

# Elephants *for* Africa



Conservation through research and education

## Elephant Tales Newsletter Issue 18



Dr Kate Evans  
22 Claremont Road  
Bishopston  
Bristol BS7 8DQ

December 2012  
Registered Charity no. 1122027  
[www.elephantsforafrica.org](http://www.elephantsforafrica.org)  
[info@elephantsforafrica.org](mailto:info@elephantsforafrica.org)

## Welcome by Kate Evans



Kate in Botswana with conservationist Lucy King

Poaching of the African elephant is rife throughout the continent. Every day elephants are killed for their tusks to feed the endless market for ivory throughout the world.

This is very sad news; however these reports make us more determined to carry on our work to ensure that elephants will survive.

So it was with increased vigour that I travelled to America in September to give talks to various zoological societies to spread the word about what was happening in Africa to the elephant populations.

I visited St Louis, Memphis and Chicago where I had the opportunity to present to various audiences including school children. Generous donations from the Chicago Zoological Society, Memphis Zoo and private donors will ensure our work can carry on.

With christmas around the corner, you may want to consider alternative presents for loved ones and support our conservation of the African elephant (see page 8).

Having completed his Masters degree, Mphoeng Ofithile (a citizen of Botswana) is now our project leader in the Makgadikgadi National Park.

This signifies an important milestone for *Elephants for Africa*, because our aim is to help local people run local projects for solutions to human-wildlife conflict.

We have also been kept busy with preparations for our Elefun weekend with the children of Khumaga Primary School. This forms part of our commitment to educating Botswana's next generation in conservation issues. We had great fun exploring the park with the children and collecting data on ants through to elephants.

Our other big news of this quarter is that Graham Bowles successfully defended his PhD thesis at the University of Bristol.

We also welcome Josephine Walker to the team; she will be broadening our research area with her PhD that will be looking at wildlife and livestock diseases, and their threats to conservation.



## Filming with Richard Hammond by Kate Evans



In June, I found myself filming in Botswana for a new television series on BBC 1 called *Miracles of Nature*. This was presented by *Top Gear's* Richard Hammond and was aired on 12th November 2012; it was very well received.

The series focused on how animal adaptations in the natural world have helped man to develop technologies. This particular episode featured an experiment to see if elephants pick up seismic information from elephant calls through their feet. Their natural ability has helped to develop an American invention that uses infrasound to locate trapped miners.

We were filming in the Makgadikgadi National Park and this involved a week of early mornings and patience as we waited for the elephants to come into the area where we did the experiment.

We had some very interesting results from male elephants when we simulated a call from a female elephant in oestrous. Setting it up took one day of testing to make sure the equipment was working

and then we all held our breath as the first elephants came into sight. Some elephants reacted more than others, which was to be expected.

Whilst we cannot be totally conclusive, because there were so many other factors at play (us watching for a starter), it certainly led to some interesting conversations around the dinner table.

When the elephants were not in the area we had hundreds of zebras to keep us company and I was able to cross-examine Richard on why he is getting into natural history presenting, working with Jeremy Clarkson and how he manages to juggle his family life with a jet-set career.

This series will appeal to viewers who are interested in technology, as well as the natural history buffs. I personally hope that it may help to make more people appreciate animals and the natural world.

We would like to say thank you to David Dugmore and all his staff who facilitated the filming.



## Art Exhibition



A fantastic Art for Elephants event was held at Memphis Zoo in September.

This saw large crowds attending the talks given by Kate and the elephant keepers: Andrew Smith and Amanda Hadicke. They spoke about their recent and forthcoming visits to the *Elephants for Africa* camp in Botswana.

After the talk, an auction took place with donated artwork by local and international artists and some of the zoo animals.

A total of £1500.00 was raised on the day and with T-shirts still being sold, this amount will increase. Andrew Smith got really creative with his lamp crafted from rhino poo, which sold for \$100.

Thanks to everyone that was involved with organising the event and to the zoo director Chuck Brady for hosting the event.

Plans are afoot to repeat the event next year.

## Jubilant Elephants

2012 has been a year of celebration for the UK with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and the Olympic Games. In keeping with the spirit of celebration, *Elephants for Africa* have made these special Jubilant Elephant badges to help raise money for the charity.

For just £2 plus £1 P&P within the UK\* you can be the proud owner of a Jubilant Elephant.

### Elephant Facts:

Since Queen Elizabeth II's coronation in 1952 we have lost an estimated 871,000 - 4,530,000 (65-90%) African elephants.

Since the modern day olympics started in 1896, we have lost between 6,530,000 - 9,530,000 (93-95%) of the world's African elephants.



Today there is only an estimated 470,000 African elephants. We are currently losing 100-200 per day to the illegal ivory trade.

\*Additional postal charges may apply for supporters outside of the UK



# Elefun Weekend in Khumaga

## by Kate Evans



During November we hosted our third Elefun weekend. We hired two safari vehicles to transport the children in, but due to a few logistical problems we were a little late heading out of Maun. However, I was still fairly confident we would make it to the ferry in time.

As we headed south towards Khumaga village, my hopes began to dwindle as the sun crept towards the horizon. I had not factored in that the vehicles were limited to 80km per hour. It was dusk (long after the ferry finished running) when we arrived in Khumaga.

Mphoeng had made friends with the science teacher at the primary school and so that was our first port of call.

We explained our predicament and we were welcomed into his home. Soon we had our tents up in his yard and supper was on the stove. We could not have asked for a warmer welcome.

By 7am the next morning, we had packed up and collected the kids from the primary school. They were all ready and waiting for us, eager to get across the Boteti river and into the park to start having Elefun.

Soon we were in amongst the animals. There were thousands of zebras, giraffe, wildebeest and kudu, as well as the stars of the weekend: the elephants.

As soon as we left the park gate behind, we stopped at a view point over-looking the river and enjoyed

watching seven male elephants drinking and mud-bathing. We could not have asked for a better start.

Each day the children would be asked to answer a question and to show how to develop methods to carry out their research and present it. This is to help them learn about scientific thought processes and critical thinking.

Whilst shy and hesitant at first, the children were soon calling out the names of the animals that they saw, diligently counting them and quizzing us about the animals.

The two groups (one in each of the 4x4s) had chosen names for themselves. Soon the cheetahs and impalas were becoming competitive, thinking up harder and harder questions for the other team that they could quiz each other on in the breaks.

After a lunch-time feast of meelie (ground corn made into a porridge) and beef stew, the children





## Elefun Weekend continued...



presented their findings to the wildlife park officer at the gate, who then shared her story on why she wanted to do this job.

Then the two teams compared flight in birds. Which bird will fly faster? One with long, thin wings or one with short, fat wings?

They made their own paper aeroplanes and compared the distances that they flew. Much fun was had by all and the teachers were keen to play as well.

On Sunday we concentrated on the sense of sound. We asked the children to compare the sounds that they heard in their village to the sounds by the river in the park.

This was to illustrate the point that sight is not the only sense that is vital to become a good researcher or guide.



Then we investigated the food preferences of ants. The children set about finding ants nests and then gave them a choice of tuna fish, honey or crackers.

I have never seen 14 young teenagers be so quiet for 20 minutes as they counted the number of ants at each of the food sources.

It was with heavy hearts that the guides and the EfA team waved goodbye to the children as they headed home across the Boteti river after a fun-filled Elefun weekend.

*Thank you to the Conservation Endowment Fund of the American Association of Zoos and Aquarium and the private donors Mr Paul Edwards and his daughter Olivia, who sponsored this event.*





## USA Lecture Tour by Kate Evans



During a whistle stop tour of America in September, I gave lectures at St Louis Zoo, Memphis Zoo and the Chicago Zoological Society (CZS).

Whilst in Chicago I had a wonderful opportunity to visit some of the local organisations that CZS partner with.

Misericordia is a beautiful and inspiring community that provides a learning environment for disabled people ([www.misericordia.com](http://www.misericordia.com)).

They had been busy preparing for my visit by learning about elephants and creating artwork.

The group discussed how well elephants are adapted to their environment as well as exploring the problem of ivory poaching. They then participated in an elephant-themed art session.

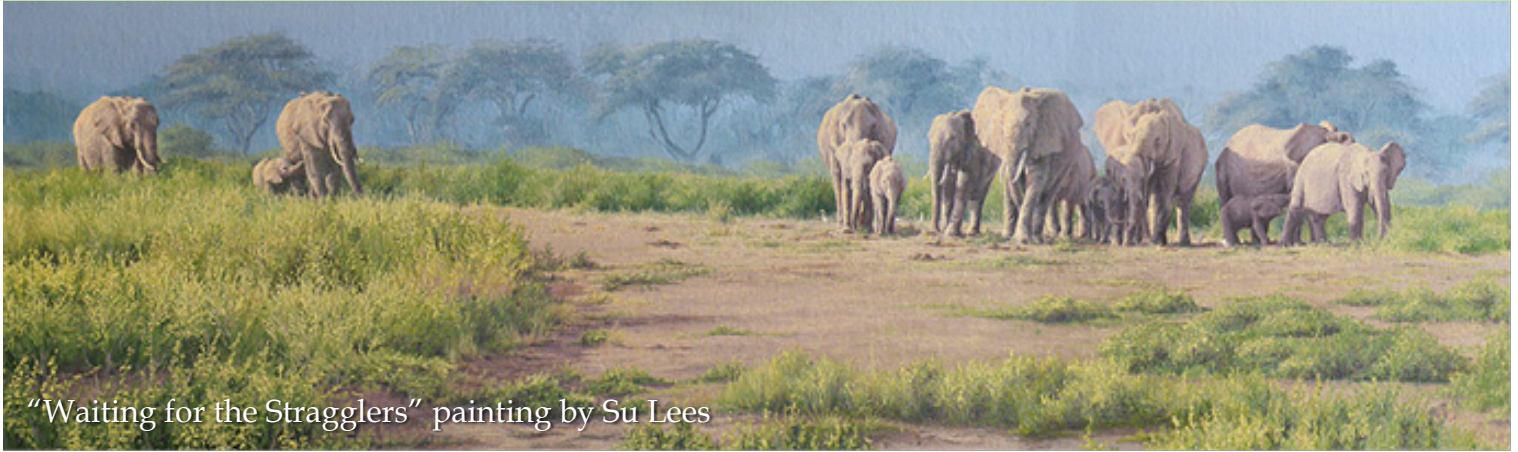
My next stop was the Nathaniel Greene Elementary School, a public school in the heart of Chicago. Here I spoke to 200 young people who gave me a wonderfully warm welcome and were very enthusiastic about elephants.

They were so eager to learn that they stayed on after school to ask even more questions.





## Christmas Gift Ideas



"Waiting for the Stragglers" painting by Su Lees

Now is the time to think about something special as a gift for Christmas. *Elephants for Africa* have a selection of goodies that make the ideal gift for elephant lovers.

The delightful elephant puppet is a wonderful toy for a loved one. It is not suitable for children under 1 year. £10 + £2.50 p&p (within the UK) – to purchase these, email: [order@elephantsforafrica.org](mailto:order@elephantsforafrica.org)



### GiveACar Scheme

This scheme is a brilliant way for UK supporters to donate to *Elephants for Africa* and get rid of their old car. They arrange a free collection for you and then either sell your car at auction or scrap it. You can also choose whether you want to donate all of the proceeds, or just some.

Over the summer, the scheme held a photography competition for the best photo from around the world of their logo. Lots of our supporters entered and Dr Ricardo Stanoss' superb photograph of the Makushi Culture Group in Guyana saw us get second place.

Su Lees has kindly donated ten prints of her beautiful painting: "Waiting for the Stragglers." We have three left. £150 +10 p&p. To order, please email: [order@elephantsforafrica.org](mailto:order@elephantsforafrica.org)

It is also possible to purchase this fantastic 20x24in photograph by Lesley Woods. This edition is limited to 500 signed prints and costs £160. Lesley has also produced a **calendar** of her stunning images. Please click this link: [www.wildearthfineart.com](http://www.wildearthfineart.com) and then look at the blog.



This **messenger bag** is our biggest seller, with handy pockets for wallets and phones. It is the perfect size for a small laptop (26.5x30x8cm).

In unisex khaki it is a useful gift for men or women. £35 + £5 p&p within the UK (please get in touch for postal costs to other countries.)







## How to donate:

Should you wish to make a donation:

You can go through Just Giving by visiting -  
<http://www.justgiving.com/elephantsforafrica>

Or pay directly to our bank account -

Account Name: Elephants for Africa

Account Number: 65345975

Sort Code: 08-92-99

SWIFT: CP BK GB 22

IBAN: GB07CPBK 089299 65345975

Bank: The Co-Operative Bank PLC  
PO Box 250, Skelmersdale, WN8 6WT  
United Kingdom

We accept cheques made payable to -

*Elephants for Africa*

Dr Kate Evans  
22 Claremont Road  
Bishopston  
Bristol BS7 8DQ

## Special thanks go to:

- Chris Baldwin
- Paul & Olivia Edwards
- Kate & Jack Shaffer
- Columbus Zoo and Aquarium
- Memphis Zoo
- Suzanne Piche
- Oxford Scientific Films

## Recycle mobile phones

If you are lucky enough to receive new phones or PDAs for christmas, remember to recycle your old ones through Recycle4Charity quoting *Elephants for Africa* and we shall receive a donation.

