

WILDLIFE RANGERS' LIVES MATTER!

On WORLD RANGER DAY (31st July 2020), The Zambezi Society paid a special tribute to all Park rangers (especially those in the Zambezi Valley) who make sacrifices and risk their lives daily in order to protect our precious wildlife and natural heritage resources for the benefit of future generations of Zimbabweans and the world. Huge respect to the men and women in the front line.



The words below, recently posted by the Rangers of Mana Pools National Park, say it all.

"Wildlife Rangers' Lives Matter!

I have pledged and dedicated my whole life to nature protection.

I have carried rations and pieces of equipment like a donkey during operations on the frontline.

I have slept on hard ground and rock stone as my pillow.

I have been chased/attacked by wild animals especially lions, buffaloes and elephants, bitten by red ants and scorpions on the frontline.

I have chased poachers through the woods and waded through large crocodile infected rivers.

I have had poachers try to stab me and have fought with poachers trying to shoot me.

I have been bitten by the poachers during the arresting procedure.

I have pulled out, carried dead, mangled bodies of my colleagues killed by wild animals.

I have lied to my colleagues as they were dying.

I said you are going to be fine as I held their hand and watched the life fade out.

Done First Aid when I knew it wouldn't help just to make fellow Officers feel better.

I have been insulted, attacked by women while I was arresting their husbands for poaching.

I have been in high-speed car chases during illegal wildlife trade investigation operations.

Foot chases across roads during rush hour traffic.

Drove like a madman to help rescue fellow officers from the angry mob.

I have missed Christmas and other holidays more than I wanted to.

My family has been insulted and threatened by the community because of me being a ranger.

I have been warned, threatened for doing my work and not to speak out by forces within and outside the system.

I have been investigated, accused and sent to jail by the system I serve for doing my work.

Every wildlife Officer I know has done all these things and more for lousy pay, exhausting hours, and a short life expectancy.

I on behalf of all Wildlife Rangers don't want your pity, am not asking for your respect.

I just want you to let us do our work of protecting our natural resources given to us by God as our heritage without you harassing us.

At times when a difference is demonized and diversity is seen as an obstacle I'm unapologetic about who I am, where I am, and my determination to do what matters!

I'm part of the eco-system, I'm a Wildlife Ranger, I'm a Father, and I Matter!

Rangers On The Frontline Matters!

Do What Matters!"



The Coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic has brought far-reaching personal and economic challenges for the entire world - the full impact of which has yet to be revealed. Tourism (which provides the main source of revenue for Zimbabwe's National Park Authority) has ceased since the country went into Lockdown on 31 March 2020, and is unlikely to return for many months. The country's economy was already vulnerable. Under these circumstances, it will now be even worse. Protecting the Zambezi Valley's wildlife resources is now even more difficult than it was before. Yet rangers in the field, despite the extraordinary conditions and anxieties currently prevailing, must continue to carry out their duties to protect our wildlife resources.

The Zambezi Society (through the Zambezi Elephant Fund) runs a programme of support for rangers in the field in the Zambezi Valley areas , and for the health and welfare of their families.

Please help us to help them - consider making a contribution via our [DONATE](#) page!