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Dear NCSG,

Please find below the overview written by Dr. Dame Daphne Sheldrick for the month of January 2013. This overview is designed to keep you informed about the Orphans' Project and all the dynamics each month, but for news specific to your fostered orphan, and to view recent photographs, please be sure to click the link to the Keepers Diary at the end this email.

The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust's 2012 newsletter is complete and a digital PDF version can be viewed or downloaded by clicking this link.

<http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org/html/2012.html>

We hope you find the time to read the numerous stories and to enjoy the stunning images throughout this comprehensive publication.

Another great way to keep current with the Trust's work throughout the month is to join us on Facebook too. Here we look to share news and photographs and short films from the Orphans' Project and our many other Projects to ensure our supporters are up to date with the very latest developments. <http://www.facebook.com/thedswt>

The Nursery:- Following late rains in Tsavo, the move to Ithumba of Kilabasi and Kanjoro took place smoothly in the Elephant Mover on the 22nd and by noon they were being unloaded at the Ithumba Stockades, welcomed excitedly by all the others.

To begin with the absence of Kilabasi and Kanjoro appeared to go un-noticed by the Nursery babies, (probably because the older elephants often spend time browsing apart) but the next morning they were definitely missed. Closest to Kilabasi were Balguda and Ngasha who were extremely upset, Ngasha crying as he and the others scoured all the stables, stockades and bushes. Sities and Naipoki did their best to console him and the following day, things became more settled once all had accepted that the two older orphans were no longer there.

To view a film and read more about Kilabasi and Kanjoro's move please click on this link: <http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org/updates/updates.asp?Rhino=&ID=486>

Three days later, on the 25th, it was the turn of Mutara, Shukuru and Tano to be upgraded. Shukuru and Tano went into the Elephant Mover without a problem, but Mutara, who had seen many of her peers vanishing having entered the truck was having none of it, and on the day needed a dose of Stressnil, baulking at the entrance. In the end she had to literally be towed in with a rope round her bottom linked to the Landrover on the other side of the truck, with all the Keepers shoving and pushing her from the back! Once inside, she was resigned, happy to have her friends Shukuru and Tano in the neighbouring compartments, and the Keepers with them to reassure and comfort and by 10.30 a.m. they, too, were at the Stockades. Kilabasi and Kanjoro were over the moon to be reunited with them, and all the other Orphans giving them a very warm reception, many having shared Nursery time with them. As usual the Ex Orphans turned up at the Stockades early that morning, leaving Lualeni behind to be their representative to greet the newcomers when they arrived. She shepherded them out to browse that afternoon, and escorted them back to the Keepers and their Night Stockades in the evening, before departing to meet up with Yatta and the other Ex Orphans again somewhere out in the bush. But, she and they were back the next morning all delighted that their extended family was growing!

To view a film and read more about Mutara, Shukuru and Tano's move to Ithumba please click on this

link: <http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org/updates/updates.asp?Rhino=&ID=487>

Mutara, Shukuru and Tano were sorely missed by the Nursery group. Turkwel was now

the obvious main Matriarch, with Sities and Naipoki as runners-up, but initially her new responsibilities were hampered by Kainuk, who resented the close proximity of the small babies, pushing Lemoyian, Barsilinga, Balguda, Ngasha and Kithaka away. Sities and Naipoki had to step in and since hen Kainuk has accepted that Turkwel must oversee the young, and now shares that responsibility, assisted by Sities and Naipoki who are very supportive!

Meanwhile the friendship of Faraja and Kwale has cemented further while Teleki remains close to Narok and Kihari, no longer as furry as he used to be on arrival having shed his mountain coat. Narok and Quanza are becoming more trusting of the Keepers, although Quanza remains skeptical, approaching the Keepers with outspread ears, and retreating into the midst of the herd having finished her milk.

Murera, now of an age when her milk is being reduced, has not taken kindly to this development, demonstrating disapproval by giving the Keepers a right run-around - going off on her own, (even without the company of her best friend, Sonje); reluctant to return as usual to her Stockade in the evenings, and sometimes rocking up to demand milk when the younger elephants are taking theirs. During the month she has become much more independent of both the Keepers and the other elephants, illustrating that she has a mind of her own, whereas Sonje prefers the security of being a member of the main group.

Still very small for his age, Kithaka is now growing apace, proof in the measurement marks on the post beside his Nursery stable. He makes up for his lack of size by taking pride in his strength, giving unsuspecting outsiders a playful shove! Like Kanjoro, he, too, will be put in line by bigger peers when he is of a size to be upgraded! Little Lemoyian, the youngest Nursery baby who is in fact bigger in size than Kithaka, is also beginning to show that he is no push-over either, taking on Balguda and even when overpowered, coming back for more until Bomani broke up the uneven contest by squeezing between the two miniature contestants. During the month Lemoyian also surprised everyone, (and himself), with a very grown-up but somewhat squeaky trumpet!

The month has brought the usual lion drama ^ warthogs killed within view of the elephants and their Keepers, leaving all extremely jittery; a cornered baby piglet which was being playfully pursued by Narok, Quwanza, Balguda and Ishaq-B racing screaming through their legs leaving them trembling for hours; buffaloes pursued by the lions tearing past to trigger a mass stampede, and so on. On that occasion Mutara, Shukuru and Tano ran to surround little Lemoyian and rushed him back to the safety of the Stockades. So, it has certainly been an eventful month for the Nursery brigade, with the usually hot and dusty month of January relieved by intermittent showers and cool fronts that kept the vegetation green.

The Rhinos:- For the rhinos it has been "business as usual" Max thoroughly enjoying the public viewing hour, pressing his great body up against the perimeter of his Stockade hoping for a rub. Solio, now unencumbered by human Attendants simply does her own thing and has been sticking to her own routine ^ sparring with Max before leaving each morning, turning up to put herself on view during the public viewing hour, sometimes giving the audience a treat by taking over the elephants mudbath before returning to her Stockade. Once all the visitors have left, her Stockade door is opened up again, and off she goes for the rest of the afternoon, returning at dusk for another Max sparring match before going to sleep on her bed of straw within view of him doing the same next door.

The Ithumba Elephants:- We had been anxious about Naserian, Rapsu, Kora and

Napasha who had not been seen in amongst Yatta's Ex Orphan Unit for over a month, so we were extremely relieved when 9 year old Naserian reappeared at the Stockades on the 12th, escorted by Rapsu and Kora, but looking leaner and with a wound on her back. The Keepers were able to clean and dress the injury and treat her to a handout of Dairy Cubes, repeating the treatment over the ensuing few days when she obligingly returned for this to be done, and when Madiba joined Rapsu and Kora as her escort party. Then, on the 16th, much to everyone's relief, 11 year old Napasha reappeared again after a lengthy absence. It was comforting to know that all our Ithumba Ex Orphans were present and correct.

Kilabasi and Kanjoro were greeted very warmly by Makireti, Ishanga and Kasigau who remembered Kilabasi from their own Nursery time clearly, but Kanjoro was a stranger to them, and was uneasy about being surrounded by so many much bigger and excited elephants. He made the mistake of giving Melia a shove, which was returned with interest! That evening all the Ex Orphans turned up to welcome the latest arrivals and three days later, on the 25th, Mutara, Shukuru and Tano arrived. Many of the Ithumba Keeper dependent orphans remembered them clearly, so they received a very enthusiastic and noisy reception from all, the Ex Orphans having turned up that morning, but left leaving Lualeni behind, after hanging around for an hour or so. Obviously it had been decided that she would represent them when the newcomers arrived, and this she did, escorting them out to browse that afternoon, and returning them to the Keepers and their Night Stockades again in the evening! Lualeni and all the Ex Orphans, including Yatta's wild recruit named "Mgeni" were back early the next morning to welcome the latest arrivals, when Rapsu had to be cautioned by the Keepers for playing a bit rough with Kanjoro. Kanjoro, who was a bit too big for his boots in the Nursery was rapidly being taught the need for respect of his elders, not only by the Ex Orphan bulls, but also by Kilaguni, Kibo, Sabachi and Ololoo, who is becoming a dominant "Pusher" amongst the Keeper dependent boys, even overpowering Kilaguni unless his friend Sabachi comes in as reinforcement!

Unaccustomed to the Tsavo heat, Kanjoro and Kilabasi initially felt the need to draw on reserves of stomach water to spray behind their ears to cool themselves down, but thankfully the weather turned cooler for Mutara, Shukuru and Tano.

The Ex Orphans, usually accompanied by wild friends, have spent a lot of time with the Junior Ithumba orphans this month, sometimes joining them as one large intact herd, either at the Stockades, the mudbath or out in the bush; at other times minus some of the bulls (particularly if they happen to be with older wild bulls); and sometimes in Splinter Groups led by Sub-Matriarchs, even occasionally by individual Ex Orphan members who choose to come either alone or with another friend, as did Challa and Tomboi on the 29th. Lualeni appears to be the main go-between, meeting up with the Juniors regularly to spend time with them out in the bush, on one occasion with a wild friend. Following a heavy shower of rain on the 13th, the Ex Orphans did not show up for a few days, but were back again on the 26th but with 2 big wild bulls and without our bulls, Madiba Napasha, Kamboyo and Zurura! What is apparent is that all the Ex Orphans, irrespective of location, know exactly where everyone is, obviously communicating with infra-sound hidden to human ears. Although apart, they are nevertheless together in the same mysterious way that they are able to forecast Nursery arrivals ahead of time.

Kilaguni, Melia, Sabachi, Chaimu, Suguta, Naisula and Kandechea have achieved another milestone this month, having been weaned off milk. However they still enjoy porridge mixed with water and fed from a bottle instead, and are happy with that!

Voi Unit:- Very satisfying has been the recovery of little Panda, the youngest member of the Keeper Dependent Voi Unit orphans, who has been weak and obviously ailing for sometime, but is now much better after an injectible penicillin course and a change of

milk. She should soon be up to traveling with the others again, after spending time browsing close to the Voi Stockades accompanied by the Keepers' little orphaned zebra foal, also named "Lualeni".

Like the Ithumba unit, the Voi Keeper dependent Juniors have enjoyed a lot of interaction with Emily's Ex Orphan Unit, including the wild-born calves of Emily and Edie, and with Thoma, Mweya and Icholta as the main go-betweens. Lesanju, who heads the Junior dependent orphans, resents her role being usurped by older Ex Orphans, especially Thoma, who has had more contact than the others. She usually tries to steer her charges away if she possibly can, calling them with a low rumble. On one such occasion she was blocked by Thoma who ran ahead and attempted to herd the group back to the Stockades again where all the Ex Orphans had gathered. Icholta picked up that this was not popular with the Juniors, and reversed Thoma's intention, instead leading the Juniors out again to their usual feeding grounds, and spending the better part of the day with them. The Ex Orphans have often also joined the Juniors at the noon mudbath and spent lengthy periods of time with them, sharing the supplements at the Stockades, meeting them out in the bush, or at the mudbath. The supplementary handout that the Juniors enjoy in the mornings has obviously been an added draw that has kept the Ex Orphans close, and in view of the current level of poaching, we are relieved that it has turned out this way.

When Ex Orphan Seraa engaged Sinya in a Pushing Game, Taveta intervened on the side of Sinya, which angered Seraa, who shot round and extracted him by the tail, sending him away bellowing. His friend Tassia who was on his way to back up Taveta, thought better of it, having seen the reaction of Seraa, and also made good his escape! On another occasion the Keeper dependent orphans met a friendly wild herd out in the bush, whose Matriarch allowed our boys to challenge wild age mates in Pushing Games. All went well until Tassia, while trying to avoid being mounted by his victorious rival, ran between Taveta and his wild sparring partner, knocking the wild elephant down in the process. His bellows brought his mother charging to rescue her offspring, after which our bulls had to make a hurried exit, as did Lesanju the the girls, leaving their wild friends before the situation got out of hand!

With the natural depressions still holding water, not many wild elephants have been coming to drink at the Stockades. Our orphans were all in awe of a huge bull who passed close by them on Mazinga Hill, raised his trunk to test the wind, and shook his huge head flapping his ears in irritation at the whiff of human scent that obviously reached him! As at Ithumba, as the Matriarchs, Lesanju and Wasessa decide where the Orphans will browse each day, on many occasions splitting up, each Matriarch taking some to browse separately, but meeting up at a pre-decided point. On such occasions the Keepers usually find a vantage point on the hill from which to monitor their charges who sometimes mingle with wild herds feeding near the Mombasa pipeline. Shimba is the main mountaineer of the Voi Orphans, who enjoys climbing to the very top of Mazinga Hill, taking with him his best friend Mzima, as well as younger orphans such as Rombo and Kivuto who are still milk dependent. While Shimba and Mzima are happy to forego a noon milk feed in order to remain at the summit of the hill eating tasty vegetation growing between the rocks, poor Rombo and Kivuto are time watchers, who hurriedly descend in order not to miss out on their milk ration at the appointed time!

Please find a link to the The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust's January Keeper's Diary should you want to keep abreast with your fostered elephant Turkwel

<http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org/asp/monthly.asp?o=Turkwel&month=Jan>

Also you will find attached a water colour painted by Angela Sheldrick for you to print off and keep.

We thank you for your valued support.

If you wish to renew or add an additional donation to your fostering of (Turkwel), please use this link below:

<https://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org/asp/foster.asp?xgin=hjhfcubefhagc>

Most Sincerely,

Dr. Dame Daphne Sheldrick D.B.E.

<http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org>