

Jan-Feb 2023

The start of 2023 has brought both triumphs and sadness for The Zambezi Society. We are proud to have reinforced our Codes of Conduct for visitors (and tour operators) in Mana Pools, at the request of ZimParks and other stakeholders, to help curb inappropriate behaviour in that Park during the safari season. We've continued to assist ZimParks to protect the wildlife of Mana Pools National Park and the Charara Safari Area, and have helped rural farming communities surrounding Charara to secure their livestock in predator-proof bomas and reduce attacks by hyenas and lion. We've also made significant inputs into an ongoing management planning process for different areas of the Middle Zambezi Valley. But we are sad to report that, despite fierce opposition, mining operations have begun at the controversial Kangaluwi Copper Mine in the escarpment area of the Lower Zambezi National Park in Zambia - right opposite our World Heritage Site (with potential downstream impacts). We are even sadder to report the loss of two highly respected and influential conservation colleagues, who, driven by their passion for the wild, both had an extraordinary influence on several generations of young people in Zimbabwe. We extend our deepest sympathy to the families and friends of Leslee Maasdorp and Dr Peter Mundy.

- The Zambezi Society Team

ADVOCACY

<p>MANA POOLS NATIONAL PARK CODE OF CONDUCT FOR VISITOR BEHAVIOUR</p>	<p>CHITAKE SPRING CODE OF CONDUCT FOR VISITORS</p>	<p>Z.P.G.A. "Guiding Code of Ethics" Values: (Applicable to all Z.P.G.A. members operating in a Photographic Area)</p>

MANA POOLS NATIONAL PARK NEEDS YOU TO BEHAVE RESPONSIBLY AND SENSITIVELY

At the end of the safari season in 2022, ZimParks called a well-attended meeting of Mana Pools stakeholders (including The Zambezi Society) to discuss a worrying increase in the number of reports of inappropriate and insensitive behaviour of visitors (and tour operators) in the Park. Such incidents have a detrimental impact on wildlife as well as diminishing the value of the visitor experience along the Zambezi River and inland at places like Chitake Spring.

As a result of this, and at the request of ZimParks, The Zambezi Society has updated and revised its [CODE OF CONDUCT FOR VISITORS to Mana Pools National Park](#) (and its slightly modified version for [Chitake Spring](#)).

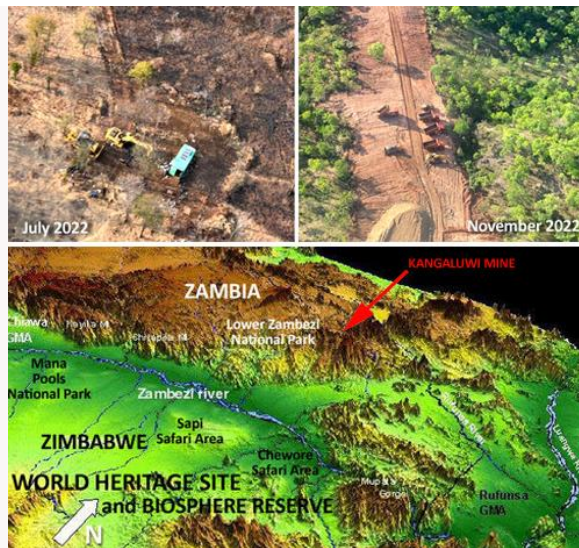
The new 2023 versions are downloadable as PDF files in the RESOURCES section of The Zambezi Society website under [EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS](#).

ZimParks Central Booking Office will send out soft copies of the relevant CODE OF CONDUCT with all new bookings for campsite, lodge or tented accommodation at Mana Pools and for camping at Chitake.

Printed flyer versions of the CODES OF CONDUCT will be available for handout at main ZimParks offices and entry points to the Park, and a summarised version will be on display to the public.

ZimParks and concerned stakeholders have stated that they will now pursue compliance of the park rules and the CODES OF CONDUCT FOR VISITORS with renewed determination.

WE URGE ALL LOVERS OF THIS UNIQUE AND BEAUTIFUL WILDERNESS TO COMPLY, AND TO PLAY THEIR PART IN REPORTING OTHERS WHO DO NOT.



**ZAMBIA'S KANGALUWI MINE GOES AHEAD DESPITE
OPPOSITION**

Recent reports and images indicate that the controversial Kangaluwi open-cast copper mine in Zambia's Lower Zambezi National Park, opposite Zimbabwe's Mana Pools/Sapi/Chewore World Heritage Site, has begun development, with potentially damaging downstream impacts on biodiversity, conservation and the fishing and tourism industries of Zambia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique. This comes after the Zambian Environmental Management Agency (ZEMA) approved the project in May 2021, after almost a decade of backlash and legal interventions from stakeholders and the public. [READ MORE HERE](#)

ZAMBEZI VALLEY PLANNING



DRAFT 10-YEAR MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR THE MIDDLE ZAMBEZI VALLEY

The Zambezi Society, along with other stakeholders is currently reviewing drafts of the 2023 - 2033 Management Plans for different areas of the Zambezi Valley, including those for Mana Pools National Park and the Charara Safari Area, where our on-the-ground operations are currently focused. These important documents, developed as part of the UNDP GEF 6 Zambezi Valley Biodiversity Project, are the result of a detailed review and stakeholder consultation process which took place during 2021 and 2022, and in which The Zambezi Society took an active role. Once finalised, these Management Plans will be made available to the Public.

COMMUNITY CONSERVATION

PROTECTING LIVESTOCK AND PREDATORS

The Zambezi Society's ongoing Wildlife Recovery Project assisting ZimParks to protect the Charara Safari Area at the eastern end of Lake Kariba, has shown that heavy bushmeat poaching within the protected area dramatically reduces prey species, which forces predators into the adjunct community areas to seek food. As a result, conflict between wildlife and farmers seeking to protect their livestock escalates.

Last year, four Human Wildlife Coexistence Officers (HWCOs) were trained and deployed by The Zambezi Society into rural communities abutting the Charara Safari Area. Their initial job was to collect data on conflict situations between humans and wildlife and to map the distribution of these incidents.

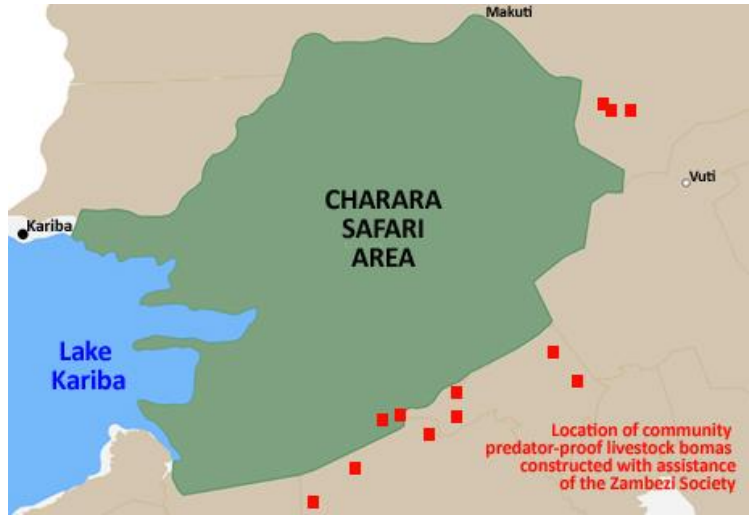
The data collected showed that hyenas are the most common cause of conflict, (much more so than lions or leopards). Despite this, calls for Problem Animal Control against lions are disproportionately higher than for hyenas - a factor that seems to be largely driven by fear of the species, and clearly highlights the urgent need for more education about human-wildlife co-existence.

The research also showed that all human-carnivore conflict cases occur where a) livestock have not been kept in bomas at night, b) where bomas are not properly predator-proof, or c) where livestock were grazing inside the protected area.

So, in October 2022, the Zamsoc team underwent a rigorous seven-day training programme, hosted by the Lion Guardians of Oxford University's Wildlife Conservation Research Unit ([WildCru](#)), who are experienced in the use and monitoring of predator proof bomas in the north-east of Zimbabwe. This workshop served to equip our HWCOs with the skills required to successfully erect, monitor, and engage with community members about securing their livestock against predators.

Our team then went back to help the communities near Charara.






By the end of 2022, with help from willing communities, twelve predator-proof livestock bomas had been erected within the project area in areas that were identified as conflict hotspots through our data collection exercise. Each boma is shared by 3–8 households and can hold between 30 and 65 cattle. An estimated 60 households are benefitting from this initial rollout. The bomas are being closely monitored and mentored by the Zamsoc HWCOs and are serving as demonstration sites for other community members to learn about the concept and to hopefully participate in the second phase planned for 2023.






FIELD OPERATIONS

SUMMARY OF OUR FIELD OPERATIONS FOR 2022



THE ZAMBEZI SOCIETY

FIELD OPERATIONS SUMMARY JAN-DEC 2022

 <p>CHARARA SAFARI AREA Arrests 6 weapons confiscated 3 bushmeat poachers convicted</p>	 <p>CHARARA SAFARI AREA & MANA POOLS NP (with ZIMPARKS) KARIBA (with KAWFT) 6 boat patrols 24,700 kms covered by vehicle 1,198 ranger nights in field 532 day patrols 81 extended patrols</p>	 <p>CHARARA SAFARI AREA 65+ kms roads repaired</p>		
WILDLIFE PROTECTION	AMBUSH & ARRESTS	RANGER WELFARE	LAND & WATER PATROLS	ROAD REPAIRS
<p>CHARARA SAFARI AREA 948 wire snares removed 27 rangers trained in tracking, strategic planning, & patrol tactics</p> 	<p>CHARARA, MANA POOLS MARONGORA & CHEWORE 200 rangers supplied with 960 kgs high energy patrol food 31,560 kgs maize meal</p> <p>MANA POOLS NP US\$500 medical supplies for clinic</p> <p>MARONGORA Educational supplies & lunches 38 students & 4 teachers Computer & printing equipment Play mats, Solar energy supplies</p>			

In partnership with Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority, Kariba Animal Welfare Fund Trust and Zambezi Elephant Fund



PREDATOR SURVEY RESULTS EAGERLY AWAITED

In our last [Zambezi Society Bulletin](#) we reported on the ongoing survey of wildlife predators being undertaken throughout the Zambezi Valley by Oxford University's Wildlife Conservation Research Unit ([WildCRU](#)). The surveys include the use of intensive camera grids as well as audio 'call ins'. During November 2022, our Zamsoc team finished up the year assisting with the survey in the Charara Safari Area. In 2023, the surveys will be concluded with coverage of Chewore North, Chewore South and Dande Safari Area. The survey data will then be analysed and we hope to have the preliminary results later in the year. These surveys are important as they provide actual information on predator population densities which can inform management decisions, including the setting of hunting quotas.

PLEASE CONSIDER MAKING A CONTRIBUTION TO OUR EFFORTS

[DONATE HERE](#)

FEATURE BLOG

*SOME OBSERVATIONS ON ZAMBEZI RIVER RAINFALL NEAR
MANA POOLS*



Not many people (except those who work there) get to experience the rainy season months in Mana Pools, and to witness scenes like the one pictured above. We feel privileged, over our many years of operation in the Zambezi Valley, to have been there and done just that. So this month, in a Feature Article on our website, The Zambezi Society takes a look at current and historical Zambezi River rainfall trends in the vicinity of Mana Pools, speculating about rain-shadow effects, extended drought periods, potential impacts on the Park and its wildlife, and whether the climate is changing in this area. If you, too, have a long-standing relationship with this area, we'd like to hear your views. [READ MORE HERE.](#)

THANK YOU



LAURA ROBERTSON - who organises the annual **Saving the Elephants Run** in Central Park, New York City, USA (pictures above). For the the past few years, Laura has channelled the funds raised by the event to the Zambezi Elephant Fund (ZEF) which supports some core activities of a small group of organisations working in the Zambezi Valley (including Zamsoc). Laura is pictured at extreme left with Jazzy Middleton of ZEF at

last year's Run in November 2022.

MIKE SMITH of [MR CRUISER](#) in Harare, who most kindly donated coil springs for the Zambezi Society LandCruisers.

GARTH DRUMMOND of [WEBDEV](#) in Harare, who generously sponsors the hosting costs for The Zambezi Society's website and emails.

[RIGHT AS RAYNE SOLUTIONS](#) who assist The Zambezi Society with sourcing, purchasing, air freight and shipping of equipment from the USA to Zimbabwe at considerably discounted rates.

Our major donors - the [LION RECOVERY FUND](#), the [ELEPHANT CRISIS FUND](#), the [SLAVIK FAMILY FOUNDATION](#) (via [RE-WILD](#)), and the [ZAMBEZI ELEPHANT FUND](#).

The **Pisec family**, **Deborah Probert**, **Rowan Mickleburgh** and the many other individual friends and supporters all over the world, as well as in Zimbabwe, who regularly make donations in support of our work.

Help us do more.

DONATE TODAY

IN REMEMBRANCE

At the start of 2023, we are extremely sad to report the loss of two friends and colleagues, whose passion and dedication in their fields of conservation and education have inspired hundreds of young Zimbabweans.



LESLEE MAASDORP (1925 - 2023)

Leslee Maasdorp passed away peacefully at her home in Harare on 6th Feb 2023 at the grand age of 97. She will be remembered fondly as a dedicated teacher and life-long conservationist, whose fervent passion for the wild had an extraordinary influence on several generations of young people in Zimbabwe.

She grew up on a farm near King William's Town in South Africa's Eastern Cape, excelling at school, passing her Matric with distinction, and winning The Royal Empire Society's Essay Competition in 1942. She went on to attain a BSc with distinction in Biology and Zoology at Rhodes University, followed by a Post-grad Certificate in Education (also with distinction) from the University College of Rhodesia & Nyasaland in 1957.

For 25 years, until 1982, Leslee taught Biology at Prince Edward – a boy's school in Harare. Known affectionately by the boys as MeeMee, she championed the school's Natural History Club, leading five field trips, including one to Mount Kenya. Many of her former pupils held her in high esteem and continued to visit her in her old age.

In 1981, Leslee achieved a Higher Diploma in Library Science from UNISA and, after retiring from teaching, went on to set up the Education Programme for The Zimbabwe Museum of Human Sciences. It was at this time that she also became involved in establishing the Zimbabwe Hunters Association Education Programme at Rifa near Chirundu in the Zambezi Valley. She and her husband Hugh subsequently went on to live at Rifa until 1995, expanding the Education Camp and overseeing the programme which, to this day, is an impactful wilderness and conservation experience for hundreds of schoolchildren.

She served for many years on Boards, successfully helping to prevent the Harare City Council from developing housing schemes on land at the Mukuvisi Woodlands and Ballantyne Park Nature Reserve.

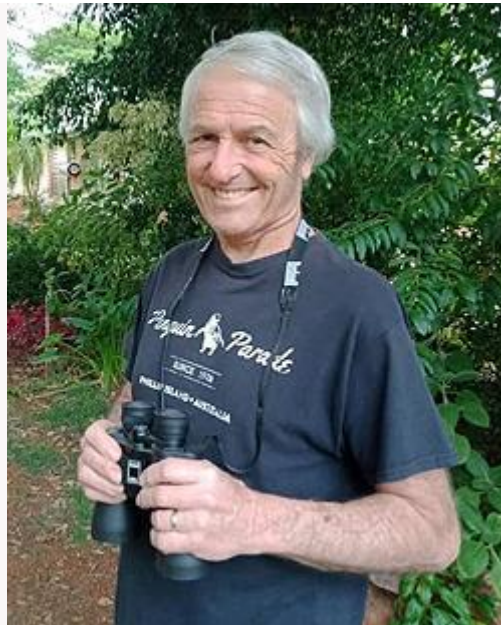
In 1996, Leslee was awarded the Cresta Wildlife Oscar by Zimbabwe's Ministry of Environment and Tourism.

In her 70s, she turned her attentions to Birdlife Zimbabwe, creating their Bird Awareness Programme, helping develop publications including Enjoy the Birds of

Zimbabwe, a Teachers' Resource Book and several articles in the Honeyguide, including an issue dedicated to The Birds of Rifa Camp, Chirundu, Zimbabwe, 1998 – 2014 with Anne Cotton.

In her 80s, now working with The Zambezi Society, Leslee set about trying to influence development planning for Chirundu town to create corridors for wildlife movement through the area. She successfully achieved the designation of Mana Pools as one of Zimbabwe's RAMSAR wetland sites, facilitated funding to purchase desks for the school for rangers children at ZimParks' Marongora station, and created conservation educational materials for distribution to schools in the areas surrounding the Zambezi Valley National Parks.

Leslee's long life was quite remarkable. She leaves behind an incredible legacy, not only for her own 6 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren, but for generations of Zimbabweans for whom she set a shining example of selfless dedication.



PROFESSOR PETER MUNDY (1941 - 2023)

Professor Peter Mundy died of cancer in Bulawayo on the 3rd February, 2023, aged 81 years. A University of London graduate, Peter taught Maths and Biology at a school in Nigeria in the early 1970s, during which time he did research on vultures, crows, and cuckoos. He won a University of Rhodesia Research Fellowship in 1972 to study vultures, successfully developing the use of cannon nets to capture vultures at a bait. He went on to become a leading authority on the biology and conservation of these birds, publishing many scientific papers and a book "The Vultures of Africa".

Besides being an outstanding ornithologist, his contributions to wildlife conservation in Southern Africa were much wider. After a few years with the Endangered Wildlife Trust, he joined Zimbabwe's Dept of National Parks and Wildlife Management and worked for nearly 20 years as Principal Ecologist, overseeing many of the Zambezi Society's projects, including the [experimental translocation of cheetah](#) from the Lowveld into the Matusadona National Park. In the late 1990s, as a consultant for

the Biodiversity Foundation for Africa, Peter wrote the technical chapters about birds for joint publications with The Zambezi Society ([Biodiversity of the Zambezi Basin Wetlands](#), and the [Biodiversity of the Four Corners Area](#), , and later, in 2003 became a Professor in Forestry Resources and Wildlife Management at the National University of Science and Technology (NUST) in Bulawayo. He inspired several generations of students through his teaching and supervision of their research.

Besides his scholarly and conservation achievements, Peter was also an accomplished saxophonist. He will also be remembered for his masterful turn of phrase, good humour, and ready wit, often embellished with the best of “cockney” accents. A bright light gone too soon. Peter leaves his wife Verity, and children Matthew and Emily, to whom we extend our heartfelt condolences. He will be greatly missed.

40 YEARS OF CONSERVATION HISTORY



Last year, Zamsoc celebrated 40 years of in-field conservation work in the Zambezi Valley. To mark the occasion, our Historical Series of articles highlighted significant moments and conservation achievements that we're proud of over the past four decades. If you missed the 12 Episodes in our Historical Series, you can read them on our website - click on the link below:-

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