vastness of the ecosystem poses a challenge, with our team travelling long distances to reach cases. Temporary streams which are unnavigable during rainy seasons also have caused delays in case attendances; at times causing unplanned overnight stops. Fortunately, some of these challenges have been overcome by air support through DSWT fixed wing airlifts and helicopter darting plus surveillance. Possibly in the future airlifts will enable more Unit crew members to be on board instead of the vet only in order to make these missions more effective.

But all the same the good news is that these cases have been declining daily because of the effective awareness and outreach programs to surrounding communities by all conservation stakeholders within the ecosystem. Rapid response whenever treatment is called for has instilled confidence in the community who in turn are willingly reporting any cases necessitating the Mobile Vet Unit service. This prompt response is enabled by unceasing sponsorship of the Amboseli Mobile Vet Unit by David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust and supporters. It is our humble submission that this collaboration will thrive beyond the expectations for posterity."







# ANTI-POACHING PROJECTS

## DSWT Teams

The DSWT first established its anti-poaching initiatives in the Tsavo Conservation Area (TCA) in 1999 with the launch of the Mtito Team based in Tsavo East National Park. This team continues to patrol today still working unstintingly after 17 years of battling illegal activities, providing protection throughout the Tsavo Triangle and along the Athi River's southern banks, the Mtito River and sensitive zones both east and west of the Mombasa Road. Since the creation of this first team the DSWT has continued to establish ranger units throughout the TCA where an anti-poaching and security presence has been needed the most.

The DSWT's Anti-Poaching taskforce now includes over 60 rangers, all of whom have graduated from the KWS Manyani Academy, making up 10 full-time Anti-Poaching Units each supported by two armed KWS Rangers. One of these fully-equipped units was deployed to Meru National Park in northern Kenya in 2014 in an effort to eradicate a worrying increase in poaching activities in the area, whilst the remaining nine units are spread throughout a vast 60,000 km<sup>2</sup> of key wildlife habitat spanning Tsavo East and West National Parks, the Chyulu Hills and Kibwezi Forest, bordering ranches and protected areas, all of which are home to Kenya's largest population of elephants. The Yatta and Mobile Anti-Poaching Units, the two newest units to join the force, were launched during 2016.

### DSWT Anti-Poaching Units (year of establishment)

Chui	– Mtito, Tsavo East National Park (1999)
Peregrine	– Trust land, Tsavo East boundary (2001)
Faru	– Burra, Voi Tsavo East National Park (2002)
Ndovu	– Ithumba, Northern Area Tsavo East (2002)
Nyati	– Tiva, Northern Area Tsavo East (2004)
Simba	– Ziwani, Tsavo West National Park (2004)
Duma	– Chyulu, Chyulu Hills National Park (2006)
Mamba	– Kenze, Kibwezi Forest (2011)
Meru	– Meru National Park (2014)
Yatta	– Yatta Plateau, Tsavo East National Park (2016)
Mobile	– TCA - Fully Mobile (2016)

2016 for the DSWT and KWS Anti-Poaching ground teams was a year seeing a number of victories, especially in curbing extensive charcoal and logging operations within the parks, whilst the teams worked diligently with the KWS in evicting thousands of cattle and livestock illegally grazing and watering in the protected areas, which has been a plague throughout both the dry and wet seasons. Although such activities rise and fall following weather patterns, overall the teams are experiencing a positive reduction throughout the year due to a continued security presence.

The teams are quick to apprehend offenders when they are caught red-handed in the parks. During the year 430 arrests were made including 9 ivory poachers, 4 of which were arrested in Meru National Park by the Meru Unit, whilst the other poachers were captured operating in areas throughout the TCA. 85 offenders were also arrested for bushmeat poaching; the majority of them caught carrying bushmeat and/or snares and poaching tools. In total 159kgs of bushmeat was also confiscated along with over 6,500 snares and over 200 poaching tools. The remainder of the arrests that were made during the year included livestock herders and charcoal burners. Nearly 400 charcoal kilns and poaching structures were also destroyed throughout the TCA including poachers' shooting blinds, platforms and camps.





## The Canine Unit

The DSWT's much anticipated Canine Unit was officially launched in July 2016. This new unit consists of KWS Manyani graduated rangers who during the year received specialist training in Tanzania to become dog handlers along with their three canine friends, Belgian Malinois, Max, Tanya and Naiko. These dogs make the perfect trackers being able to follow scents over long distances and track down bushmeat and ivory poachers inside and outside of the Parks.

Since establishment the dogs and their trainers acclimatised themselves to their new home, which is close to the DSWT's Kaluku headquarters in Tsavo East. The unit has been concentrating on their skills, training techniques and routines including discipline and one-day tracks whilst allowing the dogs to get used to the environment and climate. Training is an ongoing process for both the dogs and their handlers, who continue to form great bonds. Other training has included familiarisation with the DSWT's helicopter to get the dogs accustomed to the aircraft including entering and exiting with their handlers, getting used to the noise and obeying commands whilst in flight. Using the helicopter for these missions will ensure the rapid response of the Dog Unit team to any report received within the Tsavo Conservation Area.

Shortly after acclimatisation the Canine Unit commenced live operations in the field alongside the DSWT/KWS Anti-Poaching Units, seeing enormous success and leading to several apprehensions including tracking down and arresting bushmeat poachers, sniffing out cattle intrusion and uncovering other illegal activities in the Park such as charcoal burning and logging. These outcomes in the past months have shown how incredibly valuable this new unit is, and will be in the future.

During their monthly missions the dogs and their handlers have followed the tracks and scents of poachers in the park leading the teams to camps and hideouts resulting in several arrests of bushmeat poachers as well as charcoal burners and loggers. The Canine Unit has also received intelligence from community members concerning suspected bushmeat poachers. During these operations, the dogs visit houses in the community to sniff out any potential illegal activities, and on one occasion the team managed to arrest three suspects for being in possession of fresh bushmeat.

The presence alone of the dogs is a great deterrent to poachers and other offenders operating illegally in the parks, whilst the combined effect of the aerial, ground and Canine units is achieving great success.



# AERIAL SURVEILLANCE

## DSWT Airwing

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The DSWT has taken huge steps in expanding its aerial operations in the past years, today operating 7 aircraft including a MD500 Helicopter, 4 SuperCubs (5Y-DTP, 5Y-STP, 5Y-WRB and most recently 5Y-TRA) a Cessna 185 (5Y-DHS) and a Cessna 206. The Tsavo Conservation Area is a vast ecosystem needing the support of several aircraft all of which need to be suited to an array of missions from general surveillance to darting, long-haul journeys to rapid response and bush landings, as well as being able to transport officials, rangers and the newly established Dog Unit.

2016 saw the Aerial Unit cover over 165,500 kms over the TCA and beyond, with aerial surveillance stretching as far as the coastal Lamu District, where one of the DSWT's Saving Habitats projects is located. The year has brought many a challenge but the DSWT's pilots have been at hand answering a wide range of calls, whilst also locating and helping to dart injured elephants, searching for and locating orphaned elephant calves, discovering and reporting illegal activities, setting ambushes and tracking poachers, as well as responding to cases of elephants causing conflict in community areas.

Much like the DSWT's Anti-Poaching Units, the Aerial Unit has similarly been contending with the growing concern of human-wildlife conflict within the greater Tsavo area. Elephants outside of the Parks and protected areas have continued to find themselves in community land, crop raiding and causing damage. This is largely due to the Standard Gauge Railway carving Tsavo in two with very few points where elephants can pass. Their ancestral migratory routes are being compromised, and with this comes confusion, and very often the elephants find themselves on the community side of the Park with no way of getting back. The DSWT's Aerial Unit has spent considerable time assisting the KWS ground teams in locating and pushing elephants out of problem areas. In total over 200 elephants have been extracted from local community lands with support of the Aerial team preventing further conflict. This conflict between elephants and humans is also due to a lack of land use policy and the fact that communities are attempting to farm in locations and buffer zones close to park boundaries, which in the past were free of crops and settlement. The elephants once freely roamed these habitats, but now with a growing human population they encounter fields of maize, schools and homesteads. Yet despite these challenges the Aerial Unit is bringing confidence and assurance to the communities that something is being done about

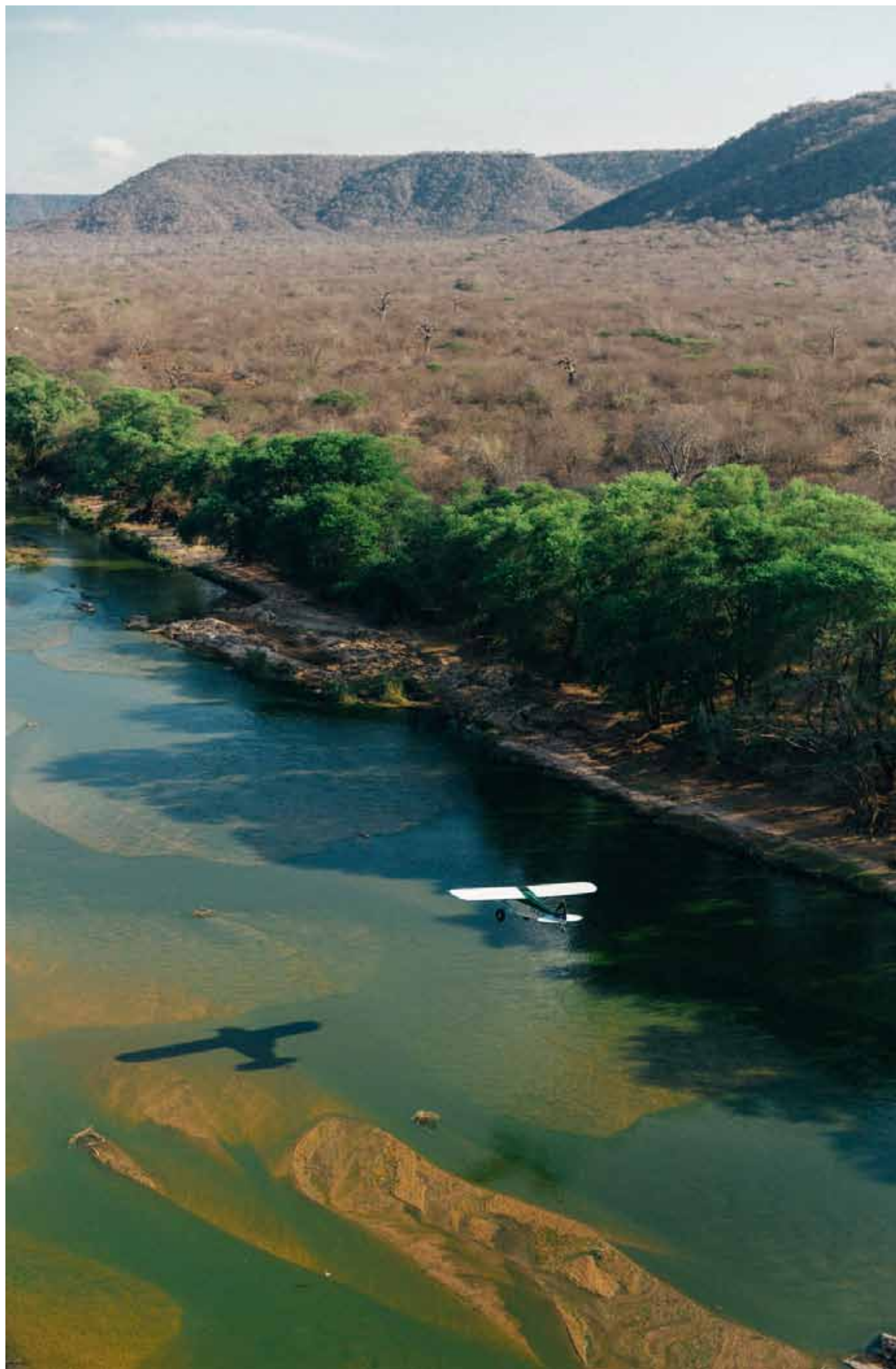
it. Illegal activities sighted from the air during the year within the parks mostly revolved around illegal grazing and charcoal burning. The helicopter has been involved in ongoing joint operations with the KWS, DSWT ground teams and the DSWT Canine Unit, dedicating many flights to extended operations to stop large-scale charcoal burning activities. Countless charcoal kilns and camps have been destroyed with up to 20 kilns being discovered in a single day. Since charcoal burners are frequently observed engaging in poaching activities simultaneously, this has been a significant victory. It is hoped that continued pressure with fixed-wing and ground patrols will help bring such areas under control permanently. Also through determined efforts from the Aerial Unit with prompt and consistent follow-up from teams on the ground, charcoal-burning activities in Gazi have been almost completely wiped out.

The Aerial Unit was also active in patrolling and supporting the Galana Conservancy this year, which is a vital project that the DSWT now supports financially. Galana is a key buffer zone for wildlife along Tsavo East's eastern boundary and must be protected to ensure the future of Tsavo East as a whole. As part of this mission the aerial team has been working to locate herders and their livestock illegally entering the conservancy and making settlements and bomas for their cattle. Whilst the pilots report the hardest hit areas, the DSWT/KWS ground team are on hand to assist Galana Conservancy rangers in evicting intruders whilst assisting with patrolling the area looking for evidence of poaching and snares.

During August 2016, the Aerial Unit was only involved in two elephant treatments during what is generally one of the busiest months of the year. Veterinary cases during this month dropped by well over half in comparison to August 2015 of which the majority were poaching related incidences. Likewise, the number of carcasses spotted by both the Aerial Unit and the ground teams significantly dropped in number, which can be contributed to increased DSWT/KWS aerial and ground patrols and an overall improved security presence in the greater Tsavo Conservation Area. Lower cases of carcasses discovered can also be due to the effectiveness and rapid response of the DSWT/KWS Mobile Veterinary Units. All teams are working hard to ensure that this is an onward trend for the future.

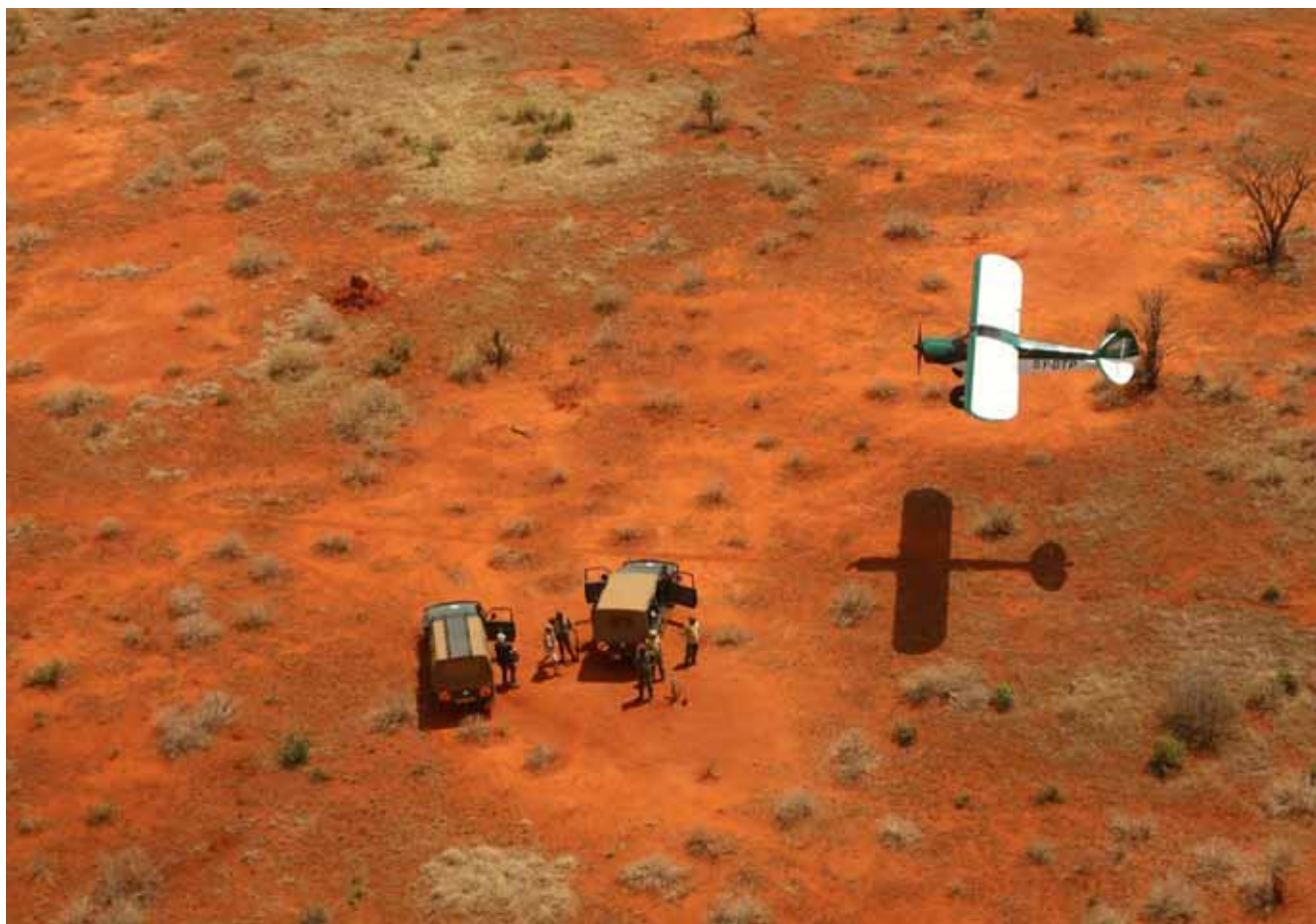














## Pilot Field Notes

By Andy Payne

"As 2016 draws to a close, the DSWT team can reflect on another year of productive helicopter operations with our distinctive 'Tsavo Red' MD500. The helicopter continues to play a vital role in the Trust's extensive aerial operations, providing rapid response and support to both the veterinary and anti-poaching units. As the DSWT helicopter pilot based in Tsavo, I feel privileged and excited to be part the conservation team who are doing an incredible job of protecting an enormous cross-section of Kenya's wildlife and habitats.

Wet or dry season the DSWT aerial unit's focus is around water points, which dictate the distribution of elephants in the park and the threats that follow them relentlessly. The helicopter typically patrols with a team of armed rangers and lands along busy elephant paths and water holes to check for shooting blinds, tree platforms and signs of poaching activity. The ability to put boots on the ground has proved to be a serious deterrent to poachers working in Tsavo.

Each day brings with it a diversity of flying and challenges, what starts off as a routine anti-poaching patrol can quickly become a darting and treatment of an injured animal. The helicopter's ability to hover and land anywhere in Tsavo's vast and varied landscape, provides an ideal platform for a veterinary officer to observe and dart from. This year the Aerial unit and KWS vets have performed numerous treatments together, which has given many of these patients a second chance at life. For me, being part of a team which successfully treats a wounded elephant is the most rewarding aspect of the job.

This year saw the recently formed DSWT Canine Unit move into their tailor-made compound and begin operations in the Tsavo Conservation Area. Consisting of 3 specially trained Belgian Malinois sniffer dogs led by 6 handlers and a pair of KWS rangers, this unit has added another arrow in the DSWT anti-poaching quiver. The dogs are usually called out by an anti-poaching team or pilot who has found fresh poachers tracks which requires a hot pursuit; the helicopter is the perfect aircraft to rapidly deploy the dog team on the tracks. Since June we have worked hard at training the dogs and handlers in helicopter operations and are now conducting successful patrols in the MD500.

As the human population continues to grow in the neighbouring communal lands, we also experience an increase in Human-Wildlife Conflict. Many of the TCA's boundaries are porous and elephants can wander out of the park and into the community farms, often causing substantial damage to crops and occasionally to humans. Elephants make themselves extremely unpopular with these subsistence farmers through the loss of crops and earnings, which often results in these farmers taking revenge on the unfortunate crop raiders. The DSWT air wing works closely with KWS and the communities to react promptly to reports of elephant seen in the community farms, by deploying the helicopter to drive the animals back into the relative safety of the park. Our rapid response to these calls for help undoubtedly saves many elephant from injury or worse and wins us the support of these local communities for protecting their interests. A win-win situation.

Looking ahead to the new year, the goal of the Aerial Unit is to build on the success of operations with our ground teams through advanced training for our team leaders. "



Pilot Andy Payne



# SAVING HABITATS

## Kibwezi Forest

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As in previous years, the DSWT continues to extend the Kibwezi-Chyulu electric fence, which already surrounds the Kibwezi Forest on three sides and extends along a portion of the Chyulu Hills National Park totalling 65.6kms of human and animal proof electric fencing that is funded, built and maintained by the Trust. In 2016, the fence was extended a further 10 km both to the north and south of the Kibwezi Forest, and will stretch to Mukururo and serve as an important barrier to would-be rhino poachers. Although these rhinos generally inhabit an area outside of Kibwezi, the forest is a part of their territory and they do occasionally move around Umani Springs. Six full-time staff funded by the DSWT maintain the extensive road network within the forest whilst a crew of fence attendants from Sanyati LTD is responsible for the maintenance of the electric fence.

Perhaps the most important function of the fenceline is to mitigate human-wildlife conflict, which has the potential to be an even greater threat to endangered species. Elephant and other animals are routinely killed when they happen upon hostile farmers and it has also been proven that community perception of wildlife improves when they do not feel threatened by animals, and are therefore less likely to poach them or lobby against their protection.

Beyond the installation of an electric fence, the DSWT also regularly assists communities by pushing problem elephants back into protected areas and away from community land with the use of the DSWT/KWS ground teams, vehicles and DSWT aircrafts (both fixed wing and helicopter). This has been a highly successful initiative with elephants being effectively removed from farms and returned to the safety of the Forest and its electric fence. Incidents of human-wildlife conflict attended to by the Kibwezi Forest team alone numbered over 40 and illustrates the importance of our efforts to continue fencing the boundary of the Chyulu Hills National Park.

The most recent extension will considerably increase protection for communities from elephant incursions, as well as other crop-raiding wildlife such as bush pigs. In the near future, it is hoped that funding can be secured to complete this fencing project along the entire eastern boundary of the Chyulu Hills National Park, which would effectively eliminate human-elephant conflict for the communities immediately surrounding the Kibwezi Forest. In the meantime, however, the DSWT is committed to continue supporting communities by helping to chase away the few elephants that do wander onto people's farms with the use of the helicopter as well as men and vehicles on the ground.

The Kibwezi Forest Anti-Poaching team (Kenze Team) had a very successful year operating mostly inside Kibwezi Forest, but also patrolling the larger Chyulu Hills Ecosystem. They have made over 50 arrests this year, mostly for charcoal burning and logging. Furthermore, they destroyed 40 charcoal kilns, a number of poacher's hideouts and shooting platforms whilst removing over 500 snares. One of the frustrations shared by the Anti-Poaching teams operating within the Chyulus and the neighbouring Kibwezi forest was re-arresting repeat offenders who had already gone through a court and conviction process. It was decided to invite the Makindu law court officials for an educational visit of the park to see first-hand the many challenges and dangers the rangers face in making an arrest and to hear the magistrates' side of wildlife crimes brought for their hearing and judgement. It was everyone's hope that through this initial visit that KWS, the stakeholders and the Makindu law court could explain each other's input to the 'arrest to prosecution' process for wildlife offences and share ideas on ensuring each case is presented in court with solid evidence,

statements, charges and understanding of the wildlife act so that offenders receive the correct punishment according to the law. It was also noted that the police are lacking in knowledge of the wildlife act, which is critical to writing up comprehensive charges against an offender. It was decided that a similar educational visit with local police stations would be arranged to present the work KWS and the stakeholders do and to enlighten them on the 'Offences and Penalties' section of the act.

Following last year's decision by Makueni County Government, in consultation with the National Government, to suspend firewood collection and cattle grazing in the Kibwezi Forest, there has been a noticeable, positive effect on vegetative growth in the Forest, especially on the outskirts of the forest where collection was heaviest. On average during 2015, 2,525 head loads of wood were being carried out of the forest every month. If 1 head load is roughly equal to 28 kg, that is 848 tons of biomass that has been prevented from leaving the forest. Much of this was greenwood, which will now have a chance to continue growing. What was in fact deadwood will now continue to serve its ecological function as food and habitat for insects, rodents and reptiles and eventually as nutrient for vegetation.

The DSWT continues to do what it can to protect the springs, and is still strongly opposed to excessive off-take of water from the springs by outside entities. In an attempt to improve the ecological value of the now dried up wetlands below the springs the DSWT's resident teams with help from local community members have begun to plant large numbers of indigenous trees, which have taken remarkably well.

The DSWT during 2016 rehabilitated the Water Resource Management Authority's (WRMA) house at Umani Springs. The WRMA is the authority which manages the pumping of the water supply and who have a full-time staff member based at the springs to keep guard on the system. For years this employee has lived in a very basic and rundown house with few amenities. To show goodwill to the WRMA the DSWT has rebuilt the house, which also lies on a key route for tourists and visitors of the Forest who take walks to the springs.

A new water trough has also been built in the Forest for wildlife, especially for the increasing number of wild elephants moving through the area, whilst the Trust's Bobcat has been busy maintaining the KWS's Kithasyo Airstrip.

The DSWT has begun replanting sections of depleted wetlands within the Forest with indigenous trees. This will establish a forest canopy in what has unfortunately become a biological desert. However, it is hoped that the environmental flow of the water springs will soon be restored and at least the core of the wetland will return to its original state. The Trust has also more than doubled the output of indigenous tree seedlings being planted, from 10,000 per annum to a total of 21,426 this year. The DSWT has also partnered with Seedballs Kenya to distribute an additional 12,500 indigenous tree seeds encased in a bio-char ball that will soften when soaked and provide the perfect medium in which to germinate. These were randomly dispersed with the help of one of the Trust's Super Cubs in an area that had previously been degraded by livestock before the electric fence was introduced. To increase the diversity of trees being planted, the DSWT sponsored an onsite training course on best practices for germination and maintenance of *Melia vukensii*. This is a notoriously difficult tree species to germinate, and has always been avoided in the past, but





the DSWT now has 4 employees who have been thoroughly trained on methods for seed collection, processing and storage, managing Melia seedlings in a nursery, transplanting seedlings in the field and tending to and managing trees to maturity.

This year's forest fires have been the worst in recent history. On three occasions in September and for around 20 days in October, DSWT teams fought bushfires for long hours, coming back to camp late in the evenings. These blazing fires originated in the Chyulu Hills National Park and thanks to the efforts of the DSWT, were extinguished and kept from entering the Kibwezi Forest. As a preventative measure, the DSWT continues to maintain dozens of kilometres of roads and cutlines that act as firebreaks should any forest fires make it past the fire-fighting rangers.

As with last year, the Umani Springs lodge has seen a steady increase in occupancy, with some months being fully booked. This speaks to the popularity and success of the lodge and its self-catering model, as marketing to date has all been word-of-mouth. The growing herd of orphan elephants at Umani likewise attracts many visitors whilst they also continue to attract wild elephants out of years of hiding. Elephant sightings in the forest are now a common occurrence, compared to just a few years ago, when the vast majority of sightings were on camera traps at night.





# SAVING HABITATS

## Project Amu

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Saving precious parcels of land before they are lost forever is extremely important. The DSWT is privileged to be the custodian of a corner of Kenya that is home to some of the greatest biodiversity on the African continent. The DSWT together with the community-run Lamu Conservation Trust (LCT), provide the means to protect and manage Amu Ranch along with Witu Livestock Ranch, Witu Forest and Pandanguo, all of which encompass over 120,000 acres of pristine wildlife habitat, ancient coastal forest, and spectacular wetlands. This ecosystem is home to elephants, many hundreds of buffalo, zebra, eland, reticulated giraffe, coastal topi, oribi, suni, duikers, including the endangered Aders' duiker, warthogs, lions, leopards and numerous other species. It is quite simply a garden of Eden.

Working in partnership with the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) the DSWT has funded the Lamu Conservation Trust to manage and protect this extraordinary habitat, funding and supporting 50 rangers trained through the KWS Manyani Ranger Academy to patrol and protect the area. Supported by four patrol vehicles, 300km of road networks have been opened to monitor the area whilst security camps have been constructed to accommodate not only Amu's rangers, but KWS rangers too, so that together these men can ensure that no illegal encroachment takes place, whilst preventing poaching, logging and unsustainable extraction.

This initiative has enjoyed enormous support from the people of Lamu, along with the County Government, and is one of a number of Saving Habitat projects the DSWT undertakes, working to empower communities to sustainably manage and support their priceless natural heritage, as it is these coastal forests that lure the rain from the sea and that ultimately provide food security for much of the country.

During 2016 the LCT requested the government through the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) to gazette part of Amu Ranch as a sensitive wetland area, as such gazettment would minimize conflict and competition between wildlife and humans whilst preventing further destruction to the environment. NEMA brought a team of experts and technicians to Amu in June, and visited the sites around Marafa, Mkumbi and Ividho. The process is ongoing and will need further site visits and engagements with other stakeholders before gazettment, but should this succeed in the future it would relieve the area of the very real threat of livestock incursion and human encroachment among other sensitive issues.

Daily patrols have continued on foot and by vehicle with great assistance from KWS rangers despite continued security tensions.

The DSWT/LCT teams have on several occasions also been assisted by the Administration Police and the Kenya Defence Force (KDF). These ongoing security efforts continue to be hugely beneficial, preventing illegal activities within the greater Amu area.

The anti-poaching and security teams continue to make arrests of cattle herdsman illegally entering the ranch whilst several offenders were arrested during the year for poaching buffalos, tapping wine from dome palm trees and illegal logging. Illegal cattle intrusion continues to be a very serious threat to the greater area. Thousands of cattle along with their herders shifted from the Tana River, Ijara and Garissa areas to Lamu County during the year's driest periods. The herders settle at neighbouring villages and forcefully bring their cattle into Amu for grazing and water. The Amu ground teams have on many occasions arrested herders who have tried to put up temporary structures on Amu for themselves and their cattle, whilst others enter illegally at night under the cover of darkness.

The hugely successful tree nursery at Amu's Farouk Camp has been expanded to accommodate over 10,000 seedlings. This year the team has planted a total of 2,358 seedlings back into Amu's Forest in areas needing regeneration. The seedlings included indigenous tree species including Mbambakofi, Mkerekere, Mku and Mwangati. The LCT team also held ceremonial tree planting days at nearby schools planting a total of 1,200 tree seedlings in school compounds.

Conservation education programmes in the local communities have continued and been improved. Apart from regular conservation film shows and school lectures, several Imams continue to talk about the importance of conservation in their Friday mosque sermons. As a result of this generation of awareness members of the public are volunteering information on planned illegal activities including logging and bushmeat poaching.

Spectacular sightings during the year have included large herds of giraffes, buffaloes and topis whilst lions are often sighted around Milihoi and Malambuni areas. Other regular sightings include lesser kudus, zebras (whose numbers are increasing), hippos, warthogs, water bucks, bush bucks and elands. Cheetahs have also been sighted on the team's camera traps, which is hugely encouraging. More and more signs of elephants have also been sighted showing that these reclusive herds are becoming more confident as they feel safer within their environment.



## Witu Forest & Witu Livestock C-Operative

Witu Livestock Co-Operative Ranch and Witu Forest are comprised of over 40,000 acres of prime coastal forest home to a plethora of indigenous species, many rare and threatened. The DSWT continues to partner with the committee of Witu Livestock Co-Operative Society as well as the Kenya Forest Service (KFS), which is the authority governing Witu Forest, in providing protection over the greater ecosystem whilst financially supporting all endeavours. There continues to be excellent co-operation between the DSWT and Lamu Conservation Trust staff and all involved parties.

Anti-Poaching and security patrols and activities were increased during 2016 and have led to several arrests and recoveries both in Witu Ranch and Witu Livestock. This increased security presence in the area is seeing a positive rise in wildlife sightings especially of buffaloes, hippos, topis and water bucks, whilst illegal encroachment, which was the greatest threat to the area, has been successfully deterred.

During the year, the area experienced a harsh drought, with many water points drying up prompting many cases of buffaloes straying into community areas causing conflict. The DSWT/LCT ground teams along with vital support from KWS rangers quelled many potentially dangerous situations averting conflict by pushing the stray animals back into the protected areas.

A new patrol base camp situated 2km from the Witu Forest boundary was constructed and opened at Pangani to enhance security efforts in the area. The camp has been very useful in providing surveillance over Witu Forest as well as Witu Ranch. Two bandas (thatch cottages) and washing facilities have been constructed at the camp along with five tents to provide accommodation for KWS rangers, whilst a borehole is being installed this year to provide water for the camp.



## Pandanguo

Much like Amu and Witu, Pandanguo is a fragile forest ecosystem found along Kenya's remote northern coastline. For several years now the DSWT has supported Pandanguo and its community, whilst also dedicating ground and aerial patrols to the area in an effort to reduce illegal activities and encourage awareness amongst the local communities of the importance of protecting their natural heritage and especially these vital forest ecosystems and all species which inhabit them.

The DSWT through its community organisation the Lamu Conservation Trust, has engaged the Pandanguo Aweer community with a proposal for payment for conservation services. Through an established fund, the members of the community would be financially compensated for reserving their land for wildlife instead of generating income acquired from converting their land and forest to agriculture, settlement or carrying on economic activities that degrade the forest ecosystem. This is a conservation template which has proved extremely successful in many other areas in Kenya such as the Mwaluganje Elephant Sanctuary. The DSWT is still in discussions with the community, but the idea has been well received by most leaders at county level including the governor for Lamu County who is eager to see the proposal accepted.



## Peregrine Conservation Area

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The DSWT continues to increase the Peregrine Conservation Area, purchasing land when it comes available to protect the wildlife in the area and act as an important security buffer zone for two segments of Tsavo's boundaries. The DSWT's Peregrine Anti-Poaching Unit is dedicated to protecting this ecosystem and patrols daily on foot, whilst creating awareness amongst local communities as to the importance of conserving the area. On this land is Kaluku HQ, which manages the Trust's daily field operations within Tsavo.









## Mwaluganje Elephant Sanctuary

The DSWT continues to financially support the Mwaluganje Sanctuary in the Shimba Hills. This support is channelled into compensating the 300 landowners of the Sanctuary who reserve their land through this scheme for wildlife, whilst funds are also dedicated to staff salaries and maintenance of the sanctuary.

A positive reduction in illegal activities in the area continues, and following on from last year there have been no reported cases of poached elephants from the Shimba Hills ecosystem, which is a huge victory itself. This was attributed to improved security provided by KWS rangers and the co-operation of the community in providing information to the Sanctuary staff and KWS security personnel. In fact, the KWS reported three elephant carcasses found during the year all having been given a prognosis of a natural death and with all carcasses still with the ivory intact.

The normally shy and reclusive elephant population in the Shimba Hills area is also being sighted more often, which is a great sign, as they could well be feeling less threatened with the greater security, whilst other key species are also appearing to be less nervous and more visible. Many bushbucks, sykes monkeys, warthogs, and even colobus monkeys are being seen. The DSWT Aerial Unit has also spent time patrolling the skies over the Sanctuary and the Shimba Hills, sighting elephant herds of 35+ and some 25 buffalo in the sanctuary itself, which must have moved across from the Shimba Hills National Park. There is also a small, but slowly increasing herd of waterbuck.

The roads in the sanctuary were in a very bad state, requiring grading, murraming and improved drainage. With support from KWS who provided a grader and funding from the DSWT the sanctuary managed to grade bad sections to make the roads passable.

Sadly, tourist numbers to the Sanctuary have not increased since last year, yet the Sanctuary team is doing its upmost to attract visitors and has met with many tour operators in the coastal area recently, in an attempt to encourage tourism in the area. The DSWT would also like to encourage all visitors, local and international, who are planning a safari to Kenya's south coast to spare the time to visit the Mwaluganje Elephant Sanctuary to explore this stunning area whilst actively supporting this vital conservation initiative.



## Mara Conservancy

The DSWT commenced a sustainable partnership earlier in the year with the Mara Conservancy, which is an organisation based within the Masai Mara dedicated to protecting a threatened ecosystem known as the 'Mara Triangle'. The Mara Conservancy was established to manage the Mara Triangle as a not-for-profit in the year 2000 in collaboration with the Trans Mara County Council. This came about after several local leaders became concerned about the levels of mismanagement in the Mara Triangle, where in the 1990's poaching and illegal grazing was out of control with thousands of wild animals being killed annually.

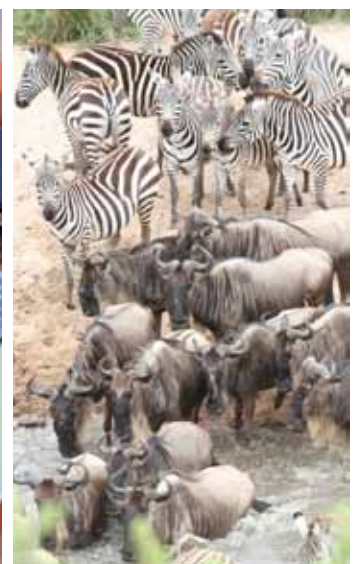
Whilst the Mara Conservancy is a great success and a shining example of conservation in the Mara ecosystem, funds are needed to sustain efforts and operations. The DSWT is financially supporting the Conservancy, specifically towards security and operations, whilst the Trust continues to fund the DSWT/KWS Mara Mobile Veterinary Unit, whilst in 2015 the Trust also donated a Land Cruiser to the Mara Conservancy to support their field operations.

The Mara Triangle is now a thriving ecosystem under protection and security, with impressive numbers of wildlife including black rhino, which have been successfully breeding in the sanctuary over the years; the area having been left in the 90's with just one lone rhino. There are also many resident lion prides, leopards, cheetahs, herds of elephant and all the big game including the famous wildebeest migration.

Since this new partnership was established between the DSWT and the Mara Conservancy, reports received from the Mara Triangle have been encouraging showing great successes in curbing bushmeat poaching and cattle intrusion, whilst the ranger teams are providing a much safer environment for the growing population of rhinos as well as the elephant herds, with reduced cases of poaching taking place.

During 2016 the Mara Conservancy teams succeeded in arresting over 300 offenders in the Triangle and within the northern Serengeti area, including over 250 bushmeat poachers who were captured during ambushes and raids organised with local intelligence. 3 rhino poachers were also arrested during this period, whilst other arrests included charcoal burners, loggers and fishermen. Over 1,000 snares were also removed from the Triangle including over 100 snares that were confiscated from poachers before they had a chance to set them.

Anti-Poaching operations are ongoing in the Mara Triangle, as bushmeat poaching is a very serious threat to the future of this area. The Mara is a crucial ecosystem in Kenya and the DSWT is privileged to be involved in the protection of the Mara Triangle, and will continue to help to conserve this environment, which is one of the world's natural wonders.





## Galana Wildlife Conservancy

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The Galana Wildlife Conservancy (GWC) is a 65,000-acre Conservancy located east of Tsavo East National Park, north of the Galana River, within the existing Agricultural Development Corporation (ADC) Galana Ranch. During 2016 the DSWT commenced financial support for the GWC with monthly donations towards ongoing operational costs to ensure conservation activities continue and boots are on the ground.

The GWC serves as a crucial un-fenced buffer zone between Tsavo East National Park and the vast agricultural areas of the Galana and Kulalu Ranches, yet due to reduced tourism it has been struggling to cover its annual operational costs which the DSWT has now committed to support. Its objectives are to conserve the natural environment in partnership with local communities whilst encouraging agricultural and pastoral development in harmony with wildlife conservation. This area was once a hugely successful working Game Ranch run by the Galana Game Management Scheme in the last quarter of the nineteen-hundreds which was feted as a prototype for modern ranching where game and cattle are successfully run together.

Operations of the conservancy commenced in March 2010, managed by the GWC Directors together with the support from a handful of sponsors, well-wishers and volunteers. The conservancy was established to protect the environmental stability of the area and address the main threats that are experienced, which include poaching and charcoal burning. The greater Galana area has suffered due to harsh ivory poaching with the area losing not just some of its magnificent Tsavo bull elephants but also many family groups. The GWC works proactively with the community, government agencies and other NGOs to prevent or investigate such incidents and have successfully coordinated the rescue of orphaned elephant calves in a number of poaching related incidents, which were all taken to the DSWT's Nairobi Nursery for care.

The DSWT is excited to support the Galana Wildlife Conservancy and hopes in time to help mitigate the threats facing its future whilst providing protection over the greater Tsavo ecosystem.

## KWS SUPPORT

### Vehicles

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To contribute towards the protection of wildlife and its habitat within Kenya the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust has continued to donate new customised 4WD's to the Kenya Wildlife Service earmarked for use by anti-poaching and security personnel within the Tsavo Conservation Area.

### Windmills And Boreholes

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In support of the Kenyan Wildlife Service and the Tsavo Conservation Area, the DSWT has funded the drilling and maintenance of the following boreholes:

- Ndiandaza in the Northern Area of Tsavo East National Park, and Kone on the East boundary of Tsavo East
- The Ndara and Dida Harea boreholes were drilled south of the Voi river, in the Southern sector of Tsavo East
- The Voi borehole, close to the Kenyan Wildlife Service headquarters. Tsavo East National Park.
- The Aruba borehole was drilled, again in the southern sector of Tsavo East National Park.
- The Ithumba borehole was rehabilitated by DSWT

- The Ithumba Dam borehole, to help serve the Orphans' Project in the Northern Area of Tsavo East
- The Kamboyo borehole, Tsavo West National Park.
- The Kanderi borehole along the Voi river course, Tsavo East National Park.
- The Tiva borehole along the Tiva River, Northern Area of Tsavo East.
- The Ithumba stockades borehole next to Ithumba Mountain.
- The Dida Harea borehole on the Ndara plains southern sector Tsavo East National Park.
- The Wanjala borehole southern sector Tsavo East National Park.

### Tsavo Fencelines

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**NORTHERN TSAVO EAST FENCELINE;** Over the years the DSWT has constructed a 63km elephant-proof fenceline along the Tsavo East National Park northern boundary, bordering the Ithumba area. This is the Trust's longest fenceline and is a significant financial commitment requiring ongoing maintenance and the employment of community teams to ensure the fence is in good working order at all times. In 2016 the DSWT requested the funds to upgrade this fenceline to a human-proof fence to further protect the wildlife of the park and similarly the communities bordering this sensitive habitat.

**THE KIBWEZI/CHYULU HILLS FENCELINE;** The Kibwezi Forest is now protected along three sensitive boundaries by 65.6kms of human and animal proof electric fencing built and funded by the DSWT. This fenceline has not been an easy task as the boundaries being fenced cut straight through a lava flow where the holes for each fence pole have to be painstakingly carved out of rock. Despite this huge task, which has created much needed employment for the local communities bordering the Forest, the fence line is key to providing increased security over the Kibwezi Forest and the growing numbers of wild elephants within the area, whilst protecting communities from the invasion of crop-raiding elephants. The fence will also provide a barrier between armed poachers that continue to enter the Chyulu Hills in search of the few remaining black rhinos inhabiting the area.

**THE VOI – MAUNGU FENCELINE ALONG NDARA PLAINS;** The DSWT is finishing the construction of a new un-shortable 14 strand electric fence along the southern boundary of Tsavo East from Voi Safari Lodge along the Ngutuni Ranch boundary to Ndara, which will cover approximately 17 km. This fenceline is of paramount importance to ensure the protection of the movement of elephants and wildlife within a sensitive zone where the new Nairobi-Mombasa Standard Gauge Railway is dissecting Tsavo East and West National Park, whilst it will also act to provide further protection for the Voi orphans.

### Security Fuel

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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 operations. Fuel is used to run anti-poaching and logistics vehicles as well as for generators and other equipment.

### Mechanical Support

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The DSWT has funded and purchased a fuel pump for the KWS HQ in Voi as well as a water bowser engine during the year to help keep all the KWS camps and sites fuelled and watered throughout the year.





# COMMUNITIES AND EDUCATION

## Tsavo School Support

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The Trust has continued to support schools bordering the Tsavo Conservation Area. In October 2016 Metava Primary School was chosen to be part of the DSWT's Adopt a School program, which is an all-inclusive educational support initiative combining desk donations, school resources, sports equipment, wildlife film shows and educational field trips into Tsavo West National Park.

Metava Primary School is located on the south-eastern border of the Chyulu Hills National Park. This school is the only education center for children from families which were evicted from the Park in the 1990s after years of encroachment. The area is semi-arid and is covered with volcanic rocks making it impossible to carry out farming. For the few open areas where subsistence farming takes place, the crops attract elephants, which in many instances completely destroy farms in a single incursion. This has pushed many community members to rely heavily on charcoal burning and bushmeat poaching as means of livelihood. The school and community were most thankful to have received this much needed donation and were hugely grateful to the generosity of the supporter of the DSWT who so kindly made this donation possible. They followed on by urging the whole community to work closely with the DSWT in protecting their wildlife and conserving the environment.

The DSWT also continues to operate wildlife school field trips to Tsavo East and West National Parks, engaging underprivileged schools and children from the bordering communities. This past year 1,030 school children from the local communities received the opportunity to visit the Parks on the DSWT's dedicated field trip bus during 41 field trips arranged and operated by the Trust's Community Outreach team.

For many years now the DSWT has been donating hundreds of study desks to needy schools bordering the Tsavo Conservation Area through the DSWT's Community Outreach Program. Most schools within these districts are over-enrolled and are lacking in the most basic of furniture and equipment. Creating a comfortable learning environment for both the children and teachers of these schools is a step forwards in giving Kenya's next generation a better education. These desks are custom made two-seater desks with hard wearing steel frames and sustainably sourced wooden tops. The need for study desks is huge and the DSWT has been creating relationships with donors to help support individual schools. During the past year the DSWT has donated 136 desks, whilst over 300 text books, teachers resources and assorted stationary items have also been handed over to schools in need.

In 2016 the Trust donated over 100 items of sports equipment to impoverished schools as well as organising a fully funded Tsavo Sports Day with support from Waves Charitable Trust. 4,400 school children have also benefitted from scheduled conservation film shows at schools bordering the Parks. These events which are led by the Community Outreach team include speeches and a presentation before the showing of a Swahili spoken wildlife film, after which a Q&A session takes place

## Tsavo Sports Day

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The annual Tsavo Kerrigan Cup, organised by the DSWT in collaboration with the Waves Charitable Trust, took place on the 30th September 2016 hosted by Sowa Primary School. This fun annual sports event for conservation, which includes football and netball competitions, brings together four underprivileged primary schools including Gimba, Mosi, Sowa and Kalambe, which are all located on the south-western border of Tsavo East National Park.

The south-western corner of Tsavo East forms an important wildlife corridor and dispersal area connecting Tsavo East and Tsavo West, and over the years has been put under greater pressure than ever from a growing human population inhabiting the Teri, Mgeno and Sagalla ranches. The community practice of ranching and small scale agriculture is the main source of this community's livelihood, yet it prompts perpetual human-wildlife conflict, with elephants damaging and destroying crops and lions killing livestock, whilst there is an increasing danger of injuries and fatalities to community members by wildlife. The DSWT is able to use this special annual occasion to build relationships with these marginalized communities whilst working to build awareness about the importance of wildlife conservation and offer support with the difficulties faced by living in a wildlife dispersal area.

This year's hugely successful event was attended by over 200 school children, 30 teachers and over 50 community members. After the sports competition, which included awards and prizes, students from Gimba and Mosi entertained the participants with conservation themed traditional songs and poems.

For a third year in a row, Gideon Mosi Primary School overcame stiff competition to win in both the soccer and netball games. The event was ended by speeches from teachers, community leaders and the DSWT, encouraging the children to take an active role in wildlife conservation and work to protect their natural heritage. This event is not only great fun but very effective in building school and community spirit. The DSWT along with the community and schools are incredibly grateful to the Waves Charitable Trust for helping to make this successful event possible.

## Nairobi Nursery Schools

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Every day at the Nairobi Nursery at the elephant orphans' 11am-12pm public mud-bath, the DSWT hosts up to 200 local school children every day, 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. Throughout the year the DSWT has welcomed over 27,000 children during these school visits.

## Tree Nurseries

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The Trust's tree nursery program provides thousands of tree saplings to schools and communities every year, helping replenish forests whilst teaching children about the importance of nature. Tree programs have also been created at many schools within the TCA, where the DSWT has donated over 2,700 indigenous tree seedlings in the past year.

These nurseries have been established at the DSWT's Kaluku HQ in Tsavo East as well as at Umani Springs in the Kibwezi Forest, whilst there is also a thriving tree nursery at Amu Ranch in Lamu District where the Trust's Saving Habitat's program is located.



## Beehive Fences

Over the last two years the DSWT, working together with the local communities inhabiting the north-western border of Tsavo East, have erected a 2.6km long elephant-beehive fence with 131 beehives on seven forefront farms bordering the park. This elephant-beehive fence is an innovative, sustainable and natural deterrent for elephant incursion first introduced by Dr. Lucy King. The project offers a myriad of benefits to the farmers through improved pollination, farm protection against elephants, and income from sales of the honey they harvest, whilst elephants receive protection in return.

In 2015 the DSWT's Community Outreach team installed 96 beehives covering 1.9km including five farms in Iviani village. In January and February 2016, a further 35 beehives were installed in two farms in Kyusiani village covering a total of 0.7 Km. Currently, in Iviani 24 of the hives installed are occupied while in Kyusiani 2 hives have bees. The south-western border of Tsavo East was originally an important elephant corridor connecting Tsavo West, Tsavo East and the Chyulu Hills. This area has since been encroached on with a human population estimated to be over 50,000. The inhabitants mainly depend on subsistence agriculture and charcoal burning for their livelihoods. Most of the indigenous trees have been charcoaled leaving many parts of this area open and prone to land degradation.

During 2016 Tsavo experienced a long drought coupled with extremely high temperatures. Elephants raiding community farms doubled and this was exacerbated by the ongoing railway construction taking place across Tsavo blocking elephant movements. The drought not only made elephant incursions worse, but also made water and adequate high-quality forage for bees limited. Bees need a lot of water to cool the hive and to dilute the honey they feed to developing bees. With limited water and inadequate forage nectar, during 2016 the teams recorded very poor beehive occupation activities, whilst in the occupied hives, bees have been foraging only during early morning and late afternoon, not able to fill their hive with enough honey to be harvested.

Despite the poor season the team together with the farm owners, have been carrying out hive maintenance practices which involve dusting, pest removal, pole replacements, shades repair, setting up catcher boxes. Additionally, they re-waxed all the hives in Kyusiani to attract more bees when they start to swarm before the next rains.





# ECO-LODGES & TOURISM

Ithumba Hill Camp

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# ECO-LODGES & TOURISM

Ithumba Camp

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# ECO-LODGES & TOURISM

Ithumba Private

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# ECO-LODGES & TOURISM

Umani Springs

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# ECO-LODGES & TOURISM

## Galdessa Camp

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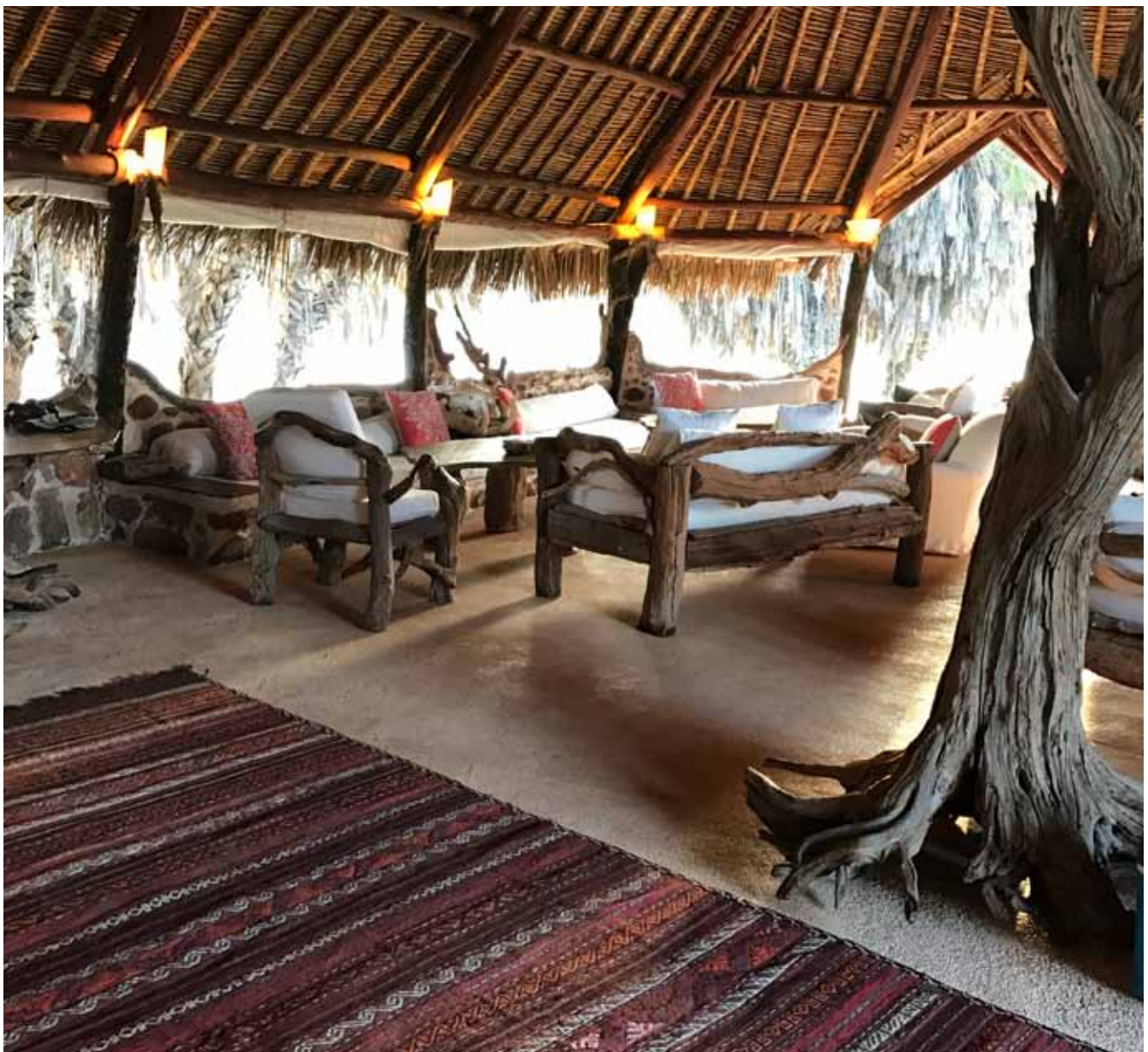


Situated within key wilderness areas, the DSWT's eco-lodges afford the opportunity to showcase the rugged beauty and unique ecosystems the DSWT works within. Managed as a not-for-profit initiative, a commitment to conservation and giving back is central to the ethos of our eco-lodges, with all proceeds reinvested into the DSWT's conservation projects including; the provision of water for wildlife, veterinary support, aerial surveillance, anti-poaching and erection of fence lines to protect fragile ecosystems, as well as direct support to KWS through vehicle and equipment donations. Enabling guests to support the preservation of the diverse habitats and wildlife in the area, a stay allows for a total immersion and understanding of the landscapes that inspired our mission to protect, preserve and conserve Kenya's wildlife.

The DSWT now operates 3 camps at Ithumba all offering special access to the Ithumba orphans and the wilderness of northern Tsavo East. 2016 saw the grand opening of Ithumba Private, an annex to Ithumba Hill, which offers vast views over Tsavo stretching out towards the peaks of Mount Kilimanjaro. The original Ithumba Camp continues to be a much-loved destination for residents and overseas guests alike, whilst Ithumba Hill and Ithumba Private now offer increased luxury, both with a pool, and both fast becoming popular choices for the discerning traveller.

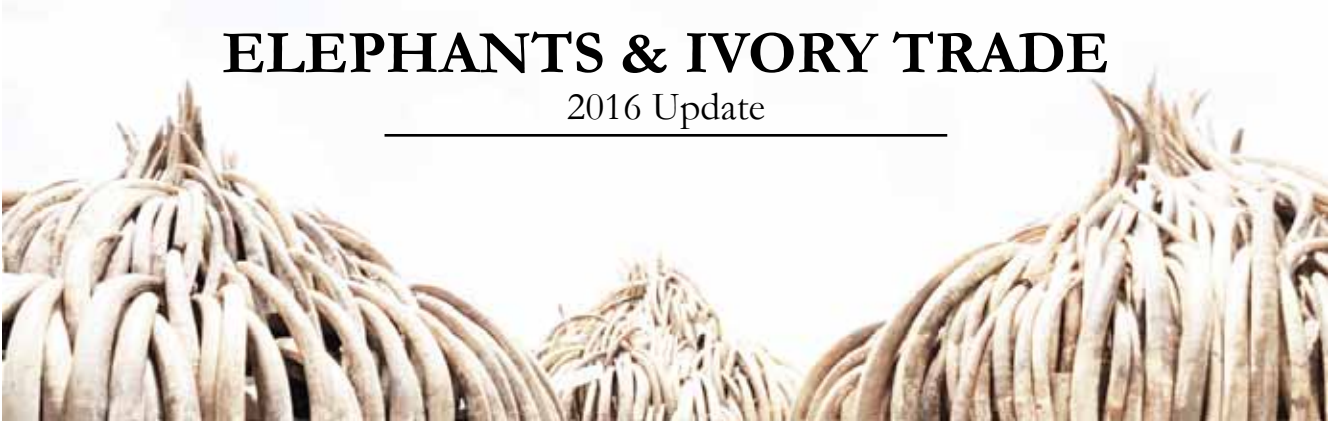
The Umani Springs lodge is a very successful addition to the Kibwezi Forest, which continues to attract many visitors every month who come to enjoy the greater Kibwezi-Chyulu Hills ecosystem as well as the resident elephant orphans.

2016 also saw the addition of Galdessa Camp to the Trust's portfolio of stunning properties. Galdessa is situated on the Galana River in Tsavo East and offers optimum wildlife viewing opportunities in a beautifully tranquil yet easily accessible area of the Park.



# ELEPHANTS & IVORY TRADE

2016 Update



Today, more than ever before, we have the most complete understanding of how humankind has crushed elephant populations and just how many individuals remain. When the figures were released in August, the Great Elephant Census found African elephant numbers had plummeted 30% across 18 elephant-range countries, confirming the known fears of all working to protect the species – humans have decimated elephant populations.

Shortly after, the IUCN African Elephant Specialist Group status report estimated there to be 415,000 elephants across Africa, combining data from more than 180 surveys, covering all nations in the elephant's range and including data on Forest elephants.

It was a sobering reference point for us all when we consider that in 1979, there were an estimated 1.3 million African elephants. Go back another 80 years and the estimate stood at 10 million. In fact, in just over 100 years, the population of Africa's elephants has fallen by 96 percent.

The African savannah has changed an inordinate amount those last 100 years and whilst the poaching of elephants accounts for much of the population decline and will remain the case until we reach the point where ivory retains no financial value, human population growth, both in terms of population count and infrastructure development, rule out the possibility of elephant numbers ever returning to what they once were.

We must therefore continue to look ahead, where hope does lie on the horizon. Despite making for sobering reading, these surveys and reports gave conservationists and the world a renewed impetus to protect the species from further decline and there were a plethora of positive activities and announcements for elephants in 2016.

Drawing attention to the poaching of elephants and the ivory trade, countries across the globe took powerful actions in the year, the most visually powerful being the destruction of stockpiles of seized ivory, which also acts to remove the risk

of this 'contraband' ever re-entering the market. Beginning in January; Sri Lanka, Malawi, Italy, Malaysia, Cameroon, Kenya and Vietnam all destroyed ivory at separate events, totalling 124 tonnes and representing more than 10,000 elephants. Kenya destroyed 105 tonnes of that total, in a truly symbolic act that drew the world's attention and made clear the urgent need for genuine action to save the species.

In the USA, considered the second largest market for ivory after China, President Obama's administration followed on previous action to protect elephants and introduced a near-total ban on commercial trade in elephant ivory. This was further enhanced at a State level, with ivory sales bans coming into effect in California and Hawaii, atop of those already in place in New Jersey, New York and Washington State. In August, France introduced a total ban on ivory sales, while Hong Kong, a major hub for ivory trade, outlined a three phase process that will conclude in a total ban by 2021.

It was at the very end of the year on Friday 30th December that saw arguably the most far reaching announcement for elephants when China, the largest consumer of ivory, stated it would work towards a ban on ivory sales by the end of 2017. Stating: "The commercial processing and sale of ivory will stop by 31 March, and all registered traders will then be phased out, bringing a full halt to the market by the end of the year."

While the motivations behind the announcement can and will be questioned, nothing should take away from the impact this will have on living elephants, as without markets for the sale of ivory, those criminals seeking to benefit from this barbaric trade will find it no longer in their interests to do so. As we look toward 2017 it is important to ensure that we continue to build on this global momentum. We can all play a part in this, by sharing stories of elephants, writing to our elected officials, marching for the species and signing petitions. As we write this newsletter, in the UK, over 107,000 citizens signed an online parliamentary petition on banning

UK ivory sales, which forced a second Parliamentary debate on this topic in just two months. Despite clear public support however, the UK Government is continuing to fail in its election promises to ban ivory sales in the UK and so, with your help, we will continue to press them.

Sadly, however, it's not just poaching that is a major threat to elephants; year on year Human-Wildlife Conflict (HWC) becomes a growing concern, as expanding populations force people to live in closer proximity to wildlife, often establishing communities along wildlife migratory corridors. HWC claims the lives of many elephants, and people, every year, and brings the importance of our projects, such as electric fencing on sensitive park boundaries, beehive fencelines, community engagement and our new HWC mobile unit, into focus.

Of growing concern locally is the newly built Standard Gauge Railway in Kenya, which cuts between Tsavo East and West National Parks with little true assessment as to its potential impact on wildlife. Even before it has been completed we are already witnessing the ramifications for wildlife as elephants have become caught and confused between the railway line, the Mombasa highway and the Parks. With only very limited 'wildlife under-passes' having been planned in the development, there is a genuine risk to elephant and human life when this line 'goes live' unless far more is done by the contractors to mitigate the issues.

For our part we will, as we have always done, be primarily focused on actions at a field level, where the rubber meets the road and blades cut through the air. The DSWT's ten Tsavo based Mobile Anti-Poaching Teams will be operational throughout the year, working in partnership with the KWS, to deter illegal activity, remove snares, arrest poachers and importantly in today's climate, tackle incidents of illegal cattle grazing in protected areas. All the while supported from the air by our Aviation Unit, whose daily patrols act as an immediate deterrent to those that would seek to harm elephants and other species.











# SPECIAL THANKS

## Trusts and Foundations

Allan and Nesta Ferguson Trust  
 Argus Fund  
 Barry & Jody Turkus Foundation  
 Bodhi Tree Foundation 'SAFE'  
 David and Claudia Harding Foundation  
 Delves Charitable Trust  
 DM France-Hayhurst Trust  
 Diane Warren Foundation  
 Eden Wildlife Trust  
 Eranda Rothschild Foundation  
 Estate of Valerie J. Smith  
 Forsava Elefanterna  
 Fredman Family Foundation  
 Harriet E. Pfleger Foundation  
 Kerrigan Savage Waves Charitable Trust  
 Lurie Family Foundation  
 Lynne Leakey Revocable Trust  
 Mactaggart Third Fund  
 Marjorie Coote Animal Trust  
 Maue Kay Foundation  
 Minara Foundation  
 Nabu  
 Norah Hamblin Memorial Fund  
 Pattee Foundation, Inc.  
 Pearson Family Foundation  
 Persula Foundation  
 Rivers Foundation  
 Robert Cave Memorial Trust  
 Rolf and Elizabeth Rosenthal Family Fund  
 Scoob Trust Foundation  
 Scott Eredine Charitable Trust  
 Tembo Preserve  
 Tusk and Horn Wildlife Trust  
 Vier Pfoten  
 Wags N' Menace Foundation, Cindy Lee  
 William J. J. Gordon Family Foundation  
 Estate of Donna Nicholas  
 Estate of Anne Tewksbury  
 Estate of David Wenzel  
 Jeff and Jacqueline Miller Fund  
 VBS Foundation  
 Bulrush Foundation  
 Philip R. Johnsson Foundation  
 The Merlin Foundation  
 Reister Foundation  
 Marta Heflin Foundation

## NGO Partners

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A huge thank you also goes to our anonymous donors; we received many extremely generous donations during 2016 and are truly grateful for your support. We remain deeply indebted to our wonderful Patron Kristin Davis.

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