

40 YEARS OF CONSERVING ZAMBEZI WILDLIFE & WILDERNESS
and proud of it!

January, 2022

The Zambezi Society is enormously proud to be celebrating 40 years of operation in 2022. It has been a roller-coaster of a ride, with the COVID-19 pandemic not helping during the last two years. However, we have renewed determination to tackle the conservation challenges of the Zambezi Valley like never before. Our operational focus this year will be to keep up the anti-poaching work in key Zambezi protected areas, to safeguard key species like elephants, lions and other predators. But we will also be tackling the surge in bushmeat poaching that the deprivations of the pandemic have brought about in wildlife areas adjacent to rural communities. Our newly-trained Human Wildlife Co-existence officers are already in the field talking to communities about how best to prevent conflict with the wild animals who live next door. We are delighted to be involved in a large-scale planning exercise for the Zambezi Valley as a whole and look forward to the outcome of this as this year progresses. Meanwhile a huge thank you to all our donors, friends and loyal supporters for continuing to believe in what we do, and generously contributing towards our efforts! We look forward to the next 40 years!

- The Zambezi Society Team

STOP PRESS!



ROAD BRIDGE DAMAGE CUTS OFF ACCESS TO ZAMBEZI AREAS

Several bridges along the access road into the Mana Pools, Sapi and Chewore areas of the Zambezi have suffered severe damage due to extremely heavy rains in the aftermath of Cyclone Ana which hit northern Zimbabwe in the last week of January 2022. The images above (taken by ZimParks personnel) show the washed away approaches to (left to right) the Marongora, Chimutsi and Ruckomechi bridges. This has effectively cut off access to the whole area.

Zimbabwe's Ministry of Transport is expected to begin repairs to the bridges shortly. But this will take some time. Meanwhile, tourism operators are assisting with boat services along the Zambezi River, to ferry staff and transport food and essentials.

Another major bridge has also gone down in the Charara Safari Area.

The Zambezi Society has had to make alternative supply arrangements for its support of ZimParks anti-poaching activities in both Mana Pools and Charara, resulting in a significant increase in our fuel requirements.

If you would like to make a contribution to assist us with these challenges, please do so via our website donation page (click on the link below).

[**DONATE HERE**](#)

FIELD OPERATIONS



NEW YEAR SNARE SWEEP HAUL

The Zambezi Society started the New Year's anti-poaching operations in the Charara Safari Area at the eastern end of Lake Kariba, with this huge haul of 293 deadly wire bushmeat snares! ZimParks rangers, deployed by Pete Musto from Zamsoc, removed these snares during an anti-poaching patrol on 1st January 2022. All were discovered within a radius of 500-metres in mopane woodland near the lakeshore. Of interest is that they were not yet set to kill, but had been placed ready for "arming" by poachers at a future date once their busy crop planting season in neighbouring areas is over! Also worth noting was that the wire had been stolen from electricity poles (this carries a heavy sentence under Zimbabwe's energy laws). This haul will have saved a lot of wild animals in the area from a cruel, prolonged and gruesome death. Excellent work, by the guys in the field, working hard over the Festive Season!



PROTECTING CARNIVORES

Zamsoc is delighted to announce our new **Zambezi Valley Carnivore Preservation Project** funded through **Re:wild** formerly Global Wildlife Conservation (GWC). We will work with partners to maintain populations of lion, leopard, cheetah, hyena, wild dog and smaller carnivore species in the area linking the Matusadona and Mana Pools National Parks, through Gache-Gache Communal Area and the Charara & Hurungwe Safari Areas. We will tackle the biggest threats to carnivore populations – human encroachment, bushmeat poaching (which reduces prey species) and human-wildlife conflict. This project synergises well with our existing work in the important Gache-Charara corridor.

TRAINING



HUMAN WILDLIFE CO-EXISTENCE (HWC) OFFICERS TRAINED

At the end of 2021, The Zambezi Society's Operations team, working with technical support from the [My Trees Trust](#), interviewed and selected four Human Wildlife Co-existence (HWC) officers to work among their rural communities along the southern boundary of the Charara Safari Area and in the Gache Gache Communal land. They will help reduce conflicts between people and wild animals in the area. The new HWCOs undertook a two day training course in Kariba in December 2021, led by Crispen Chakanaka from the Gonarezhou Conservation Trust (at left in top image). This intensive training was followed by a guided practical session where the trainees talked to residents in the Mahombekombe suburb of Kariba (second image) to gather information about wildlife conflict scenarios in the town, including damage to crops by wild animals (third image). The trainee HWCOs (pictured in the fourth image) were provided with field equipment (including SMART data capture devices provided by [Panthera](#)) and undertook their first field trip in January this year, where they were accommodated in a school classroom. To date, they have managed to capture a large number of reports and data relating to human-wildlife conflict in their areas. This project is funded jointly through the [Lion Recovery Fund](#) (LRF), the [Elephant Crisis Fund](#) (ECF) and the [Zambezi Elephant Fund](#) (ZEF) has so far received positive feedback from traditional leaders, District councillors and school heads in the areas concerned.



MORE 'SMART' TRAINING FOR CHARARA SAFARI AREA

In December 2021, The Zambezi Society once again facilitated further training in the SMART (spatial monitoring and reporting tool) system for ZimParks rangers, management and data managers in the Charara Safari Area. A group of data managers from the Peter's Point ZimParks station in Kariba, were also included in the training, which took place in the new Operations Room at Nyanyana Station near Charara. Once again Zamsoc is most grateful to **Panthera** in Zambia (the international wild cat conservation organisation), whose training officer, Choolwe Mulenga led the courses as a follow-up to her SMART training work held in Charara in June last year.

PLANNING & ADVOCACY



PLANNING FOR ZIMBABWE'S MID-LOWER ZAMBEZI VALLEY

Work has begun on the development of Management Plans for the vast Mid-Lower Zambezi Valley covering an area of more than 23,000 sq km. This includes the Mana/Sapi/Chewore World Heritage Site, the Mid-Zambezi Biosphere Reserve, three Trans Frontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs), one national park (Mana Pools), six safari areas (Charara, Hurungwe, Sapi, Chewore, Dande and Doma) and six community wildlife conservancies - within the Districts of Hurungwe, Mberizwa and Muzarabani. The work is being facilitated by Dr Ian Games through the *Zambezi Valley Biodiversity Project - ZVBP*, funded by the UNDP's (Global Environment Facility (GEF)). The Zambezi Society, as a key stakeholder, is participating in meetings to discuss the project area as a whole (an ecosystem approach), and then, as the planning process unfolds, to address the individual areas.

PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING A CONTRIBUTION TO OUR EFFORTS

[DONATE HERE](#)

THANK YOU TO OUR FUND-RAISERS!



WELL DONE CHISI JUNIOR!

The 2021 Grade 6 pupils (and their teachers) at Chisipite Junior School in Harare had another year's amazing fund-raising in support of anti-poaching work in the Zambezi Valley. To thank them, Zamsoc's Operations team, Amy Wolton (right) and Daniella Skinner (left) visited the school in December and talked about some of the realities of our work, including demonstrating the cruelty of wire snares which kill wild animals for bushmeat and showing how a camera trap works. Zamsoc owes a HUGE THANK YOU to Chisipite Junior, whose Grade 6s have been raising funds for more than 35 years! We hope to inspire some future conservationists!



NEW YORK ELE FUND-RAISERS

The Zambezi's elephants were in the spotlight last November at two marathons in New York City with participants running in support of Zamsoc's fund-raising partner, the Zambezi Elephant Fund (ZEF). Well done to Mike Garden (pictured top left) and Jos Janish (top right) who took up two charity places provided to ZEF in the TCS New York City Marathon on 7th November. And hats off to Laura Robertson, organiser of the Saving the Elephants Run/Walk (STER) which took place with hundreds of supporters in Central Park, New York a week later. Laura is pictured below left here with ZEF/Zamsoc supporters and ZEF Director, James Egrement-Lee (below right).



GIFT PACKS FOR ORPHANS

For Christmas 2021, The Zambezi Society provided gift food packs to a charity for orphaned children run by the wife of Chief Chundu in the community of Hurungwe District, which borders on Mana Pools National Park at the southern end of the Zambezi Valley. Thank you, most sincerely to the Zambezi Society supporters who responded to our appeal and donated towards this special gesture for vulnerable children in this remote and marginalised area, where Zamsoc is trying to assist with human-wildlife co-existence issues.



ICE KOOL FESTIVE DONATION

HUGE thanks to Unicare in Zimbabwe for their extremely generous donation in support of the work of The Zambezi Society, through the special promotional sale of ICE KOOL COOLER BOXES over the 2021-2022 Festive Season! Thanks, too, to all the camping, fishing and safari enthusiasts in Zimbabwe who bought these wonderful Cooler Boxes and made this support possible! Our Operations Director, Amy Wolton is pictured here receiving the proceeds of the Special Promotion. This was SUCH a great idea in support of conservation work. Thank you for caring, Team Unicare!



SUBSCRIBE TO STEVE AND HELP MANA POOLS ANTI-POACHING

At the height of the COVID pandemic, Safari Operator Steve Bolnick, of [Camp Mana](#) in Mana Pools, set about creating an online series of subscription-only videos with African conservation and wildlife themes to raise money in support of The Zambezi Society's anti-poaching work in Mana Pools. His series has been so successful that Steve has sent Zamsoc regular, generous donations from the proceeds over the past two years! This has helped us to continue our vehicle deployments and pay our dedicated Zamsoc driver to assist ZimParks rangers in the field in Mana.

We are SO grateful and are filled with admiration for Steve's courage, determination and creativity in the face of the challenges of COVID-19.

Click on the image above to watch a taster of his latest video about the extraordinary drama of Chitake Spring at the end of the dry season in Mana Pools.

Then, do us a favour, and sign up for the rest of series at [https://www.patreon.com/SteveBolnick!](https://www.patreon.com/SteveBolnick)

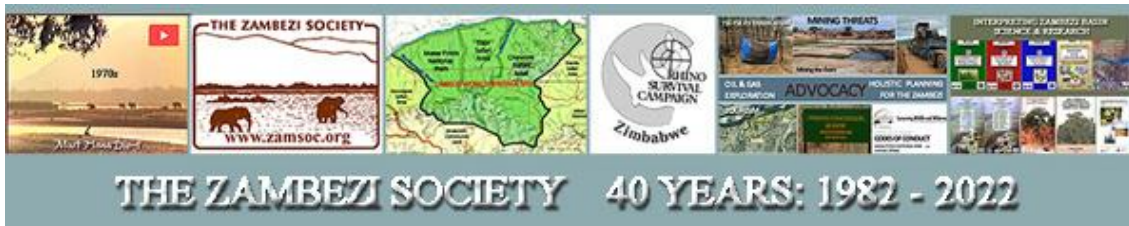
CONGRATULATIONS!



NICHOLAS DUNCAN OF SAVE AFRICAN RHINO FOUNDATION (SARF)

We extend huge congratulations to Nicholas Duncan, President of the [Save African Rhino Foundation \(SARF\)](#) who has been awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia in the Australia Day 2022 Honours List, for services to animal welfare. For more than 3 decades of challenging times, SARF has stood by Zimbabwe in its efforts to conserve rhinos and other wildlife species, assisting many conservation organisations (including the Zambezi Society) with their anti-poaching work. [READ MORE HERE](#). We are extremely grateful for Nicholas Duncan's passion, unwaivering commitment and loyal support. This accolade is very well deserved!

40 YEARS OF CONSERVATION HISTORY



JOIN US AS WE LOOK BACK ON OUR JOURNEY

In 2022, Zamsoc celebrates 40 years of in-field conservation work in the Zambezi Valley. To mark the occasion, our monthly Historical Series articles highlight significant moments and conservation achievements that we're proud of over the past four decades. Click on the links below to read our Historical Episodes so far:-

[THE ZAMBEZI SOCIETY HISTORICAL SERIES](#)

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