

4/17/2013 9:25:49 PM

Dear NCSG,

Please find below the overview written by Dr. Dame Daphne Sheldrick for the month of MARCH 2013. This update about the Orphans' Project and all the dynamics each month is to give you a broad overview of the project as a whole, but very important to note that for news specific to your fostered orphan, and to view recent photographs of your fostered orphan please be sure to click the link to the Keepers Diary at the end this email.

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 in order to bring our work closer to our supporters highlighting the latest developments. <http://www.facebook.com/thedswt>

THE NURSERY UNIT

Four more Elephant Rescues happened this month - first a yearling female named Laragai from Borana Lodge, Laikipia, who was flown in on the 2nd, then a yearling bull on the 12th named Danissa from the Galana Ranch on the Eastern boundary of Tsavo East - a Poaching Hotspot nowadays. This calf very sadly died on the 15th due to his poor condition. The third was another "albino" from the Amboseli population from the Researchers' JB Study Group, born in December 2011 and named Jasiri (meaning "brave"). He, his sister Jalila and her calf, (the age mate of Jasiri), had not been since the mother (Jemima) was found dead in December 2012, believed to have been poached. Being still milk dependent, the Researchers of the Amboseli Elephant Trust had long given up all hope of ever seeing him alive again until he turned up, emaciated and alone, on the 27th, not far from where his mother had died. The fourth rescue came two days later on the 29th, this time of a tiny calf just days old found abandoned in the Imenti Forest near Meru, who had been without milk for several days, and who was held overnight at the Meru Park H.Q., where unfortunately, but well-meaningly, he had been fed cows' milk. He was named Bocha meaning "God's Creation", so named by the Orma tribesman who found him. (Sadly, baby Boshha died on the 4th April). To read in more detail about the rescues, and to view their respective films please click on these links:

Laragai: http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org/asp/orphan_profile.asp?N=286

Danissa: <http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org/updates/updates.asp?ID=507>

Bocha: <http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org/updates/updates.asp?ID=514>

Another major event of the month was the return of 4 year old Tano from Ithumba on the 15th. She had not thrived at Ithumba, lagging behind the others and having difficulty coping with the heat and the distances the orphans travel on a daily basis. Blood tests revealed serious anaemia and a bacterial infection. Tano has improved noticeably after treatment, but has never been a robust calf like many of the well and mud victims who have come into our care over the years.

To read about Tano's return in more detail and to view the beautiful film please click on this link: <http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org/updates/updates.asp?Rhino=&ID=503>

It has been a Herculean struggle to save Jasiri, who due to being without mothers milk for so long collapsed into a coma at least 3 times after arrival and in the following days, and had to be revived through drip infusion in an ear vein. Although he accepted milk the first night, he was already so far gone, with extreme anemia and plummeting blood sugar levels, that aside from the drips copious quantities of thick oatmeal porridge fed to him in chunks offered on a wooden spoon saved the day and imparted sufficient slow

release energy for him to weather de-worming, which was badly needed, since he was passing stomach parasites in each stool. We are hopeful to have managed to retrieve this unique and very special calf against all the odds and by the 3rd April he was out and about with the others.

To read more about Jasiri and to watch his film please click on this link:<http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org/updates/updates.asp?ID=513>

As the main Matriarch, Turkwel has come to terms with Kainuk, who shares the Leadership role, while Sities has emerged also as a Leader, taking over the youngsters when Turkwel and Kainuk are otherwise occupied, and intervening to keep the peace amongst naughty little boys who become embroiled in Pushing Games that end with the loser yelling for assistance. As usual, all newcomers are welcomed warmly by all the resident Nursery elephants, Ishaq-B paying special attention to Laragai who was sufficiently calm to be allowed out to join the others on the 11th. Initially confused with a tendency to be aggressive towards the Keepers, it was Naipoki who took her in hand and persuaded her to behave, even when surrounded by a human audience during the public viewing hour. Since then she has settled in like a veteran and formed a close bond of friendship with Lima Lima, another relative newcomer, who is a particularly gentle and polite baby and who, like Barsilinga adores her human family yet prone to sneaking back to the milk mixing area to check up on her next feed! Miniature Kithaka is a law unto himself, and is now growing apace looking more his age. Orwa and Teleki are sparring partners, Orwa now the biggest boy in the Nursery who enjoys overpowering younger boys such as Kwale and Faraja who are close friends. Kihari, Sonje and Big Girl Murera are very independent characters who simply get on with doing their own thing.

Turkwel, Kainuk and Sities are scheduled to be moved early April, so their training entering the Elephant Moving Truck has been taking place for most of the month of March, Turkwel and Kainuk quite happy to take their milk inside the huge truck, but Sities less keen. However when she saw some of the others happily going in and out, she has complied.

Several heavy rainstorms kept Nairobi Park green and provided bush mudbaths at every turn, so aside from the sad losses of Danissa and little Bosha, it has been a peaceful and happy month for the Nairobi Orphans.

THE RHINOS

Solio has again been having nights away from base, confident of her acceptance as part of the Nairobi Park rhino community. To begin with we worried about her protracted absences, but took a cue from Maxwell who was totally unperturbed, so we knew that she must be alright. Like the Elephants, rhinos have amazing powers of perception i.e. when Shida was spirited away, Maxwell was visibly perturbed. Being blind, Max enjoys hand-fed special "junk food" treats that none of the others ever get i.e. a few Mince pies at Christmas time, and Hot Cross Buns at Easter, all of which he loves, and lots of fruit like mango and pineapples inbetween.

OTHERS

Geri, the orphaned Thomson's Gazelle and a huge favourite of us all has made a miraculous recovery having been rescued from the jaws of the lions by Angela. Little "Ho Ho" the orphaned dikdik is growing apace, happy while "Alfie" the minute baby Hyrax makes up for his size with loads of personality. He is quite a character as well as a mischievous time waster who enchants everyone he meets and who insists on Lemon Cake as well as his milk!

THE ITHUMBA UNIT

The dependent Ithumba orphans have enjoyed almost daily visits from the Ex Orphans

who usually come accompanied by wild friends, as well as visiting wild Elephant Bulls coming to drink at the Stockade water trough on a daily basis prior to the onset of rain on the 14th. Thereafter several heavy thunderstorms filled the natural waterholes as well as the Orphans' mudbath so food, water and mud wallows were there for the taking at every turn. The Junior boys have enjoyed daily Pushing Bouts, Ololoo emerging as a force to be reckoned with, able now to often overpower Kilaguni Sabachi and Kandecha, while Ex Nursery Main Pusher Kanjoro keeps a low profile amongst bigger opponents! Shukuru now often leads the Junior Group to and from the mudbath, other females taking it in turns to do so while Suguta remains the main Junior Matriarch, ably assisted by Melia, Makireti, Chaimu, Tumaren, Murka, Olare, Kitirua, Naisula, Kalama, Olare and Mutara who is still less confident of the terrain than Shukuru.

12 of the Juniors who are now over the age of 4 years were weaned off milk after rain had greened the vegetation this month.

Mshale, the Big Wild Bull who had a poisoned arrow removed by our Mobile Vet Unit a month or two ago, returned with another poisoned arrow wound which the Vet Dr. Poghon managed to treat on the 6th, and from which two arrowheads were removed. A few other wild bulls also came to drink with arrow wounds, two of whom the Vet also managed to immobilize and treat a few days later, high-lighting yet again the seriousness of the Bow and Arrow poaching menace by the neighbouring Wakamba tribe throughout Tsavo. Our antipoaching teams based in the northern area and working together with KWS are hard at work daily, supported by our aerial unit, pilot and plane, trying to keep this threat under control. The Orphans first wild Bull Friend, Rafiki was another regular visitor to the Stockade water trough and the Orphans' mudbath, fraternizing with the Junior Orphans on several occasions, as has Half Trunk, the young wild bull who has lost half his trunk to a wire snare, and who sometimes travels with Yatta's Ex Orphan group.

To read more about Mshale and his treatment please click here:

<http://www.sheldrickwildlifetrust.org/updates/updates.asp?Rhino=&ID=499>

Lualeni has again split from Yatta's main Ex Orphan group in order to spend time with the Juniors, spending several entire days with them, escorting them out to browse in the mornings, leading them to their noon milk and mudbath venue, browsing with them in the afternoons and leading them back to their Night Stockades in the late evening. Lualeni is particularly fond of Ololoo, always seeking him out and feeding close to him throughout the day. When she brought the Juniors back to the Stockades during the evening of the 30th, her best friend Kora along with Loijuk, Naserian and Rapsu were waiting at the compound to escort her back to Yatta's main Ex Orphan Group, indicating yet again the strong bonds that bind the orphans together as a family, included in which are the human Keepers that reared them through early infancy

When the Ex Orphans came to the Stockade compound on the 18th, missing from the Group was Yatta, her baby "Yetu" and Bulls Napasha, Buchuma, Rapsu and Madiba who then came alone to the compound on the 22nd, apparently in a bad mood, because he charged the Keeper who was taking a photograph of him! A day later Mulika and her calf "Mwende" came with Wendi, Nasalot and Kinna plus bulls Kenze, Kamboyo and Orok, and Yatta plus 10 other members of her unit were back the next day, so all our Ex Orphan family is intact.

It has been a very active and happy month for the Ithumba Keeper Dependent Orphans and our Ex Orphans, and lucky for Big Boy Mshale to have been saved yet again from the poison of poachers' arrows as has one of his Wild male friends. We hope that the new Government will shortly address the feeble sentences currently meted out to Elephant Killers which are no deterrent whatsoever, something that CITES focused on, threatening sanctions against Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, China, Thailand and the Philippines for facilitating Ivory trafficking through inadequate law enforcement and punishments.

THE VOI UNIT

Intermittent rain showers have brought on a flush of green vegetation for the Voi Orphans as well, who have also enjoyed quite a lot of wild interaction this month, particularly with one very friendly herd whom they met on the 25th and spent two full consecutive days with them browsing far from their normal feeding area. However, they were warned off by a wild Matriarch who had a small calf who confronted them with outspread ears and a low rumble, but were joined unobtrusively by a young wild bull who threatened the Keepers, prompting the Orphans to crowd around their human family in order to protect them from this intruder. The wild bull retreated thereafter, glancing over his shoulder bemused as to why Elephants should want to protect "the enemy"! On the 12th the Juniors enjoyed the company of a friendly wild herd amongst whom they browsed until the wild elephants were startled when the milk dependent Juniors heard the milk van and ran to meet it! Emily and the Ex Orphans have only visited the Stockade compound once this month, on the 18th, after which they spent time with the Juniors out in the bush, when Shimba enjoyed the close company of Ex Orphan Morani and Icholta and Thoma paid a lot of attention to all the Juniors, doing the rounds constantly touching them lovingly with their trunks. When Emily led her group away, Morani and Icholta remained behind until Shimba led the rest of the group to join his peers at the Big Waterhole. Whilst Lesanju always enjoys meeting Emily and the Ex Orphan group, she is nevertheless eager to round up her "family" and separate them, fearing that Emily and the older Ex Orphans might tempt some to move off with them. Lesanju is very possessive of her adopted "family" ably assisted by her best friend, Lempaute, and to a lesser degree by Wasessa and Sinya, Wasessa still obsessed with Emsaya, who can do no wrong in her eyes, and whom she protects jealously. Being very greedy at supplement hand-out times, Wasessa gets her ration away from all the others. Kenia and Ndiu remain best friends, and are always side by side, while Tassia and Taveta are also great friends and sparring partners as are Shimba and Mzima. Younger boys Layoni and Dabassa enjoy trying their luck against bigger opponents, while Rombo and tuskless Kivuko who have long held a grudge against one another seem to have buried the hatchet and have been playing happily together, much to the Keepers' amazement!

Little Panda's general health has much improved following a change of milk and an injectible antibiotic course. However, she still enjoys feeding apart from the others, often in the company of the orphaned zebra, "Lualeni" with whom she spent a lot of time during her recuperation period.

Sadly, the treatment of an elephant found alone with a bad leg on Galana Ranch had to be aborted when the Vet failed to turn up, having been called out on another emergency in Tsavo West. The calf was about 7 years old, and still far too aggressive for the Keepers to capture without sedation. The orphan had a poisoned arrow in its leg, and has not been seen again since, after joining up with a wild herd.

Even though the rains around the Voi area have not been as abundant as at Ithumba, the Voi Orphans have made the best of the fresh green browse and enjoyed a happy and joyful month with both food and water plentiful for a change.

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

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

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=hjhfcujjaiij>

Most Sincerely,

Dr. Dame Daphne Sheldrick D.B.E.