

Editors Column

We are pleased to bring you the latest edition of our company newsletter under the theme 'Save Wildlife Today for Future Generations' as we celebrate World Animal Day on the 4th of October. Some of the featured articles include; Shona cultural aspects of preserving wildlife, World Rhino Day, World Animal Day, Parrots: the most traded bird and for the first time we are publishing readers' comments.

We welcome your comments and environmental contributions which you may kindly send to The Editor on:

infor@blackcrystal.co.zw

Thank you and happy reading!
Clara Chikohomero



Black Crystal Consulting is one of Zimbabwe's leading reputable companies offering a quality service in environmental and socioeconomic consultancy services. Black Crystal Consulting believes in ***caring for the environment beyond today*** to ensure that biodiversity is maintained and that natural resources are not depleted for the next generation.

Black Crystal Consulting (Pvt) Ltd
1 Fairbairn Drive
Mount Pleasant
Harare

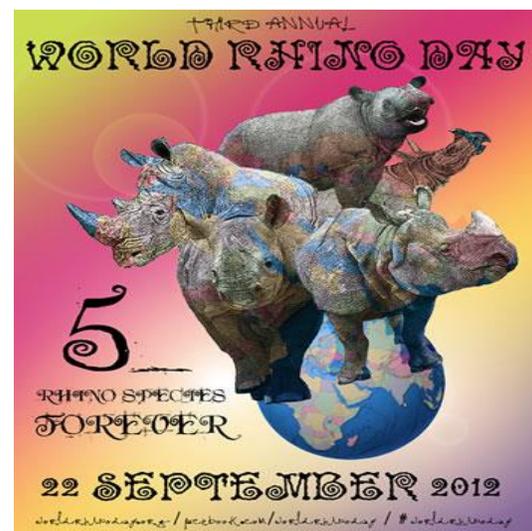
Phone: +263 4 334261 / 291 5265

World Animal Day 4 October

World Animal Day is for appreciating and celebrating the special and unique relationship between humans and animals, how we share the earth and how animals enhance our lives.

So on this day, the lives of the animals in all forms are celebrated and various events are being planned across the globe. How will you celebrate it?

World Rhino Day 22 September



The first World Rhino Day took place in South Africa in 2010 when the World Wildlife Fund created a campaign to increase awareness about rhino poaching globally.

2012 World Rhino Day is bigger than ever with events held in 11 countries. The message was: 'Rhino horn is not medicine'.

World Rhino Day Events in Zimbabwe 2012

This year there were multiple events held in celebration of World Rhino Day in Zimbabwe.

Friday 21st September: Imire Game Park

An Imire Soccer and Netball tournament for teams in the Wedza area highlighted the continued need for conservation zones and the benefits those zones can bring to communities. As well as music, traditional dancing and food, the National Parks Department gave an anti-poaching demonstration.

Saturday 22nd September

National Parks together with the Tikki Hywood Foundation, Environment Africa, Mid West Rhinos, Chishakwe, Mukuvisi Woodlands, Lowveld Rhino Trust and Imire co-ordinated a parade that started at Town House and ended up at Africa Unity Square where celebrations included music, an anti poaching demonstration by National Parks officers and addresses by the Honorable Minister FDC Nhema, the Acting Director General of National Parks and award winning rhino expert, Raoul duToit of the Lowveld Rhino Trust.

Rhinos at Play

'Rhinos at Play' was a multi discipline sports clinic facilitated by Mid West Rhinos. The six sport modules included rugby, soccer, cricket, hockey, tennis and a rhino quiz. Each module was overseen by experts in that particular field and children participated in a short clinic on each before competing in a small mini competition combining the whole.

Sunday 23rd September

Rooneys collaborated with Environment Africa and HAC in the organization of a 'Rooney's Fun Run' which took place at the Borrowdale Country Club. Bracelets, posters and t-shirts were sold to raise funds for wildlife conservation

Parrots: the Most Traded Bird

The Senegal parrot forms part of a super species that also includes the Ruppell's parrot, Meyer's parrot, Red-billed parrot, Brown-headed parrot, and Niam-Niam parrot. These *Poicephalus* parrots are among the hardiest parrots on earth being able to survive in the harsh, seasonal African subtropics.

But this species, along with many more, is under severe pressure from threats including:

Bird trade – As Senegal parrots make wonderful companions they are commonly taken from the wild and kept in captivity in the United States and Europe. The pressure of the wild-caught bird trade is often catastrophic, resulting in local extinctions for various species in many Africa countries. Meyer's parrots have all but disappeared from South Africa, African Grey parrots are no longer seen in Kenya or Tanzania, Ruppell's parrot and the Brown-headed parrot have disappeared from much of their ranges in Namibia and Mozambique respectively, and the Cape parrot is only found in small forest refuges in the high mountains

Forest degradation - Long-lived forest specialists like Senegal parrots and Rose-ringed Parakeets are particularly sensitive to forest degradation.

Deforestation - Rates on the African continent are now twice that of the rest of the world and harvesting quotas are trending upwards as forest certification becomes less relevant with booming emerging markets in the Far East. Countries like Zambia, Kenya and Malawi have almost lost all old-growth forests and forest restoration has become absolutely essential to save endemic forest bird species.

People in emerging markets want to “keep up with the Jones’s” (who already have hardwood floors etc) and are completely detached from the devastation they are causing on the African continent and elsewhere.

In Zimbabwe we need to lead by example, share this information as widely as possible, and invest in projects that develop alternative livelihoods for rural communities that should be the custodians of our remaining wilderness areas.

This article was extracted from the national geographic website to read more please visit: www.newswatch.nationalgeographic.com/2012/01/07/the-worlds-most-traded-wild-birds-senegal-parrots-color-morphs-and-the-wild-caught-bird-trade/

You and the Planet

Do you see the planet and its billions of inhabitants as a whole?

Do you feel part of a huge inter-connected community?

Care for the planet. Appreciate the differences. Treat everyone as a member of your global family.

Interpol Confiscates 1,220 Pangolins during Operation Libra



The shy and little-known pangolin is found across most of Asia and Africa, feeding silently at night on termites and other insects using a well-developed sense of smell and an amazing ability to locate and excavate their prey. During the day they seek shelter in small burrows, and if disturbed curl up for protection until the threat goes away. The protective ball they curl themselves into is able to ward off lions and leopards due to the protection provided by the large scales that cover their body.

The belief that the scales have medicinal qualities and preference for the meat in a multitude of traditional dishes has seen millions of pangolins ripped from the wild and whisked away to a fate worse than death. All eight species of pangolin are protected under national laws, and are also covered by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). In spite of this, thousands of animals are seized every year. Whilst some animals are found alive, their chances of survival are poor due to

harsh transportation conditions and their release in unsuitable environments.

Interpol's Operation Libra, is the largest coordinated operation against the illegal poaching and trade in pangolins in SE Asia, carried out coordinated investigation and enforcement actions across Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam. In total, 1,220 pangolins were confiscated, including one case where Indonesian authorities discovered a shipment of 260 cartons of frozen pangolins weighing 5 tonnes bound for Vietnam. Interpol's I-24/7 secure communications system was used and additional assistance provided by the World Customs Organization (WCO) to track the shipment to Hai Phong, Vietnam, where it was intercepted by customs officers.

The two countries are working together to identify the suspects. Supported by the Freeland Foundation through a grant from USAID, the operation led to the arrest of more than 40 individuals, with some 200 additional cases currently under investigation across the region. During Operation Libra, which also saw the assistance of the ASEAN-Wildlife Enforcement Network, raids were conducted on restaurants, private zoos, and other premises.

Approximately 1,220 pangolins were recovered, almost half of which were still alive. Birds, snakes and, alarmingly, eight tigers cubs were also seized during the operation. The operation was carried out in June and July this year and has been hailed as an unprecedented example of the success that can be achieved in combating international wildlife trade through coordinated international investigation and enforcement actions.

The pangolin was not the most popular source of bush meat 100 years ago, other better tasting, larger and more abundant

animals that are now locally extinct (e.g. elephant and small antelope) would have been on the menu. Let's not lose our last few remaining and very rare Pangolin in Zimbabwe!

World Habitat Day 1 October



The United Nations' (UN) World Habitat Day is annually celebrated on the first Monday of every October to reflect on the state of human settlements and people's right to sufficient shelter. It also aims to remind people that they are responsible for the habitat of future next generations.

This year World Habitat Day took place on 1 October 2012. First celebrated in 1986, the day is now in its 26th year.

This year's theme chosen by the UN is *'Better City, Better Life'* reminding us of the importance of providing homes for people of all cultures, all ages, both rich and poor.

Shona-Cultural Aspects of Preserving Wildlife

The Shona people have always looked at the environment as a very important and inseparable part of the human community.

The shona-cultural wisdom fosters a certain way of behaving that advances the well being of the individual, society and the

environment. One such aspect is the use of totems.

Most Zimbabweans are identified by totems which are chosen from reptiles, fish animal or bird. The choice of any one of the above was influenced by survival, nature or characteristics of the animal e.g. bravery.

The chosen totem animal was then protected from danger and it became taboo for one to kill or eat his totem. According to tradition going against this will result in one losing their teeth or fall sick. Hence totemism became an effective tool of conserving our wildlife heritage.

While animals were originally in abundance, the Chiefs had the wisdom and foresight to know that they needed to practice effective conservation. The all powerful traditional clan Chief enforced the communal laws with the consent of his people.

Some examples of totems:

Some Chiefs choose a python, the only snake to have been chosen as a totem, was believed to hold the spirit of the people together, especially women. Due to its perceived kindness, it was regarded as the grandmother and was not to be killed or harmed for any reason.

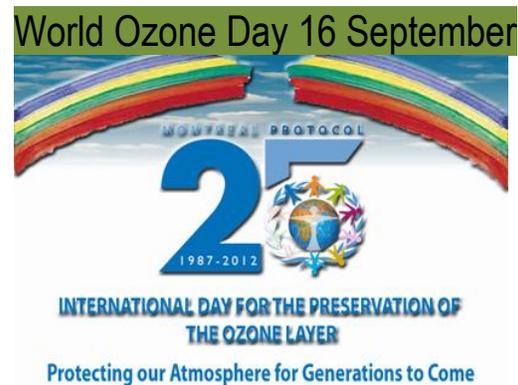
Other Chiefs chose birds for their totem because it was believed to have saved them by alerting them of advancing enemies during a bloody war centuries before. The crab was chosen as a totem in the belief that it led the ancestors to find water and fertile lands when they were still hunter-gatherers. The elephant is revered for its great size and strength. Whales were chosen because some believed that their ancestors emerged from the belly of fish. The buffalo

was chosen as a totem because of the claim that their ancestors were powerful warriors.

The leopard was held in high esteem as a totem, for its skills, strength in battle and its resilience. The baboon was revered for having alerted and saved the lives of clans from slave raiders.

Besides totemism some animals were conserved through being declared sacred and killing such animals was regarded as a taboo. Such a taboo taught people to conserve animals and to desist from being cruel to defenseless and harmless creatures such as the praying mantis.

However, sadly over time people have moved away from their traditional roots and today there are not fully respecting their totems which is having a negative impact on certain species in Zimbabwe.



On 16 September 1987, twenty four Parties signed the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. In 1998, in recognition of the Protocol's unique accomplishments, the General Assembly in its Resolution 49/114 named 16 September as the International day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer.

Ozone is a gas that is naturally present in our atmosphere. Each ozone molecule contains three atoms of oxygen and is denoted

chemically as O₃. It is formed throughout the atmosphere in multistep chemical processes that requires sunlight.

Ozone in the stratosphere absorbs a large part of the sun's biologically harmful ultraviolet radiation. Emission of gases containing chlorine and bromine is the initial cause of ozone depletion. Most of these gases accumulate in the lower atmosphere where they are transported into the stratosphere by natural air. It is in the stratosphere that these gases then participate in reactions that destroy ozone.

Certain industrial processes and consumer products result in the emission of ozone-depleting substances (ODSs) to the atmosphere.

ODSs are manufactured halogen source gases that are controlled worldwide by the Montreal Protocol. These gases bring chlorine and bromine atoms to the stratosphere, where they destroy ozone in chemical reactions. Important examples are the chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), once used in almost all refrigeration and air conditioning systems, and the halons, which were used in fire extinguishers. Current ODS abundances in the atmosphere are known directly from air sample measurements.

The Montreal Protocol celebrated its 25th Anniversary this year under the theme '*Protecting our atmosphere for generations to come.*' On World Ozone Day business were encouraged to go green and avoid emitting Chlorofluorocarbons into the atmosphere in order to protect the Ozone layer so that earth can benefit from the significant environmental and health benefits roles that it undertakes.

Paramark Plans to launch a new product at the end of the year

Paramark are planning to make sorbents from cotton ginning bi-products (CGB) locally which will be hydrophobic and oleophilic. In other words they do not absorb water but they absorb oil and they float and are bio-degradable.

Information from leading South African manufacturer states their bio-degradable absorbent fibre for cleaning up oil spills absorbs roughly 12 times its own weight.

In a study by the Laboratoire de Chimie Agro-Industrielle from 2003, researchers concluded that cgb can absorb as much as 21 grams of petroleum per gram of fibre.

A 1994 paper published in the journal Applied Engineering in Agriculture concluded that CGB could absorb as much as 80-times their own weight in oil (W.S. Anthony; Applied Engineering in Agriculture, vol. 10(3):357-361). The Anthony study used SAE 30 weight oil.

In the US manufacturers of cgb sorbents conclude that with crude oil (the Gulf Spill); cgb sorbents absorb roughly twice as much by weight as polypropylene, which is not bio-degradable. Sorbents which are not bio-degradable are not a preferred option anyway.

For more information please contact Tony Lampard on: 776399 or 0772 264 068.

Recycling Tips

Here are two great ideas to recycle plastic bottles and decrease litter and landfill usage by turning them into brooms and a boat.



A broom made from recycled plastic bottles.



A boat made out of recycled plastic bottles.

Reader's Comments

Thank you for forwarding your newsletter to me, it is the first I have received and delighted to see you have included some very valid points, of special interest is the protection of the wetlands!!!

I live in Greystone Park and have fought for a very long time for the conservation of the vlei between Warwick Road and Outspan Way through to Kambanji, we used to have a river running through but now see no signs of it due to cultivation and removal of reeds and building right down to the old river bed, we no longer have the annual swallows roost as the vlei is no longer, neither do we see the migratory European Flycatchers which used to grace the trees and telephone wires. It would be a wonderful achievement to bring

this once lush beautiful vlei back into its own.
Fira

Thanks very much for the informative newsletter.
Regards
Betty

Awesome newsletter, I will pass it on.
Congratulations
Odette.

Many thanks Black Crystal. Good to keep in touch with things happening on your side of the Zambezi River!

Best
Adam
Zambia

Hi Black Crystal
I had a read of your newsletter. Very impressive.

Gill
Zambia

Hi well done great newsletter
Thank you
Charlie

Dear Editor and your colleagues at Black Crystal
May I congratulate you on your newsletter – very succinct, user-friendly and interestingly informative! Well done! I have shared your newsletter with my colleagues as well as with key Partners and Associates – I am certain that they will also want to subscribe in due course!

Keep up the great work!

All the very best!

Kind Regards,

Kule