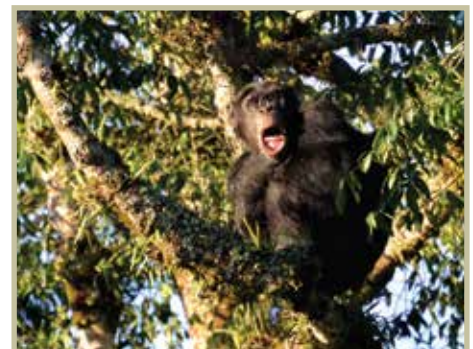


# Wilderness Safaris heads to RWANDA



Rwanda?! Yes ... Wilderness Safaris is thrilled to announce that after six years of relationship building and comprehensive investigation of every nook and cranny of the country we have formed a partnership with two leading businesses – Albizia Holdings and the Horizon Group – and are currently embarking on building our first lodge. We'll be open in 2016.

Lying as it does along the mega-biodiverse Albertine Rift, Rwanda and its unique fauna have long been of interest to us and we are really abuzz with excitement about bringing our own particular brand of ecotourism-driven conservation and community engagement to this gem of a central African country.



Highlights – May 2015



Linkwasha Camp Opens – Pg 2



New Botswana Classic Camp – Pg 3



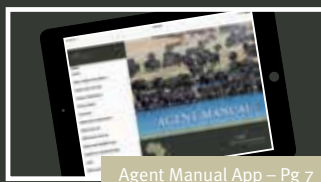
5 Black Rhino Translocations – Pg 4



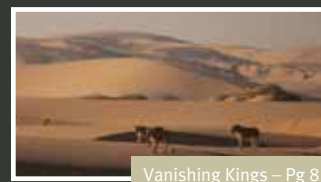
CITW Eco-Club Curriculum – Pg 5



The New Wilderness Air Fleet – Pg 6



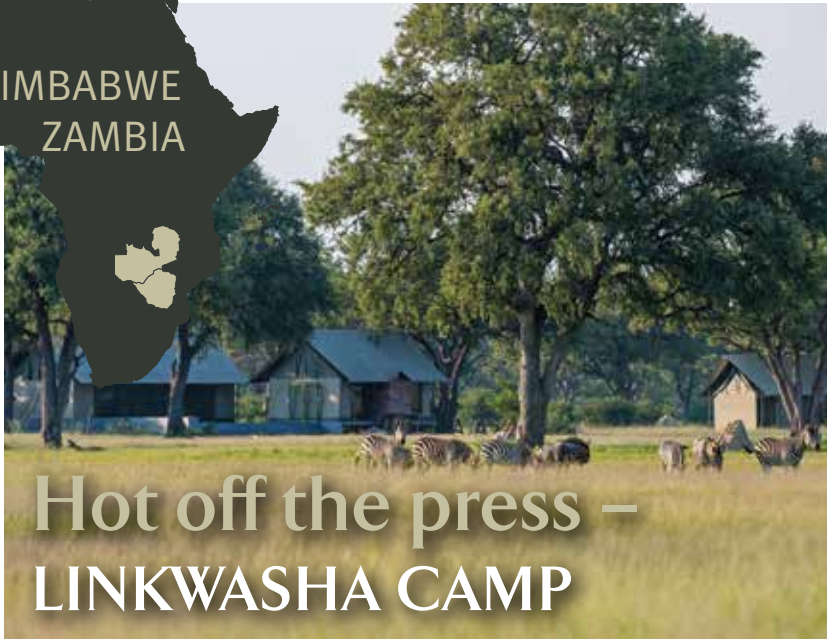
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# New Camps and Refurbishments

ZIMBABWE  
ZAMBIA



**Linkwasha** is OPEN! As of 1 May this brand new camp has opened its doors (tent flaps?), showing off its fabulous location and wealth of wildlife to guests. The first of its kind in Hwange National Park, Linkwasha will set a precedent for the luxury safari industry in Zimbabwe.

This is undoubtedly the best location in the entire Hwange National Park and overlooks a pan that is a magnet for game in every season. The fresh, open and airy camp is complemented by an eclectic contemporary design. Eight en-suite luxury tents and one family tent look out over the water, while the main area includes various multi-level decks, a pool area and a winter lounge complete with a library.

To match the new camp both **Little Makalolo** and **Davison's Camp** have had extensive refurbishments with new decking and softs in the former, and a new main area and viewing deck at the latter. Notwithstanding this, the new sleep out deck at Madison Pan has perhaps proved the most popular bed in the concessions!

## Ruckomechi

The new season has kicked off at Ruckomechi along with a sparkling makeover for the camp: Stunning soft furnishings and improved lighting to deck and walkway upgrades, new shade nets for the roofs and resurfacing of the pool, and the lick of paint has certainly made a difference. Just wait until you soak in the riverside bathtub... the views have somehow just gotten even better!



## Toka Leya

Some eight years after opening, Toka Leya will be fine-tuning and polishing its comfort and luxury in order to better serve as a place of relaxation to our safari-goers at the beginning or end of their journey. The camp will be closed from 20 May to 20 June 2015 for renovations and refurbishments. Exciting additions will include outdoor baths and sunken drop decks for each tent, new salas and decks built around the main area and river frontage, and a beautiful new spa and gym.



Pelo Camp



Vumbura Plains



Kalahari Plains

## Gorokwe

'New' and previously unpublicised prime game viewing areas in the Okavango Delta are rarer than a sitatunga in the central Kalahari, but we've found one! The Gorokwe area of NG32 south of Chitabe is a perfect mosaic of floodplain, acacia savannah, riverine islands and permanent channels and hosts a spectacular density of large mammals.

We're currently busy with the Environmental Impact Assessment for the construction of a new 18-bed Classic camp here that will open in mid-2016 and are excited to share the area with our guests.



## Botswana refurbishments

It's not all about new camps – we are continually maintaining and reinvesting in the existing ones to ensure the best possible experience.

### Okavango Delta

No fewer than ten brand new Land Rover Defenders have been introduced in the Vumbura concession. This complements the rebuild of the entire **Vumbura Plains** walkway decking and the re-thatching of guest rooms, new mattresses and a remodelling of the wardrobes in each room. Three of the new vehicles went to **Little Vumbura**, which also has a new boat station, as well as an innovative floating jetty in front of camp that now fluctuates in tune with the annual ebb and flow of the Okavango inundation.

**Kwetsani** reopens its doors on 1 June 2015 after a complete upgrade of all the tents, now far more spacious, comprising a lounge, bedroom and bathroom as well as a larger deck. **Pelo** has retained its rustic and adventurous character but new improvements include bigger tents positioned on wooden decks with full en-suite bathrooms and running water. The main area

now includes separate lounge and dining areas, a swimming pool and a new jetty. Meanwhile **Xigera**, **Mombo** and **Abu** are all enjoying extensive soft refurbishments of interiors.

### Linyanti

**DumaTau** has just received five brand new Land Cruisers and has undergone a complete refurbishment of the bathrooms. At **Kings Pool** all the rooms have received a soft refurb and the dining area has new chairs and tables. Finally, **Savuti** has seen a major re-thatching of the main area, curio shop and tents 1-4, and also now has five sparkling new Land Cruisers.

### Central Kalahari

The canvas tented roof of the main area at **Kalahari Plains** has now been replaced by thatch, offering a far better insulation for this arid environment in both summer and winter.



## North Island

The latest refurbishment of the inimitable North Island villas has seen a refreshed colour palette for all softs that reinforces the sense of place and complements new bathroom fittings and a futuristic pop-up TV at the base of each bed. The parallel architectural rejuvenation has renewed all decking and a progressive replacement of roofing has followed. All of the work is being carried out true to the "North Island Language" that has received such international acclaim. The result is more of a facelift than a redecoration, preserving the timeless look and feel of our relaxed yet refined beach villas.



# Sustainability and the 4Cs

## Five further international translocations of Critically Endangered **BLACK RHINO** in 2015



The next exciting phase of our now 16-year-old rhino translocation programme in partnership with the Botswana and South African Governments is in progress. This year no fewer than five international translocations of Critically Endangered Black Rhino will take place from various locations in Zimbabwe and South Africa to the Okavango Delta\* – a region that has proven to be a safe haven for this threatened species.

Once released into the wild, the rhino are constantly monitored by Wilderness Safaris' Rhino Monitoring Officers, the Botswana Defence Force, the Department of Wildlife and National Parks' specialised Anti-Poaching Unit and officers of Rhino Conservation Botswana, in order to ensure that they are not exposed to any potential threats.

Since the project's first reintroductions in 2001, populations of both black and white rhino have grown. Following the next phase of translocations we will have moved nearly 1% of the continent's remaining black rhino population to Botswana and gone a long way to establishing a breeding nucleus of continental importance.

*\*Please note that specific figures and locations, as well as relocation dates, are not mentioned in order to avoid drawing unwelcome illicit attention and to ensure the ongoing safety and security of the rhino.*



## Children in the Wilderness Launches a Curriculum Book for Eco-Clubs



Children in the Wilderness (CITW) has developed an exciting CITW Eco-Club curriculum book for a year-long syllabus in rural schools surrounding conservation areas.

The book contains information on how to start and run Eco-Clubs in schools, a full set of lesson plans for a year as well as descriptions on materials, time required, objectives of the lesson and helpful hints for the Eco-Mentors.

“The Eco-Clubs have become an essential part of the CITW programme not only to continue to inspire the camp participants well after their once-off camp experience in Wilderness Safaris lodges, but also to reach out to more children than can be hosted at camp. The book, which will be given to all trainees and trained CITW Eco-Mentors, is a fantastic tool to ensure the sustainability of the Eco-Club programme as well as to fully equip Eco-Mentors to run the Eco-Clubs effectively and ensure consistency and standardisation across the regions,” says CITW Regional Director Dr Sue Snyman.

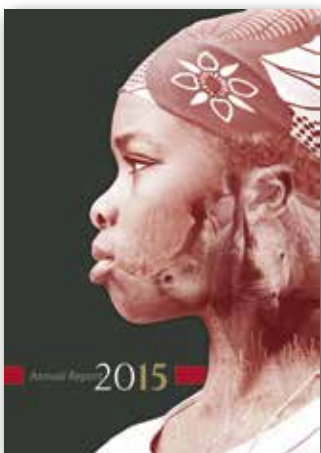
Plans are in place to develop two more books to complete the three-year curriculum and ensure that all partner schools are fully empowered to run Eco-Clubs, making a positive, real difference in the lives of many more children.

## Wilderness Wildlife Trust and Children in the Wilderness Annual Report

Watch this space for the 2015 edition of our Annual Report. Featuring both the Wilderness Wildlife Trust and Children in the Wilderness (CITW), the report will provide you with all the information you need to know about these two non-profit entities over the last year.

Over the past 12 months the **Wilderness Wildlife Trust** has funded 20 projects in research and conservation, community empowerment and education, and anti-poaching and management. This year we are also including the academic outcomes of some of these projects, which include 13 Doctoral theses, 10 Master’s theses and 53 published papers, all of which have been partly funded or supported by the Trust since 2003.

The second half of the report will feature **Children in the Wilderness**, which since 2001 has hosted 5 100 children at its annual camps and already has over 6 400 Eco-Club alumni since Eco-Clubs began in 2012.





# Transfers and Touring

## Wilderness Touring

Wilderness Touring has increased its fleet in the Zambezi region (Victoria Falls and Livingstone) with the purchase of six new vehicles, bringing the total fleet to 30 vehicles. The acquisition forms part of Wilderness Touring's five-year replacement scheme, which ensures all vehicles offer extremely high levels of comfort and reliability. Three Toyota Quantum 16-seaters, and three Toyota Coaster 26-seaters were purchased for just over US\$500 000.



## Wilderness Air FLEET UPGRADES

Wilderness Air is currently upgrading and reconfiguring its fleet in both Botswana and Namibia in order to provide the most efficient and affordable means of servicing our camps and flying circuits in those countries.

The first step in this process has been to acquire four brand-new six-seater GippsAero Airvans for the Botswana operation at a total cost of \$3.3 million. One is already in service, while the other three are in Maun preparing for their first flights for Wilderness Air. This first consignment will be added to over the course of the next 18 months by a further three new Airvans, as well as three larger turbine-engined aircraft.

As these Airvans arrive, so our Cessna 206s, which have been part of the backbone of the Wilderness Air flying service in Botswana, will be moved to Namibia. Here they will replace the older Cessna 210s on the shorter 'bumblebee' routes between Doro Nawas, Damaraland Camp, Desert Rhino Camp, Hoanib Skeleton Coast and Möwe Bay.

## Wilderness Touring Cape launches a quarterly newsletter

We are pleased to announce that Wilderness Touring has introduced *Talking Touring*, a dedicated quarterly newsletter focusing on all aspects of touring in the Cape. Each newsletter will include detailed information on a particular region in Cape Town and surrounds, new activities, upcoming events, industry news, the latest culinary scene, insider tips and more.

As the crisp winter months approach, the oceans around the Cape begin to teem with an abundance of marine life and as such, the first edition will focus on The Peninsula as well as the diverse marine activities offered during this time. The Wilderness Touring team is confident that this newsletter will provide you with valuable insights needed for the ultimate sojourn in the Mother City. Any feedback or suggestions you may have will be warmly welcomed! Email JD ([jdd@wilderness-touring.co.za](mailto:jdd@wilderness-touring.co.za)) to subscribe.



# Practical Digital Innovations



## AT LAST ... A Functional, Robust and Relevant Sales App



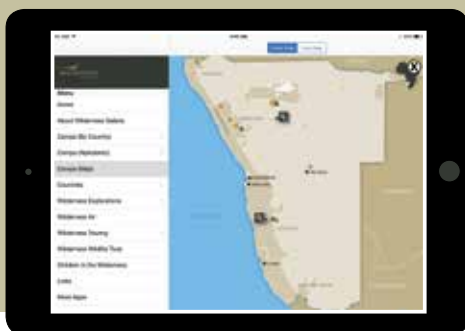
We love print and the tangibility of brochures and books, but we also recognise the exciting and more sustainable paperless opportunities that the fast-evolving digital world provides.

It with this in mind that we have developed a smooth, efficient and eminently functional app that allows our partners in the travel trade to have the huge wealth of information of our Agent Manual at their fingertips ... whether on a phone, tablet or other mobile device.

The aim here is not to create some short-lived novelty digital toy, but rather to give our partners the most up-to-date information in the most easily accessible, and ever-present way. With regular updates and no freight constraints, the Agent Manual will now be an even more useful and relevant sales tool to help our partners sell our product with genuine expertise.

Beyond all the information already available in the new printed version (camp USPs, quick concession facts, Wilderness Air information, Wilderness Touring itineraries etc.) the app also boasts an interactive map that gives the user the ability to explore the geographic environs of all of our camps.

The free app is already available in the App Store for iOS users, and will soon be downloadable for Android devices as well. Ask anyone on the stand for a demonstration.



## Aggregate all of our Online News Feeds through Flipboard

The internet is amazing and it is great to be able to get real time news from around the world through whatever social media or other platform you favour, whether Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, blogs and the like. Who has the time to process the deluge of information though? Or the data bundle ...?

Flipboard is a social media and RSS feed aggregator that has been around since 2010. As of early 2015 it has been available across iOS, Android and web platforms and as a result we have partnered with them to use their unique magazine-format aggregator to allow our online followers the ability to view our content in one simple and convenient place. Ask anyone on the stand for a demonstration.



# Vanishing Kings



Namibia – and particularly the rugged and remote Kaokoveld and Skeleton Coast – is renowned as a spectacularly scenic and arid wilderness. It is harsh. There is no escaping that. So how does anything survive here – much less an apex predator like the lion?

Releasing worldwide in July 2015, *Vanishing Kings: Lions of the Namib* is a beautiful and evocative film following the lives of a pride of these desert-adapted carnivores, which roam the stark country in the area of Hoanib Skeleton Coast Camp. It premieres in Austria on ORF, in the USA on the Smithsonian Channel, and in Germany and France on Arte.

More than just a moving documentary about a striking species living on the ecological edge, this is also a passionate tale about one man's lifelong devotion to the survival of these magnificent animals.

Conservationists and filmmakers Will and Lianne Steenkamp spent several years in the area following not only the lions, but also their researcher and guardian, Dr Flip Stander, who himself has dedicated the last 20 years of his life to the Desert Lion Project. The resulting film is very much a joint plea for the cats' conservation, one that the Steenkamps want to share with the world.

It is a vision that we are committed to, and Wilderness Safaris will be supporting the Steenkamps on a roadshow playing the film in every remote and dusty settlement we can reach by road, in north-west Namibia. Beyond that we'll also be bringing the film to our markets in North America, Europe and the UK and look forward to engaging with our trade partners on this.

This film is authentic, enlightening and intensely personal.

*Please note: Interactions with Flip Stander and sightings of lions at Hoanib Camp are entirely random and unpredictable, given the nature of the terrain and environmental variables.*

