



# SLCS NEWS

October, November, December 2008



Luangwa river during the rains

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From the CEO, Rachel McRobb

AS we reach the end of another year and mull over the good, bad, frustrating and rewarding events that have happened in 2008, I can't help but think how much we have achieved and what a genuine pleasure it is to be able to contribute to the protection of the Luangwa Valley. Even after living here for ten years, when I fly over the Valley on my way home after some time away, I realize again what a spectacular and special place it is. Often referred to as one of the last remaining wilderness expanses in Africa, Luangwa somehow continues to inspire a passion in me to help conserve it. I feel fortunate to have been heading the South Luangwa Conservation Society for the past five years and look forward to what 2009 has in store for us.

Along with the rest of the world, challenging financial times lie ahead and as we reach the end of our four year project with the Royal Danish Embassy, our funding for 2009 is not yet entirely secured. We have managed to secure approximately one half of our budget for 2009 with committed funding from our partners, our valued members and also our backbone, the Luangwa tour operators.

***Now is a good time to discretely slip in a friendly reminder to all our members to please renew your membership fees for 2009, and an appeal to all to sign up for first time membership – your donations support SLCS in more ways you can imagine!!***

*SLCS membership  
Sign up now!!!!*

Please see the form attached  
with this newsletter.

**Single - \$60 per year**

**Family - \$150**

**Corporate - \$1000**

**Unspecified donation**

## **Generosity in Action**

SLCS is now accepting cheques and online donations through Generosity in Action, c/o Philanthropic Ventures Foundation  
1222 Preservation Park Way  
Oakland, CA 94612-1201

Generosity in Action is a US based non profit. Please visit their website at

<http://www.generosityinaction.org/SLCS.htm>

We will no longer be collecting donations through Working Hand In Hand (WHIH) as they are currently in the process of closing down. We would like to thank Antonia De Matto for all her support over the past few years.

**B**enetria Milambo, who joined us this year from Lusaka has been our first administration and marketing assistant and would like to share a few words with you about her time in Luangwa.

### **'Impressions of working in the Luangwa Valley'**

I was born and partly raised in a valley, therefore coming to work and live in South Luangwa – Mfuwe was not a very hard decision to make. Having grown up climbing trees and hills, eating wild fruits, swimming in the river, it was like coming to re-live my childhood with the only difference being the wild animals.

My dad, who happens to be a traditional leader, used to tell us that once there were a lot of wild animals in the mountains near our homes but that all species were wiped out as a result of poaching. The only signs that have been left are the horns, which people use to make traditional music called 'Nyelee' during the 'budima dance.'

I also remember times when we would go to visit one of my mother's distant relatives, she would warn us not to partake in any meat dishes from



his house because he strangles wild animals or uses dogs hunt. She said it was dirt meat. Once, one of my sisters told me that she is a member of the 'chongololo club,' when I asked her what chongololo was about, she said it's about animals. The first thing that came to my mind was a chongololo, a giant millipede. My final analysis was, it's uncool.

I never understood anything about wildlife until I joined South Luangwa Conservation Society. Therefore, I believe that it is never too late to change people's mindset on how

they perceive wildlife. In short I would never have been at a better place at this time of my life in the year 2008, though I believe more experiences are yet to come.

Working with the SLCS team has been fulfilling, because I have enjoyed what I have been doing. There is a dedicated team, this made me put extra effort in whatever I was tasked to do because at the end of the day, it made me proud of my contributions as projects matured and transformed into reality. Scouts are motivated and proud because they look good in their uniforms and they are able to bring home results that protect natural resources. It does not matter how many days they are in the bush, they are always happy. There is no difference in their mood even at the time they are being pulled out at the end of their patrol because they are admired by their communities – they have jobs.

In 2009, we embark on serious fundraising activities on the home front. We have a fundraising dinner dance in April and a fundraising art exhibition in November. We will also use the presentation of media awards in September to raise funds for wildlife conservation activities in South Luangwa, through ticket sales to the gala dinner. So, please open your doors when I come knocking!

A friend of mine always said never say goodbye because it means you are not coming back. Therefore, expect more from my end.

### **The Royal Danish Embassy support**



Before we share more news, I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of SLCS to express our heartfelt gratitude to the Royal Danish Embassy for their support over the past four years. This collaboration has allowed SLCS to grow from a young and poorly funded organization into a professionally run establishment, and valued stakeholder in conservation efforts in Luangwa. To have been given this opportunity does not come effortlessly and we appreciate the trust placed in us by the Embassy to allow us to prove ourselves and the project worthy of the grant. We have grown immensely during this time and contributed greatly to the conservation of wildlife and natural resources in South Luangwa.

### **Chilli Nurseries**

Thousands of chilli seedlings have been planted by the chilli farming groups in time for the rains. We hope this will increase the chilli harvest next year as we have goal to reach of six tones.

An interesting article 'Mfuwe Farmers Earn a Living Out of Chillies (Zambia)

By Nebert Mulenga, The Times of Zambia' can be read on the following link

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200810010368.html>



## Chilli Bullets

The Zambia Wildlife Authority and members of the community have recently been experimenting with home made chilli bullets as a deterrent to crop raiding elephants. Usually, armed scouts fire warning shots above the elephants heads to try and scare them away from fields, as expected the animals quickly become accustomed this, and more often than not, firing shots has no effect. The new experimental technique of firing emptied shot gun pellets mixed with ground chilli, salt and sand above the heads of the elephants is so far proving to be effective. Only time will tell whether they will work this out and think of other ways of eluding us.

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**Snaring** continues to wipe out a substantial number of animals. Unfortunately we were too late in helping this young elephant who was found early one morning by scouts on an anti-snaring patrol, he had probably only died within half an hour of being found. This snare was most likely set to trap buffalo and was made using vehicle winch cable.

The wild dog below was also reported with a snare. We were able to immobilize him but after seeing the severity of the wound and realizing that he was beyond recovery, we decided to euthanize him. He had completely lost his foot and must have been in extreme pain.

To counteract this and help protect the wild dogs and reduce snaring, SLCS is working closely with the African Wild dog Conservation Project and receives funding from them for wild dog conservation and anti-snaring work. For more information on AWDC please visit their website <http://www.awdczambia.org/>



## SLCS MEDIA AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE IN WILDLIFE & TOURISM REPORTING



**Representatives from ZAWA, Ministry of Tourism and SLCS presenting the launch.**

The South Luangwa Conservation Society held the Media Awards Launch on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2008 at the Intercontinental Hotel in Lusaka.

SLCS will hold the first ever Media Awards for excellence in Wildlife and Tourism reporting in September 2009. The purpose of these awards, which are open to Zambian journalists from the private and public media, is to recognize individuals who have done something substantial to promote wildlife and natural resources protection in Zambia. The Awards will recognize the important role the Zambian journalists play in the protection and appreciation of wildlife and natural resources as well as the heritage sites found in Zambia.

The overall goal of the partnership is to encourage Zambian journalists from both the private and public media to report consistently about Wildlife and Tourism in ways that will engage and inform the public. Good journalism can encourage the public to support wildlife and natural resources conservation. Zambia needs more examples of ordinary people whose lives have improved as a result of natural resources not only where tourists and tour operators benefit. The public need to be encouraged to look at natural resources protection as a way to protect the lives of future generations.

## Wet Season Fly Camps

It's that time of year again when road access into the park is extremely limited and safari bush camps have closed down, reducing our scope of reports of poaching incidences. Three fly camps are up and operational in the park and have very generously been sponsored by Wilderness Trust, Mfuwe Trails, Lion Camp, Shenton Safaris and Norman Carr Safaris. Our thanks go to them.

Conservation Foundation also kindly donated some valuable helicopter time which made it possible for us to find a new and ideal location for the Luamfwa fly camp in the southern section of the park.

The first Luamfwa fly camp alone pulled out over 360 snares in the area so far. The fly camps are an essential part of the wet season law enforcement strategy, as they ensure that remote areas with restricted access and insufficient patrols are kept covered throughout the rains.



MRT group on patrol on the Muchinga escarpment



Deploying the Luamfwa fly camp scouts and rations.

## Village Scout patrols and results for Sept, Oct & Nov 2008

Month	Long patrol	Short patrol	Day Patrol	Snares	Suspects	Nets	Firearms	Ammunition	Drying Racks	Dead elephant	Ivory	Fishermen removed
Sept	10	6	6	21	3	nil	2	nil	5	6	4 pc	Nil
Oct	4	2	12	111	6	1	nil	nil	1	1	nil	1
Nov	4	6	10	11	2	nil	3	70	3	2	2 pc	nil
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>

Luangwa seems to have inspired passion in others too, and we would like to welcome Leo Stephens, our first long term SLCS volunteer. Leo did not come alone but with his small aircraft which he will be flying for various aerial surveillance assignments for the Zambia Wildlife Authority and SLCS. We have been very fortunate with Leo as he brings a number of free skills to SLCS. We look forward to working with him and achieving great results in 2009.

## Recognition

There are too many people to mention on these pages, who have shown support for our project in one way or another and we thank you all, and apologize if you are not mentioned below. There are a few however who deserve a particular mention for their support this year. We would like to say a special thank you to the following:

### Donors in Luangwa

Mfuwe Trails  
Lion Camp  
Flatdogs Camp  
Robin Pope Safaris  
Norman Carr Safaris  
Wilderness Camp  
Chichele Presidential Lodge  
Tribal Textiles  
Shenton Safaris  
Track and Trails River Camp  
Luangwa River Lodge  
Kafunta River Lodge

### Local and International donors

The Royal Danish Embassy  
African Wild dog Conservation Project  
Awely  
The CCG Trust  
The U Foundation  
Working Hand in Hand  
Wilderness Trust  
Zamshoe Ltd  
Rivonia Ltd  
Proflight Ltd  
African Wildlife Safaris  
BMV  
Safari Consultants  
Miles Travel  
African Nature Adventures  
Conservation Foundation  
Elefence International  
Environmental Investigation Agency  
DHL  
VIP Villas  
Larson Fine Imaging  
The Mennonite Church, Amsterdam  
Manzi Natural Valley  
National Airports Corporation

### Individuals

Carol Van Bruggen  
Millie Cassidy  
Nathalie Bouille  
Paolo Cafarelli Rainis  
Christiaan S. van Woerden  
Val Keight and Walmley Infant School  
Edelgard and Gero Heine  
Jude and Kaye  
Mark and Belinda Wakefield  
Teresa Duddy  
Morene and David Bodner  
Laura Ashman  
Susan Stribling  
Paul Robinson  
Jeremy Pope

On behalf of SLCS, we hope you have a wonderful festive season and we wish you all the best for 2009.

*Rachel and the SLCS team.*