



Kasanka Trust Ltd.

Newsletter July to September 2009



Puku at Kabwe plain

Watch David Attenborough's LIFE MAMMALS, featuring Kasanka bats on the 26th of October at 9pm, BBC1!

The Kasanka Team had again a great time with lots of interesting wildlife sightings, inspiring researchers, many school groups visiting the park (among others the International School and LICS in Lusaka, SK Trust School from the UK, and Rud Upper Basic School from Norway) and a record number campers in Kasanka.

We were able to cope because of the newly arrived lodge manager Lisa, her husband Greg and volunteer Tom. The three of them have put a lot of effort in fixing up the lodge, chalets, roads and hides, making new barbecue frames, guiding and many more essential works. Another great asset to the team is our Cornelie from Kasanka Trust Netherlands. She arrived in June to help the Zambian trust with fundraising and marketing, and worked since on advertisements in the Lowdown, writing fundraising proposals for the community program and visiting potential sponsors with Frederick.

The wildlife highlights were mainly predators! The presence of a Lioness in the park was one of them. She visited Wasa - heard by the watchman and in the

morning we found fresh prints - and was reported from the Fibwe area as well as from south of the park. Hyena were heard at Wasa and seen at Kabwe, Leopard were reported from Fibwe area and Kasanka Conservation Centre - where one was seen catching a Puku and another carrying a Baboon! - and Serval near the Pontoon.

Lioness prints

The Buffalo seem to have increased further. We saw them in singles and herds of up to some 35 animals. Six Roan were sighted regularly near the airstrip, and Sable and Hartebeest at Chikufwe.

Many visitors have seen the big Python who returned to the nest where it bred in 2008 near Chisamba Waponde. Others were lucky to see a



resident Python and Black Mamba near Fibwe, as well as an Olive Whip Snake sunbathing at Wasa.

Ornithological highlights included the first observation of Tinkling Cisticola, several breeding pairs of Lesser Black-winged Lapwing and a large group of Locustfinch at Chikufwe. The Wattled Cranes at Chisamba Waponde successfully raised a chick again. Currently we are witnessing the mass arrival of Barn Swallow, European Bee-eater and many other Palearctic and Intra-African migrants.

At Shoebill Island, the Shoebill watching has been

incredibly good. Thanks to high water levels, all visitors up until now have seen the bird. Helpful fishermen found a nest with a chick at the end of August and have guarded it around the clock. For a nice article on the story, see the website of African Parks.



**Shoebill chick (P.
Hosp)**

Successful activities carried out by community relations staff included the delivery of fishing material to fish farmers in Lubembe. Nets, floats, sinkers and soon a boat will help in the struggle for poverty reduction through income generating activities. The team facilitated several school visits that were funded by our friend Kieran Dodds (photographer of the famous bat pictures!), and guided the Community Resource Board with levy collection, writing their term reports and helping them to prepare for the elections scheduled for the end of October.

Research-wise this quarter was busy. Vera Rduch (Koenig Research Museum, Germany) started her PhD project on Puku with two other students at Kabwe. Anna and Marc from Washington University in St. Louis and Urs from the German Primate Centre studied the Baboons at Fibwe (and hopefully Anna will manage to get the funding to come back for a PhD project). A team from Glasgow University and North-West University (SA) lead by Kevin Murphy visited the park as part of the DelPHE project and in preparation for an EC project, a

University of Zambia/Water Affairs group visited to place water level gauges, James Byng (Royal Botanical Gardens Edinburgh) who studied the Mushitu in 2007, arrived with two students from UK and US to carry out a tree survey of the park.



Warthog family

Leigh found an orphaned Barn Owl and was brave enough to feed it pieces of rat and mice. The owl was named after Lazarus the mechanic who could not be in the same room as the owl because of local beliefs about the bird! After Greg built the owl a nice bird house, he decided to go and explore the park by himself. Now and then he returns to camp, and stays at his name sakes shelter as they are now best of friends!

Tom helped Jonas to organize this year's Nature Camp for sponsored students. The students learned about Climate change and global warming. Six of them – Joseph, William, Frank, Frederick, Purity and Vanessa – are now in grade 12. They will start their final examinations on the 25th October. Let's all wish them luck that day!

Sad news from the sponsored ones is the death of Loveness Mwila, a sponsored teacher at Chitimba School and wife of sponsored teacher Wesley.

**New
books
for
Kafinda**



The
project

for Kafinda School sponsored by Ranelagh school in the UK is getting there! Jonas has delivered the books for grade 8 and 9, the furniture has been ordered and the preparations (digging the holes, making bricks, delivery

of iron sheets and cement) for the new toilets have been finalized.

Of course we have been busy with preparing for the bat season with the received funds from Disney! We hope it will be busier than ever. It might help that in France TF1 has broadcast the documentary made last year (Ushuaia), and that David Attenborough's *LIFE MAMMALS* featuring the Kasanka bats will be on air on the 26th of October.

We want to thank David Lloyd for sending Gilbert and his team around the park to fix the bridges at Mulenga, Kapabi, Chanteti, and Kabumpa.

Colleague Kebby and (former-colleague) Mabvuto started a fundraising campaign for the Kafinda football teams. They are looking for shirts, footballs, shoes and other training materials. There will be a serious competition in the area! If you have any contacts at clubs, please let us know.



One of Kebby's teams with shirts from Holland

Thanks to donations we have been able to resurrect Charlie Patrol. We now have four patrol teams in the park as well as a ZAWA team specifically assigned to the border areas of the park. Although the quarter started off with little poaching activity, result of increased patrolling intensity as well as a good maize harvest in most villages, the scouts arrested 15 suspects and collected an awful lot of wire snares again. It was good to have the District Counselor and a delegation from Serenje Court for a visit in the park, showing their increased involvement in our park protection work!



Scouts with Serenje/ZAWA Personnel and poached Puku

The warden went with Frank and Frederick to visit the Nansanga Farming Block to check on the dams that are being built. The team is afraid of the negative impact of the farming block on the rivers in Kasanka National park.

This quarter was also the final run to get the World Bank proposal for extension of Kasanka management to Lavushi Manda ready. A mission is due in November, we'll know more soon!

Our internet was giving us big troubles, working only during early hours of the day, but has now been fixed thanks to a generous donation of a secondhand LNB unit from North Luangwa, so: **let's keep in touch!**

The Kasanka Team
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Lesser Bushbaby (baby)