



Kasanka Trust Ltd.

Newsletter October to December 2009

Bats at Fibwe



The bats arrived and left again, Lake Wasa is filling up, the fields of Pijama Lilies are stunning and the elephants have given birth to many baby *nsofu's*: the start of the wet season is really exciting and amazing!

We were surprised to see the first bats arrive on October 10, very early in the season. Possibly because there was a low availability of fruit where they came from. In Kasanka there was very little food too for our small mammal-friends, so we expected them to leave early. But they surprised us again by leaving only around Christmas!

More than 600 paying visitors have seen the bats (spending on average 2 nights in Kasanka National Park). Our special bat forest walks were a great success, making some extra money for the trust. Changwe, Webby and volunteer Alexis took visitors into the forest to see the bats up-close without disturbing them. Many many early AM's for these guides: well done!! Lisa, the lodge manager, would like to thank all the staff at Kasanka for contributing in ensuring a successful bat season.

Two other volunteers who proved to be very helpful in the bat season were Tom from the UK and Christaan from South Africa (who came by bus all the way from Cape town to Kasanka!). They guarded the bat forest with the Emmanuel and Cephas.

Tom has stayed with us for six months. He did every imaginable job: from watchman to school guide. "Sweet!", as Tom would say!

Buffalo at Chikufwe



For bird watching and mammal viewing, the 4th quarter is always a great time of the year. Buffalo sightings were frequent. There now seem to be several groups in the area between Kasanka and Luwombwa river, as well as a group east of the Kasanka north of the Pontoon.



Elephant with calf at Wasa

The Elephants are having a good year with several newly born in the groups. The single Lion seems to be still in the area as it was reported in December by villagers from a location at less than five kilometres from the park. The two Zebra that are remaining at the airstrip had a foal, which increases the hope of the survival of the small population in the park.

In October Edmund announced his retirement as park manager. We would like to express an enormous thank-you to him for all the effort and time he has put into Kasanka! It's too much to list but since 1996 – when David brought him in – he has among others spearheaded a lot of construction work (such as the Kasanka Conservation Centre, the new Wasa lodge and chalets), the development of international tourism (opening up Fibwe, Kabwe and Pontoon camps for example), the development of the mechanical workshop and training of its staff, the establishment of electrics, green energy (solar, wind) and internet, the remodeling of the park protection unit, the introduction of the website and a lot of fundraising (such as EU, embassy funds, World Bank and Beit Trust) to make the above mentioned works possible.

The Trust has appointed Cornelie van der Feen as interim manager until a new manager is appointed (early 2010).

Eurasian Golden Oriole and Bar-tailed Godwit were seen in the park for the first time, bringing the bird list to a total of 447 species!

The annual mammal road counts were carried out in September – November, resulting in a total of 4437 mammals being counted. The results were generally lower than in the last few years. The main reason seems the heavy shower in early October and good rains in early November, which caused mammals to move away from the plains where they are most visible. The results however confirm that Sitatunga is doing well but the Hartebeest numbers are probably decreasing.

The Community Relations team assisted the elections of the new Community Resources Board for Kafinda by designing ballot papers, instructing the returning officers and polling assistants, sensitizing the community members concerning the elections, designing informative posters for the elections, and screening of candidates. We are expecting a smooth cooperation with the new members equally to the previous CCRB members.

Other good news from the Community Relations Project is that Frederick and Cornelie have secured funding for 2010 from the Finnish Embassy! The project includes extensive training of the new Community Resources Board and Village Action Group members, finalizing the Land Use Management Plan for the Game Management Area, more work on beekeeping, chilli fencing and fish ponds in the surrounding communities and the revision of material used for training in gender and democracy.

Pijama lilies at Wasa



The Kasanka and World Bank teams finalized the project documents for the proposed extension of Kasanka management into Lavushi Manda National Park during an appraisal mission in November 2009. The Board of

Kasanka Trust and ZAWA were asked to put in writing their support for the project as to whether it would receive a go-ahead by the Global Environmental Fund. We are waiting for the written support by ZAWA, crucial for the approval of the project!

The sponsored students William, Frank, Rodgers, Fredrick, Purity, Vanessa and Davies have written their grade 12 examination and are awaiting the results. We hope their sponsors want to take on another student! Kasanka Trust has secured new sponsorships for five grade 10-ers from a Dutch Trust called Kathelijne Children Fund. They will be selected in March 2010.

Brown-hooded Kingfisher at Wasa



Kasanka and ZAWA have successfully altered the plans for Nansanga Farm Block. This farm block is planned to be developed within a few years, covering an

enormous area south of the park all the way up to Serenje. In the original design, the farm block would touch the park, include a substantial part of the Kasanka river catchment area and see most of the major streams being dammed. After visits of Frederick, Frank and the ZAWA Warden to the District Agricultural Office, the District Councilor and the Ministry of Agriculture, major adjustments were made. Among others, the project area is greatly reduced leaving an eight or so kilometers buffer between the project and the park and limiting the project to the Luwombwa catchment area. Also the number of planned dams and the density of planned plots is reduced. Although the project might still increase the pressure on the park, we are convinced that the main threats are off the table.

The Kasanka School has sent its pupils ready for grade 3 to Kafinda Basic school. The school will start in the first week of January with more than 30 pupils in preschool, grade 1 and grade 2. The teachers' salaries are provided for in 2010 by the same Dutch Children Trust.

On the research front, this quarter was quiet. During

the bat season we only had the project group of the University of Zambia and Hokkaido University (Japan) visiting to collect information on diseases carried (or not) by the bats. An extensive survey of the trees in the park was carried out by James Byng, who also worked on the mushitu in 2007, and two students from Aberdeen University. Hopefully they will produce a field guide for all the trees in Kasanka.

Frank has secured funding for a survey of birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians of Kasanka from three Dutch funds (Foundation for International Bird Protection, Martina de Beukelaar Foundation and JC vd Hucht Foundation. He will start in February. We also received good news from the universities that we work with: Glasgow and Aberdeen Universities (UK), Northwest University (RSA) and University of Zambia secured funding for a three year project called SAFRASS, aiming at developing a water quality monitoring system in the whole of Southern Africa. Kasanka is a partner in the project and will form one of the main working bases.

Struck by lightning!!

Our radio system at Mulembo checkpoint were struck by lightning. We urgently need to replace the system amounting to \$1000. Any contribution is welcome – please help us out!!

Kieran Dodds has published a few of his new pictures on his website. Check out the African Safari ones, when he went out with Papa en local school groups and a women's club on game drives in Kasanka! See: www.kierandodds.com/#/selected/safari



Sable antelopes at Wasa III

Following up on the institutional appraisal consultancy report funded by the World Bank project, the Trust has worked on extending its board and renewing the directorship. It is looking at expanding board membership from 8 to 20 and directorship from 3 to 5, thus getting a broader support and advice from a range of relevant sectors of the Zambian society and business world. We have already added: Mwape Sichilongo, Adam Pope, Lindiwe Kuzwayo, Kalongo Chitengi and Kim Farmer!

Also a corporate sponsor program is being developed to raise more support from the Zambian business world.

Cornelie and Frederick actively lobbied for potential partners in Lusaka. We are pleased to announce Associated Printers as a new corporate sponsor – having sponsored a pop-up display for marketing purposes. Negotiations are on the way with other Zambian businesses. We will keep you posted!



Kasanka is looking for volunteers experienced in Marketing, Tourism Development or Mechanics! Contact Inge@kasanka.com for more information.

The wildlife scouts have done an excellent job: they managed to continue a good patrolling intensity assisted by ZAWA scouts and arrested 16 suspects and confiscated or removed 854 snares, as well as confiscating lots of canoes etc! The results also confirm that poaching is far from gone in the area. In fact we are increasingly convinced we desperately need to increase and improve our anti-poaching effort. Securing funding for this will be one of the main challenges for 2010.

Overall this was a productive quarter with good anti-poaching results and tourism income. The main challenges remain control of poaching and directly related to that, sourcing funding for core management activities and overheads to continue through the low season. The Kasanka team is full of energy to make it happen in 2010 with the help of our friends and supporters!

Pelicans, storks and other waterbirds at Kapabi



Let's keep in touch,

The Kasanka Team
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