

Not just a jolly day out for kids in Mkomazi

Petra Fleischer
Fundraising Manager

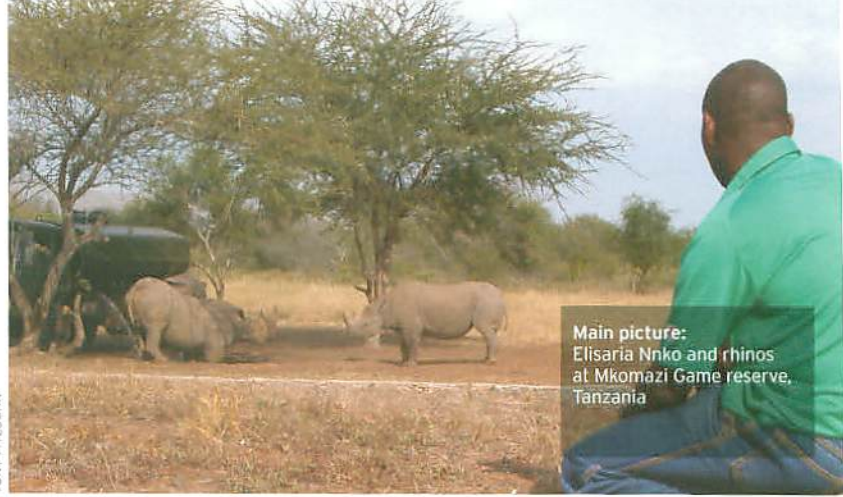
Good news for schoolchildren and teachers living in villages surrounding the Mkomazi Game Reserve in Tanzania: in April 2007 Mkomazi will launch a new Environmental Education programme, aiming to link local school children with conservation.

Kitted out with a colourful bus painted in "Tinga Tinga" style and tonnes of immensely interesting and interactive educational material, an Environmental Education Officer will travel from school to school teaching kids about environmental issues, and how they can help their own environment. The new bus will also be used for taking groups back to the Reserve to experience wildlife in its natural habitat - something very few Tanzanian children have been exposed to, despite living in a country visited by tourists for just that reason. At the Reserve children will be treated to rhino and other wildlife sightings.

But the programme is not just about a jolly day out for the children. Through the new initiative, Tony and Lucy Fitzjohn aim to raise awareness amongst school children

to make sure their conservation efforts over the last 17 years will continue. It's hoped that when children are actively encouraged to get involved in protecting their environment, say by planting tree saplings or educating them about water management, the next generation of Tanzanians will work towards the conservation of the Tsavo Ecosystem within which Mkomazi lies. There is much human-wildlife conflict in this area and population growth is adding pressure to protected areas.

Nevertheless, change is in the air, with the gazetting of the Reserve into a National Park; and with the new educational scheme, staff at Mkomazi hope to show local communities and children that there are opportunities for people living in areas rich in biodiversity. Perhaps children participating in the scheme will want to pursue a career in tourism or in sustainable natural resource use, rather than earning a living from bushmeat or commercial poaching, or by collecting wood from within protected areas for charcoal burning.



Main picture:
Elisaria Nnko and rhinos
at Mkomazi Game reserve,
Tanzania

TONY FITZJOHN

Thanks

The Development Stage of the programme is already under way, thanks to grants of £972 from Chester Zoo and £210 from Save the Rhino to pay for the salary of Elisaria Nnko who, is researching and developing the EE programme and who will travel to the Laikipia Wildlife Forum in Kenya to learn from the successful programme run there since January 2004. Maggie Esson, Education Programmes Manager at Chester Zoo, is providing invaluable support and advice in devising the new programme.

Chester Zoo has just awarded £10,000 to help cover the first three years of Mkomazi's new education programme. Our deepest thanks to Chester Zoo.

Fundraising

We are now fundraising for the full Mkomazi EE programme costs for 2007-9 inclusive. If you would like to know more, please contact petra@savetherhino.org

The Mkomazi Matatu party



RENAUD FULCONIS

Zoe Savage
Events Manager

The Mkomazi Matatu ("Matatu" means "bus" in Ki-Swahili) dinner and dance will take place on Thursday 8 February 2007 at the Porchester Hall in Notting Hill, London.

Reception drinks will start the evening off, followed by a three-course dinner prepared by Party Ingredients. An auctioneer from Christie's will encourage us to bid for fantastic lots such as a cruise in the Baltic Sea followed by dancing to a band and DJ. A fabulous safari for two to Tanzania (donated by Nomad Tanzania and Natural

High Safaris) will be raffled, so you'll have a chance to visit Mkomazi for yourself!

All funds raised will be split between Save the Rhino International and Tusk Trust, with the proceeds going to Mkomazi's Environmental Education programme.

February 8

Hold the date and tell your friends. Tickets are on sale via our website / the ticket order form enclosed with this magazine. For more information email: events@savetherhino.org or call Zoe on + 44 (0)20 7357 7474.

Above:
On the dancefloor