



Conservation and Wildlife Fund – Annual Report 2019



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Project Manager

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APU - Anti-Poaching Unit
CWF - Conservation and Wildlife Fund
FCZ - Forestry Commission of Zimbabwe
HMC – Hwange Main Camp
HNP - Hwange National Park
LJMU - Liverpool John Moores University
NGO - Non-Governmental Organisation
PDC - Painted Dog Conservation
SMART – Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool
ZPWMA - Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority
ZRP - Zimbabwe Republic Police

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide high quality support services to the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority, Forestry Commission of Zimbabwe, local communities and their authorities, and other landholders to help achieve high levels of environmental protection, law enforcement and wildlife management in the greater Hwange ecosystem.

INTRODUCTION

Hwange National Park (HNP) is Zimbabwe's largest natural reserve occupying roughly 14,650 square kilometers and is located in the northwest corner of the country, about one hour's drive south of the Victoria Falls. HNP boasts a tremendous selection of wildlife with over 100 species of mammals and nearly 400 species of birds recorded. It is part of the Kavango-Zambezi Transfrontier Conservation Area (KAZA TFCA).

The Conservation and Wildlife Fund (CWF) is a non-profit trust which was formed after conservationists and stakeholders in the region of HNP decided to combine forces to address important conservation issues affecting the area: the people, the wildlife and their habitats. CWF started work on the ground late in 2017. The members in 2019 were five safari companies (African Bush Camps, Amalinda Collection, Hideaways, Imvelo Safari Lodges and The Hide) and five NGO's: Painted Dog Conservation (PDC), Wild Conservation Research Unit (WildCRU), Lion Recovery Fund (LRF), Panthera Corporation and Southern African Conservation Trust Wildlife and Communities (SATC).

CWF works in the tract of land bordering on the eastern boundary of HNP in Zimbabwe (see Map 1 below). The project area currently covers about 4,300km², comprises national forests, communal areas and privately owned ranches and is home to a wide variety of wildlife species.

CWF's modus operandi is to support the state institutions which have the mandate to protect the fauna and flora but which lack the resources to achieve this. CWF also supports other conservation initiatives in the area, including established research organisations.

The CWF staff consists of a Project Manager (Su Maberly), a Field Coordinator (Steve Alexander), nine field scouts and a camp attendant. Dr Richard Hoare, founding Project Manager, left CWF in June 2019 and Camilla Rhodes stepped in as interim Manager for a few months before Su joined the team.

There are three anti-poaching unit (APU) bases from which the scouts conduct their patrols.

CWF is funded by a combination of:

- bed night levies from our safari company members
- grants from institutions (applied for by CWF)
- donations from individuals and organizations

Finances are administered by Chapmans Chartered Accountants based in Harare.



Map 1: this shows HNP and the CWF operations zone in relation to the rest of Zimbabwe

OPERATIONS

OVERVIEW

In CWF's first two years of operation great things have been achieved thanks to our generous grantors, donors and the support of our safari company members:

- working relationships have been formed with:
 - state authorities - Forestry Commission of Zimbabwe (FCZ), Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZPWMA) and Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) – and support is provided to them both materially and logistically
 - other conservation entities such as WildCRU and PDC
- CWF has helped the local communities where possible
- CWF scouts have been trained in anti-poaching and the use of Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool (SMART), a digital data logging system. Thanks to the CWF field staff many snares have been collected and injured animals helped. A network of intelligence on wildlife crime has been established and as a result cyanide and other poisonings have been reacted to and poachers have been arrested, charged and sentenced.
- three APU bases have been established
- a project tracking the movements of large elephant bulls has been initiated and is underway

WORK WITH STATE AUTHORITIES

1. CWF scouts carry only batons, handcuffs and pepper spray, so all patrols and investigations include an armed scout from one of the wildlife authorities - for the safety of the scouts and to ensure the patrols and any arrests made are legal. CWF helps these organisations with transport, training and some supplies.
2. Anti-poaching Patrols: generally, two or three CWF scouts will join with one armed FCZ scout to form an APU which is deployed in the project area to remove snares and track poachers. There can be more than one APU deployed at any one time. CWF supplies rations for the FCZ scouts who are usually seconded to us on three-week rotations (see below for more detail on Anti-poaching Patrols).
3. CWF personnel join with armed ZPWMA scouts to react to cases of poisoning, reports of poachers in an area and other wildlife crimes as they arise. CWF generally provides the transport and rations for these excursions.
4. CWF shares photographs and other publicity material with FCZ and ZPWMA for them to use on their own websites and social media pages.
5. In early 2019 ZRP and CWF collaborated in arrests involving an ivory poaching ring in Dete.
6. Prosecutions: There were a total of five prosecutions of poachers in 2019, and sentences ranged from 3 months to 27 years, depending on the severity of the charge.
7. Local support to FCZ: CWF helps with transport for ranger deployments, finance for monthly rations for the Dete rangers, and advice on the reorganisation of the FCZ armoury.
8. The “Grab a Bag” bin bag initiative started by CWF has been very successful at Hwange Main Camp (HMC). People are responding well to the request that they “grab a bag” from the HMC tourist office on their way into the Park and bring their own litter out of the park on their way out – either from their picnics or camping sojourns. This help is crucial to mitigate the problem caused by litter being left in the bins at the camp sites where baboons and other animals have become adept at raiding these and spreading litter far and wide – both an eyesore and a danger to wildlife. Grateful thanks to Imperial Plastics, Harare, for donating the bin liners.
9. CWF assists with problem animal control in Rural District Council areas when called upon.

WORK WITH OTHER CONSERVATION ORGANISATIONS

1. In February 2019 CWF attended a meeting with the Zimbabwe Professional Hunters and Guides Association (ZPHGA), safari companies and Hwange Lion Research which was hosted by CWF board member, Sharon Stead. This is an encouraging development that opened dialogue between the photographic and hunting sectors, with both sides taking notice of research efforts and trying to create more goodwill between competing interests. The aim of the meeting was the drafting of legislation with the intention to register and regulate ZPHGA along the lines of other professions.
2. CWF works with Jane Hunt from WildCRU when possible. In early September 2019 it was reported that there was a lioness with a snare around her neck on Antoinette Farm, close to the CWF Kennedy APU base. Jane darted the lioness and, with help from the CWF team, removed the snare and put a collar on her. That same month CWF helped with the collaring of a male lion at Mbiza. Tragically this lion was subsequently caught in a snare and died – they were able to locate the carcass due to the collar.
3. One of CWF's scouts, Michael Mavunga, is an experienced dog handler who used to work at the Air Force of Zimbabwe as a Kennel Master in the Dog Training Unit. Michael helps with the instruction of the dog handlers at Painted Dog Conservation (PDC) – a nonprofit organisation dedicated to conserving the endangered African wild dog or "painted dog". Michael is also an experienced horseman and does horseback patrols in the Dete area at least three times per week.



WORK IN THE COMMUNITY

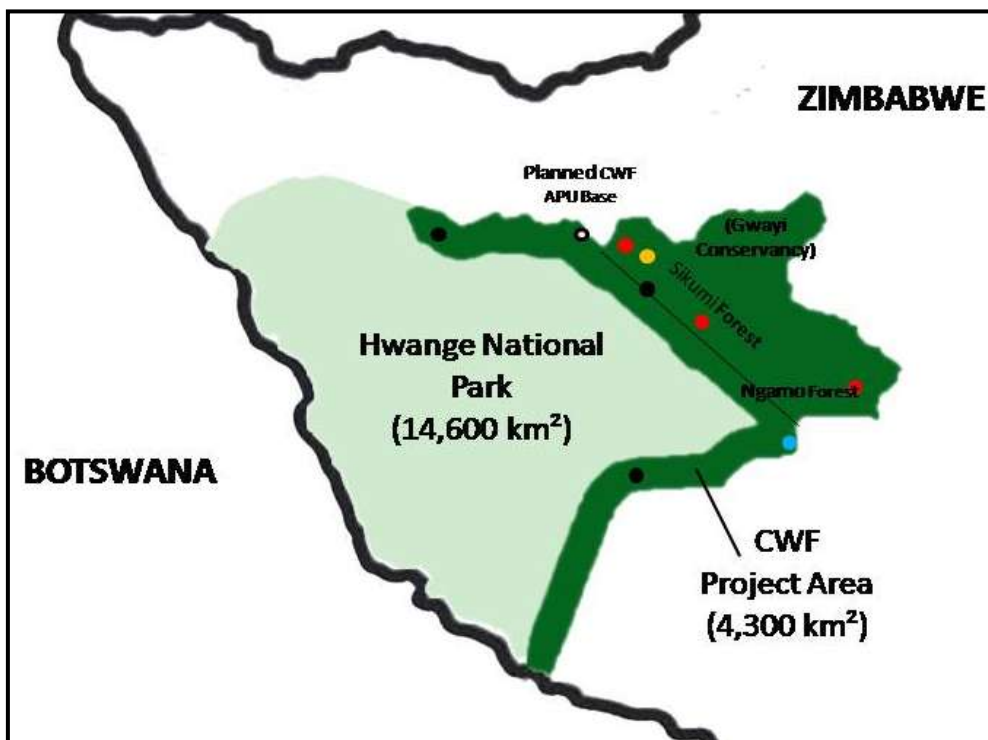
When appropriate, CWF helps communities, both inside and outside the boundaries of HNP, for the common good. Examples of this are:

1. CWF assists in taking samples from suspected rabies cases for diagnosis as rabies is a notifiable disease.
2. The CWF team helps to fight fires in the area.
3. The CWF team responds to reports of trains hitting animals: several times in a year animals are hit by trains moving on the railway tracks that run along the eastern boundary of HNP. Where possible, CWF field staff will drag the carcass off the railway tracks and well out of the way so that other animals that come to scavenge (such as vultures, lions, hyenas and jackals) do not get hit by the next train.



ANTI-POACHING PATROLS

The CWF Kennedy APU base is on the Kennedy Annex concession, which is leased from National Railways of Zimbabwe by one of our members, The Hide Safari Camp. This land borders HNP and is ideally situated centrally in the CWF project area, with good road access to the project area. Other CWF APU bases are in Sikumi Forest (in collaboration with the Hideaways' lodge Elephant's Eye) and our newest addition, in collaboration with Imvelo Safari Lodges, is in the Bomani Concession, in the Ngamo Forest. CWF APU bases are manned by CWF rangers with a Forest Guard seconded by FCZ Commission. Close to the CWF project area are three APUs manned by ZPWMA in the HNP, one manned by PDC in the Sikumi Forest area and one manned by Wilderness Safaris at the eastern-most point of HNP. See Map 2 below.



Map 2: this shows the three CWF APU bases (red dots), three ZPWMA APU bases (black dots), a PDC APU (orange dot) and a Wilderness Safaris APU (blue dot). We plan to build another APU base in the north at Inyantue, a hotspot of illegal access and activity.

THE SCOUTS

The CWF scouts are the unsung heroes of our operation. Most of the men come from nearby communities and have previous experience with wildlife-related work. They work on a three week on, one week off roster. Every day of the year at least one CWF APU is out walking the area and in 2019 the foot patrols covered a total of 6,785 km! The men are deployed in interchangeable sticks, on both routine and specially-requested patrols, where most needed.

Thanks to a donation from Safari Professionals (USA) the scouts got professional new uniforms in February. Brian Courtenay of SATIB Insurance kindly donated medical insurance cover for 2019 for the scouts, Field Coordinator and Project Manager. Dr Wolfgang and Dr Gisela Hennig organised the donation of a top-quality pair of Steiner binoculars for the scouts and Clarry Viljoen of Taita Trading gave us a very good price for new tyres for the CWF Land Cruiser. Askari Safari donated first aid items, torches and other patrol equipment for the scouts.

COMMUNICATIONS

Communications between scouts and the Field Coordinator are very important – particularly when a quick reaction is needed. Scouts carry hand-held VHF radios on patrol and Steve has a mobile base set.





SPATIAL MONITORING AND REPORTING TOOL (SMART)

CWF scouts are experienced in using SMART software on handheld devices to record patrol-related data (e.g. snares, carcasses, firearms found) with a GPS stamp which is then downloaded once back at base onto a computer to build a database. SMART also tracks the routes taken by the APUs. This data is then evaluated and used by the Field Coordinator to help in planning patrols and possible reactions. Regular training in SMART is kindly facilitated by Panthera to keep the scouts up to date.

Monthly security reports are generated by SMART. The tables below show summaries of SMART data logged by CWF personnel for the period 1 January – 31 December 2019. Map 3, generated by SMART, depicts the foot and vehicle patrol coverage for the year.

Patrol Summary

Transport type	Number of patrols	Distance (km)	Number of patrol hours
Foot	625	6,785.3	2,744
Vehicle	346	16,084.9	1,244

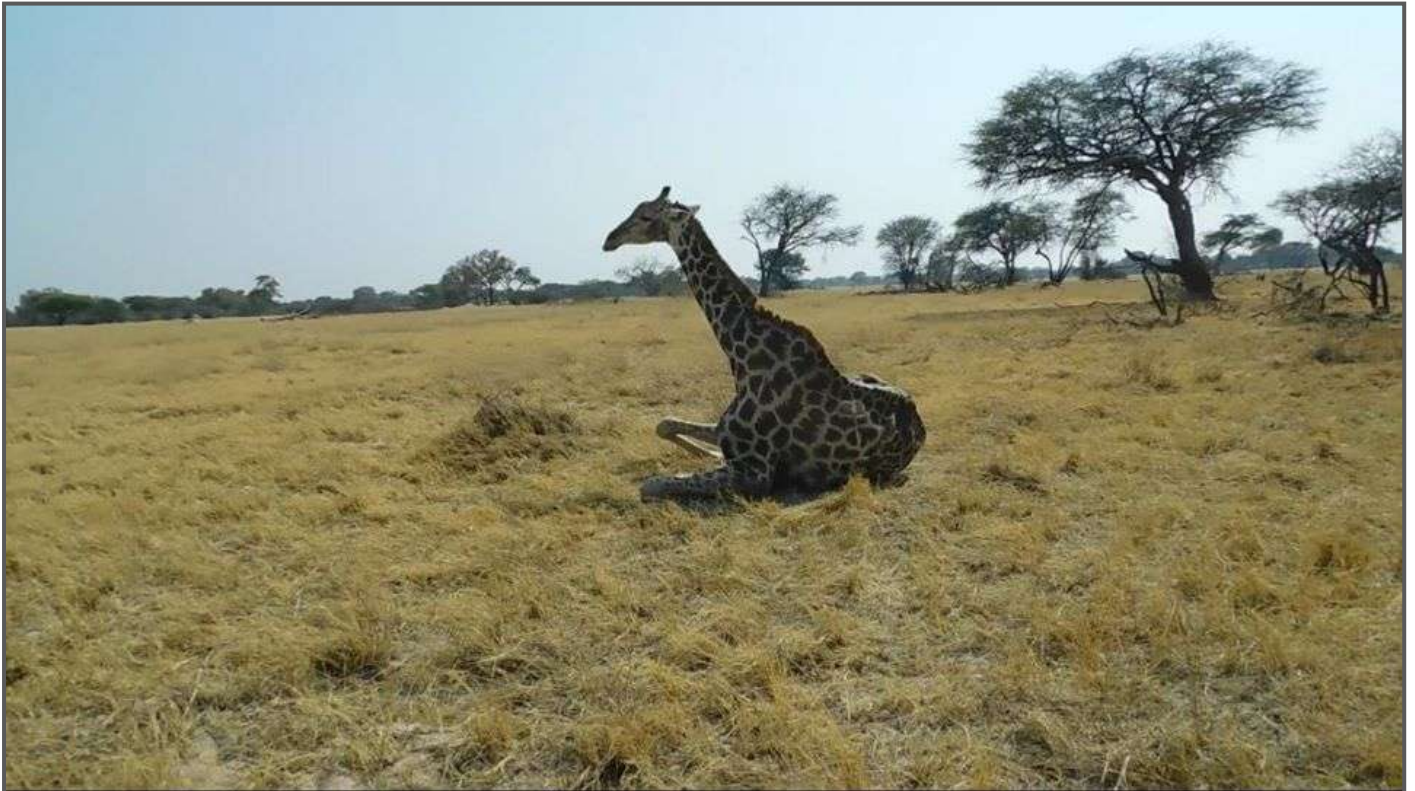
Number of Poaching Incidents

Number of arrests	Number of traps & snares	Number of cyanide incidents	Number of poachers camps	Number of carcasses	Total bush meat confiscated (kg)	Number of ivory confiscations	Number of other wildlife parts
6	462	3	3	128	60	1	1

Elephant Poaching Summary

Number of elephants shot	Number of elephants snared	Number of elephants poisoned	Number of elephant deaths by natural causes	Number of elephant deaths due to predation	Number of elephant deaths due to unknown causes
1	1	2	19		

As seen in the SMART table above, 462 snares were brought in by CWF scouts in 2019. Most of these are made of stolen telephone wire, which will catch small to medium size prey, but occasionally stronger cable snares are found which would catch even the largest game.



CWF scouts removed a snare from the neck of a giraffe which had been darted for the procedure. After the tranquiliser wore off the giraffe got up and walked away.

NEW APU BASE 2019

Thanks to a generous donation from the Beit Trust, a new APU base in Bomani Concession (in the Ngamo Forest area) has been constructed. Imvelo Safari Lodges (a member of CWF) assisted with funding, installing water supply and some of the support infrastructure. The base can sleep up to twenty-four men and is used by CWF and Imvelo Safari Lodge's own APUs.



The barracks and kitchen at the new Bomani APU base

ELEPHANT MONITORING PROJECT

Research is an important part of wildlife conservation, helping to inform those in charge of the management of environments that support threatened and endangered wildlife. HNP is renowned for its large herds of elephants and how they move around the park and beyond is of interest.

In a collaboration between CWF and ZPWMA, a study was set up to track the seasonal movement of large elephant bulls, both for research and for law enforcement purposes. Thanks to the generous donations of private donors and Liverpool John Moores University (LJMU), radio collars were fitted to five large-bodied male elephants in August and November 2018 and their movements tracked by Africa Wildlife Tracking. The data is analysed periodically by Dr Lochran Trill at LJMU.

Unfortunately, two of the five bulls died in early 2019. The cause of death of one was put down to natural causes, as there was no evidence to suggest otherwise, and the other was poached. ZPWMA, with the assistance of the CWF team, reacted swiftly to the poaching and were able to make significant arrests, apprehending several people who had long been suspected of ivory poaching in the park.

FINANCE

SOURCES OF INCOME

Core funding for the operation of CWF (some of the salaries for management and field staff, administration costs and some recurrent expenditure) comes from the accumulation of small fees levied on each bed night spent by safari tourists with four of the CWF member companies engaged in photo-tourism (African Bush Camps, Amalinda Collection, Hideaways and The Hide Safari Camp). In 2019 this levy was US\$15 per tourist bed night.

Donations from Lion Recovery Fund, The Beit Trust, Askari Safari, Dr Wolfgang and Dr Gisela Hennig and others helped towards what was not covered by the levies as well as with important work such as the building of the Bomani APU and the elephant monitoring project.

The table below shows the sources of income for 2019 and their percentages of total.

INCOME SOURCE	2019 US\$	2019 %
TOURISM LEVIES, MEMBERSHIP	182,400	69.0%
DONOR INDIVIDUAL	20,000	7.6%
DONOR CORPORATES	8,000	3.0%
DONOR INSTITUTIONS	53,890	20.4%
TOTALS (US Dollars)	264,290	100.0%

2019 DONATIONS

Sincere thanks to CWF's 2019 Donors:

Institutions:

- Lion Recovery Fund - www.lionrecoveryfund.org
- Liverpool John Moores University - www.ljmu.ac.uk
- Panthera - www.panthera.org
- The Beit Trust – www.beittrust.org.uk

Corporate:

- Askari Safari (USA/Zimbabwe) – www.askarisafari.com
- Imperial Plastics (Zimbabwe) - imperial@yoafrica.com
- Safari Professionals (USA) – www.safariprofessionals.org
- SATIB Insurance Brokers (South Africa) – www.satib.co.za/satib-trust
- Taita Trading (Zimbabwe) - www.facebook.com/taitatrading/

Individuals:

- Dr Wolfgang & Dr Gisela Hennig (Germany)

TO DONATE

If you would like to donate to CWF, we do have partnerships with reputable charitable foundations in the following countries that can receive donations on behalf of CWF and allow the donors to legally obtain income tax rebates or tax-related benefits:

- **USA :Bushlife Conservancy** – <https://bushlifeconservancy.org>
- **UK: Victoria Falls Wildlife Trust** – www.vicfallswildlifetrust.org
- **Germany** : www.Rettung-bedrohter-Wildtiere.de Lindenweg 4, 95445 Bayreuth, Germany.
- **Netherlands Stichting CCP – Carnivore Conservation Programme**, Blaaksedijk 244, 3271LRMijnsheerenland, The Netherlands.

To donate directly to CWF please contact the Program Manager on manager@conservationwildlifefund.org for bank details.

PLANS FOR 2020

After two successful years in operation, it was decided to take the opportunity to assess our position and implement any necessary reforms that will help set CWF up for further success in the future. An independent consultant, Mujon Baghai, was engaged in the latter part of 2019 to review CWF's institutional and governance structures relative to Zimbabwe law and regional best practice, with the goal of ensuring a strong platform for the long-term growth and success of CWF. Mujon's research included over 20 interviews with local stakeholders, international conservation and non-profit governance experts, as well as two Zimbabwe-based lawyers. This was supplemented by a review of relevant CWF documents, desk research, and the consultant's own experience in conservation partnerships. This was kindly sponsored by Lion Recovery Fund.

We are currently working on Mujon's recommendations which focus on CWF's leadership developing a clear, shared vision that everyone can unite behind. The key elements to this are clarity of structure and clear strategy, marked by concrete goals, realistic milestones and explicit metrics. To this end we will engage a consultant to assist in this process and we hope to have completed this exercise in the next month. A report detailing the results will be distributed by the end of June 2020.

In the meantime, the CWF team will continue their excellent law enforcement work on the ground.

THANKS

Grateful thanks to our members and staunch supporters: Beks Ndlovu (CWF Chairman, African Bush Camps), Angus Preston (CWF Vice Chairman, The Hide Safari Lodge), Sharon Stead (Amalinda Collection), Katja Quasdorf (Hideaways), Mark Butcher (Imvelo Safari Lodges), Peter Blinston (Painted Dog Conservation), Andrew Loveridge (Hwange Lion Research Project), Peter Lindsey (WCN Lion Recovery Fund), Paul Funston (Panthera) and Brian Courtenay (Southern African Conservation Trust).

Thanks also to our partners, ZPWMA and FCZ, for a good working relationship and to everyone who has given of their time, expertise and other resources to help us help our partners to protect our precious Hwange.

Thanks to Will Maberly for the cover photo; to PDC for the photo of Michael Mavunga with PDC canine unit; and to Steve Alexander for all the other photos used in the body of this report.

MEDIA AND CONTACT

For more information please see:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ConservationWildlifeFund/>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/conservation_wildlife_fund/

Website: <https://www.conservationwildlifefund.org/>

Email: manager@conservationwildlifefund.org or fieldops@conservationwildlifefund.org