

MATOBO



SOCIETY

PO Box FM 648, Famona. Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

Welfare No: W/O 30/94

NEWSLETTER 32 / JULY 2001

1 - SUBSCRIPTIONS

It is that dreaded time of the year when subscriptions fall due. Your committee has debated this topic long and hard, and took into account the contributions made by members at the AGM. However, regrettable as it may be, it has been resolved to increase subscriptions in line with inflation, as per the mandate given at the last AGM. We are all only too aware of the considerable increase in costs on all fronts, and at the same time, the valuable contribution to the Society coffers from the previous high interest rates has now been lost.

2 - BROCHURES

The Committee have had reproduced the two popular visitor guides that were last available two years ago. It has been decided to sell these at \$10,00 each, and they will only be available from the main gate into the National Park (Sandy Spruit). Suitable containers are being manufactured that will contain a secure moneybox! Once this is complete the brochures will be on sale.

At the same time, following the initiative of Dr Peter Mundy and the Ornithological Research Unit of the DNPWM, a new brochure will be introduced. This will be a bird checklist for the Matopos, containing a short introduction. This brochure will likewise be available at Sandy Spruit for \$10,00.

The MCS Schools Conservation Booklet is also being reprinted. This booklet, with illustration by Karen Duff, was prepared in both 'Sindebele and English for Primary Schools. It proved to very popular with both children and teachers, but has been out of print for the past four years. The Committee felt that this booklet served as an important educational tool, and so sought the assistance of the original sponsors to have the booklet reproduced. We are grateful to the Edgar's Trust for supporting us once again.

3 - NEW ASSOCIATE MEMBER

The Hwange Conservation Society has approached the MCS with a view to becoming an associate member. This will allow for an exchange of ideas between the two sister societies - a positive initiative.

4 - ZIMBABWE TREE SOCIETY, MATABELELAND BRANCH

The Matabeleland Branch of the Tree Society has asked the MCS to assist in a caretaker role in so far as the Tree Societies affairs are concerned. With falling numbers and other difficulties, the Tree Society faced some tough decisions, but are pleased that this associate member of the MCS approached us rather than dissolving itself. The Tree Society has an important role to play in the Matopos, and it is from work carried out by the Tree Society, and other individuals, that the true botanical richness of the Matopos has come to be realised. The members of the Tree Society, many of whom are MCS Members, will join us on our Field Trips. They may well arrange Tree studies elsewhere, to which MCS Members will be more than welcome. The inclusion of tree experts in our regular outings should present a real opportunity for our members to learn more about the environment on each trip - we may yet produce ardent botanists from amongst our members. The MCS Newsletter will contain a section in future dealing with Tree Society matters.

Details of the new subscriptions are contained overleaf.

Subscriptions are due by 30 July, 2001.

Please return the tear-off slip with your subscriptions.

Thank-you for your support.

5 - NEXT EVENT

Date	Sunday 9 September 2001
Venue	Western Matopos
Meet	8:30am, Churchill Arms
Travel	All vehicles
Details	Provide own chairs, tables, meals and drinks. Don't forget your hat!

The Society will be visiting the farm owned by Barbara and Derek Viljoen, located in the Mangwe area of the Western Matopos. When we last visited here, the Society went to Fort Luck, Fort Mangwe, Lee's House and the Mangwe Pass Memorial, but that's not all the area has to offer, and so we are taking Barbara and Derek up on their earlier offer to visit the other places of interest. We are sure that there will be time for those members who want to see the Mangwe Pass to do so.

6 - REPORT BACK

A record 70 members and friends attended our last outing to Toghwana Dam and Inange Cave. The trip proved to be a resounding success. Not all the members went on the walk to the cave some chose to picnic at the Dam, others went only a short way along the Cave walk, but for those who went the whole way - including those literally dragged up to the cave at the end - it was well worth the effort. The cave is described as possessing the finest rock art in the country, and members spent some time examining the detail - the more one looked, the more one discovered. The Secretary gave a talk on the geology of the cave, followed by an introduction to the rock art itself, drawing attention to specific works. The magnificent Reticulated Giraffe and the strange Ovoid pictures were highlighted. The veld was magnificent, and the weather ideal for the outing. Members enjoyed the unusual experience (for Matabele's) of splashing through rivers en route to Toghwana!

7- NEW PARKS ACT GAZETTED

The Society, through the Matobo Committee received a draft of the new Parks and Wildlife Amendment Bill 2001. Your committee was concerned with the content of the new Bill, which seeks to establish the DNPWM as a statutory authority. The Parks & Wildlife Amendment Bill 2001 was gazetted on 13 June, 2001.

8- E-MAIL

A number of members responded to our appeal for e-mail addresses. If you did not respond but have an email, please advise the Secretary.

9 — WORLD HERITAGE

Work is going full steam ahead with this project, and at the time of writing the draft Submission is being prepared at the Natural History Museum, with contributions from the various stakeholders.

The supporting film is now complete. Members who attended the Toghwana Field Trip will be aware of the presence of Osprey Productions and some terrific footage was obtained during the day. Film trips have also been spent in various other parts of the hills, and the presentation is impressive. We are very grateful to the donation of time and expertise given by Osprey Productions in this exercise. A number of members have asked if they will get to see the final production, and your committee has decided to hold an event, most likely after we hear if our bid has been successful, at which the film will be shown to the public for the first time. This will most likely be in early 2002 - and we will keep you well advised.

There have been a number of articles in the press in regard to the World Heritage Submission. The Society was not responsible for the article that appeared in a daily newspaper that alleged we were endeavouring to save the endangered white elephant! And no, our World Heritage Submission will not end up as a white elephant either!

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SUBSCRIPTIONS Due 30 July 2001		NAME
Corporate	\$1200.00	ADDRESS
Family / Individual	\$ 250.00	AMOUNT
Special (Pensioners / Students)	\$ 125.00	CHEQUE NUMBER or CASH