

MATOBO



SOCIETY

PO Box FM 648, Famona. Bulawayo, Zimbabwe

Welfare No: W/O 30/94

NEWSLETTER 45 / SEPTEMBER 2004

1 – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given of the Annual general Meeting to be held on 6th November at 3:00pm. Following the meeting there will be a series of walks, and thereafter a social braai in the evening. Allow an hour to travel from Bulawayo to the venue. Members are reminded of the need to elect a new committee (including a new Chairman) and we need more administrative assistance. We look forward to a good response from our members at this important event.

Members wishing to stay at Camp Dwala should contact Dessy Stephens on 091 211156. Both camping and chalets are available.

2 – SNAKES

Following from our introduction in the last newsletter, we thought it appropriate to start off with the general first aid treatment for snake bites, which is summarized below (with acknowledgment to the Bundu Series).

DO NOT PANIC.

- 1) Calm and reassure the victim and insist on absolute rest. Remind the victim that many bites, even by poisonous snakes, do not cause any harm.
- 2) Ascertain the time lapse since the bite occurred.
- 3) If it is a very recent bite, try to suck some venom out through thin rubber, thin plastic or cellophane. If none is available immediately, don't waste time; rather go directly to step 4.
- 4) If several hours have elapsed since the bite and no symptoms of poisoning have developed, proceed with the treatment listed, but you can afford to relax a bit.
- 5) Try to identify the type of snake. A rough idea of its type will suffice from:
 - looking at the snake if it is available. Kill it (do not smash the head), so that it can be taken with the victim to hospital. Open the mouth with a twig or penknife to examine the fangs if necessary. (It is better to leave the snake alive if it will be difficult or dangerous to find or kill it);
 - the victim's description, if coherent;
 - the site of bite;
 - the type of bite and the reaction.
- 6) Calm and reassure the victim. Make him lie or sit down.
- 7) Arrange to transport the victim to medical help, preferably a hospital, as soon as possible. Telephone, send a message or call for expert help.
- 8) Immobilise the limb, lightly and gently, with clothing or whatever is at hand.
- 9) Apply a cold compress or wet cloth to the bitten area, or just wet the clothing covering it.
- 10) Proceed with the patient and the snake to hospital. Go yourself; the doctors will want to know the circumstances of the bite you may need to apply artificial respiration on the way.
- 11) If you are quite sure that the symptoms you see are due to venom and not just shock (for example, large painful swelling, or drooping eyelids and drunken speech and movements), and there is no way of obtaining medical assistance for several hours, check for allergy, then inject two ampoules of serum into the muscles of the buttocks and watch for signs of allergy to appear.

For competent first-aid personnel only: If you were with the victim when the bite occurred and you have *seen* the snake and *positively identified* it as a cobra or mamba (NOT if you just *think* it may be), apply a wide constrictive bandage tightly to the upper femoral or humeral region as indicated. Release for a timed three minutes after thirty minutes and remove after one hour.

Venom in the eye: Wash the eye with running water ideally, or any reasonably bland liquid if water is not available. Then wash the eye with antivenom diluted with five parts of water. Dress the eye or otherwise protect it from light and rubbing and transport the victim to medical attention as before. The next article will cover the first of the families containing poisonous snakes, and the specific treatment.

3 – RHINO TRANSLOCATION

During July ten white rhino have been moved from the Matobo National Park to Hwange National Park. The translocation was handled by National Parks and the Marwell Zimbabwe Trust, and all the animals have been safely resettled in their new homes. We will bring you more details, and an update, in the next newsletter.

4 – TREE WEEKEND

The Society is arranging a special weekend focusing on tree identification. This will not be a general outing but a specialised event for those who want to learn more about the botany of the Matopos. The outing will be held at Camp Dwala in the eastern Matopos where just under 200 tree species and 1,000 plant species have been identified. Mr Roy Stephens will lead the identification walks. The weekend will start with a social braai on the evening of Friday 22nd October, a series of walks on both Saturday and Sunday, ending on Sunday afternoon. Those who are interested should contact Des Stephens on 091 211 156 to book accommodation.

5 - NEXT EVENT

Date	12 September 2004
Venue	Maleme Dam
Meet	8:00am to leave by 8:15am, Churchill Arms
Travel	All vehicles
Details	Provide own chairs, tables, meals and drinks. Don't forget your hat!

The Black Eagle Survey has invited us to join them on an Eagle viewing day, around Maleme Dam. We will be given the opportunity to see Black Eagle chicks in their nests, and to learn more about the Black Eagle Survey.

6 – REPORT BACK

The outing to Malalangwe was most enjoyable, with about 60 members (which included some WEZ members) joining in for the day. The group enjoyed some splendid game viewing, including Gemsbok, Eland and Giraffe amongst others, some good walks, and a visit to two trees of special interest, namely *Erythrophysa transvaalensis* (The red balloon tree) and an Adenia. The cold weather of the preceding weeks rolled back, and a lovely picnic lunch was enjoyed by all around the lodge pool. For interest, a leopard killed an impala at this site a few hours after the last of the MCS group had left! Richard Peak spoke to the group following lunch, providing much interest and information on this part of the Matopos. A special thanks to Richard and Bookie Peak for hosting such a large crowd and for all the information supplied!

7 – MATOBO CLEAN UP

The clean up will take place on Sunday the 22nd of August. Those interested to phone either Bobby Hogan 241701 or Gordon Geddes 230565. Teams will meet at the Sandy Spruit gate at 09:00 and will be allocated an area. Please bring your own spades, forks and gloves. This is an overdue exercise, but one that will assist the Matobo National Park considerably. Litterbags will be issued and a truck arranged to carry the rubbish away. Participants will be given free entry into the Park. Please bring own refreshments / lunch.

8 – MATOPOS VIDEO FOR SALE

The ink was not yet dry on the last newsletter when we were contacted by a member who is able to source videos. As a result, members wishing to purchase the Matopos World Heritage video may do so from the Society at a charge of \$25,000 (they will be on sale to non-members for \$30,000). These will make ideal Christmas presents for family and friends no longer able to visit the old hills! The Society has limited stock at present. Videos will also be on sale at the WEZ shop, Fife Street.

9 – EARTH TREMOR

In the early hours of Friday 25th June, an earth tremor rumbled through the Hills, but no reports of damage or rock falls have been received. The tremor, which was felt as far away as Victoria Falls, Plumtree and Beit Bridge rattled homes in Bulawayo. There were reports from Hazelside and Ntunja. The tremor measured 3,0 on the Richter scale, and the epicentre was in the Nyamandhlovu area.

10 – ADIOS

Our Chairman, Iain Sheasby, has left Zimbabwe for attachment with Deloitte in Perth, Australia. Iain has served on the committee since 1995, and has been Chairman in 2001, 2002, and 2004. He played an integral part in the World Heritage application, the Matopos Anti-poaching fund and other projects, and was a regular and reliable participant in our many outings. He will be sorely missed and we wish him and his young family well in the land of the eucalypts.

11 – PARK FEES

There has been another significant increase in Park Fees -

Entry	\$9,500 (non-resident US\$15)
Car	\$20,000(up from \$500)
Eagle	\$250,000 (\$50,000 per person per night)
Lodge	\$200,000 (\$50,000 per person per night)
Cottage	\$125,000 (\$31,250 per person per night)
Camping	\$10,000 per person per night
Picnic	\$nil

12 – SUBSCRIPTIONS

Have you paid?

Subs are now overdue, and must be settled before the Annual General Meeting.

FAMILY / INDIVIDUAL	\$ 10,000
SPECIAL / PENSION	\$ 2,500
CORPORATE	\$100,000

13 – AGM

Date	6 November 2004
Venue	Camp Dwala
Meet	1:30pm to leave by 1:45pm, Churchill Arms
Travel	All vehicles, but take care on the Old Gwanda Rd
Details	Provide own chairs, tables, meals and drinks. Don't forget your hat!

Those who wish to leave earlier are welcome to travel out ahead of the group and to have a picnic lunch. Proceed along the Old Gwanda Road, and turn off left on the Quaringa Road at Matopo Mission. Thereafter it is signposted to Camp Dwala.

Remember the social braai in the evening following the AGM.