

The Livingstone biWeekly



Dear All

My header is from Kanyemba Lodge, Lower Zambezi. The birdlife was amazing. More of the story later ...

LIVINGSTONE

Road Levy at Vic Falls Border

Last week I mentioned that Kazungula District Council was collecting fees at the Vic Falls border. I am reliably informed that they have been told to leave as they have no right to collect any levies at this border.

Livingstone Art Gallery

The Art Gallery behind the Showgrounds is now open. I went to have a look. Excellent. Please visit and tell your friends to go and have a look too.



Ocean Basket

Many of you will have noticed that Ocean Basket has closed. Don't worry. It is re-opening by the end of November in their new premises next-door-but-one - next to Fez Bar.



Final Part of my trip to Lower Zambezi

ZAMBIA

As I am off on another trip next week, I need to finish my story about Lower Zambezi.

I left the story as we were returning into the park to stay at Chiawa Camp. We left Chongwe Lodge after lunch to go back over the Chongwe River ford but, on the way, we found some lions. They were lazing in the road in the shade of some trees and did not want to move. Even when a noisy tractor came up behind us, they stayed put. The tractor and its trailer full of workers did a wise thing and turned round. We waited. After some time I decided to edge forward slowly. I know we shouldn't disturb wildlife and the lions are entitled to sleep in the road if they want, but I could imagine us being there for hours as they had a snooze. Eventually they got up and moved off the road so that we could pass.

Chiawa is not far from the park border and we arrived there quite soon to be met by Peter and Anita, the camp managers. Chiawa was the first camp to be set up in Lower Zambezi in 1989. So the camp has lots of stories to tell. There is a book on the coffee table in the main area which shows some of the old photographs of the years in the park. Again the elephants



were our constant companions as they came to feast on the fruit of the overhanging acacia trees.

At Chiawa we were treated like royalty. In the evening all the guests were taken over by boat to an island for dinner. It was full moon and the island had been light up with lanterns; the meal was traditional Zambian. A very special evening.

In the morning we went for a boat cruise. The birdlife again was prolific. Then later we had lunch on a boat on the river. Lots of chatting of park stories were told in between ...

And then on to Royal Zambezi, back out of the park, across the Chongwe River ford, past Chongwe Lodge and then to Royal Zambezi. Again, it wasn't far and we got there within an hour. We were greeted by Natalie and Kolo. Kolo used to work here in Livingstone at Islands of Siankaba – amazing how the tourism fraternity moves around the country.



Royal Zambezi is a much more sturdy facility; a lodge which should appeal to Zambians. I know that most Zambians get a bit nervous in the more 'rustic' camps. The Royal is brick! It reminded me of Chichele Lodge in South Luangwa which was designed with Kenneth Kaunda in mind. Very close to Royal Zambezi is the tarred runway where Proflight runs scheduled flights during the tourist season, so it is easy to visit the area for a weekend or a mid-week getaway. But don't do as we did and stay for one night, stay for at least 3 nights. While we





were there we met some guests who had arrived to stay for 10 days, the husband being a 'mad fisherman'.

As you can see from the photograph of the early morning boat trips, Royal Zambezi is a very popular lodge - quite rightly so.

The following day we left around 1pm to get back to the Kafue River end of the park and I wanted to stop in at Mvuu Lodge on the way.

Mvuu is the place for the samango monkeys so I was delighted to find a troop of them in the trees when we arrived. Failed to get a photograph, though. Brett, the owner of the lodge showed us around. This is the only lodge, I think, which also has camping. Each campsite has its own ablution block and is set under shady trees. They also have chalets, bar and



restaurant. Keep this one in mind if you are a camper – a good place to stay.



From there it was on to Kanyemba Lodge. I had in my mind that Kanyemba would be just a birding spot so was surprised to find quite a lot of wildlife too. Opposite the river is a safari area in Zimbabwe and there are several islands in between. The wildlife moves between Zim and the islands. But, certainly it was the birdlife which was stunning. Hundreds of geese and ducks on sandbars - as in my header. Fantastic. Carmine bee-eaters too. Kanyemba is open all year round and is easily accessible by road. So, if your budget does not run to flying into the area, drive yourself to Kanyemba.

Kanyemba is run by Meegan who has been at the lodge for some years and knows all the stories. This is also not a 'bush camp'; it is set in beautiful gardens and lawns. A hippo was there when we visited – he was mowing the lawns for Meegan so we had to be a bit careful when moving around. Kanyemba does have a bush camp on an island, so if you prefer that experience, they can offer it.

My overall impression of Lower Zambezi is that it deserves its place in Zambia's Big Three parks. I just wish it had not taken me so long to go and visit. There are lodges to suit all tastes and budgets. The wildlife experience is first class and although there is not a huge variety of species there are plenty of them. It is worth going too for the scenery and the birdlife. Lower Zambezi is so well protected through the work done by Conservation Lower Zambezi that it shows what can be achieved with some hard work.

My trip was to find information on the area, so some of my notes on lodges are not as complete as they could be. It was such a rush. Next time I will take it more slowly. Lower Zambezi needs time ...



This time of year

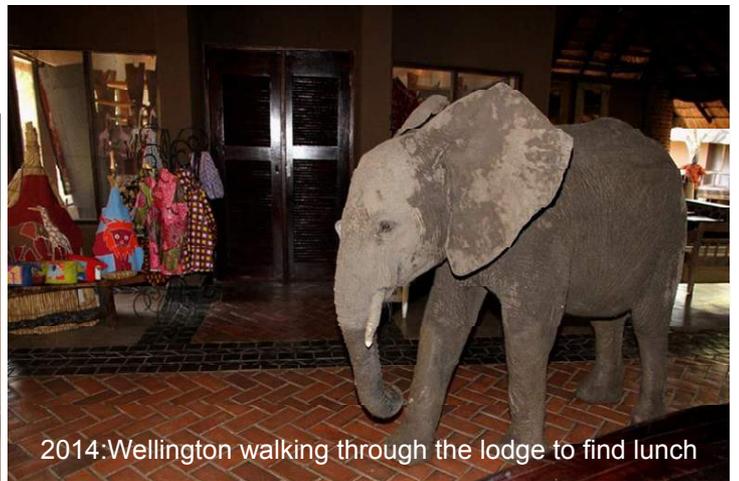
November is a great time of year for nature tourism in Zambia. Kasanka is awaiting the arrival of their 5 million straw-coloured fruit bats; the wildebeest (last count around 50,000) are arriving at Liuwa Plain National Park and the elephants are walking through Mfuwe Lodge, South Luangwa. Here is a story from Mfuwe:

*Each year at Mfuwe Lodge we have some very special guests that come to visit - "Wonky Tusk", as she has become affectionately known, and her family have been regular guests at the lodge for a number of years, visiting every October and November to feast on the fallen fruits from the large "Wild Mango" (*Cordyla africana*) tree in the lodge grounds. The fact that a large safari lodge is built around this delicious food store is of no concern to her... after all, why walk the extra few metres to go around, when there are some nice steps and a tiled reception lobby to saunter through each day?*

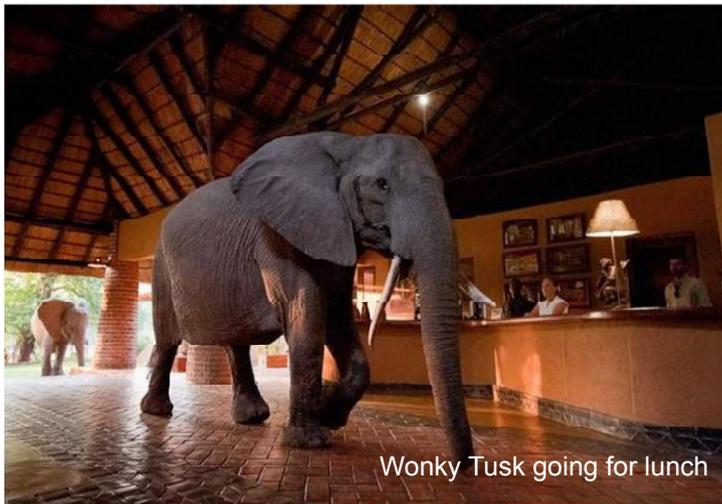
In October 2009 a new arrival to the herd - Lord Wellington - was born on the Lodge grounds and at 2 days old was introduced to the reception and the steps - now he is an expert at clambering up and through reception area. Wonky Tusk's family's annual dining habits have been the focus of many a photograph, video, newsworthy article, and even a children's book.



2009: New-born Wellington with his mum Wonky Tusk



2014: Wellington walking through the lodge to find lunch



Wonky Tusk going for lunch

TONGABEZI



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Update on the hippo rescue in Kasanka National Park

To start the rescue operations the team at Kasanka National Park decided to block all exit spots out of the pond that they were living in with pole structures, leaving only one opening left. The hippos started using that one exit/entrance and a platform was constructed for scouts to be able to monitor their time schedules in and out of the pond without being in danger of an attack.

One night when the two came out from the pool, Pieter Snyman, Kasanka Trust Manager of Operations and Infrastructure at Lavushi Manda and Kasanka National Parks, was on the platform and could see the snares clearly. The hippos, which turned out to be a female and sub-adult bull calf, were not entangled anymore but both of them still had cables on their front left feet at the first joint. The calf had an awkward walk and the female could only walk on three legs with the fourth foot very swollen and sensitive.

The hippos did not return that night and the next morning Pieter found them in the Luwombwa river about 3.5 km away. It was decided by vet Ian Parsons that the hippos would be darted in the river on the first opportunity, therefore not giving the animals chance to relocate again and make things more difficult.

Finally the hippos were darted and after waiting for the animals to subdue the team went in with a rope but as the animals were still conscious it was a great risk to go in the water. There was also a risk that the hippos would drown because of the depth of the water. The team found it very difficult to get a rope around a limb or head and the ropes keep slipping off.

At one point Pieter realised that the female hippo was not responding at all and would drown. He bravely dove into the water from the canoe, put a rope around one leg and shouted to the eager helpers on the bank to "PULL" the animal to the shallows. Ian Parsons did the same on the bull hippo and the hippos were pulled to shallower waters. The snares were cut off and the darts removed but during this procedure the calf stopped breathing.

It was disappointing that I did not manage to save the young bull. I suspect that the drugs dose was overwhelming for him due to his poor condition, despite the fact that he was given only 75% of the usual dose for an animal of his size." commented Ian Parsons.

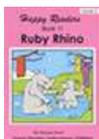
The antidote was administered to the female after taking off the snare and administering of antibiotics. She recovered well and moved off into the water. The following morning she was still hanging around hoping to find her calf. She is being monitored for a few more days. For Kasanka and wildlife conservation it was a huge success despite the loss of the one animal. Good experience was gained from this incident and the team released that de-snaring operations are just as important as having poaching patrols in the field.

The Kasanka Trust wants to thank everybody for their advice, help and contribution. They still need some financial assistance to cover the costs of the rescue and any additional money they receive will be put in a emergency fund for incidents of a similar nature.

If you can assist in any way possible PLEASE contact Pieter Snyman, operational manager at Kasanka Trust: +26 0971 745231, pieter@kasanka.com.



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Elephant Charge '14 - Conservation Lower Zambezi (CLZ)

This year CLZ entered their beast of a car, ANIMAL with the notorious CLZ Mudhogs (Ian Stevenson, Richard Chapple, Andrew Bawden, Mark Barrett, Damian Harris and Abri Potgieter) into the mad 4x4 annual challenge, The Elephant Charge. The CLZ Mudhogs were placed amidst a field of worthy contenders. The ANIMAL took some risky detours with premeditated planning and navigating backing their routes. However, after a long, hot, dusty and most importantly fun day the CLZ Mudhogs came up second with Autoworld taking the winning title. This fantastic day was topped off with the runners up checkpoint, Royal Zambezi Lodge & Royal Air Charters, who were also great sponsors in supporting the CLZ Mudhogs. We would like to thank the whole CLZ Mudhogs team for their concerted effort and enthusiasm and we hope to see them in the number 1 position next year!



Source of the Zambezi

The Zambezi River begins at Kalene Hills, north-western Zambia. There are concerns that the source of the river is being threatened by deforestation; farmers have gradually moved in along the start of the river. As we all know, rivers are dependent on the vegetation which lines their banks. Remove the vegetation and the water dissipates into the ground and becomes unavailable for plants, animals, birds and humans. It also leads to flooding when the rains are heavy.

In an article in the Post, In'utu Suba, Permanent Secretary for Environment and Natural Resources, who visited the area, has said that the encroachment along the banks of the Zambezi near its source has to end. In'utu Suba has said that all local authorities will, in future, be required to submit an EIA for any land which is to be allocated.



I downloaded a Google Earth map of Kalene Hills to have a look. As you can see, the tributaries to the river are completely surrounded by farmland. That the source of the river is in danger is obvious.

To me, this is a problem which concerns all our rivers, not just the Zambezi, and we need to think carefully, as the population grows, that we look after our rivers. We all need fresh water to drink. Surely a law should be passed that no land can be farmed or developed within a certain distance of any river, to give the river a buffer zone and a chance to survive.

I can remember when the Dambwa Stream through Livingstone had water. It doesn't now. Council allocated plots along it for development and the stream is no more.



YOUR INVITATION TO AN
ART EXHIBITION & COCKTAIL PARTY
CELEBRATING ZAMBIA AT 50 YEARS
'BUSHSCAPES'

AN EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS BY
ZAMBIA'S PREMIER LANDSCAPE PAINTER, QUENTIN S. ALLEN



CORPORATE MEDIA BY WILDFOOTAFRICA

You are invited to join the management of Mukwa Lodge and the artist at the exhibition opening and cocktail party with wine & snacks at
Mukwa Lodge & Restaurant, Kitwe
on Thursday 13 November 2014 at 18:00 to 20:30 hrs
(in addition, the restaurant & a cash bar will be available)

If you require a dinner reservation at the restaurant, please book early!

The exhibition will be open to the public from
Friday 14th to Sunday 16th November daily from 10:00hrs

Information: 0212-230389 & 0979-602032

Admission Free

ZIMBABWE

Slack-Lining

Two men crossed the gorge in Zimbabwe between, I assume, Cataract Island and the viewing walk opposite the Falls.
From the BBC:

Two high wire artists have negotiated a successful crossing of the Victoria Falls on the Zambia-Zimbabwe border - the culmination of two years spent in training. Student Lukas Irmeler, 26, from Germany, and 34-year-old journalist Reinhard Kleindl from Austria, used a slack line slung across the face of the spectacular falls, known locally as "the smoke that thunders".

Watch it on:
www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-29975111

Found this photograph by Tom Varley on Facebook ...
Thanks, Tom



In Livingstone we had the intention of sorting out our dog problem. In Kasane they concentrated and did it. From Kasane News:

Phew, another successful spaying campaign completed! This year we were blessed with a first-class team from MAWS - with 2 vets from the UK, 2 vet nurses from Maun and a number of extra Kasane bods providing crucial assistance we easily broke our target of 20 spays/castrates a day.

Sadly this year we saw 4 cases of TVT, a sexually transmitted cancer that, if left untreated, is fatal. With no facility in which to treat these animals euthanasia was the only option. I'm sure we'll see many more until the population of free-roaming unsterilized dogs is eliminated – further motive to keep at these campaigns!



Poached Black Rhino
The Namibian

A reward of N\$30,000 is being offered for information that would lead to the arrest and prosecution of the people responsible for the poaching of a rhinoceros in Namibia's premier wildlife sanctuary, the Etosha National Park, about a week ago. The reward is being offered by the Namibian Police and the Ministry of Environment and Tourism, a police spokesperson, deputy Commissioner Edwin Kanguatjivi, said yesterday. All information provided to the police would be treated confidentially to ensure that the identity of informers assisting with the investigation of the poaching incident would not be revealed, Kanguatjivi said.

The Ministry of Environment and Tourism announced on Wednesday afternoon that the carcass of a black rhino bull was discovered in the Etosha National Park on Tuesday morning. It is believed that the animal had been killed about two to three days before the discovery was made. Both horns of the endangered animal, which was found dead in the vicinity of the Galton Gate in the south-western corner of the wildlife reserve, had been removed, Kanguatjivi added yesterday.

The discovery of the poached black rhino brings to 15 the number of rhinos found dead in Namibia so far this year as a result of suspected poaching. More than 40 elephants have also been killed illegally, mostly in the north-eastern part of the country, since the start of this year. ...

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GARDEN

We have had rain. Not a lot, but enough to get the garden excited. So many trees and plants have burst into flower. My flame tree is bright red, as are so many throughout the town.

Although I am told that we are heading for a drought year, I am hopeful that the prediction is wrong and have been busy in the garden. My dogs keep me company but also the birds are pecking through the leaf litter and tweeting overhead. I think, at any one time, I can have 10- 20 bird species in the garden at one time as they come down for a drink or to feed. I even had a striped cuckoo for a visit and wondered if it was the same one as last year. I can remember watching the young cuckoo being reared by a babbler.



I have also had a sparrow and a weaver talking to themselves in the window of my car.

CALENDAR

Date	Event	Place
Saturday, 29 November	Fireworks	Acacia School, Livingstone

WEATHER

Min Temp	Max Temp
24°C	35°C

EXCHANGE RATES

US\$1	K6.38
	P9.33
	Nam\$11.26



THE SMILE

A visiting weaver having a long conversation with himself in the window of my car ...

Have a good two weeks

Gill