



WildNews

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The Wildlife Society of Zimbabwe is pleased to announce its two additional lines :- 747648 & 747684 and the existing no. 747500.

The new fax no. is 747174. That should improve communication!

Need for law against chopping down trees

THE wanton chopping down of indigenous trees in Zimbabwe is reaching a crisis situation and we have now reached a point where regrowth and replanting has fallen drastically behind the rate of destruction. When the trees are extinct (at this rate we do not have long to wait) maybe only then will the current abuse and disregard of our natural environment sink in. In a letter copied to the Mashonaland Branch of the Wildlife Society, written by Mr Ken Lever of the Architects Design Group and addressed to Mr Frank Austin of Kilimani Investments it is reported that over 300 indigenous trees have been allegedly felled from a four and a half acre property owned by Kilimani. Some trees at the stand in Helensvale would possibly have had to be taken down to allow for development and terracing, but the removal of every single tree to "develop" the property takes some believing. The fact that the trees were taken down during World Environment Week - where Environment 2000 was trying to persuade children of this country to preserve and grow indigenous trees - is ironic.

Lever explained how the removal of the trees had disrupted the micro-climate and how people will pay vast amounts of money for "a few hectares of beautifully wooded hillside, and then promptly fell the trees and bring in the bulldozers to level the whole thing - rather than make efforts to retain the trees and design houses to accommodate the slope."

The wholesale felling of trees in the Umwinsdale valley, especially on the Glen Lorne side, has continued unabated for years, which has severely damaged the whole ecological balance and micro-climate of the valley. The main area of concern is that Mr Lever was unable to get any clear-cut answers from either the Borrowdale Council Offices, the Natural Resources Board, the Forestry Commission, Environment 2000 or even the Wildlife Society, with regard to the protection of indigenous trees on private property. This, as it has transpired, is simply due to the fact that there IS no legislation governing the wholesale felling of indigenous trees on private property. This should be redressed immediately. No doubt this will raise legal questions about the rights of ownership and the individual. Protecting indigenous trees on private property would be a positive step towards making our population more aware of the need for national preservation, and the fact that trees are a renewable resource make the decimation of our indigenous trees even more deplorable.

5425

Boost for black rhinos

THE Zambezi Society has donated anti-poaching patrol equipment worth Z\$90,000 to the Black Rhinoceros Intensive Protection Zone (IPZ) in the Matusadona National Park.

The equipment consists of tents, groundsheets, webbing, mosquito nets, life jackets, torches, water bottles, boots and various other items.

The money for the equipment came from a campaign mounted by FINA, a European petrol company, to raise funds for rhinoceros conservation worldwide. The Zambezi Society's UK branch, in conjunction with the Zoological Society of London, made a successful request to FINA for funds for Zimbabwe's Matusadona IPZ.

At a ceremony held at the Matusadona's Tashinga headquarters during which the equipment was handed over to the Park Warden and his staff, Zambezi Society director, Dick Pitman, emphasised the Society's continued support for Departmental field stations and staff in their fight against black rhino poaching. While welcoming the consultations currently taking place over black rhino policy, he nevertheless called for the rapid re-implementation of measures such as de-horning and radio monitoring.

Page 6

Orchid Society turns 50

THE Zimbabwe Orchid Society is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. It was the first orchid society to be established in Central and Southern Africa, possibly in the whole of Africa, and well ahead of Kenya and South Africa, where societies were set up in the 1950's. To mark this auspicious occasion the society is organising a Congress and Show to be held from 12 - 17 September, 1997.

With its headquarters at the Mukuvisi Environment Centre, the Z.O.S. is an active society with a current membership of over 400, including country members. The Indigenous Orchid Group of the society has been active in promoting interest in Zimbabwean and African species, and in rescue operations in areas where the indigenous orchid plants have been threatened with destruction.

A statement from the Z.O.S. said the show will be held in the Harare Showgrounds, and would be part of the Zimbabwe Agricultural Society's annual Garden Expo, which this year has adopted the theme "The World of Living Colour". The orchid display, centred around the Golden Jubilee theme, will be quite spectacular, as the Bulawayo and Manicaland Orchid Societies will also be exhibiting, as well as some nurseries from overseas. The orchid plant sales hall, always popular with the public, will this year be offering plants from Madagascar and some British nurseries, as well as plants being cultivated by local growers.

The congress is to be held at a Harare hotel from 15 - 17 September 1997. It has attracted an impressive line-up of internationally recognised speakers from the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, Zambia and South Africa.

A varied programme of lectures has been arranged to cater for all tastes, from growers primarily interested in the cultivation of exotic hybrids, to the species enthusiasts, with speakers presenting papers and slide shows on the orchids of Madagascar, Kenya, Zambia, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

The congress being organised is the first ever Orchid Congress to be held in Zimbabwe, and has already attracted a number of delegates from beyond our borders. Registration is not limited to members of the orchid society, so anyone interested in attending should either phone Harare 302537 or write to P.O. Box UA 134, Union Avenue, Harare and a registration form will be posted to you.

The family *Orchidaceae* is the largest family of flowering plants, with conservative estimates putting it at more than 15 000 species in nearly a thousand genera. Zimbabwe has a rich indigenous orchid flora, estimated to be about 250 terrestrial species and 100 epiphytic. This is a natural heritage which all Zimbabweans can be proud of, and encouraged to take steps to conserve.



National Parks warden and staff of the Matusadona Black Rhino Intensive Protection Zone inspect anti-poaching equipment donated by the Zambezi Society.

Donations update

THE Wildlife Society of Zimbabwe thanks those named below for their donations made during the 3 months from March to May 1997:

Mr S G Whittle	- \$2 750.00
Mr & Mrs C J S Sharples	- \$1 623.00
Rio Tinto Foundation	- \$1 250.00
Mr & Mrs A C Rees	- \$1 106.00
Mr S H Taylor	- \$ 553.00
Mr D Murchison	- \$ 535.00
Mr & Mrs D J Shelton	- \$ 400.00
Mr A Ernsting	- \$ 396.00
Lions Club of Nyanga	- \$ 350.00
E Gillmaster/L Gruenfeld	- \$ 250.00
Mr J M Wicke	- \$ 250.00
Mr K R Watson	- \$ 250.00
Mr & Mrs D A Wilson	- \$ 250.00
Mr W C Simpson	- \$ 220.00
Mr & Mrs D W Birch	- \$ 200.00
Master G Delpont	- \$ 200.00
Mr & Mrs S E Evershed	- \$ 200.00
Mrs Z von Broembsen	- \$ 200.00
Mr D D Hall	- \$ 150.00
Mr & Mrs C Jacobs	- \$ 150.00
Mr C T Jones	- \$ 150.00
Mr D O Martin	- \$ 150.00
Ms A L Smith	- \$ 150.00
Mr & Mrs G P Wiggins	- \$ 150.00
Mrs S E Ashton	- \$ 100.00
Mr & Mrs L M Attwell	- \$ 100.00
Barwick ICA	- \$ 100.00
Mr G Blyth	- \$ 100.00
Mr & Mrs M E Futter	- \$ 100.00
Mr & Mrs D M Middleton	- \$ 100.00
Mr D J Petrakis	- \$ 100.00
Mrs S Trelic	- \$ 100.00
Mr P A Walsh	- \$ 100.00
Mr I W Wannell	- \$ 100.00