



Kasanka Trust Ltd.

Newsletter Second half of 2010

It's with much sadness that we have to pass on the news that David Lloyd passed away on 19th December 2010 at CFB Hospital in Lusaka. On 23rd December a memorial service was held in Kasanka National Park with many community and staff members attending. His ashes will be scattered in the park on a later date. He will be missed by all of us.

Many know the story of how David came to Kasanka but for the ones who did not hear it yet we would like to tell it again so that we can all remember him for what he has done for Kasanka:

David Lloyd, a British expatriate who had lived in Zambia for many years, visited Kasanka National Park in 1985. He heard the crack of gunshots and concluded that if there was still poaching there must still be animals there and set out to save the park from total depletion. He teamed up with a local farmer, sought funding and along with much of their own resources applied for official permission to rehabilitate the park. They built tourist camps, roads and bridges and set up the Kasanka Trust to raise funds for this community based project. In June 2002 David Lloyd was awarded an OBE for his vision and determination in seeing the Kasanka Trust project through to where it is today.



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One of Stephen Belchers stunning pictures



The last few months were dominated by the presence of the Straw-coloured Fruit Bats. The first few came in on the 10th of October – the same date as in 2009 but ten days earlier than the arrival date in years before! By the 1st of November we estimated 5 million and numbers peaked during the second half of November when again more bats than ever seemed to be present. The mind-blowing numbers left all of the many visitors speechless.

Great pictures of the bats were taken by Stephen Belcher. See www.stephenbelcher.net. The magazine Illustreret Videnskab will run a story about the bats around April next year with his images. This is a Danish magazine but with multiple language copies, 800,000 copies worldwide.



Sitatunga's seemed to be everywhere in 2010!

In September, October and November the annual mammal counts were carried out: the general impression so far is that many species increased compared to previous years, such as Warthog and Sitatunga. Approximately 30 Hartebeest were seen, which is good news as numbers were down in the last few years.

Game viewing has been excellent over the last six months: game drives at dusk or dawn along the eastern banks of the Kasanka between Pontoon and Old Kabwe produced up to 60 Sitatunga in a single drive! In general, this stretch of the Kasanka was spectacular this year due to high water levels, with Hippo, Crocodiles and tens of Warthogs seen during basically every drive.

An update of the mammal and bird lists for Kasanka resulted in a new total of 108 mammal and 452 bird species. Additions were a Sooty Falcon at Fibwe (only the 20th or so record in Zambia), Curlew Sandpipers over Lake Wasa and Trush Nightingale in Wasa Camp, all in November. At Shoebill Island, the 8th Pectoral Sandpiper for Zambia was seen on 8 October. Another spectacular wildlife sighting was a cloud of millions of dragonflies (presumably Globe Skimmer) migrating to the north over Fibwe forest on 21 November.

News on Shoebills comes from Kasanka this time: a Shoebill was seen from the Fibwe hide by visitors on 14 December! Near Shoebill Island, the Shoebills



Lappet-faced Vulture at Shoebill Camp

Excellent numbers of raptors frequented the forest hunting the bats. At least six Martial Eagles, the resident Crowned Eagles, African and Ayres' Hawk Eagle, one Palm-nut Vulture, several Yellow-billed Kite, Lesser Spotted and Steppe Eagle, African Fish Eagle, European Hobby, Amur Falcon and Steppe Buzzard were all hunting or at least chasing bats. Only the Martial, Crowned and Hawk Eagles were seen being successful in this! Crocodiles and monitor lizards were present as well and might well have added bats to their diet.



remained fairly easy to see up till early October thanks to the excellent water levels.



Our new film stars: (1) the Shoebill chick at Gibson, filmed by the BBC

Kasanka and Bangweulu received a lot of attention from film crews. Teams from the BBC and Korean Broadcasting Service (KBS) spent weeks at Shoebill Island in August and July respectively, and at Kasanka for the bats in November. It took a lot of effort to find a Shoebill chick for the BBC to film: the staff searched all over the swamps, rewards for fishermen were promised. In the end an extensive search by aeroplane resulted in the finding of a Shoebill nest near Gibson; a fly camp was set up and brilliant footage was obtained.

(2) the resident female Crowned Eagle, with bat, filmed by the BBC and KBS



During the bat season, the BBC focused on the Martial and Crowned Eagles predated on the bats.

We are looking forward to see the footage of eagles hunting bats, or the one week old chick of the Crowned Eagle being fed bats by the mother, and the large python breeding near the forest!

Two more film crews visited for a shorter period during the bat season, both for French television (programs "Accelérateur de Neurones" and "Faut pas Rever").

(3) scout Marley Katinta, leading character for "Faut pas Rever"



A great help during the bat season was volunteer Bastiaan. He worked with the scouts and guides to protect the bat forest and is planning to return next year for a longer period!

The season saw lot of research activities going on in the park. Vera Rduch from Bonn University, Germany returned in October to the park to commence her PhD study on the Puku antelope (*Kobus vardonii*).

James Byng also returned to the area where he did research before. This year he and his team from Kew Gardens and Livingstone Natural History Museum, did a botanical survey of Lavushi Manda National Park. Previous work in 2007 resulted in an excellent guide for the Kasanka mushitu tree species. His work in Kasanka 2009 and this year's work should result in a highly awaited botanical field guide for the region.

Anna Weyher from Washington University USA is studying the Kinda baboons (*Papio cynocephalus kindae*). Her project is up and running, the research

camp “Kinda Camp” has been built and she and the scouts have begun formal data collection on the Fibwe Group. Over the next year they will follow this group at close range and study their behaviour, biology, and ecology. Visit the website for more information: www.kasankababoonproject.com.

Exciting news at Kinda Camp is the new addition to the baboon troop. One of the females, Lady Godiva, gave birth to a baby in late October. She is a special looking baboon with bright white fur



excluding the top of her head which is covered in black fur.

The baby was named Robin: after Frank and Inges baby daughter, who came to join the Kasanka team at the age of four weeks!

Lady Godiva and Robin

WWF Netherlands has secured funding for a large multiple year research project on the Shoebill Stork in Bangweulu. This project will be carried out by the Bangweulu Wetlands Project, Percy Fitz Patrick Institute for Ornithology (Cape Town) and Kasanka Trust. A PhD student (David Ngwenyama) has recently been contracted for the project and will start in a few months.

The Community Relations Project funded by the Finnish Embassy made a breakthrough with its Income Generating Activities project: It was consolidated by the sale of thirty tonnes of groundnuts to COMACO! It also held workshops for

local bee keepers and fish farmers, undertook boundary surveying for the buffer zone in order to implement the management plan, constructed new chilli fences. The Community Relations Team is complete again with a new assistant for Frederick Mbulwe: Claudia Sianjobo.

Except for the specific bat tourism, it is worth mentioning that we had several school groups in the last few months visiting the park, such as a group of forty-six students from Leuven University (Belgium), the International School of Lusaka and the French School of Lusaka. The two groups of the French School have spent a lot of time on art work on the bats: they will have an exhibit next year in l'Alliance Française in Lusaka!

There is good news for Lavushi Manda National Park! In June the Global Environmental Fund (GEF), approved the project proposal for extending Kasanka Trust management to Lavushi Manda National Park. This was followed up by a mission from World Bank, and ZAWA representatives in whom we worked on annual work plans, budget and procurement plans. If ZAWA signs a new Memorandum of Understanding before mid February, we can start the recruitment soon after!

Kasanka vehicles are still in need of attention and maintenance as they are old and worn out which is keeping the workshop staff on their toes. We got our hands on two old Landrovers (one donated by a visitor!) that we'll use for spares. Our seemingly reliable Hilux broke down in the middle of the bat season. A real disaster. Luckily a ZAWA staff member allowed us to rent a car from him on a temporary basis.

Fundraising now has to focus on acquiring a new 4X4 as without a reliable vehicle fleet our work grinds to a halt. Meanwhile a database has been prepared of possible national and international conservation and community development funds. Applications are being prepared.





KTL sponsored students

In July eleven school visits to Kasanka National Park took place; this program was funded by the Disney Worldwide Conservation Fund. The Kasanka truck collected learners from their schools and brought them to the park where they did a game drive and had lunch at the Kasanka Conservation Centre.

Kasanka-sponsored students enjoyed a four day Nature camp at Kasanka Conservation Centre where they learned about the park, had lectures on ecology and conservation and could ask questions about wildlife and dispel common myths.

Five of the 17 pupils on sponsorship have written their final high school exams and are waiting for the results to come out in April next year. We hope the sponsors are taking on new students: Given and Inge have already interviewed potential new students and are keeping a shortlist of six!

Talking about sponsorship: two bright & ambitious former sponsored students, Frederick Museka and Frank Malata, are looking for financial help with their university programs. Please email to inge@kasanka.com for more information on them and their courses.

As always we would like to thank our dear friends for their donations. Not only were we given a vehicle and new student sponsorships, we also received a new set of uniforms for all the scouts from Zambeef! Other highly appreciated donations include new spotlights with rechargeable batteries for the guides from Viaggi Solidali visitors, posters from Associated Printers and financial assistance by many individuals through Kasanka Trust Netherlands and Kasanka Trust UK!

Wishing everyone a happy new year!!

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