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Written and edited by John
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Painted Dog Conservation Inc

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Chairman – John Lemon
Vice Chairman – Angela Lemon
Treasurer – Carol Shannon
Secretary – Alyson Handfield

**Patrons: Tony Park, Bradley
Trevor Greive and Simon Reeve**

From the Chairman

To all our valued members we hope you had a Merry Christmas and safe and Happy New Year.

It's hard to believe that 2013 has passed. It is always great to reflect on the year – and what a year it was.

A quick overview of the year includes continuing to fully fund an anti-poaching team in South Luangwa National Park through the South Luangwa Conservation Society, with the generous financial support gained by us from Perth Zoo and its Wildlife Conservation Action fundraising program.

We also continued our support of a community education officer through Chipembele Trust with funds we were granted from Perth Zoo to undertake further education activities in the rural areas.

Additionally, we have provided continued support to the Zambian Carnivore Programme for field activities and vehicle maintenance and will be acquiring an additional vehicle for the Kafue National Park study site in the coming weeks.

(An update of my most recent field trip to Liuwa Plains National Park, Zambia, is within these pages and one of my best yet!)

Funding was also provided for educational materials for African Wildlife Conservation Fund's Zimbabwean Lowveld Wild Dog Project and we also distributed funding from the Humane Society International (Australia) to the Painted Dog Conservation Project in Hwange Zimbabwe.

Also in this newsletter we showcase our largest fundraising activity to date, an Evening with Kevin Richardson (aptly named the "Lion Whisperer"), which was held in three states over one week in November.

Kevin's anti-canned lion hunting was a heartfelt message by all who attended. We have recently contributed a considerable amount of funding to allow him to spearhead



his campaign.

Exciting news is that our patrons Bradley Trevor Grieve and Tony Park have now been joined by Simon Reeve (pictured top), who is as passionate about Africa and the dogs as we are!

Simon is an Australian television presenter and host on the Seven Network. He is currently the sports presenter on Weekend Sunrise, a reporter on Sunrise, the host of the children's quiz show *It's Academic*, the presenter on *The Force: Behind the Line* as well as a fill-in

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presenter for Seven News. From the beginning of 2014, he will host *Million Dollar Minute*.

Welcome to our newest Life Members Peter Cliff and Chris Mitchell.

Welcome also to Wayne Hamilton (pictured bottom previous page), Director of Swagman Tours www.swagmantours.com.au as our most recent committee member.

Wayne did an exceptional job attending and supporting all three Kevin Richardson events as well as being the auctioneer at two of them.

All these results are not possible without the assistance of our committee, members, supporters and our donors.

Continued support from the SAVE Foundation committee, Nicholas Duncan, Mike Palmer, Kim Hoddy, Nia Carras, Steve Harrison and Eveline Wong, is always outstanding and major donors including

Perth Zoo, Syd and Sue Chipchase, Chris and Margie McClelland, Geoff Hoddy, Bev Poor, Steve Morvell and others are always there to continue their support.

I wish to convey my thanks to the committee, in particular Carol Shannon (Treasurer), Alyson Handfield (Secretary), Mark Tyler (Life Member and Committee Member) and Frances Ingall (Committee member), for their ongoing contributions.

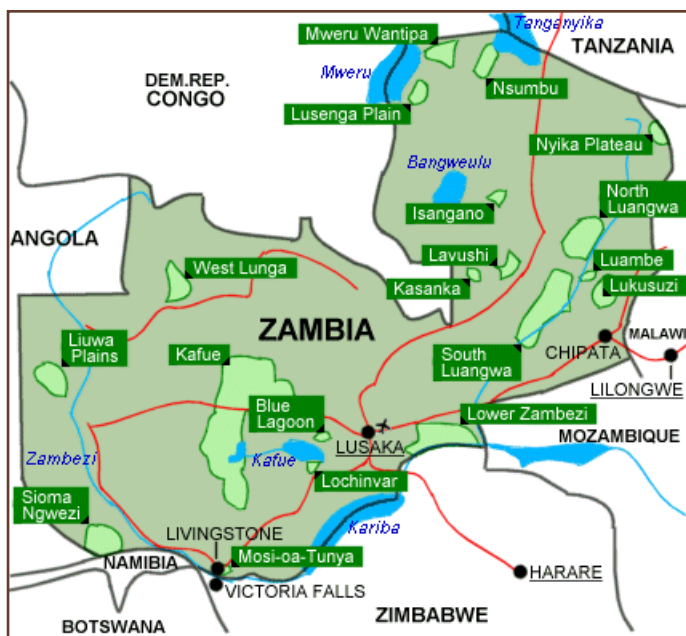
Thanks also go to Daniel Scarparolo for his continued assistance with design and compilation of the newsletter, event fliers and various other printed media. A great task considering he is currently in Canada!

2014 is gearing up to be a great year and I look forward to catching up with you all soon.

Regards
John Lemon
Chairman PDC Inc.

Liuwa 2013

John Lemon, Chairman Painted Dog Conservation Incorporated and Chairman of the Zambia Carnivore Programme, gives an insight into three weeks of his travels to Zambia to undertake research in Zambia's Liuwa Plains National Park.



History of Liuwa Plain National Park

Liuwa Plain has long been regarded as a special place. As early as the 19th century, it was declared a 'game reserve' by the Litunga, the traditional king of Barotseland. Traditionally, the plains were the Litunga's private hunting ground, and the villagers were charged with looking after the animals for him. Then in 1972 Liuwa Plain became a national park and its management was taken over by central government – although the local people continue to have rights to utilise parts of the park and its plains for grazing, harvesting of traditional plants and fishing in the rivers.

The Liuwa Plain Ecosystem forms a huge ecological network the size of Italy.

In the Lozi language that is spoken all over western Zambia, the word 'Liuwa' means 'plain'. There's a local legend of how one Litunga planted his walking stick on the plains, where it grew into a large mutata tree. This tree can still be seen in the national park.

Widespread poaching, mainly by refugees and warring factions from the Angolan war, over the last several

decades, along with unsustainable trophy hunting, extirpated most of the park's large mammal species.

In 2003, African Parks Zambia (APZ) assumed management of Liuwa in partnership with the Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) and the Barotse Royal Establishment tribal authority. APZ's vision has been to protect and restore the ecosystem, its processes, and the human populations that depend on it through legal and traditional instruments.

As a result, wildlife species and populations are being rapidly restored through increased protection efforts such as anti-poaching patrols and reintroductions of many species. One hallmark of their success has been tremendous improvements among large ungulates such as wildebeest (*Connochaetes taurinus*) that have more than doubled in number from 15,000 in 2003 to over 40,000 at present.

Liuwa Plain is certainly the most fascinating park in the region, but getting there currently requires an expedition.

Geography of Liuwa Plain National Park

Until the last few years, there have not really been any roads at all in the national park; it's just been 3,660km² of untouched Africa. The majority of Liuwa Plain National Park is covered with huge, honey-coloured grassy plains – measuring about 70km long and 30km wide.

Within this huge open area, you'll find the occasional small tree-island, cluster of raffia palms, or open pan interrupting the flatness. Often you can look 360° around you and see nothing but a level expanse. The environment is unlike any other park in Zambia.

Much of the huge Liuwa Plain floods from around December to April. The waters are said to rise in the north and spread south. This flooding drives the wildebeest migration, for which the park is famous; the herds move out of the woodlands to the north and on to the open plains for new, fresh grazing.

In the centre of Liuwa Plain, and especially to the south of this enormous grassy plain, there are a scattering of flat, open pans. Many of which hold their water well into the dry season – and these are always worth investigating. They vary immensely; on any given day some will appear almost lifeless, whilst others host real concentrations of birds or antelope.

Mammals and reptiles of Liuwa Plain

As is often the case in large open areas, Liuwa's larger mammals tend to group together into great herds when on Liuwa Plain – and these are much of the park's attraction.

The wildlife census in 1991 estimated there were about 30,000 blue wildebeest, 8,000 tsessebe, 1,000 zebra and 10,000 other large mammals – including herds of buffalo, red lechwe, eland, Lichtenstein's hartebeest and roan antelope, plus assorted pairs of reedbuck and the delightful, diminutive oribi that are so common there.

Subsequent surveys suggest that game numbers were declining significantly towards the end of the 1990s and in the first few years of the 21st century. By 2003 blue wildebeest numbers in Liuwa Plain were estimated at only 15,000. This decline was stopped with much more active protection thanks to the African Parks Network, which took on the park as one of its projects in 2003–4. They've spent a lot of time and money on the park's conservation, and the development of its surrounding communities since then – and this appears to have paid off.

Liuwa's blue wildebeest are now estimated to number as many as 45,000 – and anecdotal evidence is that other species are also benefiting.

Predators are also well-represented in Liuwa. Lion, leopard, cheetah, Painted dog and hyena all occur there.

Leopard occurs within the national park, though the surrounding forest is a better habitat for them than the plain itself.

Zambian Carnivore Programme and Painted Dog Conservation Incorporated have been undertaking research and conservation initiatives in the park since 2009.

Birds found in Liuwa Plain National Park

About 319 bird species have been recorded in or around the Liuwa Plain. Bob Stjernstedt, a Zambian birding expert, comments that because Liuwa is seldom visited, many more birds are sure to be added to this list.

In dry months such as September, the birding is amazing. Spectacular groups of crowned cranes often numbering several hundred birds; groups of wattled

cranes, and flocks of several hundred pelicans have been seen.

When the pans fill up, yellow-billed, open-billed, saddle-billed and marabou storks arrive, with grey herons, spoonbills, egrets, three-banded and lots of blacksmith's plovers, spur-winged and pygmy geese, and many other water birds. Slaty egrets are seen in groups, a rare occurrence elsewhere.

Secretary birds and Denham's and white-bellied bustards are common; and the park is noted for large numbers of the migrant black-winged pratincoles, a finely-marked swift-like bird which is rare further east. Other 'special' birds in Liuwa Plain include the pink-billed and clapper larks, swamp boubou, rosy-breasted longclaw, sharp-tailed starling, long-tailed widow and white cheeked bee-eater. Liuwa Plain is also a great area for raptors from the greater kestrel to bateleur and martial eagles, palmnut vultures and fish eagles. Pel's fishing owl is found along Luangwa River to the south and the Luambimba River in the north.

Seasons in Liuwa Plain

From January to about April, a large area of Liuwa Plain is covered in shallow water, and all the pans in the south of the park are full – perfect for the large herds of herbivores which gather there, and the large numbers of birds which also arrive.

However, around May–July the plains dry up, the waters recede northwards, and gradually the herds move that way also.

They desert the waterholes of the southern side of the plain, and move back north-west, eventually melting back into the woodlands which surround the park. Plenty of resident wildlife remains, relying on a scattering of pans which retain their water for most of the year.

From August to October the herds start drifting southwards again. At first, in September, you'll find just a few herds, typically just a few hundred wildebeest, venturing south on to the northern areas of the plain – but gradually as the rains approach these increase in number and move further south into the park.

In November and December the first rains are falling, and then Liuwa Plain is teeming with game. November is classically the best time to visit the park – a balance between catching the best of the game, and yet avoiding any danger of getting permanently stuck in deep mud.

For those who are feeling seriously adventurous, the park is accessible from around February to April.

Day 1

After many months of preparation it was time to pack field equipment, vehicle spares and clothing for a three-week visit to Liuwa Plain, Zambia, to join my colleagues in undertaking ground breaking research on lion, hyena, cheetah, wildebeest and Painted dogs.

Just over twelve months ago we undertook the largest wildebeest collaring operation in history on the second largest wildebeest population behind the Maasai Mara Ecosystem.



As usual I leave packing to the last minute and with three hours until I needed to be at the airport I began a mad dash around the house like a competitor in a trolley grab race.

Five minutes into my preparation we were in complete darkness, Canning Vale once again had a major blackout and after a quick call to Western Power, restoration was at least three hours away. After living in Africa, being plunged in darkness at inappropriate times didn't put me off and with a fresh set of batteries in the head torch I was packed.

At check-in my dramas continued. I was carrying a much needed alternator for one of our grounded land rovers. The lady at the counter said that it couldn't be checked-in as it may contain fuel and be a risk. After 15 minutes of explaining what an alternator does it was on. Next my bulk pack of AA batteries! After an explanation and clearance from the dangerous goods officer, they too were cleared.

Eleven hours later I arrived at Johannesburg Airport with a six-hour stopover.

Onto my second flight of the trip to Lusaka to meet my team, arriving without sleep and off to Lusaka Backpackers.



Day 2

The whole day was spent buying food for three weeks in the field plus hardware and car parts.

Lusaka has become something of a boom town of late. New buildings are going up everywhere and many chain stores and shopping malls are springing up all over the sprawling suburbs.

The road development isn't quite keeping up so peak hour traffic is finally becoming like other cities, but it has an optimistic air of a town on the rise. For many, this is the perfect example of what economic liberalisation has done for the country.

And viewed from the villages, Lusaka is the glittering capital which still persuades rural Zambians to migrate to the city in search of jobs and dreams. Well over 60% of its 2 million inhabitants are unemployed, but there are surprisingly few beggars. Although petty theft occurs, most people try to make an honest living selling their wares or services, always with a friendly smile.

Day 3

As part of my role as Chairman of the Zambian Carnivore Programme, it was off to WWF Zambian Headquarters for our AGM plus crucial meetings with Dr Nyambe Nyambe on future activities. A big day and an anticipation of excitement in the air as we head into field tomorrow after much preparation.

Day 4

We headed off at 5.30am hoping to get to Kafue National Park to undertake some reconnaissance work.



Once in the southern part of the park it wasn't long until our open vehicle was infested with tsetse flies and biting us relentlessly. One animal I don't like which is a first and apart from their nasty bite, diseases transmitted by tsetse flies kill 250,000–300,000 people per year.

Found in the centre of western Zambia, Kafue National Park is the oldest and largest of Zambia's national parks. It covers a massive 22,400 km².

First established as a national park in the 1950s by the legendary Norman Carr, Kafue is one of the largest national parks in the whole of Africa. Despite its size and prominent location only two hours' drive from Livingstone, it remains little-known and largely unexplored with vast tracts of its virgin bush still untouched. Thanks to its size and variety of habitat types the Kafue holds a fantastic diversity of wildlife.



Our challenge today was to drive from Kafue to Mongu, onto Kalabo and another four hour drive to our base and get there before dark!

We headed off before dawn and, 70 km before Mongu, we came across a fatal truck rollover. With the large crowd around there was nothing we could help with and we continued on. We arrived at our first barge crossing but it was out so we then had to use a makeshift bridge built by the Chinese. It only just sufficed and we were on our way to Kalabo.

Kalabo is a small town and administrative district in the Western Province of Zambia, on the plains west of the Zambezi River and the Barotse Floodplain, about 70 km from the border with Angola.

It is situated on the south-eastern bank of the Luanginga River across which a small pontoon ferry connects to a dirt track going north-west to the Angolan border. Kalabo is the base for the Liuwa Plain National Park.

Western Province was formerly known as Barotseland, and Liuwa Plain was the Barotse king's hunting grounds which Lewanika made into a game reserve in the 19th century.



Once our work was done and we were covered in tsetse fly bites it was off to stay with friends at Mukambi Safari Lodge and share a few tales and a few ales.

Day 5

Access to Kalabo by road is difficult and it is usually cut off by road in the rainy season. The dirt tracks across the floodplain from Mongu become flooded, and frequently in poor condition at other times. The tracks go to two ferries across the main channel of the Zambezi, a northern one near Libonda accessed from Mongu via Limulunga, and a southern one at Sandaula accessed via Lealui.

In recent years dirt roads on raised earth embankments have been constructed from Mongu to Lealui and from Kalabo to Sandaula. This is part of an ambitious long-term regional plan to provide the first ever major link between the road networks of Zambia and Angola via a paved causeway across the floodplain and a bridge over the Zambezi, replacing the ferry. A paved highway would then be built from Kalabo north-west to the Angolan border and beyond. Although originally intended for completion in 2006, construction has proved more difficult than anticipated and large sections were washed away in floods in 2003/4, resulting in funding shortfalls.

Except at the end of the dry season, small boats can go from the harbour at Mongu all the way to Kalabo, a distance of about 50 km.

A dirt track also goes 200 km north-north-east to Kalabo from the Kalongola Ferry south of Senanga, but it is in very poor condition.

We arrived finally at our second barge and it was in action. Pulling a fully loaded land rover across by rope is always good exercise after driving for so long.

We arrived at camp in the dark.

Quick meal and it was off to our tents.

Day 6

Starting early in the morning it was off to undertake field research for our wildebeest project. Part of the project is to work out home ranges, migration patterns, and survivorship and vegetation preference.



It wasn't long and we met up with the Sausage Tree Painted Dog Pack that was enjoying wildebeest calving as it made for easy pickings.

Further on, we came across Lady Liuwa, possibly the world's most famous lion, and her male and female companions. The younger female was heavily pregnant.



Day 7

Liuwa is home to hundreds of hyena and it was off to try and fit a new VHF collar to one of our study animals that needed replacement.



On route we again met up with the Sausage Tree pack and they were on the hunt. Liuwa makes for great carnivore hunt follows and it wasn't long until we watched them pull down another wildebeest calf. Around twelve hyenas were quickly to the site hoping to pick up any leftovers.



After the dogs rested by a waterhole to avoid the heat, we set off back to camp to get more water and headed back to spend the night with the dogs and keep on their track.

The hyenas surrounded our car, chewing the bumpers, mudflaps and tyres. We continual had to shoo them off. Even toilet breaks meant standing behind the open car door with a hyena on the other side and watching behind you. Very curious and unlike any hyena I have worked with in Zimbabwe.

At 11.30pm a massive storm rolled in with lightning

and torrential rain. Our canvas cover on the rear was ripped to shreds by the winds.

In our open land rover it was sadly back to camp.

Day 8

With two broken down vehicles it was a day spent on repairs then back onto wildebeest data collection on motorbikes.



Liuwa is also a great herpetological site with huge monitors and snakes a plenty.

Massive storms roll in back to camp.



Back on the female hyena for collaring and this time a success at 12.45am.



Back to base and get ready for 4.30am to roll around.

Day 9

The morning was spent repairing our solar panel array and waterproofing with new sheets of iron.

It was off on our Honda UTV to check the lions.



We sat with the male to follow his hunt. The two girls had moved off, preparing for the impending birth.



Darkness arrived and so did the rain, just as the male began his hunt. With two cheap ponchos in my bag, I handed one to my colleague as the rain bucketed down.

Day 10

Stayed all day and night with the dogs sleeping in our old Prado. The next morning the dogs killed six wildebeest calves in one hunt. Splitting off into pairs, with one group chasing their calf almost under our car.



The hyena stole two kills but the dogs were definitely full and weren't going to hunt again.

At around 2am I woke with breathing at my ear, I had managed to dose off with my head against an open window in the back seat and a hyena was less than 10cm from my ear!



Day 11

Spent all day and night with the dogs in the UTV. After their big meal the day before, the dogs laid in slumber until 9.30am and then headed off on several chases with no real enthusiasm.



Sleeping in the UTV is near impossible and trying to keep all of your appendages inside the cab another!

Headed back to camp and then back out on the UTV on my own for the night.

Surrounded by huge electrical storms and spectacular light show I followed the dogs on a night kill at around



8.30pm. This time a yearling wildebeest.

The storms and lightning worsened. I needed to stay on the dogs but with the added rain and wind I had to head back. The UTV had a fuel issue and took four hours to get back to base, drenched to the bone.

Had to spend an hour drying out the equipment then off to a wet bed as well at 1.30am.

Day 12

Spent the whole day tracking and collecting data on two cheetah on the motorbike. They killed a common duiker.

Lions in camp overnight.

Day 13





Continued a full day of data collection on the two cheetah.

Day 14

Another day with the cheetah, this time they killed an oribi.

Day 16–18

Spent the last few days with the dogs around the clock.

Witnessed some amazing hunts and interactions.

Dogs in most environments are arch rivals with hyena but in Liuwa, if the pressure of protecting a kill is not paramount, you can find them sharing a waterhole.

Day 19

We left camp at 2.30am hoping to get back to Lusaka by dark. Sixteen hours' drive passing another fatal crash along the way and we arrived in Lusaka.

Unloaded our equipment into storage for the rains then off to a final meal with my team.

Day 20

Two flights home and back in Perth.

Big thanks to SAVE African Rhino Foundation for their continued support of PDC Inc. and my work!





"Canned" Hunting

by Kevin Richardson, *The Lion Whisperer*

While it's really great that Melissa Bachman has brought to the fore the despicable practice of "canned" lion hunting, it has also made me realize how misguided most people are in terms of the reality of what's happening in South Africa surrounding lions.

Unfortunately what Melissa did is not illegal and therefore getting hundreds of thousands of people to sign a petition banning her from South Africa is futile and actually counter productive, as once again passionate energy is misdirected and the matter becomes confusing and clouded as people don't actually know how to go about making a real difference to conserving lions and putting a stop to "canned" hunting.

In South Africa we have loosely three groups of lions. Captive lions, those which live in captivity and have all their daily food and drink requirements met, (note I don't say "have all their needs met"); wild managed lions, which live in game reserves of various finite sizes (they catch their own prey and find water however are

sometimes intensively managed as numbers need to be kept in check depending on the game farm size); and truly wild lions, which pretty much are self sustaining.

Out of the three groups it's only really the truly wild lions that contribute directly to lion conservation in Africa at this point in time. The other two groups require man's intervention, which is almost always controversial, especially when it comes down to managing populations.

However, let's get back to Melissa Bachman, whereby it has been stated by many a hunter that her shooting that lion contributed to lion conservation, community upliftment and job creation. How could it contribute to lion conservation when the lion was a captive-bred lion that was reared for the sole purpose of being shot and killed as a trophy animal one day?

Hunters will argue that this type of "closed system" hunting takes pressure off wild lions being hunted. This also cannot be true as there is no evidence

to support this. In fact wild lion numbers have dropped significantly in the past decade whereas captive breeders and “canned” hunting farms have mushroomed in that same period.

More or less 10 or so years ago there were thought to be around 2000–2500 lions in captivity. Now there are estimates of between 6500 and 8000. Numbers are extremely difficult to obtain as conservation authorities are not forth giving with that information. Personally I think it's because they actually don't know.

Why I say this is because I've seen first hand in my 16 years of working with lions, just how easy it can be for facilities to cheat the system. During this same period of 10 years, wild lion numbers have plummeted from in the region of close to 100,000 down to anywhere between 15,000 and 30,000 (and this is because scientists don't agree on the numbers and quite frankly it appears that they actually don't know, which is even more alarming).

What people don't know is that around three or more lions are shot every day in the same manner that Melissa Bachman shot her lion in South Africa. Why she sparked such a public outcry is probably because an animal lover stumbled on her facebook post and then reposted on other social networking platforms, which was then easily accessible by the lay public, who are not necessarily searching the internet for this kind of macabre content. This was the incendiary device that caused the uproar.

However, if you do a Google search today, you'll find just as many upsetting images and/or YouTube clips of lions and other animals being shot in a similar manner, with people posing alongside the lifeless bodies with a broad grin on their faces.

What is extremely distressing is that the very same 480,000 plus people who signed a petition trying to ban her from South Africa, completely miss the link between them going to a predator park of sorts and interacting or petting a lion cub, which most people if asked have done at some point in their life.

In fact it's a well known pastime to do this in South Africa and is promoted by several reputable tourism organizations as a “not to miss” experience. They fail to make or simply choose to ignore the connection between the cub they pet and ultimately the lion that they see in the picture with Melissa Bachman.

I'm yet to be given a straight answer as to where all the surplus lions land up once they are too old to be petted or walked with. (Walking with lions is the new “in” thing).

Many facilities will tell you how their lions go to “good” zoos around the world, and others go to wilderness areas or game farms around South Africa. Don't get me wrong here, not all lions land up being “canned” hunted. There are a few facilities that get cubs and then keep them once they're too big to interact with.

These facilities don't offer cub petting as an activity all year round and I've seen such facilities owned by people with genuine good intentions.

Some facilities and zoos even sell a lion or two to bona fide facilities in South Africa or even overseas. Some facilities that breed lions perpetually even keep some of the lions they breed and can show you them when asked, “what happens to cubs after they're too old to pet?”. However, be warned, by and large, most of the lions land up somewhere down the line at a hunting farm.

Something that I find somewhat bizarre is the notion that because a facility keeps a lion alive, it almost makes it okay to keep it in a less than appropriate enclosure.

I often hear the comment, “but at least he's alive, seems healthy and gets food and water”. I suppose having worked so closely with lions over the past 16 years has made me realize that lions in captivity need so much more than just food and water and that there are very few facilities that can properly take care of their needs. It's probably one of the biggest motivations why I still maintain close relationships with the lions I work with. You can see a difference in their demeanor and psychological well being. It also enables me to rotate the lions in my care to different areas in my facility which facilitates mental and physical stimulation and is also the reason as to why a 20 hectare area was built at the sanctuary. The lions will all eventually be rotated through this area which gives them a quality of life in captivity.

Having said that, my mission nowadays is to see less lions bred in captivity as the model that works for me is simply not sustainable and has its inherent dangers associated with it. Not everyone is going to raise a lion and then dedicate their life to making sure its life is enriched. Multiply that by 27 (the amount of lions I

care for) and it makes the job infinitely more difficult.

A better situation would be to see declining wild lion numbers stop in their tracks, take a 180 degree turn and start increasing again. After all this time working intimately with lions in captivity, maybe I am becoming a “greenie” as somebody mockingly accused me of becoming the other day.

It's not a question of being a “greenie” to me, but rather a question of where I would like my children and their children to see lions one day.

Naturally in the wild, I would hope.

Back to the captive breeding, I suppose the question that runs around in my head is a simple one of basic mathematics. If you are a facility and you always offer cubs for the public to interact with, then you must have a constant supply of cubs from breeding females. If you take a lioness that has up to four cubs in a litter and you remove those cubs to hand rear for your cub petting program, she will come back into estrus within a few weeks only to be mated and fall pregnant again. Within 110 days you will have another litter of lion cubs which if removed, will start the whole process over again.

Now if you take how many facilities around the country breeding lions (160 probably more) and multiply this by just one lioness having an average of say six cubs a year, that's 960 lions, just from one lioness at each facility. Now that's just one female. If you have three, that number becomes 2880.

At this rate all the bona fide zoos and legitimate game farms or preserves around the world would be filled to capacity in one year or even less, and then there would be no need for more, as a lion in captivity can live for up to 20 years!

We do know that the captive lion population has increased to around 6500–8000. Where have the thousands of others gone? It's just not sustainable unless there is some sort of an outlet, i.e. “canned” hunting farms.

What's even more concerning of late is that The Predator Breeders Association of SA recently said on SBS Australia's 60 Minutes television program, that they have distanced themselves from petting facilities and/or hand raised lions, and that the lions that their members supply to the “canned” industry have no human imprinting whatsoever.

At face value this starts to seem more ethical as the lions don't see humans as a friend but rather a foe, however yet again there are several flaws in this approach.

The first is that, even if this was true, a “canned” lion has absolutely no chance of fair escape. It's put in an area hours or at most a day or two before the “hunt” and then is “tracked” down and killed in a pantomime, not a hunt. This can't possibly be called hunting.

The reason lion are one of the big five game animals is because of their reputation for being dangerous to hunt, back in the day when hunters actually hunted and animals actually had a chance of evading the hunter.

The second issue relating to this “hands off” breeding approach to lions is what happens to lion cubs that truly are abandoned by lionesses? Are they left to die? Surely these are removed and hand raised?

The third issue is that breeding lions “hands off” simply won't satisfy the demand for trophy lions, especially males. Let me explain.

If a lioness is kept in an enclosure and is mated with a male, she will have a litter after conceiving in 110 days. Now with a “hands off” approach we are led to believe that the lioness will raise her cubs until they are ready to eat meat or weaned fully. This process can take up to six months or longer. Only then would the cubs be removed from their mother and put in another enclosure and the mother mated again, which would only allow for at most a litter a year.

One would also expect more mortalities and therefore less yield at the end of the year. Also assuming a 50/50 birth ratio of male to female (and bearing in mind that the demand is for trophy hunting male lions), one would start to see a shortfall in the amount of lions being available for hunting. So the question is, “what happens to all the females and what happens to cubs that need hand raising?”

Also, again assuming that The Predator Breeders stick to the rule they've set and we overlook what I've just raised in the paragraphs above, I start to fear what is going to happen to all these lions bred for cub petting if there is no longer an outlet. Are we going to start seeing cubs or lions being “destroyed” once they have passed their usefulness?

Unfortunately at the end of the day, it all revolves around money.

The lion industry is huge business and the cub petting/lion walking part of it is extremely lucrative. A lion sold legitimately to a zoo or similar type park around the world will fetch 5–6 times less than if sold to a middle man looking for lions to supply to the hunting industry.

The NSPCA staff described how a predator park near Johannesburg undertook to abandon cub petting because of ethical issues. Unfortunately, the loss of income would've been so severe that the park reneged on its undertaking, and didn't even stop it for one day. I'd love to know what those ethical concerns were.

When it comes to money, ethics seem to fly out the window.

What would really be a breath of fresh air is for some transparency. Predator parks around the country continuously claim that their cubs don't go to "canned" farms and haven't been sold there in the past. If this is true, then there shouldn't be any problem disclosing where. It would be wonderful to follow up on some of the lions that were bred over the years. It would also be good to see some sales figures which would clearly reflect to whom they were sold just by looking at the price. It shouldn't really be hard to do as every lion by law should be micro-chipped. It should be a simple task of asking for

a sample of say 10 or 20 lions that were sold, getting their micro-chip numbers and then following up at the facility where they were sold to.

Likewise every captive lion that ends up in a "canned" hunt should have a micro-chip number on the permit. At any point in time one should be able to test The Predator Breeders' self imposed rule and use a micro-chip reader to see where the lion was originally bred after it has been hunted. This should put to rest a lot of myths about cub petted lions being hunted.

If a lion that is hunted fails to show a micro-chip number, one can only assume that the lion was wild. Wouldn't that throw a spanner in the works of the "canned" hunting world!

To think that lions, once revered by people around the world and thought of as "The King of Beasts", represented on coats of arms, adorned on family crests and crowns of kings, present in statue form in almost every city around the world and representative as the national animal in no less than 13 countries, are now being farmed like battery chickens for slaughter, excepting in this instance, not even for food but as a trophy that is a result of nothing other than a sick form of self gratification or indulgence and greed for the greenback.

For more information visit www.lionwhisperer.co.za.

An Evening with Kevin Richardson

In November 2013, PDC Inc was honoured to host world famous conservationist, Kevin Richardson ("The Lion Whisperer") as our special guest speaker at events across Australia.



We had been developing our relationship with Kevin and his wife Mandy over the past 12 months, and were excited to partner with him for our fundraising evenings.

Our patron Tony Park co-wrote Kevin's book "Part of the Pride", so PDC Inc was keen to develop this relationship further, and were fortunate to have Tony also present at our Perth event.

Functions were held in Perth (2 November), Melbourne (6 November) and Sydney (7 November), and over 400 people attended these functions, helping raise considerable funds for our frontline conservation projects.

It was a manic week (and months leading up to the events themselves!), with John and I travelling with Kevin, "escorting" both Kevin and the auction items to each event, setting up at each venue, ensuring the

functions went smoothly and organised Kevin's media commitments such as Sunrise, The Project and The Today Show.



Unique auction items included one-off sculptures by UK artist Nick Mackman, photographs by Perth's own premier Pet Photographer, Alex Cearn, donated airfares to Africa courtesy of Air Mauritius, signed books by our patron Bradley Trevor Greive, and a week's volunteering at Kevin's sanctuary in South Africa.

At our Perth event, patron Tony Park entertained the audience with his usual African adventures and the launch of his new book *The Prey* – with our biggest crowd on record – 206 people in attendance. Thank you Perth!



Top: Tony Park, Angela Lemon, Kevin Richardson and John Lemon in Perth
Bottom: Kevin speaking in Perth.

In Melbourne, media personality and journalist Simon Reeve was our MC. Simon has a love of Africa and passion for its wildlife, so he was the perfect fit! We are thrilled to announce that Simon is now PDC Inc's newest patron!

As a thank you for Kevin's partnership with us, we commissioned Australia's leading wildlife artist, Steve Morvell, to create a special "memory" for Kevin – his original painting of hyena in a den was presented to Kevin in Melbourne, and is now proudly displayed on his wall in South Africa.



Top: John Lemon and artist Steve Morvell presenting Kevin with his painting at the Melbourne event.

Bottom: Melbourne MC Simon Reeve, guest Dennise Rado-Lynch and Kevin Richardson in Melbourne.

Finally in Sydney, Dr Chris Brown ("The Bondi Vet") was our MC and wowed the crowd with his stories of his time with Kevin, and hammed it up for the audience when he carried Kevin around as "an auction item"!

Newest committee member, Wayne Hamilton of Swagman Tours, did a fantastic job as auctioneer at our Melbourne and Sydney events, and donated an amazing African Travel package for one of the auction items.

Kevin was indeed the entertainer, and charmed and enthralled the crowds with not only his well-known talents and relationships with his beloved lion and hyena, but also inspired hundreds with his current commitment to the Canned Hunting Campaign (see separate story by Kevin in this issue).

PDC Inc is proud to be partnering with Kevin to raise funds to assist with his critical work in his Canned Hunting campaign.

We are accepting funds on his behalf of his Australian followers. All monies are tax deductible and participants also receive a Certificate of Appreciation from Kevin and PDC Inc. Our first follower to participate in this program is Lauren Duffy-Cearns (pictured below). Thank you, Lauren!

This was the first time that PDC Inc has organised, ran and hosted events interstate, so thank you to all of our new “friends” and “members” that we now have on board. Thank you for your support!

If anyone wishes to participate in the Canned Hunting Campaign, or wishes to purchase signed copies of Kevin’s biography, please contact Angela on lemonj@ozemail.com.au.

PDC Inc is looking forward to hosting Kevin on his next trip to Australia! Please follow Kevin at www.lionwhisperer.co.za or on twitter [@lionwhispererSA](https://twitter.com/lionwhispererSA).



Top right: The Bondi Vet “auctioning” Kevin for the Sydney audience.
Middle right: Dr Chris Brown, Angela and John Lemon, Kevin Richardson in Sydney.
Bottom right: Angela Lemon presenting Lauren Duffy-Cearns with her Certificate of Appreciation.

South Luangwa Conservation Society Update

This year is SLCS's tenth anniversary and I am thrilled that PDC Inc, through funding received from Perth Zoo, has been supporting us for nearly half of this period. It's been a long journey and we have come so far from the time when we first started with our anti-snaring patrols and just a handful of scouts.

Ten years on and we now have a professionally trained and well equipped team of 60 scouts and a total staff of seventy, and land on which the SLCS Base is situated and all activities controlled and coordinated. Anti-snaring and anti-poaching patrols progressed from local patrols in the vicinity to a much more coordinated, professional approach carefully planned, monitored and evaluated.

So far in 2013 SLCS supported scouts have conducted 80x10 day long patrols, 20 short patrols, 150 day patrols and confiscated 1100 snares, arrested 130 suspects and confiscated 60 illegal firearms amongst other activities.

In the early years we had limited or no transport, today we have a fleet of five land cruisers for field work, a boat for wet season patrols, four motorbikes for investigations and human wildlife conflict work, and a joint conservation/research aircraft with the Zambian Carnivore Programme (ZCP).

With regards to wildlife welfare, in order to reduce the ongoing trend in the number of snared animals we have also employed a joint full time Zambian veterinarian with ZCP this year.

Dr Mwamba Sichande has become an important part of our teams and has been involved in many snare removals in a short space of time including four lions, four hyena, one giraffe, eight elephants and four buffalo. His joining us ensures that there is always someone available to attend to snared animals and assist in the wild dog and lion research work conducted by ZCP.

All these activities have been supported by PDC Inc for five years now and our partnership with them has grown in to one based on trust with good conservation results. Thanks to PDC Inc from us all at SLCS and we look forward to another year.



Update from Chipembele

2013 was our most productive and busiest year ever, only made possible by the support of our wonderful donors including PDC inc.

The generous donation of \$10,200 from the PDC Inc fundraising event in November last year was used to construct a much needed Chipembele conservation classroom next to our offices in Mfuwe, Zambia that was opened in May this year. Huge thanks go to the supporters of that event who helped make it possible. Our students now have a venue for club meetings and the complex has become a hub of conservation activity throughout the school year.

This year we also introduced some new and innovative programs to our students, including the Nature Nights program (camping excursions in the bush), and have travelled widely with them, including trips to two distant outdoor centres, and careers trips to the capital, Lusaka, and the regional town of Chipata. Opening the minds of our students to the wider world and the opportunities available to them is an important part of the Chipembele ethos.

Early in the year we secured a hectare of degraded land behind the offices and entered into a partnership with the local community and the local secondary school to turn it into a Nature Conservancy. Our students have been working hard all year planting and watering trees, clearing firebreaks, removing litter, filling in pits with broken bricks from disused brick kilns etc. It has been hard work but a lot of fun too!

Our partnership with the Zambian Carnivore Programme has strengthened this year and 15 of our students from the local secondary school go into the national park every Friday afternoon to assist with research. Some ZCP staff remain behind in the offices to teach the other 15 students in the club more computer skills and how to record and analyse of data from the research.

This year we have sadly taken in more orphaned and injured animals for rehabilitation than ever before. We are uncertain as to whether this is a result of the increased levels of poaching or of increased levels of human-wildlife conflict, but suspect it might be a combination of both as the population in the area continues to rise at an alarming rate.



Currently we are rearing two baby vervet monkeys, two baby bushbabies, a young hippo (in the process of being weaned), a goshawk (some primary wing feathers had been cut off by children but they are slowly re-growing), a young squirrel, a baby impala (whose legs were paralysed but he is improving greatly) and an adult female baboon called Doreen who was kept illegally in terrible conditions for years in Lusaka. It is unlikely she will ever be rehabilitated as she is now 10 years old but can hopefully see out her days in peace at Chipembele.

*Top: The new Chipembele conservation classroom, with an adjacent interpretive room for nature displays.
Middle: Ben, our Conservation Education Manager leads a group of students on a bush walk with an armed scout for safety.*



African Wildlife Conservation Fund Update

The African wild dogs in the Zimbabwean lowveld have had a reasonably successful denning season this year, although unfortunately we have seen quite a high level of pup mortality, largely attributable to lion predation.

On a more positive note however, anthropogenic mortality has not been a big problem for the dogs in the latter half of this year, even with two packs denning in resettled and communal areas. This is partly thanks to our education and community engagement program which is going from strength to strength, in part thanks to the support from Painted Dog Conservation Inc, Australia.

AWCF works in all 84 primary schools within 10km of the boundary of Savé Valley Conservancy (as well as 39 around Gonarezhou National Park) and this program is being very well received and having a positive impact so far as we are able to evaluate.

Results of a quiz testing the knowledge, attitudes and understanding of students regarding African wild dogs and conservation issues have shown a significant improvement over the last year, with an



Top: AWCF teaching students on a visit to the Save Valley Conservancy about African wild dogs. Bottom: Secondary school students performing a dance at the Wildlife is Life Day.



overall improvement in scores of 30%. Many of these schools have also set up wildlife clubs and/or put together plays and songs to spread the word about the importance of African wild dog conservation to their communities.

As well as working with the kids, we operate a mobile education unit which takes DVDs and educational books, games and puzzles into the communities, accessible to anyone of any age or status.

This has been well received and serves as a useful connection between the communities and the protected areas, demonstrating a benefit linked directly to the wildlife resource.

AWCF was also involved in a wildlife awareness day

'Wildlife is Life', involving four communities on the western boundary of Savé Valley Conservancy. The day included poetry, dances and drama sketches all showing how wildlife is part of the culture and should be conserved. It was a truly rewarding day.

Despite the heavy mortalities from lions, the African wild dog population in Savé Valley Conservancy is still doing well, with over 100 adults and yearlings in 10 different packs. In Gonarezhou, whilst exact numbers are harder to estimate, all known packs ($N=8$) are doing well and have bred successfully.

There is no doubt that the Zimbabwean lowveld remains a key area both within Zimbabwe and the wider region for the conservation of the endangered African wild dog.



Top: A healthy litter of pups! Left: Camera trap pictures non-invasively monitor the den sites and allow for good counts of the young pups. Right: Muvava Primary School listening to a talk about environmental custodianship.



Zambian Carnivore Programme Update

As we conclude another dry season, the 2013 year has been a monumental point in Zambia's wildlife conservation history and we currently stand at a cross-road in wildlife conservation.

This situation was engendered with the January 2013 announcement by the Zambian Minister of Tourism that all hunting would be banned due to alleged mismanagement and abuses of the system, and any wildlife-based tourism in Zambia's vast collection of community Game Management Areas (GMAs), upon which most of these activities occurred, would be suspended until scientific data clarified the situation.

The ban brought to the forefront some badly-needed reform in wildlife management but also revealed a strong lack of current and accurate scientific data with which to guide the country's wildlife management and policy.

Our research contributed to the way forward, having provided the only peer-reviewed scientific data on large carnivores prior to and following the ban, and we are currently working with ZAWA and stakeholders to further develop the country's research and monitoring

capacity to help avoid such situations in the future, for while GMA Management will need reform, the lack of any wildlife-based tourism for GMA communities appears to have contributed to a significant spike in poaching in many areas.

In November we were thrilled to welcome back John Lemon, the head of PDC Inc. and our ZCP Chair, to Zambia for several weeks of assisting us with field work in Liuwa Plain, where he was treated to some of the most stunning dog hunts either of us had ever witnessed, as well as cheetah kills, loads of hyenas and wildebeest, lions and the whole spectacle that is Liuwa Plain wildlife.

It was a fantastic trip and as always John was ever helpful on everything from funding to fixing leaky tents!

In the field we continued to make progress on our intensive studies of carnivore guilds across the Luangwa, Kafue and Liuwa ecosystems, continuing to provide what for most areas is the only scientific data on large carnivores and their prey.

We made significant progress in all research initiatives while contributing seven scientific articles with four in review on a range of relevant conservation topics such as poaching, the problems with large-scale fencing, disease, genetics, and land-use planning.

On the conservation front we continued our work to evaluate poaching trends and patterns with the completion and publication of a study on snaring spatial patterns, an evaluation of human encroachment trends and patterns across the Luangwa and Kafue ecosystems, and the assistance in development of alternative conservation models for the GMAs that focused on community wildlife conservancies.

On the educational front our collaborations with Chipembele and the Mfuwe Secondary Student Conservation Club continued to progress, with students finalizing their 2013 research projects evaluating species richness across perennial and seasonal streams using camera trapping technology.

As the final piece to their work the students developed and presented a powerpoint presentation on their research and presented it to a packed audience at Mfuwe Lodge.

And as a long-missing piece to our comprehensive educational initiatives we also finalized a scholarship programme with the Southern Africa Wildlife College aimed at providing scholarships to secondary school graduates from Conservation Clubs in the Mfuwe area and together with Chipembele (and generous private funders!) we have enabled two students to attend a six-month course on conservation and environmental education in South Africa in 2014.

On the university level we continued to sponsor current or recently graduated university students in the Luangwa and Kafue with a third hired for Liuwa in 2014.

At the graduate level Thandiwe Mweetwa completed a key field season in the Luangwa for her research on lion population dynamics study given it was the first year without male trophy hunting in our study area. At the end of the season she boarded a plane for the University of Arizona in the states where she begins her master's coursework.

In Liuwa Jassiel M'soka completed his fourth and final field season on large carnivore dynamics in a lion depleted ecosystem and he now returns to Montana State University to write up and publish his findings.



Having initiated the Liuwa Project in 2010 Jassiel was instrumental in developing it into the comprehensive study it is today and Liuwa will not be the same without him!

In the Kafue Dr Wigganson Matandiko continued to anchor the ZCP research in Zambia's largest wild dog and cheetah populations, as he pursued his PhD research on factors affecting ungulate abundance and distribution in the Kafue study area, with a particular emphasis on interactions between predation and disease.

In addition to these students we welcomed Dr. Mwamba Sichande, our new SLCS/ZCP wildlife vet, onto the team. With a very high rate of snaring and lots of research work to do, Dr. Sichande acquired a lot of wildlife immobilization experience in a hurry across all three study sites while also providing vaccination, spaying/neutering, and medical treatment to pets in the Mfuwe community.

On the media front 2013 was a big year for wild dogs, lions and cheetah in Zambia as the BBC continued to work with our Liuwa Project to film wild dogs and cheetah as part of the upcoming 'Survival' and 'Hunters' series, while wild dogs and lions in the Luangwa valley's Nsefu sector played a star role in the BBC series 'Africa's Last Oasis: Countdown to the Rains.' The spectacular footage captured by the crews will certainly translate into positive publicity for both carnivores and Zambia's spectacular wildlife tourism possibilities.

So in summary another successful year and another successful year that would not have been possible without the generosity and assistance of PDC Inc. Thanks again to all of you and all the best for the new year in 2014!

A Letter From Patron Bradley Trevor Greive

Embracing The Unknown

Greetings fellow PDC Inc members and supporters – I hope your Christmas break was joyous and at least moderately restorative such that your liver is now ready for an unapologetically exciting year ahead.

Motivational speakers like to tell us that we don't know what we don't know – a vapid truism that makes me want to slap them across the larynx with a lamb shank. Annoyingly however they are entirely correct. One of the best and worst things about life is that it is impossible to know everything. The world is always far more astonishing than we give it credit and there always is something around the corner that we could never have expected.

This was brought home to me other day while I was producing a Winter Wildlife Special for American television and I was able to spend some time with a herd of Reindeer. During my research I discovered a number of things that I didn't know about these remarkable cold weather specialists, but two fact in particular blew my mind: Reindeer can see ultraviolet and, wait for it, their eyes change colour with the seasons!

Let me explain.

During the long, dark, Arctic Winter a Reindeer's eyes turn blue, which helps trap as much available light inside their eyes as possible. And, during the equally long and bright Arctic Summer, their eyes turn a dazzling yellow-gold – helping to reflect excess light and thus preserve visual acuity in the extreme conditions – in each case Reindeer have an advantage when it comes to spotting potential threats; no mean feat when they have to identify white predators - such as arctic foxes, wolves and polar bears - against a background of snow and ice.

Reindeer are the only known mammal to have this ability: They literally see the world differently in order to cope with the very real change they must face in order to survive. But then, that is true for all of us. To quote Heraclitus (535 – 475 BCE), history's most celebrated cry-baby:

"No man [or Reindeer] ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man [or Reindeer]".



Like you I am very proud of what PDC Inc accomplished in 2013, and thus I am justifiably excited about what might be accomplished in 2014. Without getting too metaphysical the fact remains that time is arbitrary and its passage can be measured in any number of ways – including hair-loss ... I ruefully observe – so therefore I suggest that, instead of getting hung up on the weeks and months ahead, we instead make an attempt to establish a PDC Inc chronology that is worthy of our goals: Let this be time when we raised more money, put more boots on the ground, removed more poachers' snares, undertook more research and educated more people than ever before.

The key to achieving all of this is to start thinking of creative ways to increase PDC Inc membership – simply because our noble body of supporters is the resolute and dynamic core of all that we hope to do.

In essence: We can't know what challenges we will face this year but we do know this - The difference between that which is impossible and possible is you.

PDC Inc is a grassroots organisation that is extremely cost efficient and thus highly effective in the field. Every penny counts, as does every ounce of enthusiasm (assuming that enthusiasm is something that can be measured by weight, even though quantifying enthusiasm as a form of energy, using kilojoules, seems more relevant, though in fact is equally far-fetched ... But I digress).

Bottom line: Let's get excited about what we have to do, and have fun doing it. After all, we're on our side!

Happy New Year!

Bradley Trevor Greive, Founding Patron, PDC Inc.



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Conservation through action and education

Would You Like To Help?

Our supported projects do NOT receive any government funding and is wholly reliant on donations to continue its operations.

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Please consider a donation for the work to continue.

All donations received are put without deduction to the benefit of the African Painted Dog.

The Object of the Association is:

To advance conservation for the public benefit of the African Painted Dog, (also referred to as a Wild Dog) *Lycaon pictus*, through education promoting and disseminating research into such conservation and seeking to achieve their sustainable management.

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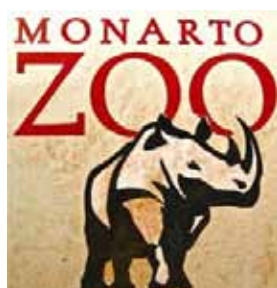
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