

Imire Rhino and Wildlife Conservation Christmas Thank You

At this time of year, it's natural for all of us to reflect on what we've achieved and enjoyed; at Imire, it's been a very constructive year in so many little, but very meaningful ways.

Just our new name "Imire Rhino and Wildlife Conservation" is a great achievement! Sums up perfectly what we do as the caretakers and protectors of Imire and all she holds dear. It's never easy, but then whoever said it would be? We continue to follow the philosophy of Imire's Noah, Norman Travers, when he reintroduced small herds of wildlife back onto the savannah plains of the highveld's "ark", initiating his dream in the early 70s. It was not easy then, but he took it step-by-step, one day at a time, which is exactly what we are doing today in 2011.

Imire's uniqueness comes from the characters of the animals as well as the close interaction between animals and people. Special bonds of trust have formed over the years and we feel that somehow there is no place like Imire anywhere on this earth.

"... there is no place like Imire anywhere on this earth."

The elephants take centre stage in most people's hearts. Mac in particular, our gentle giant, wonderful father to 2-year-old Kutanga, who loves to imitate his parents even though often out of his depth.

Nzhou, the matriarch of Imire, who lives with the buffalo, and manages to unleash her nightly chain when she feels like it, removing the buffalo from their slumber and raiding the crops or farm veggie gardens for a scrummy midnight feast.



The Black Rhino continue to fill our hearts.

Recently dehorned, their scars testimony of the destruction and greed of mankind. Tatenda is now coming into his 5th year and he still enchants all who meet him; that inquisitive expression on his enquiring little face is what does it for Tatenda. We would like to thank Mr. Colin Roberts for his continuing, very generous sponsorship, which meets Tatenda's needs throughout the year.



We thank National Foods for

their generous support and continued donation of one tonne of cubes each month; we cannot express how grateful we are and how important your donations are to Imire. It is a great relief each month to know that we have your support. Thank you.



Thankfully we have had such beautiful rains already and welcomed the arrival of the Abdims Stork, a true indication of summer.

The veld has come alive literally with maternity wards of babies... impala, wildebeest, blesbok... such a glorious exciting time of year, we love it!

The bee-eaters are home, arriving rather dowdy after their long flights, and are now sprucing themselves up for Christmas.

The red-breasted cuckoo is a true Christmas sound - "piet-me vrou". And our attention is captured anew each time by the glorious russet colour of the paradise flycatchers, the plum coloured starlings and more...

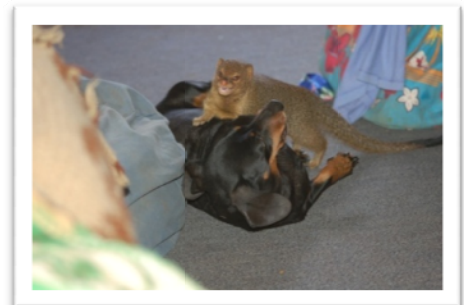
Horse-back riding alongside the Imire babies is so exciting, a great way to be in touch and in tune with nature.

This year has been a great year for Gabriella, the warthog orphaned in 2009. After much concern as to what to do about her love for our bed and sofa, Gub-Gub did what all warties 'oughta' and found herself 'Mr. Handsome'; she gave up her home comforts for an ant-bear hole in the game park and is now a very proud and happy Mamma of two scallywags, only coming home now and then for a tummy rub. We are thrilled for Gubby as this is how it should be ~ all animals returned back safely to the wild.

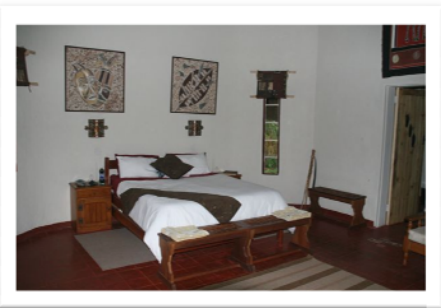


The same can be said for Mongo, an orphaned mongoose, who found his home in Judy's knickers' drawer for a year! During this time we had many of his predator visitors visiting the knickers drawer at all hours of the day and night - a 7 foot python, a leguaan and of course endless

territorial wild 'mongooses' have made their way into this rather unusual bedroom! Mongo is still the kingpin on the block and pops in from time to time when it suits him for a quick easy snack, and then off he scoots!



“Conservation education is Imire's priority, as this is the key in protecting Zimbabwe's precious wildlife heritage.”



We would very much like to thank our Lodge Manager, Jason Palmer and his partner Jane and the wonderful Lodge team for all their hard work this year. With the expertise and skills of Jason and Jane, Imire has been given an upgrade and much needed renovation; through generous funding from Nick and Pamela Roditi ~ The Curtin Foundation, we have been able to upgrade the facilities of our educational bush camp, too. Thank you to Nick and Pamela and Robert Whitman for sharing our vision in the importance of conservation education for all

school children. This year more than 2,700 children have had this privilege of education via school tours and educational bush camps.

Reilly, together with his anti-poaching unit and teammates, remains vigilant 24 hours a day. As a result, the poaching on Imire has significantly dropped. They are kept extremely busy every full moon when, for some unknown reason, we have to track down and turn around the nomadic white rhino, Ntombi and Matopos, who feel it necessary to break out of Imire, heading cross country, up to 60km away. We take our hats off to Reilly and his scouts on their tracking skills and energy. There is never a happier Reilly than after a good couple of days tracking - beats an office job any day!

We thank Bright, Greg Moran and the volunteers for their hard work and commitment to conservation. It really is fun having people from all walks of life sharing the daily workload and forming close relationships with the animals on Imire. Through the volunteer programme, we are able to work closely with our local Numwa Schools assisting in teaching, sport and permaculture in the primary and secondary school -



over a 1,000 children. This year has been a good year with

the construction of a new pre-school classroom, built from funds from one of our generous volunteers - a big thank you to Barry Takel.

Through the volunteer program we are now part of a

Women's Sewing Group, making affordable school uniforms for rural children - all machines donated by Imire volunteers. Three children have been able to follow their dreams of becoming teachers and extending their education to college level. For this we thank Jo Hansen, a volunteer from Australia, for funding and committing to their tuition so generously; a remarkable person who saw the need and acted on it.

A community borehole has also been installed by Imire in a rural school close by.

Charlotte Ramsay, a 2010 volunteer, showed her true colours by entering the British Iron Will Challenge - after 14 hours of gruelling commitment to Imire. Charlotte donated her sponsorship money towards the very much needed upgrade of our website, which is happening! We really do admire her drive and determination. Charlotte, thank you from our hearts.

Laura Davies believes in, understands and truly captures the essence of Imire; she's passionate about Zimbabwe's heritage, and is giving her commitment to our new website; she's always on hand to give support and advice. Thank you Laura and Jacqui, too, for your vision and sincere love for conservation.

We would like to thank Nicholas Duncan and Save the Rhino Australia, who support all the Rhino projects of Zimbabwe. Nicholas is a key support to all rhino conservation projects -



he makes things happen and his generosity of funding and veterinary supplies are valued in the world of wildlife.

Doctor Chris Foggin, with his veterinary partner Doctor Chap Masterson, give Imire their undivided expertise, advice and direction when we need it most. Thank you Chris and Chap, you look after the rhinos of Zimbabwe with such deep passion, we are privileged to have you both in the wildlife industry.



We hold an annual rural soccer and netball Rhino Tournament every November in memory of the four rhino slaughtered on Imire in 2007. We feel it is important to mark the tragic day with awareness of conservation and wildlife. Always a fun day, with the elephant kicking in the final goal. We would like to thank very much Absolute Sport and Springvale School for the wonderful donations of soccer and net balls, thanks to Nyambuya Services in Marondera for the Save the Rhino T-shirts - the kids went home to their rural areas beaming. Of

course, thanks to Proton Bakery and Metro Peech for the food supplies and everyone who made the day a very special one for the kids in the rural areas.

The annual mountain bike ride, organised by the Marondera cyclists, is held once a year to raise much needed funds for Borradaile Trust Old People's Home. This year's event finished on Imire after a cross country course of 65 tough kms. This is a very well-supported bike ride with cyclists from all over Zimbabwe and all ages - it continues to grow every year.

Every year Borradaile Trust spend a day on Imire, we all look forward to this annual event, a time to catch up with their stories of days gone by. They leave Imire on the Peterhouse school bus totally exhilarated, thrilled to be in the bush surrounded by animals, and having shared great food and wine.

Lastly, but my no means least, thank you to all the Imire staff; our first class guides Edmore and Anyway and to Morris who left us after many years of great service; to the committed elephant and rhino handlers; our hard working Chefs and all the helpers, each and everyone of you - a very big THANK YOU for all you do in the name of conservation. Your hard teamwork and enthusiasm is what allows Imire to grow.

To all our valuable clients, thank you for your support and please come and share the Imire spirit again, we welcome you always.

It is truly wonderful to have so many people like those we have mentioned who give their time, money and support in helping us cherish vital gene pools. To those too numerous to mention but just as important, thanks to each and every one of you - we appreciate your time and generosity for all you do for conservation.

We take this time to wish you all a safe and happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Warm Regards
John and Judy Travers
Imire Rhino and Wildlife Conservation