



Kasanka Trust Ltd.

NEWSLETTER SECOND HALF OF 2008



Elephants bathing in Lake Wasa

We had two busy periods in the second half of 2008, being July-August with overseas school groups, regular tourists, volunteers and researchers, and the bat season in November-December.

In July and August Kasanka Conservation Centre hosted two school groups from the United Kingdom. The two groups, organized by Wilderness Exertise, prepared, fundraised and saved money for almost two years to come to Zambia. We took them around the park for Puku counts and tree identification assignments, we entertained them in the Conservation Centre with games and local drama, and took them to Kafinda Basic School and Miseshi Basic School to paint buildings and interact with the school children.



Ranelagh Team painting Kafinda School

In November we were contacted by Wilderness Expertise with exciting news: the Ranelagh Team has raised £7000 specifically for Kasanka and Kafinda Basic School and the environmental education link between the two!

Around the same period we also had some interesting research projects. An expedition group from University of Aberdeen and Glasgow were in Kasanka studying bats, Sitatunga and water quality. Our Hippos weren't too friendly to the researchers; they didn't like Alexis and her Aberdeen colleagues putting up nets to catch bats near the Pontoon at dusk, nor did they allow Maarten, a student from

Belgium, catching some fish in lake Wasa for his research!

Maarten, Celine and Hedwig on Lake Wasa



Jantijn, a student

from the Netherlands, worked with David Lloyd mapping the burning program within the park. In October Master student Justin arrived from The Netherlands to study the motivation of our scouts to work in anti-poaching. Not wanting to be an armchair anthropologist he is joining the scouts on patrols and even into the local beer halls on their off days...

Short visits from various researchers increased interest from different universities with

possibility of PHD student studying Puku arriving next year from Germany and a baboon researcher from USA – both long term.

Volunteers Graham from the UK and Hedwig from the Netherlands helped us a lot in the daily running of the tourism and education project.



Graham and chameleon Changwe

The second busy period was as always the bat season. They say that the bats are a spectacle but the people who come to see them can be a pretty amazing sight too! This time it was a French invasion; a film crew from Ushaia Nature used various unusual aircraft to chase after the bats. Edmund took on the organizing logistics of this event with help of Claire Powel from Kasama and Leigh Chaloner.

The BBC program 'Life' Series footage of the Bats filmed in 2007 is due out in March 2009.

Alison Peels from Cambridge and a research team from Hokaido University (Japan and UNZA) were looking at the potential role of bats as vectors for viral diseases.



Bats from BBC hide



The Woopy "Flying Stepladder" with inflatable wing in Bangweulu

The first single bat in 2008 was seen on 18 October, with numbers rapidly rising to an estimated one million already by 25th of October. As in previous years, numbers seemed to peak between mid November and mid December when the sky was filled with bats in every direction between 17:50 and 18:30. Numbers only very slowly decreased after that and a good number were still present at Christmas time. Food conditions were perfect as the Musuku trees (Wild Loquat, Uapaca kirkiana) carried lots of fruits.

The bat season influx of mainly resident visitors boosted the otherwise modest tourism income. The number of international visitors has been significantly less this year than the previous years leaving the Trust with a funding shortfall.

Juvenile Bateleurs, Kabwe

The abundance of water and thus fresh grass throughout the dry season seemed to support a good breeding year with plenty of young Sitatunga, Puku Bushbuck, Hartebeest and Sable. Puku appear to continue to



expand in number and range with around 45 at Mulaushi and up to 35 often at Chikufwe. Sitatunga remained highly visible at many locations, including right in front of Wasa lodge. One Black Lechwe was still present at the Kabwe plains, but the second animal has not been seen for a long time. The albino white Duiker is still present near Wasa. The main herd of Buffalo spent much time outside the park in the Mumbu area, where poaching pressure is very high. The Trust's scouts managed to push the herd of 19 animals back to the Chikufwe area. The main group of 12 Zebra was seen along Luwombwa downstream of the park. A big highlight was the sight of two playing Leopard cubs seen from the Fibwe hide. A tree hyrax successfully bred two young in a rock crevice just meters from chalet 8 at Luwombwa.

Pennant-winged Nightjar, Fibwe



Birding was excellent; the park's bird list was pushed up to an incredible 440 species, with as latest add the superb African Pitta, which was seen at two locations by some of the scouts, but hasn't been seen again yet... Other 'goodies' include territories of Green Twinspot and Bocage's Akalat in the bat forest, displaying Bat Hawks above Lake Wasa, the first Peregrine and Lanner Falcons for the park, Crested Coot at Kabwe, Corncrakes at Chikufwe and Kanyamanzi, invasion of hundreds of Lesser Spotted Eagle and Marabou together with many other raptors during early November. The birders of the "Biggest Twitch" described their visit in September as "a superb day birding in this fantastic national park" (see www.biggesttwitch.com).



Displaying Bat Hawk, Lake Wasa

A 50cm wide Giant Catfish head found by the river and probably killed by a crocodile, must have been a huge fish!

In Shoebill Island, a pair of Spotted Eagle Owls managed to raise two young. The hyena's seem to be doing good and several were seen during the drives, as well as heard regularly from the camp. Shoebills were a little more elusive this year than last but most visitors did manage to see them. Fishing has increased to unsustainable levels and rapid action is urgently needed. The creation of the new Chikuni Park managed with African Parks will hopefully improve the survival changes of this population.

Kasanka Trust Netherlands organized a benefit party in Amsterdam for Kapepa community centre. The event on 22 August was well attended with approximately 200 adults and 75 children. The pupils of the Dutch Elout School, the exchange partner of the Zambian Kafinda Basic School, participated actively in djembe drumming, water-game, making an African football out of rags, participating in a tombola, and painting animal faces. The art



Benefit party





Kasanka Conservation Centre as stage for drama evening

auction managed to raise more than €2000. One of the best pieces 'Little Friends' was donated to Kapepa school. It is a painting based on kids drawings from the Elout School. In the evening there was a fabulous fashion show inspired by Africa, with great music and wonderful Zambian home-cooking. The total amount raised was enough to finish the construction and provide furniture for the Kapepa community centre and as a result the centre was officially opened in December!

The Community program has been operating on a low budget over the last six months, but luckily Kasanka Trust Netherland secured the salary for the Community Relations Coordinator through Amersfoort Zoo in The Netherlands!



One of the Spotted Eagle Owl Young, Shoebill camp

Interesting activities of the project in this period were the development of a register of reformed poachers, work on fishponds, repair of chili fences and park visits for 3 local schools. The school groups were hosted at the Conservation Centre and escorted around the park. Students and their teachers participated in a treasure hunt, nature trail, quiz, safari walk and talks by retired scouts from Misumba.

A team from the Open Africa Project visited Kasanka and neighboring areas to gather stakeholders for a possible new tourist route in this area. The idea is to promote community owned tourism routes through publication and distribution of advertising brochures, a specific website and travel markets.

The Kafinda healthcare and education project continued to support Chalilo clinic with medical supplies and fuel for collection of medicine from Serenje and fuel for UCI (universal child immunization). The clinic has received a good supply of medicine from the District. The clinic staff are upgrading an

external ward to a maternity unit. Dainess Mumba continues to work as a traditional birth attendant.



Finishing touch on the new bunk beds by carpenter Lewis

School rehabilitation funds from this project are being invested in Chenga OVC (orphaned and vulnerable children). The students, currently study in a church building. The parents and teachers from Chenga have dug a foundation for a 5x9 meter two room building and collected san, stones, gravel and made 20,000 bricks. The walls and a roof will be added before the heavy rains.

The second school identified for assistance under this project is Kalungu community school near Chipundu (the burial site of David Livingstone). Rehabilitation will include a concrete floor, and replacement of the thatch roof with an iron sheet structure. The PTA (parents and teachers association) have collected sand and stones and identified a committee of workers to do the construction on self help basis. Furniture for the classrooms



and teachers office will be added after completion of the roof and floor. Extra funding from an external source has been found to support an untrained community teachers at Kalungu school for 2009.

The new classroom at Kasanka Conservation Centre is open and in use! The grade 1 class of Kasanka Pre-school enjoy the use of the building three times a week for their classes and visiting schools have used the classroom for environmental lessons during their stay at the Conservation Centre.



Forman Matthews and Kim at Chenga OVC

The sponsored students were in Kasanka for a few days in August. They stayed in the newly made bunk beds in the Centre's dormitory rooms. This year's topic of nature camp was birds so they followed lessons on beaks, wings and of course watched the famous Attenborough's Life of Birds episodes!

Three of the students are in their final year, grade 12 and they took exams in December but the results won't be out before April 2009. Interviews were held for new sponsorships for 2009. We had to chose from no less than 71 applications, sadly many more than the places available, so if anyone is interested to sponsor one of these, please contact Inge (inge@kasanka.com)! Given Mambwe, who worked for the Trust at the checkpoint for many years, is also looking for sponsorship. He has been accepted to journalism college in Lusaka but needs some help with the school fees and accommodation costs.



Students on walking safari

Cooperation with the Zambian Wildlife Authority took a step forward when a new warden, Teddy Bwalya was posted as warden for the Kasanka and Kafinda GMA. He has been supported with a senior scout to work with the KTL scouts in a supervisory role. 10 ZAWA scouts were posted to Mpika/Chiundaponde to work in Lavushi Manda National Park. They have been in the park twice since September and helped apprehend 3 suspects. It is excellent to have ZAWA support.

Anti-poaching operations in Kasanka were boosted by the visit of Mansa's head prosecution Nestar Pakati who did some training and gave encouragement. In September the scouts apprehended 12 suspects and collected 390 snares indicating both that the scouts are working well and that the rate of poaching is still high.



The new truck

The Trust received two notable donations during the period. Care for the Wild in UK helped us to buy a secondhand three-ton truck, which has been an item at the top of our "wanted" list for years. This will be a huge help



and cost saving. Zambeef donated new boots, uniforms, tents and raincoats for Kasanka scouts and camp staff which will be invaluable to keep them working well in the field for the coming months.



Stakeholders workshop

The World Bank project for upgrading management for Kasanka and Lavushi Manda NP made progress with its first consultancy. The appraisal of the project proposal has been postponed to May 2009 to have more time for fundraising. Funding is being sought for ground activities eg. construction of roads, airstrip and scout housing.

The consultancy was carried out in September-December by our former Community Relations Officer, Cornelia van der Feen, who visited four neighboring chiefdoms of Lavushi Manda. She had an exciting meeting with a group of active poachers, and the tour was finalized with a stakeholders workshop in Kasanka Conservation Centre, hosted by our own honorable chief Chitambo IV. At this meeting the 'Lavushi Manda' chiefs Kopa, Mpumba, Chiundaponde and Muchinka signed a declaration of intent to work with KTL to make the World Bank project a success!

In August Clifford Kandonga and Inge went on a first aid course in Lusaka. They will transfer the new knowledge to their colleagues in the beginning of next year. Friday, Webby and Changwe went to a bird course in Mutinondo.



Head of giant Catfish, Katwa

Very sadly, we lost our head carpenter of many years, Boston Mbasaula who died suddenly from a seizure while off duty. We also failed to save a baby Bushbaby and a baby duiker who were brought to us to try to care for.

We are now preparing for the departure from Kasanka of Kim and the young Farmer boys to go to school in Lusaka.

***Let's keep in touch!
The Kasanka Team***



Kasanka scouts in the new uniforms donated by Zambeef

