

## Face to face

Standing next to a rhino dung midden on a hilltop in Hluhluwe Game Reserve, the awe-inspiring view takes in endless wilderness and a bird of prey soars overhead.

**Lucy Boddam-Whetham**  
Office and Communications Manager

Moments like those make you realise how important conservation really is, but in this over-populated and unyielding world, conserving such a beautiful place, and the environmental management involved, requires on-going resources, equipment and man-power.

On a recent holiday to South Africa, my friend Vicky and I were lucky enough to tie in a visit to Hluhluwe. As I toil in front of a computer all week, the chance to go into the field with Dirk Swart, Section Ranger, and Dumisani Mponshane, anti-poaching unit ranger, was a chance I wasn't going to miss.

Project visits are extremely constructive in seeing first hand the benefits of grants and gives project staff the chance to communicate future challenges and needs; and they help boost morale amongst the rangers - someone has travelled all that way to come and learn about their work. The Hluhluwe rangers have had many visitors this year: SCI member Kerim Hilmi visited in June and three members of the RAW Africa 2008 team visited in May. All reported back on how impressed they were with the set-up in Hluhluwe, and on the dedication of the staff.

As the day started I couldn't help feeling how special it was to be able to go off the beaten track. Dirk talked passionately about his work and was proud to show me the benefits of all our fundraising. We were taken to see a part of the vast perimeter fence. In stark contrast to my earlier hilltop epiphany, the fence gave a distinctive difference between the protected Reserve and the neighbouring farmland. Although the idea of the Reserve being completely fenced is initially unappealing, you could easily picture how quickly encroachment from the neighbouring farms would happen. The fence also helps to keep the animals in, so as to reduce human-wildlife conflict in the neighbouring communities. Dirk and his team have to burn fire breaks along the fence line to prevent fire spreading both in and out of the Reserve. The ongoing maintenance of the fence and creation of fire breaks is an uphill struggle, but one that is extremely worthwhile.

Hluhluwe is renowned for its rhino conservation, a reputation which has been upheld with support from funders. As reported in previous issues of *The Horn*, grants from Colchester Zoo's Action for the Wild fund, from SCI (London Chapter), and from the SCI Foundation in the USA, have greatly improved infrastructure and ad hoc maintenance in the Reserve. While we bounced along in the truck, Dirk explained how such grants facilitate the



This image:  
Dumisani, Vicky, Lucy  
Above:  
Dumisani

attainment of tools which make routine work easier and more efficient, enabling more man-hours to be spent where it is really needed, in the field monitoring the rhino; but also tremendously boosts staff moral. Towards the end of the day we excitedly came across a crash of white rhinos who soon took just as much interest in us, and we hoped that they didn't try to "crash" into our truck! There is nothing quite like seeing such amazing creatures thriving in their natural environment and being safe in the knowledge that field staff such as those at Hluhluwe are extremely dedicated. Although I am somewhat jealous of their working day, I know how lucky I am to be involved in rhino conservation and the memories of the rhino dung on the top of that hill is enough motivation for me.



## Grants

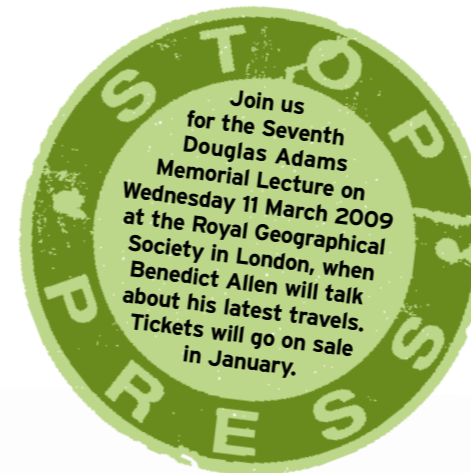
We are delighted to announce that, following the promotion of Dave Robertson to Conservation Manager of iMfolozi Game Reserve, we are also now supporting that side of the Park. Salzburg Zoo has just made a donation of 3,000 euros, which will help pay for camping equipment so that the Anti-Poaching Units can cover a wider area. SCI's London Chapter held a fundraising auction on 23 September: we hope it will raise approx £6,500 to pay for vital equipment for both sides of the Hluhluwe-iMfolozi Park.

## Events:

## Language as a Window into Human Nature: The Sixth Douglas Adams Memorial Lecture

This year's Lecture, in aid of Douglas Adams' two favourite charities, SRI and the EIA, was a very special event, as it was the 30th anniversary of the first-ever radio broadcast of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*. This combined with a lecture by cognitive scientist and best selling author, Professor Steven Pinker, lead to a sell-out audience at the Royal Geographical Society in London.

**Fiona Macleod**  
Events Manager



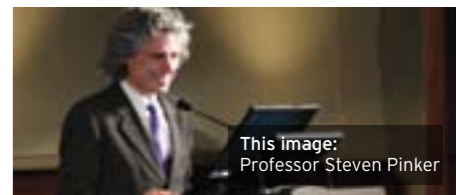
The event was opened by John Lloyd, long-time friend of Douglas Adams, co-writer of the fifth and sixth episodes of *Hitchhiker's* and television producer. He told stories of a young Douglas Adams and how he came up with the number 42 as the meaning of life!

Professor Steven Pinker then stepped up to give his lecture, which was enjoyed by all. His witty and thought-provoking talk kept fans of Pinker and Douglas, and our dedicated supporters listening intently throughout. Following the theme of this issue of *The Horn*, communication, Professor Pinker explored how the words we use expose our hidden thoughts, emotions and relationships, from indirect speech, veiled threats and bribes, and sexual come-ons to swearing and taboos. The audience members who had read the book, and those who hadn't, both found the lecture extremely interesting and signed copies of his book were hastily snapped up afterwards.

As this year was the 30th anniversary of the first performance of *Hitchhiker's*, James Thrift, Douglas's brother, decided that a live performance by the original cast would be the perfect way to mark this special occasion. The cast included Simon Jones as Arthur Dent and Geoffrey McGivern as Ford Prefect, and the performance was directed by Dirk Maggs. One family had travelled all the way from America to see this reunion.

James Thrift kindly stepped in as auctioneer and managed to get the audience bidding healthily. The time he'd spent as a sheep auctioneer clearly helped him! Audience and cast members were then able to mingle and chat while they tucked into a delicious three-course meal at Ognisko Polish Restaurant after the event.

Thank you very much to everyone who donated raffle prizes and auction lots, and to those who bid and bought raffle tickets. It really helps increase the amount of money raised so that more funds can be channelled towards conservation work in Africa and Asia.



This image:  
Professor Steven Pinker

## Thanks

The evening was a huge success, raising over £11,500 net profit, and we would like to thank the following people: Professor Steven Pinker, the cast of *Hitchhiker's*, John Lloyd and James Thrift Ed Victor Ltd and the Richard Dawkins Foundation for Reason and Science who sponsored the evening. *The Ecologist*, the RGS, and the donors of the auction lots and raffle prizes (especially Lord and Lady Latymer and Malcolm Stathers)

## Pecha Kucha Asia

**Fiona Macleod**  
Events Manager

On Thursday 13 November 2008, the Porchester Hall in London will be transformed for Pecha Kucha Asia.

Join Save the Rhino and the Environmental Investigation Agency for a exquisite, four-course, Asian-themed dinner during which you'll be entertained by a number of well-known speakers. Pecha Kucha, meaning chit-chat in Japanese, is a relatively new format sweeping the arts and architecture industry. Each speaker will talk about an Asian experience or passion, while showing 20 slides to be presented at 20 second intervals. The result will be a very different type of black-tie event that is fast-paced, informative and highly entertaining.

Speakers include: Louis Theroux, well known for his television documentaries; Bamber Gascoigne, the legendary presenter of University Challenge; and culinary explorer and chef, Valentine Warner.

Funds raised from Pecha Kucha Asia will be split between SRI and the EIA to help a variety of Asian conservation projects. SRI's share will go towards the Rhino Protection Unit programme in Indonesia that we've supported since 2002.

To join us for this exciting event please fill in the ticket order form enclosed in this magazine, visit [www.savetherhino.org](http://www.savetherhino.org) or call Save the Rhino HQ on 020 7357 7474.

Tickets cost £100 per person, or £1,000 for a table of ten, and include a four-course meal and drinks throughout the evening.

This image:  
The perimeter fence