

Kenya:



Bosco and Drastic are a force to be reckoned with



The contents of a rhino ranger's rucksack

Tools of the trade

The Chyulu Hills National Park, Kenya extends to the north of Tsavo West National Park, and is a vital part of the Tsavo ecosystem as a whole. In the northern section of the Chyulu Hills, and on the adjacent Mbirikani Group Ranch, is a population of a minimum of 14 Critically Endangered Eastern black rhino.

Richard Bonham
Chairman
Maasailand Preservation Trust

independent teams operating in different areas and I have to keep track of them and react immediately to situations as they come up. When communications break down, I am blind."

Save The Rhino asked me what my favourite and most important tools for rhino conservation were... So I passed the buck to the rangers who are out there every day and night on the sharp edge. This is what they came back with:

Wilson Mancha, in charge of rhino monitoring: "My GPS unit. Now that we have our geographic information system (GIS) in place, I can see where the rhino concentrations are and the areas the patrols are covering. I really look forward to being able to map the movement of individuals."

Fred Njagi, administrator: "My computer; my work would be very difficult without one. It helps me track the wages of the 71 rangers we employ, enter data of rhino and other wildlife activity, with reporting, with mapping and so much more."

Sergeant Sakimba: "My weapon. We patrol areas which are full of buffalo, elephant, lions and sometimes very bad and dangerous poachers. When I have my weapon I am not frightened."

Edward Piya, officer in charge of security: "It has to be the radios and my mobile telephone - communications are everything. Sometimes I have up to five

Sergeant Nderu: "Informants are our best tools. Most of the arrests we make are the result of information we get from informants."

Ranger Silati: "My boots! Sometimes we walk for ten hours in a day over very rough rocks and without my boots I could not do it. I like boots which don't leave distinct tracks as they tell the poachers we are around."

Ranger Dickson: "My uniform. I am proud to wear it and it gains me respect from the community when they see I am a rhino ranger."

Ranger Saab: "The donkeys. They carry and position water for our patrols to places cars cannot reach and this means we can stay in the bush longer."



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Drastic was greeted with enthusiasm by his new handlers



One of the Game Scouts displays a confiscated snare

Ranger Kilitia, tracker dog unit: "My dogs. They have helped us catch many poachers and it means the poachers can run, but not hide. The dogs are like witch doctors."

Ranger Masangao: "The camera traps. The Chyulu rhino are like ghosts. We see their tracks and dung but, because the bush is so thick and they mainly move at night, we very seldom see them. The camera traps help us identify them and make them real."

And mine? If you can call commitment a tool then that would be my choice. Without the commitment of these rangers there would be no rhino left in the Chyulus.

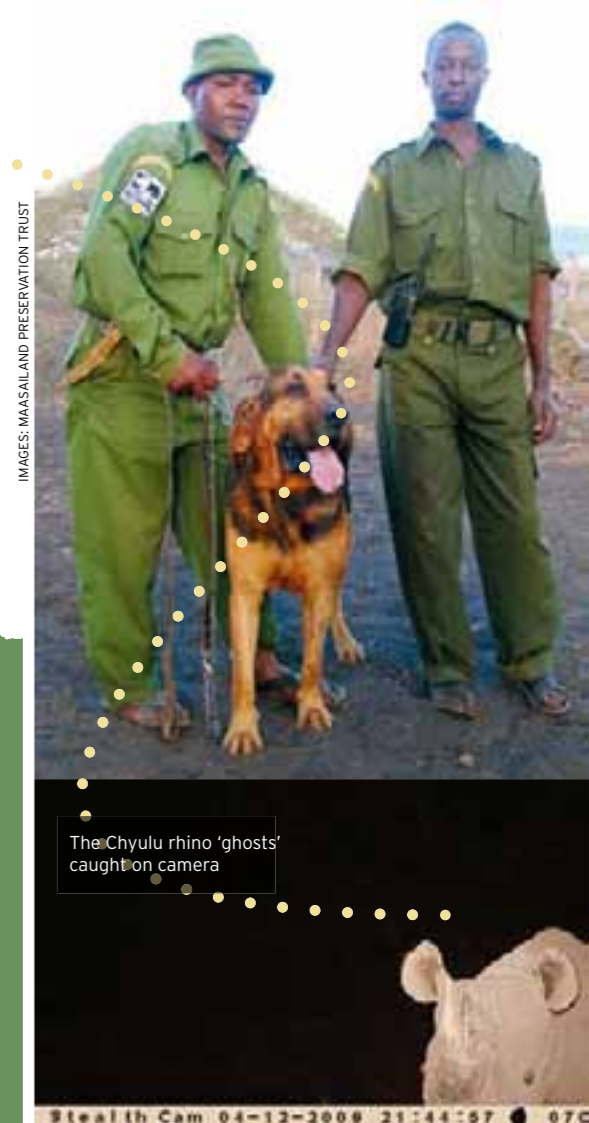
Grants

We are extremely grateful to Chester Zoo and to the Ernest Kleinwort Charitable Trust, which gave us £8,027 and £5,000 respectively for the ongoing running costs of the Game Scout and Rhino programme. We have also just heard that USFWS is again supporting this programme, with a grant of \$49,932. Thank you to USFWS's Rhino and Tiger Conservation Fund. MPT's game scouts dealt with over 430 illegal activities in 2008 alone; they do a fantastic job.

We were also, thanks to a matching grant by the Kenya Wildlife Service, finally able to implement the long-awaited construction of a borehole in the Chyulus, releasing \$42,500 from USFWS and 10,000 euros from Amnéville Zoo. This will provide a clean and secure drinking water supply for the Chyulus' black rhinos, without their having to leave the boundary of the Park on the heavily populated eastern side of the Hills. Our thanks to everyone concerned.

Nothin' but a hound dog

One of the bloodhounds died from sleeping sickness. Giles Sim, a former Master of Foxhounds, who had recently been out to stay at Ol Donyo Wuas, offered to find a replacement hound (and another for Lewa Downs Conservancy). Giles contributed £500, David Boddy donated the dogs, Tusk Trust awarded £1,000 and negotiated a discount with Kenya Airways; and we gave another £1,000. The dogs were flown out on 27 August and arrived in Nairobi the following day, where they were met by Richard Bonham. No quarantine is needed, so they'll be out tracking poachers almost immediately!



IMAGES: MAASAILAND PRESERVATION TRUST

The Chyulu rhino 'ghosts' caught on camera

Stealth Cam 04-12-2009 21:44:57 07C

Last Chance to See with Stephen Fry and Mark Carwardine

Sponsored by Abercrombie & Kent
Tuesday 27 October 2009

Fiona Macleod
Events Manager

In the late 1980s Douglas Adams and Mark Carwardine spent a year travelling the globe in search of endangered animals. Their adventure was broadcast as a radio series on BBC Radio 4 and in 1990 made into a book. Author, comedian, television presenter and film director, Stephen Fry was a close friend of Douglas Adams and in 2008-9, exactly 20 years after the original journey, for a new BBC documentary and related book, Stephen and Mark travelled to see what had become of the animals for which Douglas and Mark had searched two decades earlier. The Yangtze river dolphin is now extinct, but they did film the Komodo dragon, blue whale, kakapo parrot, aye-aye, manatee and the black rhino.

On Tuesday 27 October, Stephen and Mark will give a talk updating us on their quest to find these species. Until recently, the Northern white rhino was found in Uganda, southern Chad, south-western Sudan, the eastern part of Central African Republic, and north-eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. Four individuals were seen in Garamba National Park in the DRC in 2006 but none has been seen since. The Northern white rhino is therefore now presumed extinct in the wild. There are 11 Northern whites held in captivity, in the Czech Republic and California, but they're not breeding.

Following the talk by Stephen Fry and Mark Carwardine, there will be an optional three-



course hot and cold buffet served at Ognisko. Tickets for the dinner must be bought separately to the talk.

Tickets are on sale now! Please visit: www.savetherhino.org

The first episode of the television series will be broadcast on Sunday 6 September; the last on Sunday 18 October.

