
GAME RANGERS

INTERNATIONAL



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#WeAreAllRangers

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Above: Elephant repellents ready to be installed at KRF

Front Cover: 5 month old Mataya plays with Keeper Audience; Photo Credit Lynda Rorbye

Page 4: The start of the Elephant EPIC race to the Zambezi

EMPOWERING RANGERS AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO CONSERVE NATURE

INTRODUCTORY MESSAGE

By Andrea Thorne

More than just a volunteer...

The term “volunteer”, in any English dictionary, refers to working without being paid; offering your time and energy to a worthy cause. However, Game Rangers International Volunteers bring so much more to conservation and to GRI than just that!

Not only do they pay to be part of this incredible experience and give of themselves physically, mentally and emotionally, but often go on to assist us in ways which hold incredible meaning and make an enormous impact to our organization and those we support; continuing to do so long after they've left Zambia!

In this edition of the Bush Telegraph you will see that a former volunteer funded the New Ngoma School block; another former volunteer created the infographic showing the elephant statuses. Also, recently, volunteers assisted in the training of the repeller's Artificial Intelligence (AI) to recognize elephants!

The repellers use 'smart' technology to safely deter elephants by using a combination of a smart camera trap and a light and sound alarm to be installed near key human – elephant conflict areas. The AI smart camera element monitors approaching elephants and triggers an 'at-a-distance' alarm to deter the elephants.

These are just three examples of what volunteers have brought to GRI. We thank each of them and all the others, whether they're current, part of the alumni or yet to come, for their choice to make a difference in this world! The elephants and people of Zambia appreciate you!



Andrea Thorne
Volunteer Administrator

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WILDLIFE RESCUE PROGRAMME

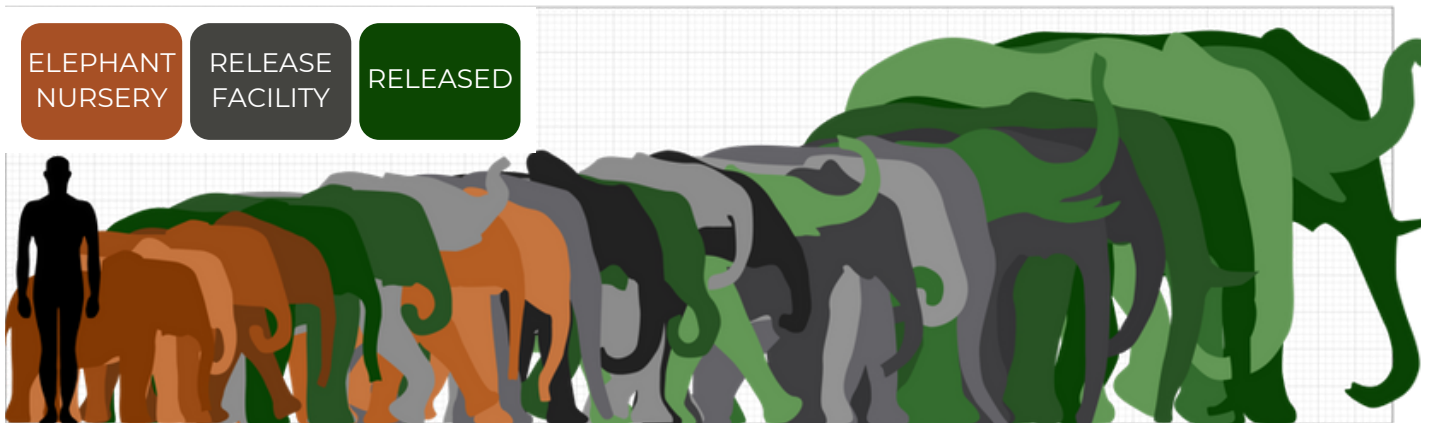
RESCUE
REHABILITATE
RELEASE



Muso Crossing the Nkala river crossing point

ELEPHANT STATUSES

STAGES OF RELEASE



HIGHLIGHTS

- Lani joins Chamma's herd and is then escorted back to the KRF herd
- Mphamvu, Mulisani and Kasewe return to KRF from 83 days in the wild
- Maramba, Muchi and Mkaliva remain in the wild, last seen 17th May
- KRF herd relocated to the Dry Season boma

This past quarter had some very interesting events for the Release Facility herd that impacted their behaviour, interactions, and dynamics. In the absence of Maramba, who has been the dominant male at the Release Facility for some time, and Mphamvu, Musolole took up the position of the most dominant male in the herd. Kavala, who is herd matriarch, has formed bonds with Musolole and Nkala which would not have happened if Mphamvu or Maramba were around. After the initial wariness created by the absence of their seven herd mates had worn off, the remaining six elephants divided into two groups. Kavala was with Nkala and Musolole while Ludaka was with Tuko and Olimba.

The most significant events this quarter were the return of Lani, Mphamvu, Kasewe and Mulisani after free roaming in the Kafue National Park.



Biological samples collected from Rufunsa during the collaring

CHAMILANDU'S HERD

COLLARING OPERATION

Stage 6 (released but monitored) orphans, Chamilandu, Tafika, Mosi and Rufunsa were successfully collared on 22nd and 23rd May. This was a milestone activity for GRI as it was the first time we collared orphans in a wild setting (all orphans have previously been collared within or close to the boma). With the risks involved in collaring wild elephants we required aerial support to access the elephants safely and are grateful to African Parks (AP) for providing a helicopter and technical team.

Each elephant had a team allocated for collar fitment, collection of samples and monitoring vitals. Since we were going to have multiple elephants collared simultaneously, we were supported by three Department of National Parks & Wildlife vets. Dr Innocent Ng'Ombwa, Principal Vet, led the operation which included African Park's helicopter, GRI's fixed wing plane and three vehicles with teams.

We had planned to dart all the elephants by helicopter, but Tafika provided a perfect opportunity as he appeared by the dry season boma on the first morning so was darted from the ground as the plane ensured we could maintain good visuals of him. Thereafter, we proceeded to locate Chamilandu, however the GPS component on her collar was non-functional, as was Mosi's, so we utilised Very High Frequency (VHF) tracking by plane and ground team to maximise the chances of finding her.

After a few hours of searching, we located her herd Southeast of the Release Facility. The herd was pushed (by helicopter) into an open area for darting, but in the process, Mosi and Rufunsa separated from Chamilandu who stayed with her son, Mutaanzi David. Once the vet had clear visuals Chamma, Mutaanzi and another juvenile elephant in their company were all darted. It was initially suspected to be Rufunsa as he was close to them both and defending Mutaanzi, however, once on the ground it surprised the team to discover he was a wild bull. Chamilandu was quickly collared, and the other two, were stabilised. All samples were collected, and the sedation was reversed on all three. This marked the end of the first day of collaring with the hope that Mosi and Rufunsa would reunite with either Tafika or Chamilandu.

During the second day, we had less search time; the just deployed collars from day one were set to frequent data points for more efficient tracking. James Amoo, Resource Protection Director and GRI Pilot, deployed the plane, and the ground team began tracking Tafika and Chamma. Upon locating Chamma we found Mosi and Rufunsa had united with her overnight. The helicopter team were then deployed to dart them.

Elephants are family-oriented, and in the wild, a breeding herd is mostly comprised of closely related individuals. But in the case of orphans, they have created these bonds by living together over years. Elephants, when threatened, bunch up for defence. Despite Chamilandu's herd being a surrogate herd, we witnessed the same "bunching" behaviour and following Chamilandu, the matriarch, in response to hearing the helicopter. Rufunsa was darted first, then Mosi. This was Rufunsa's first-ever collar.



A baby Vervet Monkey snuggles up in a warm, comforting blanket

WILDLIFE RESCUE EXPANSION

ZAMBIAN PRIMATE PROJECT

We are thrilled to announce the expansion of our Wildlife Rescue Programme with the incorporation of the highly acclaimed 'Zambia Primate Project'.

Aligning beautifully with our Wildlife Rescue mission and values, the primary aim of Zambia Primate Project (ZPP) is the rescue, rehabilitation, release and in situ protection of primates in Zambia that are victims of the illegal wildlife trade or injured due to human intervention. Through the awareness generated by its work, ZPP also aims to reduce the number of primates compromised by the illegal wildlife trade and human wildlife conflict.

ZPP was initially established in 2002 by wildlife welfare and conservation giants, Born Free, with technical expertise and leadership from Dr Cheryl Mvula MBE, and has been successful in returning over 810 vervet monkeys and baboons back into the wild in Kafue National Park. These individuals had been orphaned or injured by the bush meat trade, held captive through the illegal pet trade, or injured through road or snare accidents in Zambia. In close partnership with the Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW), ZPP has been dedicated to rescuing these primates for over 21 years. What is even more staggering is that once returned to the wild, the survival rate of the released primates over the past 10 years has usually ranged between 85 and 100% at 12 months after release, making ZPP one of the most successful primate release projects in the world!

The Three R's



Rescue



Rehabilitate



Release



Both Mandy (8 month old baboon) and Kanono (7 month old vervet monkey) are orphans. They were rescued in the same week in mid-June.

GRI's holistic approach to wildlife conservation aims to support all wildlife and the communities living alongside wildlife to coexist and, in the ideal, benefit one another. In order to work towards this goal, it is so important that we focus on the needs of the communities, incorporating a compassionate approach to conservation. This is where the work of the Zambia Primate Project, and the Elephant Orphanage Project, is significantly highlighted, as the welfare of individuals is prioritised, and each animal is given every chance for a life back in the wild where they truly belong. Whilst at GRI we have focused energies primarily on endangered species conservation through the Elephant Orphanage Project, there has always been a will and vision to support the wider species as required (funding permitted) and the incorporation of ZPP demonstrates the perfect opportunity for GRI to lend its organisational support systems, research expertise and technical knowledge into such a successful, respected and long-term conservation project.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank and welcome on board the long-standing primary partners of ZPP, Born Free, Olsen Animal Trust and Humane Society International – Australia, who have supported this project to flourish over the years and who have encouraged this new incorporation. In addition, we deeply thank and acknowledge our operational partners at DNPW who have supported this project since its inception and our sincere thanks to new partners at African Parks who manage the Kafue National Park and ensure the safety of our team and primates in the release area which is key to their long-term survival. We are confident that together we will achieve more, and we invite you all watch this space for exciting updates from the primate world of GRI Zambia Primate Project!"



Cosmas Mumba

"Throughout its history ZPP's achievements are a reflection of the continuity, commitment and passion of its Project Manager, Cosmas Mumba.

Cosmas has dedicated his life to saving primates from injury or mistreatment." ~

Rachael Murton

Wildlife Rescue Director



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COMMUNITY OUTREACH PROGRAMME

ENGAGE
EDUCATE
EMPOWER



Students board the WDC Bus in preparation for their Discovery Day

EDUCATION

WILDLIFE DISCOVERY CENTRE BUS

We were thrilled to unveil the newly designed Wildlife Discovery Bus this quarter. Generously funded by David Shepherd Wildlife Foundation, the bus is another huge step in ensuring that the Wildlife Discovery Centre is accessible to all. With no public transportation links to Lusaka National Park, and the vast majority of local schools unable to afford private bus hire, the bright and beautiful bus enables us to provide safe and comfortable transfers to the facility.

NEW NGOMA SCHOOL

The development of New Ngoma School's 1x2 classroom block was a major focus this quarter, with the official opening set for early August.

Communities on the eastern borders of Nkala GMA remain inaccessible by road during the wet season. This challenge lasts 4 to 5 months every year, leading to delays in the implementation of certain community projects until such a time when the road network opens up. In view of this, Community Outreach Manager, Britius Munkombwe, conducted a road inspection in early April, and ultimately approved transportation of building materials to New Ngoma to resume.

Britius then facilitated a meeting with the Parents and Teachers Association (PTA) and School Project Executive Committee members of New Ngoma Primary School to provide an update on the project implementation plan. The forum also discussed the support that will be needed from the community during project implementation, and how best to monitor and safeguard the materials that will be delivered to the school. We officially broke ground on the New Ngoma School site on 28th April.

"The advancement of this project has brought excitement to people in Musungwa Chiefdom who now realise and appreciate the benefits that come from wildlife conservation, as they vow to take the lead in reporting illegal wildlife activities".

Britius Munkombwe



New Ngoma School under construction



Bushmeat recovered from an op near ITT, apprehending 4 poachers

ZOONOSES

AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

The Transnational African Zoonosis Education Campaign aims to raise awareness of the risks of zoonotic disease transmission and encourage lasting behavioural change. The campaign directly links the conservation of wildlife with the protection of public health through the One Health concept.

Zoonotic diseases (also known as zoonoses) are caused by germs that spread between animals and people. Examples of zoonotic diseases include animal flu; anthrax; bird flu bovine tuberculosis; brucellosis; ebola etc...

This quarter we worked with local artist Anthony Zaza to develop a series of resources and educational materials which will support our delivery of the campaign across Itezhi-Tezhi, Lusaka, Luangwa and Ndola. Campaign materials include posters, bumper stickers, an interactive display, t-shirts, radio scripts and pre-printed flipcharts.

Key facts according to World Health Organisation:

- A zoonosis is any disease or infection that is naturally transmissible from vertebrate animals to humans
- There are over 200 known types of zoonoses
- Zoonoses comprise a large percentage of new and existing diseases in humans
- Some zoonoses, such as rabies, are 100% preventable through vaccination and other methods

PREVENT ZOONOSES



HUNTING



BUTCHERING



COOKING



EATING

BUSHMEAT PUTS YOU AT RISK OF DISEASE

GAME RANGERS INTERNATIONAL



RESOURCE PROTECTION PROGRAMME

STOP
SECURE
SAVE



Officers confiscating illegal timber and charcoal

ILLEGAL TIMBER AND CHARCOAL OPERATIONS

AN INFLUX

Over the past few months, Mumbwa and Namwala Game Management Areas have seen an influx of illegal timber and illegal charcoal traders.

Two types of operations were planned since April 2023 to curb this. The first one being intensive monitoring, patrols and clearing by the Mweengwa teams as well as joint operations with other partners including African Parks, Musekese with the Mweengwa teams. Efforts were made to clear and clean up any illegal charcoal, destroy charcoal kilns and confiscate any illegal timber.

The first approach yielded two major results. Four illegal timber dealers were apprehended with 45 logs and 615 pieces of timber. This case was processed in court and the four illegal timber dealers were sentenced to 9 months imprisonment each, with hard labour or a fine of K1,000 each.

Then an operation was conducted in Namwala GMA around Chief Chikaza Munyama's area on 20th June 2023 where 315 pieces of timber were confiscated. The case is being handled by the Musa Senior Investigations Officer with the Forestry Department.

The second approach which involved joint operations with stakeholders, resulted in 800 x 90kg bags of charcoal and 130 logs collected while 30 charcoal kilns were destroyed. This operation was conducted from 24th to 28th April 2023. A follow up operation was conducted from 15th to 20th May 2023, where 320 x 90kgs bags of charcoal and 50 logs were collected.

These operations have sent a very strong signal to those involved in these illegal activities and have resulted in a reduced rate at which they are exploiting the resources. These operations will continue throughout the year and may be conducted monthly or bi-monthly depending on the situation on the ground.



Timber confiscated from Mumbwa East GMA in June and charcoal kilns being destroyed in April.



Rangers practice a casualty evacuation using a stretcher.

RANGER TRAINING

VETERANS FOR WILDLIFE VISIT

In May, three trainers from Veterans For Wildlife (V4W) visited Musa Camp, GRI's Field Head Quarters (FHQ) in Kafue National Park, Zambia to deliver first aid training to GRI supported Rangers and Community Scouts, and to conduct a training needs assessment for further training to be delivered in the future.

The courses were attended by a total of 37 Rangers – 2 Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW) Wildlife Police Officers (WPOs) and 35 Community Scouts, all of whom are currently supported by GRI. The training course combined lessons on first aid theory with practical workshops. This allowed V4W to review the current knowledge of the Rangers, to provide refreshers where needed, and to fill any gaps.

Rangers were taught the METHANE and ATMIST major incident protocols, to be used in the case of incident reporting and patient handover. Practical workshops were then conducted where the Rangers took part in first-responder scenarios. This allowed them to practice skills learnt and to experience the use of correct protocols in high pressure situations.

INQUISITIO TRAINING

In April, the Special Investigation Unit at Musa and Investigation Officers from Mweengwa undertook a 5-day training course lead by an intelligence consultant from the UK. The training focused on protocols for conducting surveillance operations, running informer networks and intelligence gathering. The course also included lessons on reporting procedures and informer databases and practical workshops on tracking and surveillance which were conducted in camp.



Community Scouts practice bandaging wounds during the V4W practical workshop



Rangers apply a tourniquet while practising responding to a major incident



The Rescued Tree Pangolin

SPECIAL INTELLIGENCE UNIT

BACKGROUND

The Special Intelligence Unit (SIU) and the Special Anti-Poaching Unit (SAPU) are highly trained GRI supported teams of Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW) Rangers and Community Scouts. The SIU is a stand-alone intelligence and investigation team which collects and analyses Human Intelligence and Signal Intelligence to direct the activities of all GRI supported units. SAPU is an intelligence-led strike force.

PANGOLIN

On 13 July 2023 the SIU and SAPU, a team of GRI supported Rangers, apprehended four suspects in possession of a live pangolin in Northern Zambia. The suspects were attempting to make an illegal sale of the animal. The suspects were apprehended, taken into custody and their vehicle was impounded.

The recovered pangolin was a tree pangolin, also known as the white-bellied pangolin or three-cusped pangolin, one of two species found in Zambia. Upon recovery, the team liaised with a local pangolin expert who advised that the pangolin appeared to be in good condition and should therefore be immediately released into the wild. The decision was therefore made to take the pangolin to Lusenga National Park, where there is a known resident population of tree pangolins. The team met with local DNPW Rangers from the area and the pangolin was successfully released.

Four suspects were apprehended in connection with the pangolin, two Zambians and two Congolese. The suspects will be charged with 'Illegal Possession of a Prescribed Trophy' under the Zambian Wildlife Act 2015, a charge which carries a penalty of five to ten years imprisonment upon conviction for a first offence, or seven to fifteen years for a second offence.

The release of a live pangolin back into the wild, especially having spent some time in captivity, is a great result. In addition, the apprehension of four suspects, two of whom are Congolese, goes a long way to increasing the perception of risk not only to those illegal players within Zambia, but also to those considering illegal activity from bordering countries.



Image taken of the pangolin following its recovery, and climbing a tree post release

GAME RANGERS INTERNATIONAL



FUNDRAISING, MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

SHOP
ADOPT
VOLUNTEER
DONATE



Volunteers having a talk on elephant behaviour with Research Assistant, Moses

GET INVOLVED

VOLUNTEER PROGRAMME

GRI has received 45 volunteers so far between April and June 2023, with more scheduled for the rest of the season. Our volunteers come from all over the globe and play a pivotal role in supporting our programmes.

The Programme consists of a 21-night trip starting in Lusaka National Park at the Wildlife Discovery Centre and Elephant Orphanage for the first week. On the second week the tour moves to Musa Camp, home of GRI's Field Headquarters and Community Outreach Office. The final week is based at Camp Phoenix to walk with the Release Herd.

Throughout the experience, our Volunteers learn about GRI's holistic approach to conservation and support the programmes in many ways. The primary role of the Volunteer is to carry out biodiversity studies, a project which takes up valuable man-hours but is vital to understand the impact of conservation in Kafue and Lusaka National Parks. They also engage in conservation education with our Community Outreach teams and use each of their unique skill sets to empower our programmes, whether photography, IT knowledge, medical or crafts. Each Volunteer brings their own strengths to the role and uplifts GRI's teams.

There is often the opportunity to experience a completely unique moment within GRI. Two of our Volunteer groups this year have been involved in collaring operations - where they are at the heart of the action. Each Volunteer experiences something different, and as the final journey for two nights in Livingston comes round, they will be filled with a vibrant understanding and passion for GRI's conservation approach and will go on to be long-term ambassadors for our organisation.

Volunteer bookings are made easily online via the GRI website: <https://www.gamerangersinternational.org/volunteer>

We also have valued Volunteer Partners who assist in the management of bookings for Volunteers from Germany (via NATUCTE and SafariFrank), Italy and France (via Silvana Olivo) and the Netherlands (via TravelUnique and Africa Travel Stories) and South Africa (via Tour Mama Africa).

Basic information

- Accommodation in safari-style tents within fully facilitated campsites.
- Shopping trip at start of tour for set meals coordinated by Volunteer Hostess and cooked in camp kitchens.
- Dedicated Hostess and experienced Driver for all in-country travel
- Itinerary of activities designed to immerse Volunteer in our three pillars of conservation.
- Emergency Evacuation cover included

US\$2750 for 21-nights



EPIC Riders crossing the famous Bell finishing line!

ELEPHANT EPIC

On Saturday June 24th we hosted the 2023 Elephant EPIC MTB Challenge from Lusaka to Lower Zambezi with around 180 dedicated riders joining the herd.

The riders were assembling at the starting line as early as 4am to do final checks and test their bikes before take-off. At 7am, the starting horn sounded, and the riders took off on the 75km trail, through rough, hilly terrain to Lower Zambezi. There was barely time for people in vehicles to get from the start to the finish before the first rider crossed the Bell finish line.

The winner of the 2023 Elephant EPIC, for the second year in a row, was Kawemba Davies who was representing First Quantum Minerals. His official time was an astonishing 02:29:02. Davies was closely followed by his teammate, Olokani Michael who was just 0.02 seconds behind.

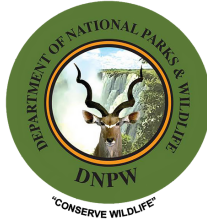
At the end of this tough challenge, Game Rangers International, CEO Jonathan Churcher, who also participated in the race, presented awards to the 2023 EPIC winners from the respective categories at Kiambi Lodge.

“GRI thanks you all for your unwavering dedication towards the EPIC Challenge over the years, your support and love for what we do is amazing,” said CEO Jonathan.

The EPIC would not be possible without our partners. Thank you to BELL, FNB, Pre Secure Zambia, Niner Juliet Logistics, CC Systems Ltd., Ctrack Zambia Armitage Environmental and Social Consulting, and other partners for making EPIC possible.



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