



NVT Event 2nd November 2016

Save the evening of Wednesday 2nd November in your diary for this year's NVT event at the Royal Overseas League. We are delighted to have Dan Bucknell, executive director of TUSK Trust UK, as our speaker. Tusk is a pioneering and high profile organisation with 25 years' experience initiating and funding conservation, community development and environmental education programmes across Africa. Tusk has sent funding to NVT in the past and introduced us to LWT, which resulted in our new programme (see article below).

With a lifelong passion for wildlife, Dan has worked in conservation for the past 14 years. He comes to Tusk from Elephant Family where he was Head of Conservation and Campaigns. His talk **'Why Attitudes and Perceptions of Wildlife Matter'** will include the importance of research and education. It is sure to be of very great interest to us all.

It is also an opportunity for us to update you on NVT developments and for you to network with old and new friends who share an interest in Malawi. We'll let you know more in the next newsletter.

News Update

Progress on NVT's new approach

In our autumn newsletter we reported that we were in discussion with a non-governmental organisation about a proposed environmental education programme focused on issues concerning the Nyika and the Vwaza Marsh. That organisation is The Lilongwe Wildlife Trust (LWT), who already operate in Malawi, so we do not have to fund our own operation there, but can focus all our funds on conservation. We are no longer distracted by demands that should rightly be met by others.

LWT proposed a sound programme that encompasses:

- Education through schools (building on our successful work with Charity Kumwenda) to teach communities about the harmful consequences of poaching, deforestation and killing animals that threaten livelihood through crop raids.
- Working with local magistrates to reinforce prosecution of poachers as poaching will only be stopped if there is a meaningful deterrent.
- Finding ways of replacing community income currently earned through lucrative trade in bush meat and the 'Chikanda' trade in orchids.

We have agreed to commit to the programme for one year, with the expectation of extending it to years two and three, provided progress is satisfactory and in accordance with the objectives set. Our first tranche of funding (£26,996) was

paid in December 2015 and a second (£11,158) will be paid in April 2016.

We have received two progress reports showing that encouraging progress has been made:

- ◆ Two education officers have been recruited. Frank Chimpango holds a bachelor's degree in environmental science from the University of Malawi and Jayne Kumwenda has a degree in environmental management from the University of Livingstonia. Both were selected for their experience in delivering education projects and will now undergo training on the technical aspects involved.
- ◆ A District Executive Committee meeting took place with over 30 stakeholder individuals and organisations participating in the project. The purpose was to explain the work of LWT and to set out the scope and detail of the environmental education project to be implemented by them and funded by NVT UK. Participants were attentive and finished by formally committing to the plan.
- ◆ A meeting with DNPW focused on core objectives for the project, lessons learned in past programmes and challenges foreseen. DNPW agreed to provide records that might help plan modules.
- ◆ Village Natural Resource Committees (VNRC) from nine communities met to hear about the programme

(Continued on page 2)

News Update continued

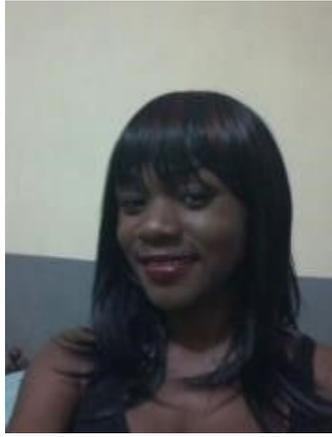
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and their roles in supporting it.

- ◆ Lease secured for a project office in Rumpho Boma, for which all the equipment has been purchased.
- ◆ Purchase of two vehicles and a motorbike for transport during project work.
- ◆ Schools and communities selected to take part in the programme, chosen because they are within Nyika-Vwaza protected areas. Approximately 1,500 children will be registered for the programme in the first year and around 14 teachers trained.



Frank Chimpango



Jayne Kumwenda

What happens next?

March	Now that the two officers are in place, the aim is data collection so that existing education modules can be adapted to reflect current local issues. LWT is hiring a consultant to help develop the modules and prepare supporting materials.
April	Teachers and VNRC leaders will be trained in Wildlife Conservation & Welfare, Human Wildlife Conflict, and Wildlife Crime, to give them the skills to teach children and community members. Teachers and VNRCs given bikes to access all areas.
May	Programme of lessons commences with monitoring and review. Once the programme settles satisfactorily, the team will start to develop micro projects such as wildlife crime workshops and bee-keeping.

It is pleasing to see a fast start to the environmental education programme we have committed to fund and to know that our money will be spent on activities that will make a positive difference to conservation on The Nyika and the Vwaza Marsh. We look forward to the start of the engagement with children and communities in the region and their reaction.

Conservation Research Grants

In autumn 2015 we circulated selected universities and institutions with a call for research grant applications for the following suggested topics in the Nyika and Vwaza Marsh:

- Fire management, especially in the Nyika National Park
- Exotic species control in both the Nyika and the Vwaza Marsh
- Bird population and endangered bird species
- Orchid poaching on the Nyika.

NVT trustees reviewed the applications and asked for amendments which would make them more appropriate for funding. In particular applicants were asked to target specific and relevant issues and to state clear outputs for each research project. One candidate, MSc student Emmanouela Galanou from Cranfield, has since been selected and awarded a research grant of £1,805.

Her study is on vultures on the Nyika, looking at what role they play in the local ecosystem, such as removal of rotting dead animals. Vultures are declining on the plateau and most vulture species are critically endangered worldwide, but the effect is not fully understood. Her research may be able to shed light on what value vultures have, as well as explaining how they are perceived by local communities. We hope to get useful data on vulture occurrence and what is causing their decline, such as poisoning or hunting.

A call for a second round of applications will be on the NVT website shortly, with a deadline of 30 June 2016. Details are available from Peter Lawrance Tel: +44 (0)1483 714130, Email: sec.nvt@gmail.com.

Stop Press!

Information from the Lilongwe Wildlife Trust is coming thick and fast in the form of useful background data for the environmental conservation programme funded by NVT. Figures for poached animals (but not for flora), listed by species, confirm we face a real challenge. Data on convictions for possession of firearms and hunting wild animals indicate there is much to be done around education and sentences that act as a more robust deterrent.

Sponsor our Marathon runner!

Please help us raise money for the Nyika-Vwaza Trust by sponsoring Juliet Cornelius-Rumsey who is running for us in the 2016 London Marathon on 24 April.



Juliet and supporters

Juliet, is a hard working mother of three and, in her spare time, she competes in triathlons and recently ran her first Marathon. We are particularly fortunate that she will represent us because she is no stranger to Malawi. She was born in Mzuzu and spent most of her early life on the Viphya Plateau with her family. Her parents lived in the country for over 40 years. She was very happy to be asked to support the trust and has already started her training for the forthcoming event.

Please support the trust. Donations via Juliet's page on the Just Giving website, <https://crowdfunding.justgiving.com/Juliet-cornelius-rumsey> or direct to NVT's bank account: TSB Bank plc, sort code 30-90-15, account no. 01192885, quoting 'Marathon'.

Thank you for your support. And good luck Juliet!

"The Hidden Harvest" - Annual Lecture Evening Nov 2015

It was good to see so many old friends, and some new faces, at our annual lecture evening last November. A big thank you to all of you who came. We enjoy and appreciate the opportunity to meet with our supporters and to update them on the work of the Trust as well as benefitting from their feedback.

The talk was given by Anastasiya (Nastya) Timoshyna, medicinal and aromatic plants programme leader at TRAFFIC, the wildlife trade monitoring network. She started with some concerning facts: one in five species of plants are estimated to be at risk of extinction, while over 50,000 plant species are used by humans for medicinal purposes, the majority of them collected from the wild. The continued loss of plant diversity will eventually rob poor communities of their income. I think we were all surprised to learn that some mass-market products contain wild-collected ingredients.

TRAFFIC has developed the 'FairWild Standard', aimed at

sustainable harvesting of wild plants. This involves working with the communities, traders, herbal/medicinal companies and the end consumer to create awareness of the threat to species and ecosystems and to introduce certification standards which benefit conservation and communities.

With trade in wild collected plants being worth billions, poor communities have an understandable incentive to collect what is around them and sell for much-needed income. There is not only push from those who harvest plants to sell, but a strong pull from increasing demand for wild collected plants as ingredients in food, medicine and cosmetics. It is only by influencing all stages of the process that TRAFFIC can ensure a sustainable supply of threatened species. Success stories are Liquorice root in Kazakhstan used for herbal and medicinal teas, Frankincense resin in Africa used for cosmetics, and Triphala fruits in India used in Ayurveda formulas. Linkages were also made to the wild-harvesting of orchids for the 'chikanda' trade.

The audience was very evidently engaged in what Nastya had to tell us, resulting in some highly pertinent questions and discussion at the end.

We were delighted that two of Nastya's TRAFFIC colleagues joined us for the evening. Steve Broad, Executive Director, and Carolyn Causton, Development Manager, had the chance to talk with many of you and explore links between TRAFFIC's FairWild programme and NVT's work in Malawi, and I think they were surprised just how connected the work of our two organisations is. For further information, visit TRAFFIC's website: <http://www.traffic.org> and <http://www.fairwild.org>



FAIRWILD® certified products entered the market in 2009



From Nastya's presentation

We were also delighted that Nils Meyer of KfW was able to join us for the evening. Chairman, Tom Lupton, reported a very productive exchange of views, in particular the shared objective of forming social contracts with Nyika and Vwaza communities.

Lastly, a big thank you to Peter and Jane Lawrance and Julie Lupton for all their hard work in arranging the evening and making it success and to the staff at ROSL for their help with organising the event.

Great Sightings on The Nyika

Central African Wilderness Safaris (CAWS) report that visitors to The Nyika have enjoyed excellent game viewing. Leopard sightings have been frequent, including cubs. An unusual climax on New Year's Eve saw a leopard sunning himself in the middle of the air strip whilst a plane was coming in to land! Fortunately a guide was able to usher it into the bushes, leaving the way clear. A large male has set up home on the airstrip and we assume it is the same leopard.

Other sightings include serval, porcupine, side striped jackal, bush pig, spotted hyena, and tree hyrax. Huge herds of roan and eland antelopes have been spotted near to Chelinda camp, some up to 300 strong with plenty of young in evidence. Zebra, reedbuck and bushbuck are always close by. Birders have been rewarded with sightings of bar tailed trogons, spotted eagle owls, martial eagles and Denham's bustard. CAWS' Chelinda managers, Paul and Janet, were excited to notice that two young spotted eagle owls have taken up residence at the entrance to chalet 8 at the Lodge.

The summer rainfall season's daily moderate to heavy rain means the water table is now so high that all rain water remains on the surface and flows directly into the rivers and streams, hopefully finding its way into Lake Malawi. Interspersed with blue skies and sunshine, this weather brings the annual crop of wild flowers. Guests only have to walk or drive a few km from Chelinda to find beautiful orchids, including *Disa robusta*, *Disa ochrostachya* and *Disa erubescens*. Some of the best displays are in the Dambos (peat bogs), where, as CAWS lodge manager unfortunately found out, it's possible to sink up to your waist in an instant!

An unusual new 'sighting' is a bicycle-powered cinema, designed to deliver a strong anti-poaching message to children and communities living in remote areas in and around the National Park.



Leopard
© CAWS



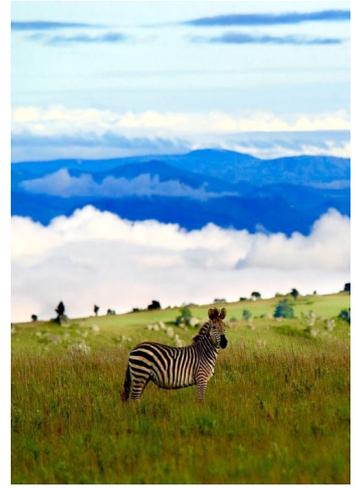
Disa Ochrostachya
© CAWS



Chameleon
© CAWS

Guide to Nyika National Park

There's a great deal involved in producing the new guide. Sigrid (Sigi) Anna Johnson has now had technical feedback from all the specialists in the Technical Advisory Group and is making suggested revisions. So we're not there yet, but it is on its way and we are sure it will be worth waiting for.



Proposed front cover to the guide

We rely on your donations

While we have been refocussing our efforts, we have not actively sought new funding, but the Lilongwe Wildlife Trust project and the research grant programme will need significant and regular investment – some £125,000 for the first three years for the first and around £20,000 a year for the grants. We can call on our reserves to kick start the funding, but want to preserve a healthy financial cushion so we can be sure to maintain the programmes at an effective level.

We rely entirely on donations from you and others like you to fund our conservation work in northern Malawi. We thank you for your generosity and hope you will help us build the funds to deliver our two new programmes.

To donate, please fill in the form at the end of this newsletter, or donate online at www.nyika-vwaza-trust.org

When you come to write, or update your will, please consider leaving a gift to the Nyika-Vwaza Trust, a registered charity in the UK, number 1105105. Gifts to registered charities do not form part of your estate for inheritance tax purposes and can greatly enhance the work that NVT does to support its conservation programmes in Malawi.

TFCA Infrastructure report

North and South Malawi are impacted differently by El Niño. While South Malawi suffers drought, Northern Malawi gets heavy rain. It's the end of the rainy season for Nyika and Vwaza and Sam Banda, TFCA manager for the area, reports that downpours have brought the usual challenges. Lake Kazuni in Vwaza has flooded, causing Sam a three hour wait to cross a swollen stream. The Chisanga Falls are increasing and the fine spray can be felt from 50 metres away. Roads are treacherous and make construction work just that much harder.

However, he reports that progress is being made and that projects under consideration for 2016 include:

Rehabilitation of the Chelinda airstrip.
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Early burn and firebreaks - important as some 39 poachers' fires were extinguished in 2015 and still more went unchecked.

Diversion of the Hewe River channel, to improve Lake Kazuni water levels in the dry season.

Consideration of fencing the northern boundary of the Vwaza Game Reserve. 43 kms of southern boundary fencing is now complete and electrified.
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Infrastructure improvement through tow grading of existing roads or building new sections.
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Kazuni house rehabilitation



Chelinda clinic rehabilitation



Kazuni temporary dam



The Nyika-Vwaza (UK) Trust
Reg. charity no. 1105105

The Hon. Treasurer/Secretary
50 Brewery Road,
Woking,
Surrey.
GU21 4NA
Tel: +44 (0)1483 714130
Email: sec.nvt@gmail.com

Working for environmental and wildlife conservation in northern Malawi.

Email: info@nyika-vwaza-trust.org
Website: www.nyika-vwaza-trust.org

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(for UK residents only)

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(Please insert the name and address of your Bank in the space above)

Please pay to TSB Bank plc, 40 High Street, Alton, Hants, GU34 IBQ (Sort Code 30-90-15), for the credit of The Nyika-Vwaza (UK) Trust's Account No. 01192885, the sum of :-

£ on

(Please insert date above)

and thereafter every month/quarter/six months/year (*delete as appropriate*) until cancelled by me in writing.

Name of Account to be debited

Account Number

Signature

Date

Please return this completed form to:-

Hon. Treasurer,
Nyika-Vwaza (UK) Trust,
50 Brewery Road,
Woking,
Surrey.
GU21 4NA

for registration and onward transmission to your Bank.

Friends of the Nyika-Vwaza (UK) Trust Donation Form

PLEASE PRINT YOUR DETAILS IN CAPITALS

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I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax for each tax year (6 April to 5 April) that is at least equal to the amount of tax that all the charities or Community Amateur Sports Clubs (CASCs) that I donate to will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify. I understand the charity will reclaim 25p of tax on every £1 that I give on or after 6 April 2008.

Signature:

Date:

Please return this completed form to:- Hon. Treasurer,
Nyika-Vwaza (UK) Trust, 50 Brewery Road, Woking,
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