

CONSERVATION IN ACTION | WINTER 2022

# WILDCRY



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#BACKTOTHEWILD

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# WELCOME



from Damian Aspinall

This edition of Wildcry offers us the opportunity to reflect on a very demanding year for our teams across the globe. From complex translocations to rescuing injured and orphaned animals, the dedication shown by each and every member of our team, often in the face of hugely challenging circumstances, has been phenomenal. None of this important work would be possible without your help, and we hope this edition highlights the significant impact your valued support has on the lives of countless threatened animals.

The variety of species we work with continues to expand, with the fascinating pangolins of South Africa and captivating slow lorises of Java now included in our vital conservation work. Featured in this edition are dramatic stories of our team stepping in to rescue these desperate, persecuted species from the twin scourges of poachers and the illegal pet trade.

Also covered in this edition are the translocation of two beloved lions from Howletts, our partnership with a prominent South African organisation to step up our work in the region, and a richly deserved international award for a long-standing member of our Madagascar team. Progress continues on our world-first project to move the Howletts elephant herd to Kenya, with our strategy reinforced by the findings of a report from The Conservative Animal Welfare Foundation. You can read more about this, along with many more groundbreaking projects, in the following pages.

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'D. Aspinall', is written over a dark background with a circular dot pattern.

# MUCH-LOVED UK LION DUO BEGIN NEW LIFE IN SOUTH AFRICA

Back in Spring, the team at our partner park, Howletts, waved goodbye to a beloved pair of boisterous lion cubs, Azi and Zazu.

The brothers - 16-month-old Azi and 11-month-old Zazu - travelled from the park in early May 2022 to the dramatic bushveld landscapes of South Africa. Azi and Zazu were born at Port Lympne Reserve but were both sadly rejected by the pride in infancy and were transferred to Howletts to be hand-raised by the dedicated Howletts team.

Under the team's care, Azi and Zazu flourished and became firm favourites around the park. However, The Aspinall Foundation and their partners at Howletts and Port Lympne are committed to a shared belief that, where possible, animals deserve the opportunity to live in the wild. Led by this deep conviction, The Aspinall Foundation worked closely with the team at Howletts and our overseas partners to find Azi and Zazu a safe, new home.

Their destination was a specialist sanctuary run by Love Lions Alive in Free State province. They are now roaming an area ten times the size of their former enclosure and have settled into their new surroundings fantastically; running, stalking and playing as all lions should, in their ancestral homelands.

The move comes two years after The Aspinall Foundation's successful translocation of two cheetah brothers from Howletts to South Africa's Western Cape.

**The lions are now thriving in their new environment and feeding enthusiastically, with their favourite meal being a full venison carcass. As they settle into life in Africa on the golden plains of Free State Province, the Love Lions Alive and Aspinall Foundation teams are preparing a larger area for them.**



**“We firmly believe this relocation has given Azi and Zazu the very best future: a return to the lands of their ancestors.” - Dereck Milburn, Southern Africa Project Director**



TONGAS

# THE TONGAS: ELUSIVE GORILLA GROUP SPOTTED FOR THE FIRST TIME IN TWO YEARS

**We have some incredibly exciting news from Gabon, as our furthest-ranging wild group of gorillas have been spotted for the first time in two years! This large group of western lowland gorillas, estimated to number 13, are all either orphans of the bushmeat trade or their offspring, who were born in the wild.**

Five individuals from the group, including Tonga, Zora and Batéké, were spotted by the Mpassa river. Our team on the ground have installed cameras in the area in the hope we can spot this group again soon.

The success of this group is what our incredible Gorilla Protection Project is all about. Of course, when gorillas arrive in our care, or if we rewild them from our partner parks in the UK, they must spend a long time adjusting to life in the wild. This is why groups like Djongo, Mayombe and Taàli, and Joshi, Loukelela and Bomassa live on protected islands that allow us to continue to care for them, often for years.

Ultimately, our aim is to see these gorillas live as wild and free as the Tonga group. The success of groups like this has allowed gorillas to thrive in an area where they were previously hunted to extinction. Their offspring will eventually start to form their own groups and allow them to thrive across an even wider area.

Many doubted our gorilla project could succeed. But by rewilding gorillas from the park and rescuing them on the ground, we have created a growing population in Congo and Gabon. We remain the only organisation rewilding captive gorillas in this way. Their presence also helps the wider ecosystem, and we are seeing animals on camera traps that we have never previously seen in our decades of work here. One of the impacts of our rescue, rehabilitation and reintroduction projects has been the virtual elimination in the trade in live orphan gorillas within Congo and Gabon – over the past 15 years, we have very rarely received orphan gorillas.

All of this incredible work has only been possible due to loyal supporters, whose regular donations help us run this phenomenally successful project. Thank you for making this possible.

**Learn more about our wild-living gorilla groups**  
Our two free-ranging gorilla-groups, the Tongas and the Boumangos, have 28 members combined (Tongas:13, Boumangos: 15).

Males Tonga and Boumango arrived at our project as rescued orphans in 1999 and 2000, respectively, and grew up together in the same group. Boumango split from this group in 2012 and was solitary for several years. In 2015, in a move worthy of a classic British soap opera, he started to take females from his old groupmate, Tonga. He succeeded in taking most of the first-generation females from him, leaving Tonga with just one female, Zora.

The rest of Tonga's group consists exclusively of second-generation offspring of the released orphan females. Each of the orphans have a similar, sad history of how their life began: their mothers, and certainly several of their group members, were killed for bushmeat, while they were kept alive with the intention of selling them as pets. After they were rescued, they spent varying amounts of time in captivity before they arrived in our care. Whilst their histories are similar, every individual's story is unique. Here are Tonga and Zora's stories:

## TONGA

Tonga was a resident of the Port-Gentil "zoo", where he was kept in a tiny cage with another orphan, Choupette. They were used as an attraction, exploited to bring some money to the establishment. It took a huge amount of negotiating to convince the owner to give them up and bring them to Mpassa in 1999. Unfortunately, the cage in Port-Gentil was refilled with other orphans, despite promises to the contrary, and two more of them, Kongo and Djembe, had to be rescued by us before the "zoo" was finally closed. Thanks to our work and your support, Tonga is now thriving in the lush green forests of Mpassa.

## ZORA

Zora lived at the tourist resort of Nyonié, south of Libreville. She was the main attraction for tourists there, running around free in the camp, sitting on tables, eating whatever people offered her from their plates. It was National Geographic photographer Nick Nichols who advocated bringing her to our project. After convincing the owner, he chartered a light aircraft and we brought Zora to Franceville, and eventually to our project in the forests of Gabon. Originally, she was introduced to, and living with, Kwibi's group, who had been translocated from the UK, but when she reached maturity, she transferred to Tonga's group. Today, she is still with Tonga and is the most successful female as far as reproduction goes, having given birth three times already.

## FROM A TRAUMATIC START TO LIVING WILD AND FREE

While all the orphans went through a major trauma at the beginning of their lives and were dependent on humans one way or another for years, it is hugely inspiring to see how totally independent they have all become, now they are living as fully wild gorillas.

**The success of these wild-living groups is testament to the success of our work protecting and rewilding this magnificent species. We hope to get further sightings and images of these captivating groups in the coming months.**

# Head of The Aspinall Foundation's Madagascar Team Wins Prestigious International Environmental Award

We are delighted to share with you the exciting news that Maholy Ravaloharimanitra, who heads our hard-working team in Madagascar, has received a prestigious Yves Rocher Foundation Terre de Femmes International Award.

The Yves Rocher Foundation annually sponsors the "Women of the Earth" award to honour women in France and around the world for their achievements in environmental awareness, conservation, and solidarity. Maholy was one of five recipients for 2022.

On the 14th June, Maholy was invited by the Yves Rocher Foundation to attend the 21st Terre de Femmes Ceremony in Paris, where she received her award.

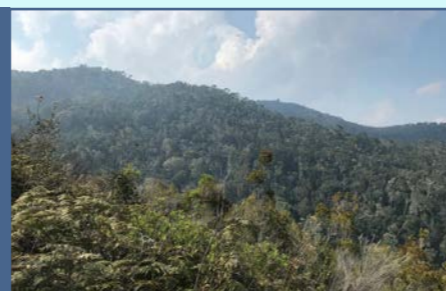
We are immensely proud of the amazing results and the dedication of our team in Madagascar. Maholy has been part of that team since its inception at the end of 2008, becoming our National Representative in 2017. She is a highly experienced conservationist, dedicated to preserving the fascinating habitat and wildlife of this unique island country. She is also passionate about the people, and the role of women she knows can become a strong and positive force for local development and conservation with the right support.

We are also thrilled and honoured that Maholy is the first Malagasy national to receive this particular award. We would like to congratulate Maholy and join her in thanking the Yves Rocher Foundation, and also in celebrating all the recipients on this distinguished recognition of their work.

As many of you will already be aware, The Aspinall Foundation Madagascar team have been working on community-based conservation initiatives in the western portion of the CAZ for many years. It is one of the only known areas where four of the most unique and Critically Endangered large rainforest lemurs can be observed living together: the indri (Indri indri), the black-and-white ruffed lemur (Varecia variegata), the diademed sifaka (Propithecus diadema) and the greater bamboo lemur (Prolemur simus). These four species represent some of the highest-priority primate conservation challenges in the world.

These challenges have increased in recent times. During the height of the coronavirus pandemic, our team saw a sharp increase in the population in and around CAZ. Newcomers to the area were unfamiliar with the efforts made to protect the local ecosystems and destructive farming practices saw a resurgence. Forest clearance and slash-and-burn agriculture, as well as the production of charcoal, were some of the main issues. Our team had to make requests to the various authorities in the area to find a solution, as the problem was too great for the community associations to

**The Ankeniheny-Zahamena Corridor (known as CAZ) covers an area of almost 550,000 hectares of low, mid and high-altitude rainforest, located in eastern Madagascar. It is one of the largest remaining areas of moist evergreen forest on the island and hosts a range of endemic species, including at least 11 species of lemur, many of which are classified as vulnerable to extinction.**



handle. Our team are working with local authorities to find a solution. Our rangers have increased their forest patrols and continue to work with community associations to protect the precious Malagasy habitats.

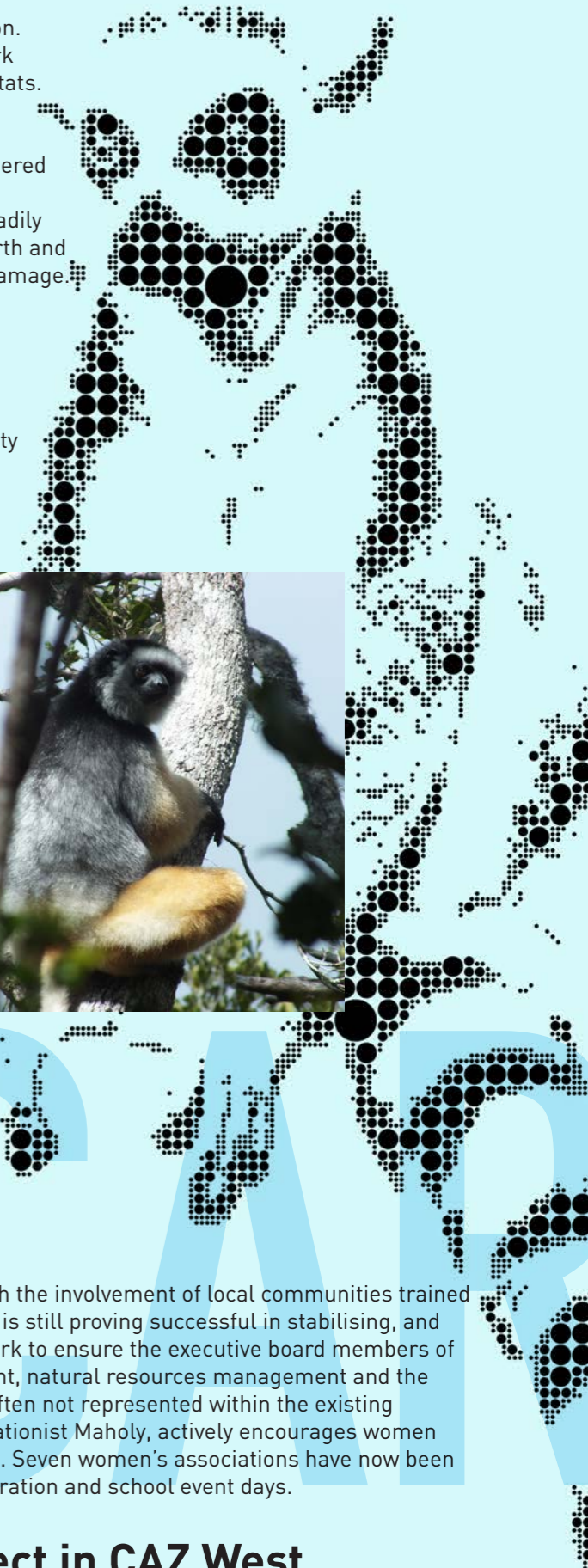
In time, this increased pressure will reduce, but another increased challenge will be far more difficult to resolve. Madagascar is considered to be one of the top five countries most affected by human-induced climate change. Rising temperatures and record droughts have steadily worsened in southern Madagascar in recent years, whilst to the north and east of the island heavy rain and typhoons are causing significant damage.

At the project sites in CAZ West, changes in rainfall patterns have led to a shift in the agricultural season, subsequently impacting local farmers. As a result, some local communities are now looking to change income-generating activities supported by our project, such as ginger plantations and rice growing. Through our community support initiatives, these activities are being replaced by others less impacted by local weather, such as beekeeping, which offers a more reliable income for local communities.



Despite these challenges, the hard work of our team, combined with the involvement of local communities trained in forest surveillance, habitat, species, and biodiversity monitoring, is still proving successful in stabilising, and in some cases increasing, the lemur populations. Our team also work to ensure the executive board members of each community association are trained on association management, natural resources management and the use of the management tools that they are provided. With women often not represented within the existing associations, the team, headed by our dedicated Malagasy conservationist Maholy, actively encourages women to get involved in conservation through awareness-raising activities. Seven women's associations have now been created, responsible for raising awareness during a variety of celebration and school event days.

**The results achieved by our project in CAZ West prove that positive change is possible, but it takes time, commitment and a dedicated team to persevere, especially when new challenges and pressures arise.**





**OUR WORK IN JAVA CONTINUES  
AT PACE, AS WE RESCUE  
AND REWILD MANY  
MORE PRIMATES  
IN NEED**

# PRIMATES FROM JAVA

There are two main aspects to our work in this region: rewilding primates from our partner parks and saving them on the ground, often from the horrific illegal pet trade.

We hear below from the dedicated team about three particular groups of primates that epitomise our work in Java.

### LINSEED AND DIAMOND'S GROUP

Linseed and Diamond are female Javan langurs that were part of a group of nine primates released in Java almost eight years ago after being rewilded from Howletts. Now they are in the Raden Soerjo Grand Forest Park and Coban Talun Protection Forest. This dynamic group are still often observed by our team, who check up on as many of the released primates as possible. This group are thriving and have been successfully breeding in the wild since their release. The Javan langur is classed as Vulnerable, so this work is helping to add crucial numbers to the wild population.



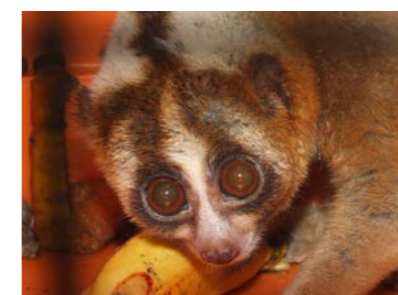
team of rangers and experts will patrol the forest and monitor this group as they live wild and free.

### JOKO AND BAGONG'S GROUPS

As well as repatriating the primates from our partner parks in Kent, we also rescue animals from threats on the ground, primarily the appalling illegal pet trade. Two groups that have come under our care in the past two years are Joko and Bagong's group. Joko was handed over from locals in Jember town, East Java, in August 2020; Nisa was translocated from central Java in December 2020, Ozawa from West Java in April 2021. Bagong (male), Yosinta and Yanti (females) entered our care in 2021, having been rescued in Java that same year. Since then, we have cared for them and prepared them for release in the wild.

### WE COME TO THE RESCUE FOR A NEW SPECIES

Earlier this year, our team were called on to rescue a slow loris from a local village. This gentle, enigmatic species is Critically Endangered, and despite being protected by law, it is sadly still a victim of poaching and the illegal pet trade. In May, one of our Indonesian team members was informed that an animal was being kept by local people at Cisondari village in West Java. The team immediately travelled to the location and found an adult male loris which appeared to be alert when approached. As shy, nocturnal animals with specialised diets and complex needs, lorises kept as pets are destined to live short, uncomfortable lives. The bright lights and activity of a human home are highly distressing and severely compromise their welfare. Entrenched beliefs about their supposedly supernatural powers, as well as their endearing appearance, have contributed to their popularity as pets and use in traditional medicine.



### RETURN TO THE WILD

Bagong's group was released in March 2022 in Coban Talun. It took 5 hours of trekking through dense jungle to reach the release site, only accessible on foot. At the time of writing, Joko's group are due to be released within weeks, into the same protected forest. Here, our dedicated

Without delay, the team saved the animal and brought him to our rescue centre for physical and medical screening. Fortunately, he was given the all-clear and was released that night.

### THE VITAL WORK CONTINUES

Our incredible team in Indonesia are there to help threatened animals day and night. Be it saving them from the illegal pet trade, rewilding animals from our partner parks or undertaking hundreds of education sessions a year, they are making a huge difference to wild animals on the island.

**SO FAR, WE HAVE RELEASED:**

 17 GENET

 26 LESSER BUSH BABIES

 2 SERVALS

 9 BLACK-BACKED JACKAL

 1 WHITE-TAILED MONGOOSE

 12 BANDED MONGOOSE

 3 CARACAL

 11 NILE CROCODILES

 2 THICK-TAILED BUSH BABIES

# SOUTH AFRICA NEWS:

## Partnership with Wild & Free Continues to Save and Successfully Rewild Animals Across Mpumalanga Province

In April, we were delighted to announce our official partnership with The Wild & Free Rehabilitation Centre to support the rewilding of animals in South Africa's Mpumalanga Province. At the start of the year, our combined teams hoped to return more than 40 animals to areas of protected wilderness in 2022. At the time of writing, we have already released 83 animals together and the team receive more calls every day.

We have worked together to rescue, rehabilitate and rewild species including black-backed and side-striped jackals, bush babies, genets, caracals and an orphaned white-tailed mongoose. The partnership has seen us work closely to provide desperately needed support for injured, orphaned and at-risk animals across the region.

### CROCODILE RESCUE AND TRANSLOCATION

One of our notable projects was the rescue of two groups of crocodiles: one from the recently closed Seaview Predator Park in Gqeberha and another at-risk group who had been placed in the Mpumalanga state quarantine facility. Until the intervention of our teams, the crocodiles at Seaview were languishing in the closed remains of a defunct visitor attraction, where they were at risk of destruction if an appropriate new home could not be found for them. In collaboration with the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency and the Nkomazi Local Municipality, we carefully moved these threatened animals in specially constructed travel crates to a quarantine area in the northeast province of Mpumalanga. After clearing quarantine, six of the crocodiles – some approaching ten feet in length – were returned to the wild in the 1,500-hectare Lionspruit Reserve, making their new home amidst its scenic lakes and dams. The remaining five animals were moved to Kwa Madwala Private Game Reserve, a new facility that has never had crocodiles before. By moving them to this new facility, we are helping to expand the crocodile population in South Africa and the area they cover.



### SURE-FOOTED PLANS FOR BLACK-FOOTED CATS

We are delighted to be working with the Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks Agency to protect and breed black-footed cats at the Loskop Dam Nature Reserve, for future rewilding and reintroduction in South Africa. These extremely rare predators, classified as Vulnerable on the IUCN Red List, are Africa's smallest cat species, standing just eight inches high. Despite their diminutive size, these pint-sized felines are one of the most efficient predators on the planet, hunting with a 60%+ success rate and taking down a dozen small prey items per night. Their population is declining due to loss of prey species and land practices.

At the time of writing, the project has seven adult cats with seven adorable kittens – four female and one male. This tremendous success means we are now the most successful breeder of black-footed cats in South Africa.

### REHABILITATED CARACALS RELEASED

As part of the same operation, three orphaned caracals, which were rehabilitated by the Wild & Free team, were also released. The caracals – a male named Ingwe and two females named Elize and Eloise – were found in their den by a farmer as kittens. Tragically, the mother was found dead nearby and the Wild & Free team had to act quickly to save the vulnerable youngsters. After a 16-month period of rehabilitation, the team were confident that the cats were ready for a life in the wild, and the gates to their acclimatisation enclosure were opened, releasing Ingwe, Elize and Eloise into the natural beauty of Lionspruit. Around the release area, the Wild & Free team have engaged with local farmers, who are proud to see the return of these stunning animals and to watch the population grow.

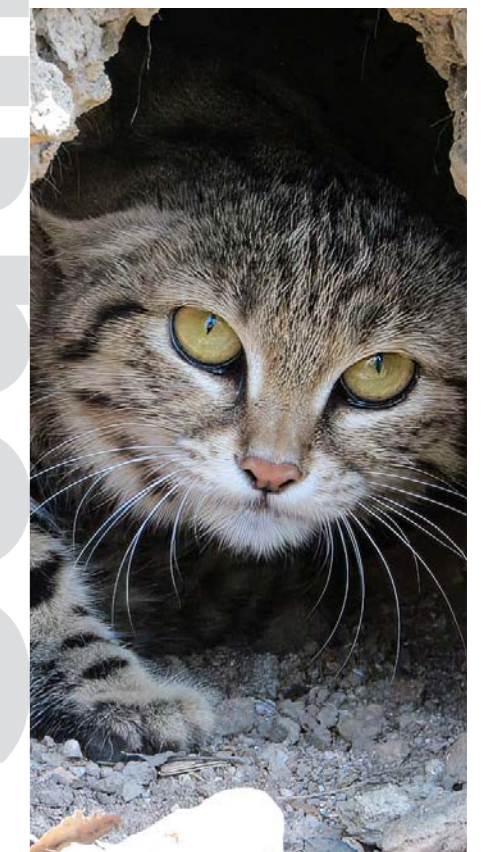
All the breeding females are first-time mums, and their kittens will be released in the near future to help ensure the survival of the species. All the released animals are closely monitored by our dedicated team to ensure their survival.

**Watch this space for more news from this exciting project!**

### SECURING THE LIVES OF COUNTLESS ANIMALS

Dereck Milburn, our Southern Africa Project Director, said, "This year alone we've saved the lives of countless animals across the province – and we couldn't have done it without the Wild & Free team's support and expertise."

Dierdre Joubert, founder of Wild & Free Rehabilitation Centre, added, "Working in close collaboration with The Aspinall Foundation has enabled us to seamlessly coordinate a multitude of interventions to secure the lives of many different species at immediate risk. With an additional release boma currently being constructed at Wild & Free, the centre will be able to significantly increase its release and rewilding capacity, further advancing our work in the region."



# UMBHALI!

## AN INSPIRING RESCUE STORY

**In April 2022, our partners at Love Lions Alive in South Africa were informed that a small, male lion cub was being held in awful conditions at a farm close to the town of Warden.**

When we reached him, the cub was close to death. Barely strong enough to feed himself, he was severely dehydrated and was showing signs of neurological damage. The farmer who was keeping the cub captive had decided that he did not want to spend money on the animal any longer, so he had been left to die in his tiny, filthy enclosure.

The cub's chances were slim, and we knew we had to step in. He was seized and rushed to Old Chapel Veterinary Hospital in Pretoria. There, Peter Caldwell, one of the world's best feline vets, led an intensive three-week course of treatment for the neurological conditions caused by the poor diet and heart-breaking treatment the young cub had suffered.

Initial treatment in the first two weeks included anti-inflammatories and painkillers to allow him to gain the strength to be properly x-rayed. His treatment then progressed to intensive nutritional supplements and medication to support bone growth.

As the tenacious youngster clung to life and showed the first glimmer of recovery, his name became obvious to our team. He was Umbhali, which means 'author' in Zulu. This 6-month-old cub was not going to let cruel humans write his story for him - he was the author of his own destiny. His new name perfectly captured the spirit of this truly inspirational cat.

Umbhali's story continues at the Love Lions Alive sanctuary. There, he continues to receive the best possible care. Despite his sad start to life, Umbhali has a notably friendly and gentle temperament, and is very fond of playing with his favourite toy: a ball. Another young rescued lion lives next door to him at the sanctuary and the two are interacting positively through the fence, with Umbhali always keen to bring his food over to show his neighbour.

Umbhali is recovering and growing well, getting stronger every day, and our team are steadfast in ensuring that he will never again be subjected to such abuse. With the right care, he will be able to move to a larger protected area, where he will live a natural life under the watchful eye of his carers.

A noticeable spark has returned to Umbhali's unusual light brown eyes. For this striking white lion, a positive new chapter has begun.



# TIPPING THE SCALES:

## OFFERING HOPE FOR PANGOLINS ACROSS SOUTH AFRICA

Our team has recently been working closely with partners to undertake vital conservation work with a fascinating new species: pangolins.

These remarkable, shy nocturnal creatures are the world's only scaled mammals and have the heart-breaking distinction of being the most illegally trafficked animals in the world. Found across sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, they are threatened by poaching for their meat and keratin scales, which are used in traditional medicine, as well as habitat deforestation.



So far this year, our dedicated team in South Africa has rescued three pangolins from dire circumstances. October saw them springing into action to airlift a pangolin from Mbombela after the poor animal had been confiscated from illegal trade. The city was locked down by bus strikes, completely blocking all roads in and out. The vulnerable animal was flown in a fixed-wing aircraft out of the city and directly to the care of waiting vets. Currently being rehabilitated, this pangolin will be released very soon to a protected wild area.

Another recent mission saw the team rescue one helpless animal from poachers on the border between South Africa and Zimbabwe. Working closely with our incredible partners Hope for Wildlife Helicopter Services, The Aspinall Foundation ensured that the severely distressed animal was airlifted for urgent treatment.

Under the care of ProVet Animal Hospital in Hoedspruit, the animal's condition swiftly improved, and once rehabilitated at the wonderful Umoya Khulula Wildlife Centre, it will be fitted with a GPS and VHF tracker and returned to the wild.

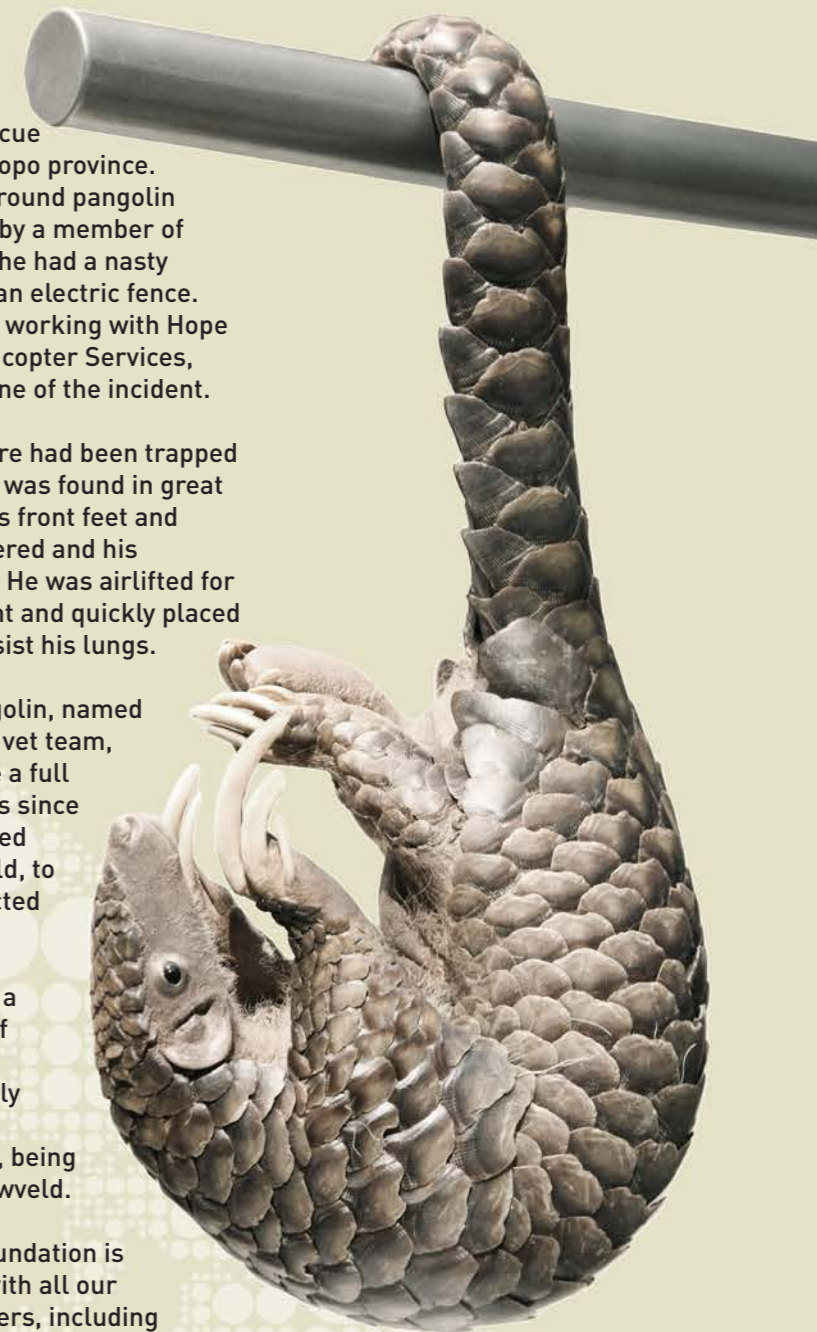
Back in March, the team were again called out to an urgent rescue mission in Limpopo province. A Temminck's ground pangolin had been found by a member of the public after he had a nasty encounter with an electric fence. Our team, again working with Hope For Wildlife Helicopter Services, raced to the scene of the incident.

The poor creature had been trapped in the fence and was found in great distress, with his front feet and throat line blistered and his breathing rapid. He was airlifted for urgent treatment and quickly placed on oxygen to assist his lungs.

The plucky pangolin, named Maverick by the vet team, thankfully made a full recovery and has since been reintroduced back into the wild, to a carefully selected protected area.

Sadly, there are a rising number of Temminck's pangolin, the only species found in Southern Africa, being seized in the Lowveld.

The Aspinall Foundation is proud to work with all our dedicated partners, including Friends of Wildlife Management, Mpumalanga Tourism and Parks (MTPA) and DCM Surfaces, in this ongoing mission to rescue, rehabilitate and release these enchanting animals back into the wild, free from persecution, where they belong. Your tremendous support helps to give these beautiful creatures back their hard-earned freedom.

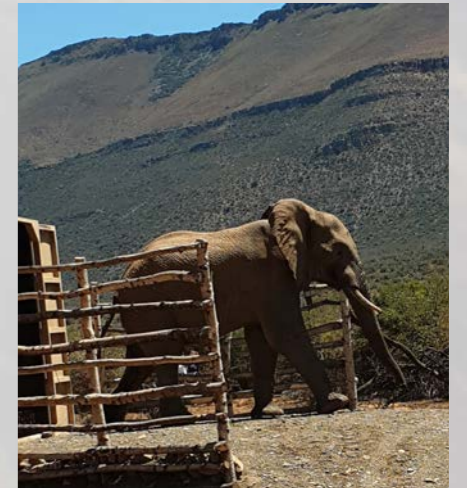


We hope to bring you more updates from this fantastic project in future issues of Wildcry.

# HARRY

## A NEW CHAPTER

In 2019, a daring rescue took place against the dramatic backdrop of the African bush. A magnificent bull elephant, weighing approximately five tonnes, had been pushed out of a herd on his home reserve in the Eastern Cape and was reported by neighbouring farm owners to be wandering across roads and farmland, in search of food and water, and had been marked for death by the authorities.



In a race against time, Dereck Milburn, The Aspinall Foundation's Southern Africa Project Director, put together a task team of experts in order to provide government officials with an alternative solution to shooting the elephant.

Within 30 hours, the decision to shoot the animal was overturned and The Eastern Cape's Department of Economic Development & Environmental Affairs issued a relocation permit, whilst the necessary funds to support the translocation were put in place.

As the sun rose, the project team were already hard at work. Vets took to the air by helicopter to locate the elephant, named Harry by the team. They then sedated him using a dart gun, firing from a moving helicopter with pinpoint accuracy.

Once Harry was safely sedated, the team reacted swiftly to move him in to his travel crate and on to the transport vehicle, to embark on the 120-kilometre journey to the safety

of Mount Camdeboo Private Reserve. After being fitted with a tracking collar, Harry was released into his new home and set off in search of the small breeding herd of elephants that were saved from a cull and released into the reserve earlier in the year.

Dedicated monitors have been continuously tracking the eight-strong herd and we are delighted to share some incredible news: Harry has become a father! The mother, Luwanda, and the calf are doing well and we could not be more excited to share this amazing news with you.

We are so proud to have been involved in securing Harry's future and that a new chapter of his story has begun. Despite their ordeals, this family now have the chance to blossom in safety thanks to the unparalleled teamwork and unrelenting commitment of the teams and of course, our wonderful supporters.



# WORLD-FIRST ELEPHANT TRANSLOCATION PROGRESSES AS CAWF REPORT SUPPORTS REPATRIATING ALL CAPTIVE ELEPHANTS

Progress continues on our world-first project to rewild Howletts' cherished herd of 13 elephants from the UK to Kenya. Working closely with the Kenya Wildlife Service, comprehensive ecological assessments continue to be conducted at the chosen site of Mwaluganje elephant sanctuary in Kwale County. Here in the UK, the travel habituation process for the animals is advancing positively, with the much-loved herd responding well to changes in their routine and happily entering and exiting their individually-designed transport crates.

Once the experienced team of conservationists, animal carers, behaviourists and veterinarians are confident with the site preparation and the herd's development, the translocation will take place.

The Conservative Animal Welfare Foundation (CAWF) recently published a report, endorsed by 25 leading specialists, on the unique needs of elephants. The report findings reveal that zoos simply cannot meet the complex needs of these wonderful, intelligent animals and that keeping them in captivity should be phased out due to welfare concerns. The CAWF report also contains two key recommendations: to end the import and breeding of elephants and to repatriate all remaining elephants in captivity.

The Aspinall Foundation welcomes this report and its findings, which correlate with the aims of our monumental project, which we hope will catalyse further commitments to return animals back to the wild, wherever possible. With DEFRA also reviewing the future of elephant-keeping in the UK, we remain steadfast in our mission to change the lives of these elephants and to complete an important chapter in conservation history.



HOWLETTS

PORT LYMPNE

THE ASPINALL FOUNDATION WORKS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE HOWLETTS WILD ANIMAL TRUST WHO OPERATE THE PARKS AT HOWLETTS AND PORT LYMPNE.

GLOBAL WILDLIFE CONSERVATION



# PARK NEWS

## BABY BOOM AT HOWLETTS AND PORT LYMPNE

Siamang gibbon

Spring is traditionally the season associated with a flurry of cute newborn animals emerging into the world, but Howletts and Port Lympne have been bucking the trend with an amazing early autumn baby boom.

There was cause for celebration in the primate sections of both wildlife parks, with Howletts welcoming a playful baby gelada baboon and rare siamang gibbon and Port Lympne a delightful Endangered Javan gibbon.

At Howletts, the adorable young siamang is rarely more than a few feet from its mother, despite her ear-splitting calls, which can be heard up to two miles away! Life is far quieter for the little gelada, whose cheeky antics and fondness for playing amongst the daisies in their enclosure is delighting guests and staff alike.

Gelada baboon



## Furry Nice to Meet You! Adorable Brown Bear Cub Being Handraised at Port Lympne Reserve

Port Lympne has welcomed a cuddly new addition to its 800-plus animals: an adorable European brown bear cub! The delightful little newborn arrived on 21st January in our partner park's custom-built, three-acre enclosure. Unfortunately, the bear cub was rejected by his mother 9-10 weeks after birth, weighing less than 9kg.

Port Lympne's dedicated carnivore care team stepped in and collectively became the baby's new family, naming him Boki. Under the care of the Port Lympne team, Boki quickly adapted to a diet of porridge, dog biscuits and fresh fruit and veg. He enjoys regular visits from his keepers, who spend hours in his enclosure to carefully monitor his condition and ensure that he has all the exercise, stimulation and company that a young bear needs.

Keepers report that Boki's favourite games currently include chase the hosepipe, chase the keeper and chase the stick.

Boki has now moved out of the enclosure where he was born to a new nursery enclosure of his own. Specially designed for the needs of a growing bear, the enclosure is being developed at the bottom of the reserve, close to the popular Babydoll's restaurant. Visitors to our partner park will be able to enjoy watching Boki play, interact with his keepers and grow to more than ten times his current size.

As he grows, the Port Lympne team plan to work with Bears In Mind, an organisation which works to provide better living conditions for captive bears, to find a suitable bear companion for Boki.



## BABY BOOM cont.

Port Lympne's new Javan gibbon is already exploring its spacious enclosure under the watchful eye of its family and keepers. At just one month old, the precocious primate has developed a beautiful silvery coat and is starting to cautiously experiment with swinging from branch to branch, before returning to mum for a cuddle and some much-needed reassurance.

Keepers on Port Lympne's popular Asian Experience section were also ecstatic at the arrival of a beautiful Przewalski foal, a rare Mongolian wild horse. The species was considered extinct in the wild by the 1960s, with populations only recovering through release programmes from a captive breeding group of just 12 horses at zoos in Munich and Prague.

Matt Ford, Animal Director at Howletts, said: "We're absolutely delighted with these newborns and it's been a joy to see them settling into their new families. All the babies and their mothers are doing exceptionally well.

Simon Jeffery, Port Lympne Reserve's Animal Director added: "As well as being a captivating sight for our visitors, each of these births is another key step to conserving at-risk animals."

Tony Kelly, Managing Director of Howletts and Port Lympne, said: "Our remarkable breeding records clearly demonstrate the exceptional level of care provided to the animals at Howletts and Port Lympne. We are lucky to have a fantastic team of vets and keepers to maintain our high standards of welfare – and for whom every animal birth is a source of huge pride."



# FELINE LOVED UP



## Critically Endangered Tigers 'Dating' at Howletts Wild Animal Park

Howletts Wild Animal Park recently welcomed a new addition: a magnificent Sumatran tigress called Tipah. So far, the three-year-old big cat has made the biggest impression on fellow Sumatran tiger and long-standing Howletts favourite, Achilles.

After a carefully-monitored introductory period – the tiger equivalent of dating – Tipah and Achilles moved in together in the big cat enclosure closest to the visitor centre on the east side of park.

The Howletts team have spotted the two lovebirds mating several times since they moved in together and it is hoped that Tipah and Achilles will welcome cubs in the near future. As a Critically Endangered species with fewer than an estimated 400 wild individuals remaining, every cub born to the pair will be a precious gift to the future of their species.

## PORT LYMPNE RECENTLY WELCOMED A FANTASTIC NEW ARRIVAL:

## A FIVE-YEAR-OLD MALE INDIAN RHINOCEROS CALLED ORYS

### The Rare Indian Rhino (or Greater One-Horned Rhino) is Welcomed into its Record-Breaking Collection

The handsome pachyderm's arrival now means the park is the only collection in Europe that houses three different species of rhino – southern white, eastern black and Indian (also known as greater one-horned).

With decades of experience keeping rhinos, Port Lympne is one of the few locations with the space and expertise to house such a large and important collection. The reserve is now home to 17 rhinos from three of the five species.

Orys has quickly settled into his large enclosure on the reserve's safari route, close to the spectacled bears.



# CHRISTMAS GIFTS WHICH GIVE BACK

Looking for the ideal Christmas gift for the wildlife fan in your life? One which will have an immediate impact on the care and protection of animals across the globe? As well as our own fantastic merchandise and adoption packs, available from our online shop. The Aspinall Foundation also partner with some wonderful brands offering some perfect gift ideas which support our vital conservation projects.

## ANIMAL ADOPTIONS

An Aspinall Foundation wild animal adoption directly supports our numerous conservation projects overseas, including our vital animal protection schemes in Congo, Gabon, Java and Madagascar. Your adoption also supports our ground-breaking Back To The Wild initiative, which reintroduces endangered species born at our partner parks back to wild protected areas.

Available as digital packs at £25, or printed packs at £35, your adoption includes a certificate, photocard and fact sheet about your chosen animal, with printed packs arriving in an adoption box with a plush toy of your animal. To order an adoption pack today and help create a future for vulnerable animals **Scan QR code**



## MAROKKA SCULPTURES AND GIFTS

Marokka's 'Gus the gorilla' geometric sculpture was created in partnership with The Aspinall Foundation and has inspired a collection of gift products available from Marokka's online shop. For every Gus sculpture sold, Marokka will donate £10 to The Aspinall Foundation.

**Scan QR code**



## TAF CAP:

Show your support for our work with an Aspinall Foundation cap featuring our iconic gorilla A, as worn by Freya and Damian Aspinall in our popular YouTube videos showing Joshi's journey back to the wild.

All proceeds will go towards our conservation work around the globe. **Scan QR code**

## SPECTRUM COLLECTIONS ASPINALL FOUNDATION 6 PIECE GIFTABLE BRUSH SET

Award-winning beauty brand Spectrum Collections teamed up with us to launch a new collection of elephant-inspired make-up brushes in celebration of World Elephant Day. £10 from the sale of each 6-brush set, which retails at £29.99, will be donated to The Aspinall Foundation.

**Scan QR code**





#### THE ASPINALL FOUNDATION CLOTHING

Shop from our exclusive collection of sustainable clothing and merchandise, featuring a range of high-quality apparel made from GOTS-certified organic materials and printed on-demand in the UK in a renewable energy-powered factory. Distributed in plastic-free packaging, the products are designed to be remanufactured once worn out, creating a sustainable, circular fashion economy. The collection, including classic 100% cotton t-shirts and hoodies, comes in three striking designs. Aspinall Foundation caps and tote bags are also available from our online shop. **Scan QR code**



#### HEJ COFFEE COMPANY ELEPHANT AND CASTLE GIANT BEANS

For every bag of Elephant Beans sold, £1 is donated to The Aspinall Foundation to support our Howletts elephant herd rewilding project. **Scan QR code**



#### TADA & TOY ASPINALL BRACELET

Available in sterling silver or 18ct Rose Gold-plated vermeil on sterling silver, this stunning bracelet features the iconic Aspinall 'A' logo. **Scan QR code**

#### SHUFFLE 'INTO THE WILD' CARD GAMES

Shuffle's award-winning range of Into The Wild card games take little ones on an educational trip through the animal kingdom. The games producer donates 7.5% from all sales into retail from the Into the Wild collection to The Aspinall Foundation. Available at John Lewis - **Scan QR code**



#### A LIFE WITH ANIMALS

Published to commemorate The Aspinall Foundation's 30th anniversary, this delightful book takes the reader on a photographic journey through the charity's archives. Discover the story of the founding of John Aspinall's two wildlife parks and learn about the pioneering philosophy behind his charity, now under the dedicated leadership of his son, Damian. With some rare glimpses into the Aspinall family photo album, A Life With Animals is the truly unforgettable and inspiring story of a unique family and remarkable wildlife organisation. **Scan QR code**

# THANK YOU TO EVERYONE FOR YOUR SUPPORT

AS WELL AS MONTHLY AND ONE-OFF DONATIONS, HUNDREDS OF OUR SUPPORTERS HAVE BEEN GETTING INVOLVED THIS YEAR TO RAISE FUNDS FOR OUR VITAL WORK. FROM RUNS AND SKYDIVES, TO PLAYING OUR LOTTERY OR EVEN JUST SHOPPING ON AMAZON, THERE ARE SO MANY WAYS TO HELP.

WE ARE HUGEY GRATEFUL TO ALL OF YOU THAT SUPPORT ENDANGERED ANIMALS AROUND THE WORLD, WEEK IN WEEK OUT.

## WEEKLY LOTTERY

Our weekly lottery is a fun way to win prizes while also raising crucial funds for our work. One of our lucky players, Gavin Noble, won an amazing £1,000 from a draw earlier this year. Gavin had this to say about his win:

"It was a lovely surprise. I joined to help raise funds for the Aspinall Foundation, but I never expected I could win the lottery! Thank you."

Gavin pays by direct debit, which is a simple way to support our work. You can get involved by **scanning the QR code**



## OUR THANKS GO OUT TO CRAIG, WHO UNDERTOOK AN INCREDIBLE CHALLENGE FOR THE ASPINALL FOUNDATION

Craig said "I ran the North Downs Way 100 on the 6th August to fundraise for the Aspinall Foundation. This is a 100-mile ultramarathon in the middle of summer through the scenic North Downs, starting from Farnham in Surrey and ending at Ashford in Kent. Why such a crazy distance? I've always loved running and challenging myself. After finishing my first 100km race last year, I knew the next logical step would be to train for and complete a 100-mile race. It's important that charities like the Aspinall Foundation continue to receive funds for their crucial work conserving and rewilding different species. I've been to both parks numerous times and, whilst I admire all the animals, the gorillas are my favourite".

## AMAZON SMILE

Our thanks go out to everyone who has registered us as their charity of choice for Amazon Smile - Your purchases have seen us raise over £1,000 so far. Registering with Amazon Smile doesn't cost you anything and we then receive a small percentage of every £1 you spend with Amazon. It is so easy to sign up - **just scan QR code**



## IVECO DAILY CHAMMOTH

A huge thank-you to IVECO, who sent a unique fundraising vehicle with sustainability at its heart to visit our partner parks on 19th August. The IVECO Chammoth, a fusion of Cheetah and Mammoth, captivated the public as it toured the UK on a 2,100-mile road trip, becoming a social media sensation en route. Partnering with The Aspinall Foundation, IVECO donated £1 for every social media post featuring an image of the distinctive Compressed Natural Gas-powered vehicle. During its spell at Port Lympne, the quirky bio-methane-fuelled van attracted a lot of attention, with many people testing their skills playing on its in-built coconut shy. As a result of IVECO's fantastic campaign, a cheque for £6,000 was presented to The Aspinall Foundation at Port Lympne.

We are always delighted to work in partnership with any organisations to make a real difference to endangered animals, whether through corporate donations, donating profits from product sales, Payroll Giving, employee/customer fundraising or gifts in kind. To find out more, contact: Fiona Churchill, Corporate and Philanthropy Manager, [fionac@aspinallfoundation.org](mailto:fionac@aspinallfoundation.org)

## RACHEL JUMPED FROM 12,000FT TO RAISE FUNDS FOR OUR WORK

On the 18th June, Rachel, who works in the cashiers' department at Port Lympne, bravely jumped out of an aeroplane in aid of The Aspinall Foundation, helping to raise vital funds for our overseas projects. She jumped from 12,000 ft and reached a speed of 120mph during freefall (with a qualified instructor).

Following her incredible feat, Rachel said: "I had the most fantastic day. What an amazing experience! I would recommend it to anyone that is up for a challenge. I loved it and had a smile on my face the whole day. And I'm still smiling now when people ask me how it was! I was partnered with a brilliant trainer, Dave, and everyone at Skydive Headcorn was lovely and encouraging. Thank you to everyone that sponsored me. I really appreciate it."

To set your own JustGiving page up and help raise funds for our work, **Scan QR code**



## HOWLETTS RUN

Our popular Howletts 5k run had a record-breaking 450+ participants this year, many of whom raised additional funds via JustGiving pages. Similarly, our Port Lympne 5k and 10k challenges on October 16th were also our most popular races yet, with an amazing 600 participants. A huge thank-you to everyone who took part, raising an incredible amount of money for our work. Our thanks also go to Nice Work for the race management and to our sponsors Talis.





# WILDCRY

 **THE ASPINALL**  
FOUNDATION  
CHARITY NUMBER 326567

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