



WildNews

Please note

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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!

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Toxic Cyanide flows into Umzingwane Dam?

WATER supplies to Bulawayo from Umzingwane Dam were stopped for some days after sludge from How Mine suspected to contain the toxic cyanide flowed into the Ngwabalozi tributary, which feeds into the dam.

Recent heavy rains were said to have washed away the sludge dump at the mine directly into the tributary which feeds one of Bulawayo's main water supply dams, Umzingwane. Mine officials said that although the dump was built to international specifications, rain water flowing from nearby mountains had collected on the dump and breached the slime dam leading to the mudslide.

The toxic sludge, which scientist Dr Ngoni Moyo of the Department of Biological Sciences at the University of Zimbabwe said was lethal to both humans and animals "even in small quantities" had, however, been quickly rehabilitated. A civil engineer had been called to supervise the work.

The Matabeleland branch of the Wildlife Society of Zimbabwe was monitoring the situation, which hit the headlines of the Bulawayo daily, The Chronicle.

"Current reports indicate that the mine authorities together with the staff from Bulawayo Municipality are endeavouring to ensure that pollution is kept to a minimum. The branch will continue to monitor the progress of this damage control and restoration as the consequences of this disaster on the human and wildlife populations that are dependent on this water supply are of great concern," said branch chairman, Karl Schmahl.

Reports from Bulawayo said although residents in the Bulawayo urban area might not have been affected as water supplies were stopped, many people in the lower side of the polluted river had collected water downstream amid fears of poisoning.

However, no immediate reports of people that complained of pollution-related ailments had been received. Scientists said the effect to many would be felt in the long term.

Elephants snared!

HUNDREDS of snares are being removed in the Omay communal lands and Bumi Hills safari area amid reports that these snares were "catching" the "wrong" animal - elephants - whose trunks have been injured as a result of the wires.

Sources within the wildlife industry in Omay near Kariba said several bulls now had semi-crippled trunks, thereby affecting their feeding habits.

"The situation is serious. The people need to be educated. Their targets are the kudu and impala, but they end up snaring elephants. The elephants are caught in the wire and in trying to de-snare themselves end up injuring their trunks," said a guide in the area.

The sources said staff from a well known safari operator in the area, were now sponsoring de-snaring operations, in which hundreds of snares had been removed.

Officers from the Department of National Parks and Wildlife Management had moved in to investigate.



Kids raise \$27,000 for rhino conservation

TWO Grade Six classes of schoolgirls from Chisipite Junior School last year raised Z\$27,000 for conservation of the black rhinoceros in Zimbabwe. The money was handed over to the Zambezi Society, a regionally-focused environmental organisation which, for the past ten years has channelled over Z\$2 million into helping conserve rhinos in the Intensive Protection Zone within the Matusadona National Park, south of Lake Kariba. Said Dick Pitman, Zambezi Society director at the hand-over ceremony held at the school in December last year: "Very few citizens of this country have shown as much practical, personal commitment to conservation as have these girls. Their fund-raising efforts this year have been truly outstanding. The Zambezi Society is delighted that they have chosen to channel their support through us."

This year's funds will be used by the Zambezi Society to buy supplies such as milk powder, vitamins, glucose, cereal and horse cubes, to feed orphaned rhino calves being hand-reared at the Park headquarters in Tashinga.

Raising money for rhinos through the Zambezi Society has become a traditional event at Chisipite. Each winter term, the Grade Six children are loaned \$10 each by the school to kick-start their individual money-making activities. Their efforts have contributed over \$30,000 to the rhinos over the past three years. But the class of 1997, spurred on by the enthusiasm of their teachers Jenny Mann and Pat Davies, and by a visit to the rhino protection zone in August this year, has surpassed all previous efforts.

Over the past decade, the Zambezi Society had been at the forefront of efforts to help protect Zimbabwe's few remaining black rhino from virtual extinction through poaching. It instigated the international Rhino Survival Campaign in the early 1990s and, after the establishment in 1992 of four well-guarded rhino sanctuaries in different locations across Zimbabwe, focused its attention on assisting Matusadona National Park, the only Intensive Protection Zone within the Zambezi Valley.

The Zambezi Society raised funds for the dehorning and translocation of rhino into the Intensive Protection Zones, provided voluntary assistance to this operation, and has, over the years provided anti-poaching equipment, an electricity generator, radio tracking equipment, a vehicle and research materials for rhino conservation within the Matusadona National Park.

The Chisipite funds are used by the Zambezi Society almost exclusively for the upkeep of rhino orphans being hand-reared at Tashinga. No wonder the school picked up The Wildlife Society award for best conservation institution.



Grade Six pupils from Chisipite Junior School befriend Chewore, the first of several orphaned black rhino calves being hand-reared in the Matusadona National Park with the help of funds raised by the children.