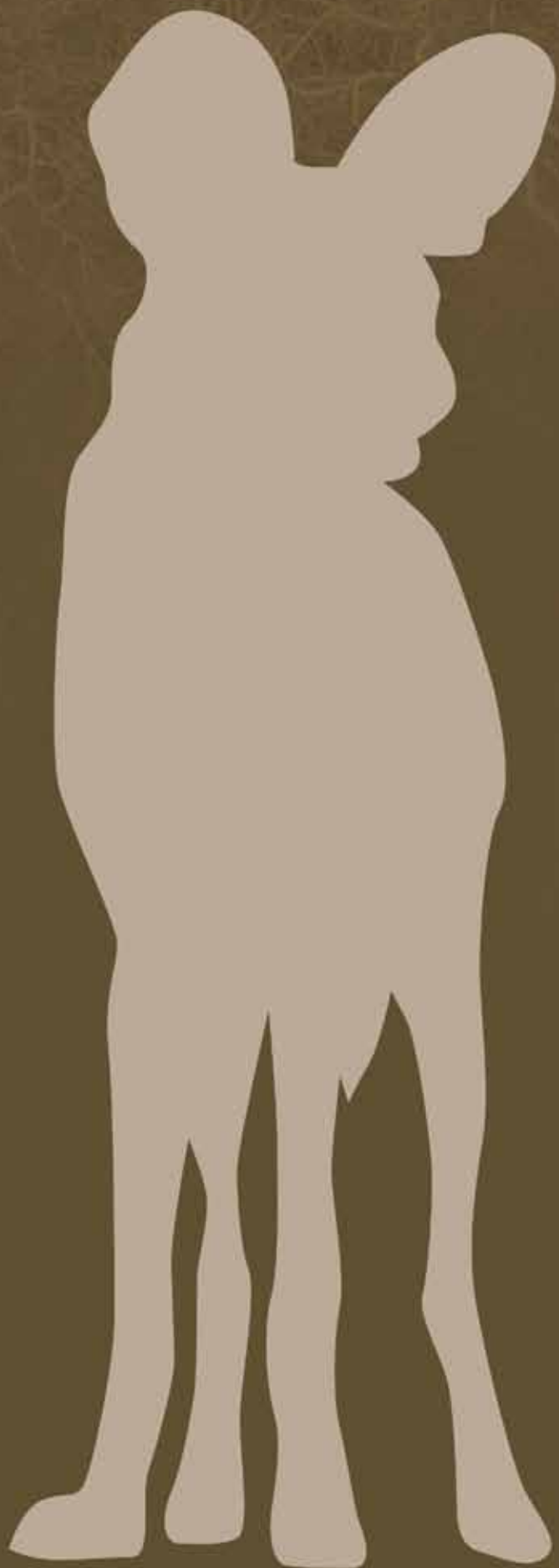


2010 ANNUAL REPORT



WILDERNESS
W I L D L I F E  T R U S T

BOTSWANA RHINO RELOCATION AND REINTRODUCTION PROJECT

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Over 2009, the rhino of the Okavango Delta continued to be monitored daily by Poster Mpho Malongwa and his assistant George Njunja James based out of Mombo Camp on Chief's Island in close collaboration with the Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP), the Anti-Poaching Unit (APU). Three white rhino were born during the year, affirming how well the species is doing in the Okavango.

A major horn implant replacement operation was carried out in 2009. Horn implants are replaced every couple of years due to battery life limitations. The operation was made possible by the combined efforts of Wilderness Safaris staff, the DWNP, APU, the DWNP Air Division, Sefofane Air Charters, Northern Air Maintenance and highly skilled vets. The operation was highly successful thanks to the hard work and dedication of all involved as well as generous funding from guests and from the Wilderness Trust.

In 2003 four black rhino, two males and two females, were released into the Okavango

Delta. The animals adapted well to their new surroundings, but as is typical of black rhino being reintroduced into the wild, they did not breed as readily as the white rhino that were introduced previously. There was great joy in September 2009, when a tracking team consisting of Malongwa and three members of the APU carried out a rhino patrol to check up on these animals and found one of the females with her calf, estimated to be about six months old. The name of the new calf is 'Boipuso' – meaning 'Independence', as it was located during Botswana's Independence week.

The current focus of the project has shifted to raising funds to bring in more black rhino in order to form a healthy founder population in the Okavango Delta. With a large enough population of black rhino to make up a minimum viable population, it is hoped that they will begin reproducing and re-expanding their range into parts of Botswana where they have not been seen in many years.

