

# Sebakwe News

Editor: John Gripper

[www.blackrhino.org](http://www.blackrhino.org)

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## TANGARIRA KILLED BY POACHERS

Dave Strydom reported that Tangarira was killed on the night of 11th September 2015 on the boundary between Eastrange and Sanjo. His carcass was found in the early hours of Saturday morning, poor fellow, killed with one shot to the head and his horns chopped off.



He was found approx 100 meters from where our monitors had last seen him and it is assumed that when our monitors left after dark, the poachers moved in quickly and shot him.

Initially five suspects were tracked down and arrested. The investigations into Tangarira's death are ongoing with CIO and CID in charge of all this. and they came on Sunday 12th and chopped up the carcass, especially the head, to look for the bullet so that they could match the weapon. Three of the poachers were caught carrying weapons. The suspect poachers- were caught with a very large Kudu bull and a Steenbok which they had hunted and killed at night using torches. Three of the poachers were fined USD 100 for poaching of wildlife and carrying a weapon.

Tangarira ended up being a bit of a loner and became very aggressive after he was chased out of his favourite sanctuary by the younger bull Ranzi. For a black rhino he had lived to an extremely old age. He was due to be dehorned and we went ahead and have now dehorned our other four adult rhino. There has been an increase in rhino poaching in Zimbabwe this year and we are hoping to build a new fence to provide our rhino with greater security.

Although Tangarira had enjoyed long and full life in the Midlands Black Rhino Conservancy we were all very sad to see it end in this manner.

# THE STORY ABOUT TANGARIRA

by Bob Swift and Dave Strydom

In the late 80's a friend of ours Ray Gripper brought his cousin Dr John Gripper, an international Vet with great reputation, to our farm over the Christmas period. I soon found out that John was violently against consumptive use of wildlife. He asked me what I would like to do regarding conservation, and at the time I was Vice President of WEZ and involved in the ICA movement. I suggested a Rhino Sanctuary and a learning school for high density children. At this time rhino had been moved from the Zambezi Valley to Mazuri Ranch on Alan and Eleanor Lowe's farm. John took up the idea of a Conservancy and when he left he told me he was going to see if he could raise funds. John Gripper did just that, he is energetic and tireless. We then had David Shepherd and his daughter to our farm and a television crew who were doing a documentary on the artist. The Conservancy was born and the funding started.

A visit from a National Parks Authority on Fauna and Flora and rhino habitat, Drew Coneybear gave our place support. At the same time another man, Dr Emslie from South Africa walked around Bemthree and told us that we had excellent black rhino habitat.

A capture of rhino was undertaken and we were to be given two rhino only, a 34 year old rhino bull, we named him Tangarira (the first to come) was put in our Boma. Tangarira had a deformed horn and we were told he was a difficult animal prone to charging. He was captured on Bushy Park where he had lived up to his reputation of terrorising the workers. He was a very aggressive animal in the boma and always charged me or our staff when being fed. On one occasion he broke a hole in the stockade and I had to quickly drive my land rover into the gap which proved successful. I then received a two and a half year old female who we put into the boma. We called her Tapiwa (we've been given). Tapiwa settled down quickly and was soon eating out of my hand. I spoke to the rhino at least twice a day and always told the bull to "steady down". As we were building a big dam which was accompanied by blasting we kept the rhino in the bomas for 3 to 4 months.

On the due date I let Tangarira out first and three days later let Tapiwa out. We kept track of the two. One evening I was motor cycling in the area Tangarira had last been seen. I came across him in the middle of the road. He immediately started to huff and puff and looked as if he was going to charge. He always started with a few small little rushes before deciding on the big rush and follow through. I put the motor bike between me and him and then spoke gently to him telling him to steady on. He recognised my voice, started browsing in front of me and walked away. I had learnt something. Tangarira taught us a great deal about rhino. They are intelligent, don't have good eyesight but good nose and could recognise by scent and sound myself and my trackers who monitored them. Tapiwa was a different story. She was a nervous cow but again would stop a charge when I called out to her. The two rhino became inseparable and went around together all the time. I could call them up by voice and in fact, with a tree between me and them managed to feed an orange to Tangarira. On one occasion I took John and Annie Gripper to look for the rhino. We were in an open vlei. John being a little impetuous went ahead of me as Tangarira came out of the Mopani belt, smelt John and started to charge. I called out to him and he stopped. I had great admiration for Tangarira. He was a gentleman and I believe highly intelligent. Tangarira and Tapiwa bred twice and so we had a group of 4 rhinos to contend with.

Tangarira was a real bull, he fought other bulls that came into our area and appeared to win all the scraps. Tangarira's age was calculated by Dr Kock and Raoul DuToit by examining his teeth when captured in 1997. His age was put between 33 and 35 years of age. This would have made him about 48 years old which again supports the fact that our habitat is good for rhino.

His last progeny was our youngest female Tafara (we are happy) who was born on the 18th February 2013. Unfortunately our younger and a lot larger bull, Rancy finally ousted him from Bemthree and he took himself off to the farm next to Bemthree where he became more vulnerable to poaching. He remained fairly aggressive to the end and earlier this year he had altercations with two of our Monitors on separate occasions. He was well respected by his Monitors who kept their distance due to his aggressive attitude.

We have lost a great bull and hopefully his progeny will not be killed so that his genes will survive for future generations.

# DEHORNING OF RHINO

by Dave Strydom



On the 13th of September 2015 Dr Chris Foggin arrived with Nick La Grange and Dr Hanyire of Wildlife Veterinary Unit and Drew who was a volunteer to come and dehorn the remaining four of our rhino. They were kindly accommodated by Lou and Ian Rutledge.

On the 14th we had all 4 rhino visually at 8am. At 10am we started off with Ronda on Twin Springs ending the day with Tafara, our youngest female on Bemthree just after 5.30pm.

We guided the chopper into each rhino wearing brightly coloured reflector jackets given to us by donors in the UK.

The day's events went very well apart from Nick's helicopter hitting the tree tops with his rear rotor on the last dehorning. Fortunately it was not too seriously damaged and he was able to continue flying, thank goodness.

The youngest female Tafara was ear notched and given an ID and her DNA was also taken. Both the other adult females had blood taken to see if they are pregnant- which we are hoping for. Not long after being dehorned Ronda took off and headed north and it took two and a half days to get her back.

On a scale of 1 to 5, Chris Foggin gave our rhino a score of three and a half, and Tendai and her calf a score of 3. Considering the time of year this was not too bad. The rhino all look sad without their horns and we must now build a new fence to help protect them. We were very happy to get this project done and thanks to Nicholas Duncan who donated auctioned goods at our Cricket Dinner Dance Function for making this possible - thank you Nicholas.

## RHINO CHRISTMAS QUIZ 2015

We have sent a copy of this quiz to those of you who regularly do them and raise so much for our much needed funds. If you have not received a copy and would like one, please let me know and I will send it to you.

I will also add your name and address to our quiz database so you will receive them regularly in the future. My address and telephone number are on the last page of this newsletter.

Happy Christmas  
Annie

# AFRICAN WILDLIFE

by Chris Bowman





# Women's Microfinance Projects in the Sebakwe Community

by Linda Strydom

In October 2013 Dr John Gripper of Sebakwe Black Rhino Trust, initially set up and financed a Microfinance Scheme to empower and help the women in the Sebakwe Community.

Two woman's groups got underway with a poultry project and a goat project, soon to be joined by a further three groups in 2014. They were mostly Poultry projects raising and selling off broilers to the local community. Unfortunately a few of these failed, the bagged potato growing which unfortunately failed due to bad seed and when winter came a lot of chickens died of the cold. Another group of ladies gave credit to buyers for chickens which did not materialize. The goat venture was unsuccessful as no male goat was purchased to build up the family of goats.

The Micro Finance Scheme ventured further afield to the Chiodza area where 2 tuckshop enterprises started and proved to be very successful. One of these groups paid off their loan very quickly.



By the end of 2014, nine Micro finance projects were up and running with two of the poultry projects changing to grocery sales until weather conditions for the chickens improved. The last venture in 2014 was another poultry scheme where unfortunately all their chickens died.

Early in 2015 one Airtime business got underway and a further 2 Tuck shop/ Grocery stores were started and are proving to be very successful as there is a definite need for the commodities they offer in this area. One of the tuck shops used a barter system where maize was exchanged for goods in the tuckshop and the tuckshop owner then sold on the maize to others. In July of this year another two Projects were started also in the Tuck shop/ Grocery Sales business.

So overall, 14 women's groups have benefited from this scheme and over these 3 years, a sum of US2100 has been loaned out with interest accruing at 20% to cover defaults and adding US2520 to the scheme. US1100 has been paid back over the past three years into the scheme with a balance of US1365 outstanding. Extra funding has now been received for more schemes.

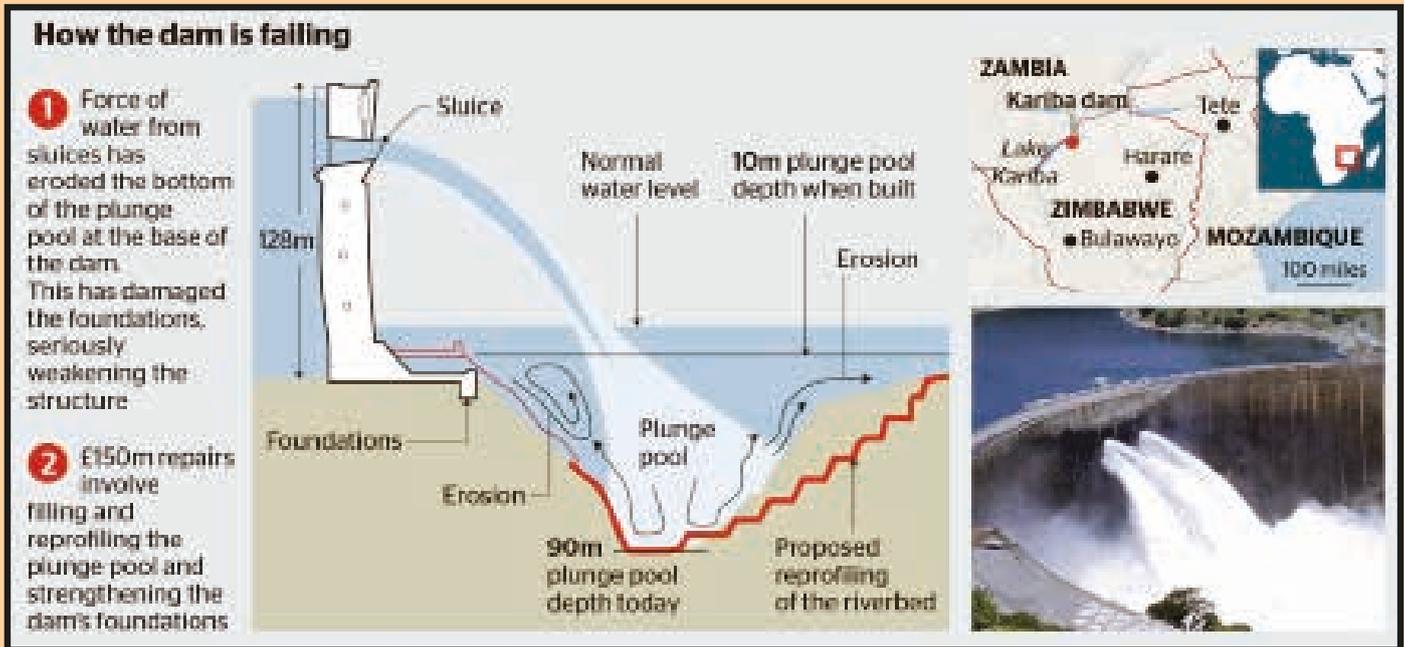
These sums speak for themselves with viable businesses up and running with a turnaround that helps start other projects in our Community and so empowers our local business women and gives the community commodities that they would otherwise have had to travel great distances to get.

I know that these ladies are extremely grateful to have had the opportunity to start a business to add to their very meagre income and they are now able to contribute to the family's daily needs and improve their lives in their Community.

# Kariba dam

A follow up to the article published in the winter 2014 newsletter

by Robert Gripper



At last there is a sense of urgency regarding the extensive repairs required to Kariba dam to prevent its collapse and the national disaster this would create for the 3.5 million Zimbabwean people living in the areas that would be flooded and for South Africa who get 40% of their electricity supply from the hydroelectric facility at Cahora Bassa in Mozambique, which would probably be destroyed by the collapse of Kariba dam, about 8 hours later.

The dam is owned and shared jointly between Zimbabwe and Zambia. The dam has a maximum output of 1839 megawatts compared to Cahora Bassa which has a maximum output of 2075 megawatts. The dam is managed by the Zambesi Rivers Authority (ZRA) who have decided it is no longer safe to open any of the sluice gates until the repairs to the dam are carried out. The work to repair the plunge pool which was originally 10 metres deep, but is now 90 metres deep and undermining the wall of the dam, involves blasting 300,000 cubic metres of rock to enlarge it, and each sluice gate needs to be repaired, the work could take up to 10 years to complete because only one gate at a time can be repaired.

A report by the institute of risk management of South Africa warns that “the consensus of engineers from around the world is that Kariba dam has a life span of three years if extensive repairs are not undertaken immediately”

The Zimbabwean and Zambian governments signed agreements on 18th September with the European bank, World Bank, African development bank, and the Swedish government, to finance the repairs estimated to cost \$294 million. The work will begin later this year or early next year.

Lake Kariba is 20% down on its usual capacity, and the low water level has taken the pressure off the dam. This begs the question what might happen if there is a heavy rainy season? The ZRA has stated that the flood gates will not be opened in any circumstances in the foreseeable future.

# Please Help Us !!!

Adopting a rhino cost just £30 for one year and is an excellent Birthday or Wedding present for your friends or relations. Our Website ([www.blackrhino.org](http://www.blackrhino.org)) has a full list and display of pictures of the rhinos for adoption.

## Membership, Adoption, Quiz & Donation form

Tick	Amount £	PLEASE PRINT
<input type="checkbox"/> Family Membership	- £25 .....	Name .....
<input type="checkbox"/> Adult Membership	- £15 .....	Address .....
<input type="checkbox"/> Junior Membership (12 years and below)	- £5 .....	.....
<input type="checkbox"/> Adoption Donation	- £30 .....	.....
<input type="checkbox"/> Quiz	- £2 .....	Postcode .....
<input type="checkbox"/> General Donations	- £ .....	Tel .....
Total enclosed £ .....		

**Cheques** - Please make payable to SBRT

### Completed forms to be returned to:-

**Annie Gripper  
Manor Farm  
Ascott under Wychwood  
Chipping Norton  
OXON  
OX7 6AL**

**Tel:** +44 (0)1993 830 278  
**Fax:** +44 (0)1993 830 395

### I wish to ADOPT for ONE YEAR:-

- TENDAI female born 2003
- RONDA female born 2007
- RANZI male born 2004
- TAFAFRA female born 2013

### Address of Adopter:-

Name .....

Address .....

.....

.....

Postcode .....

Tel .....

Name of Adopter for certificate ..... Special date (if required) .....

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### Please sign this form so that we can claim Gift Aid tax relief on your donation.

I confirm I have paid or will pay an amount of Income tax and/or Capital gains tax for each tax year that is at least equal to the amount that I donate to and will reclaim on my gifts for that tax year. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council tax do not qualify. I understand that the charity will reclaim 25p on every £1 that I give on or after 6th April 2010.

Signature ..... Date .....