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Amboseli Calf Sketches Now Available

The very talented Karen Laurence-Rowe visited us earlier in the year to produce some exclusive

News from the Amboseli Trust for Elephants

September - October 2015

Greetings!

Hunting for sport, or more accurately killing animals for fun, has been very much in the news over the last few months. In Zimbabwe there was the killing of the well-known wild lion Cecil. A superb male who controlled two prides with females and cubs, Cecil was lured out of a protected area with bait and shot with a bow arrow by an American dentist from Ohio. He wasn't killed outright and was finally found 11 hours later and shot dead.

Recently, also in Zimbabwe, hunters announced the killing of the largest male elephant in several years; accompanying photographs showed the proud hunter and guide with the magnificent bull lying dead.

Both of these events caused widespread outrage. Although the hunting of Cecil was legally questionable because there was supposed to be no hunting of lions in the area, Zimbabwe and many other countries in Africa have legal hunting industries. (Kenya banned hunting in 1978.) The familiar justification is that sport hunting brings in large amounts of revenue for the government and for local people in the areas where the hunting occurs. Careful economic analysis shows otherwise, but that is not the point I want to make here.

Another argument one hears from hunters is, "We only kill the old individuals who are past breeding and are useless to the population." It is this claim I want to address in the first article below. I know that you the readers of this newsletter are well aware of the ethical implications of sport hunting and almost of all of you will be anti-hunting. I would like to explain some of the conservation implications of killing so-called trophy individuals.

Cynthia Moss

Director

Amboseli Trust for Elephants

pieces to support ATE. We are delighted to announce that these charming sketches are now on sale, just in time for Christmas. There are four sketches available, and we think these would make any elephant supporter smile.



Flossy with newborn Flint



Cheeky Ebelle

Prints are \$50 each, order yours by [Clicking Here](#).

Good News!

AB 96, the California bill to end the sale of ivory and rhino horn, was signed into law by Governor Jerry Brown. Readers may wish to thank Assembly Speaker Toni Atkins, who spearheaded AB 96, and co-author Senator Ricardo Lara. This law is an important step toward reducing the demand for ivory and rhino horn. The US is estimated to be the second-largest market for ivory in the world.

Not Good News: Planned Export of African Elephants to US Zoos

Trophy Hunting

by Cynthia Moss

From an ethical point of view we at ATE are totally against trophy hunting. Here I want to examine hunting from a biological point of view.

A sport hunter in Zimbabwe recently killed a large bull elephant with tusks weighing over 100 lbs. each. The male was estimated to be between 40-60 years old. The professional hunter who guided the client said, "This elephant was probably 60 years old and had spread its seed many many times over."

Brent Stapelkamp, the scientist who was studying Cecil and the other lions in the Hwange National Park area reported that Cecil was 13 years old, which is old for a lion, but he was in excellent condition and along with his pal Jericho controlled two prides of females. Cecil did almost all of the mating.



When a hunter kills individuals such as these two what are we losing? In the case of the elephant we have lost a prime male who, by reaching the age he was (whether it was 40 or 60), proved that he was a vigorous, healthy male who survived the many trials and dangers of life in the wild. He gained tremendous wisdom in those years and he was passing

that knowledge on to younger bulls who were following his example. His experience of his ecosystem and the paths to and from important resources was invaluable and a benefit to other bulls as well as to females and calves. Our studies show that females would have been preferentially mating with him whenever he was in musth. By doing so they were choosing a male who would be passing on his genes for longevity.

By killing older males for their tusks the very individuals who should be breeding are taken out of the population and younger, in a sense unproven, bulls are mating instead. Eventually the health and vigor of a population decreases when natural selection is removed and replaced with human selection for males with the biggest tusks. In addition, older males play an important role in the very complex society in which elephants live.

They are explorers, teachers, and friends to males, females and calves.

In the case of male lions, the repercussions are even more immediately evident and devastating. If a male lion holds a pride by himself his females will usually be taken over by another male who will kill the cubs in order to mate and father his own cubs. If there was more than one pride male the

remaining male or males will most likely lose control of the pride.



Eighteen elephants from Swaziland are destined for US zoos. Read our statement about why we and other wildlife scientists and conservationists are opposed to sending elephants to a life of captivity. The link is on the Born Free website [Here](#). Also watch the short video we participated in while at the Jackson Hole Elephant Summit: [Video](#).

Visit from Our Friends at REA



Thomas Töpfer shares a reflective moment with Eudora, Eunice and Eugenie

It's always a pleasure to welcome our annual visit from Rettet die Elefanten Afrikas. This German NGO does incredible work supporting elephant conservation projects across Africa, including ATE. Their staff is composed entirely of volunteers, who all work full time in the "the real world". We love to host them in recognition for their amazing dedication and love for elephants.

Thank You

We greatly appreciate our generous donors who keep us in the field with the elephants. We want to thank the following for their support:

- Linda Wasserman Aviv
- Sharon Bigelow
- Born Free Foundation
- James and Emily Bost
- Detroit Zoological Society
- Eleanor Gibson
- Betsy Gifford
- Elizabeth Ann Jackson
- Jewish Communal Fund
- Knox Family Foundation
- Wendy Kosanovich
- Gladys Cofrin and Daniel Logan
- Julie Monahan
- Jane O'Loughlin
- Tembo Project
- Margot von Gonford
- Andrea Walcott

the territory and often they will be killed. Sometimes females will leave the territory and look for safety for their cubs in new areas and often this can lead to them leaving a protected area and moving closer to human habitation with ensuing conflict.



Lion researcher Brent Stapelkamp argues that hunters usually kill the biggest male in the area with the result that smaller and weaker males then mate with the females. "By hunting the biggest and strongest males, we're interfering with the natural process and artificially allowing the genes of the weaker, smaller males to proliferate...Hunting of lions is just not natural or healthy. From an ecological and scientific point of view, there is no justification for it. Economically, there may be a reason because it brings in a bit of money, but that's short-term gain for long-term loss, and that's when money starts overruling logic and hard science." (Interview with Scott Ramsay, Love Wild Africa, 27 October 2015).

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Jackson Hole Elephant Summit

ATE's Executive Director Betsy Swart and Cynthia Moss attended the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival and Elephant Summit at the end of September. The Festival, held every two years, is an opportunity for wildlife filmmakers to meet for discussions and ideas and to learn about new technical innovations. On the final evening in a gala event film awards are presented in various categories.

This year the organizers decided to hold a special Elephant Summit to overlap with the Film Festival. It was a great success with more than 60 delegates to the Summit and 800 attendees to the two events combined. There were stimulating panel discussions and interviews. Kenya was well represented by elephant conservationists, scientists and filmmakers. ATE's Kenya Trustee Pat Awori was on one panel and our close colleague Winnie Kiiru was on another. Our long-time collaborator Joyce Poole and Cynthia were interviewed onstage by writer and conservationist Carl Safina. They received a standing ovation.

On the night of the gala Iain Douglas-Hamilton, Joyce Poole and Cynthia Moss received Outstanding Achievement Awards for their contributions to elephant conservation and behavior. The awards were presented by the veteran filmmaker and long-time friend Alan Root.



Ways to Support Us

Follow a Family in Amboseli with Elatia

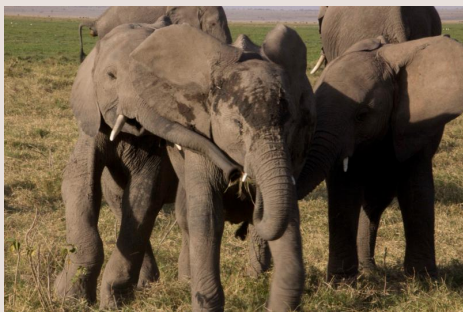


Keep up with events for Eunice, Elspeth and the rest of the EB family with an Elatia membership

Elatia members enjoy private information about their chosen families on the alternate months to this newsletter. Becoming an Elatia member costs only US\$30 per year for each elephant family. Your contribution helps fund ATE's on-the-ground expenses.

To learn more about Elatia go to [This Link](#). If you have any problems, Tal has made a tutorial for signing up, [Click Here](#).

Name a Baby Elephant



These calves from the OA family all need names - can you think of good ones?

You can become a part of the Amboseli Elephant Research Project by naming one of the elephant calves. Unlike our Elatia program where many people follow the same family, our naming program is a unique experience. The calf becomes "your" calf and yours alone and the name you give forms a part of the Amboseli



Betsy Swart, Cynthia and ATE Trustee David Breskin



Carl Safina interviewing Joyce Poole and Cynthia



Part of the Kenya contingent



Joyce, Iain and Cynthia with Alan Root at the awards event

 [Forward to a Friend](#)

Elephant Portraits: Barbara

by Norah Njiraini & Vicki Fishlock



After the death of Deborah from the DB family in September last year, Barbara inherited the crown as the grand dame of Amboseli; our oldest living female. When Cynthia first met the BBs in 1973 she estimated Barbara was around 25, making her 67 years old today.

Barbara has led her family as matriarch since 1990. We have great affection for her because she remains a playful character, and an excellent grandmother. She is very friendly with males, and her confident manner means that younger family members have many opportunities to learn and socialise. We also know that Barbara is very wise and experienced. She leads her family up to the North of Amboseli where there are rich bushy areas that provide nutritious food. They sometimes stay away for months at a time.

Because Barbara is moving into her old age we are always very happy and relieved to see her return. It amazes us that an elephant this old can look so well; we think that if we were to assign an age estimate today we would make her at last 15 years younger than her true age! These pictures were taken in October, after a nine month absence. Barbara was



dataset for all time, even after the elephant dies years later. For more information visit our website

Zazzle

We love our project logo, which is inspired by North African rock art. If you want to spread our fame far and wide, why not buy one of our logo products from our shop on the Zazzle store? The Amboseli field team is particularly fond of our travel mugs, keeping much-needed tea and coffee supplies hot on chilly early mornings. They're a bit hard to find: click on mugs and then change the style to travel mug and select your colour. See the whole range of products at our [Zazzle Shop](#).



Norah in camp with our mug

iGive

One of the ways you can support ATE is by making your online purchases through iGive. If you sign up the Amboseli Trust for Elephants as your recipient organization we will get a small percentage of the sale. Connect with [iGive](#).

Give a Gift that Lasts Forever

Designate the Amboseli Trust for Elephants as a beneficiary of your will, individual retirement account, or life insurance policy. Your legacy gift will enable ATE to learn more about the fascinating and complex lives of elephants and to assure their future. To learn more about planned

clearly happy to be back in

the cool swamp; she loves to swim ([See Video Here](#)). This grand old lady embodies some of the very best of elephants. We all love her.

Visit our [Website](#)

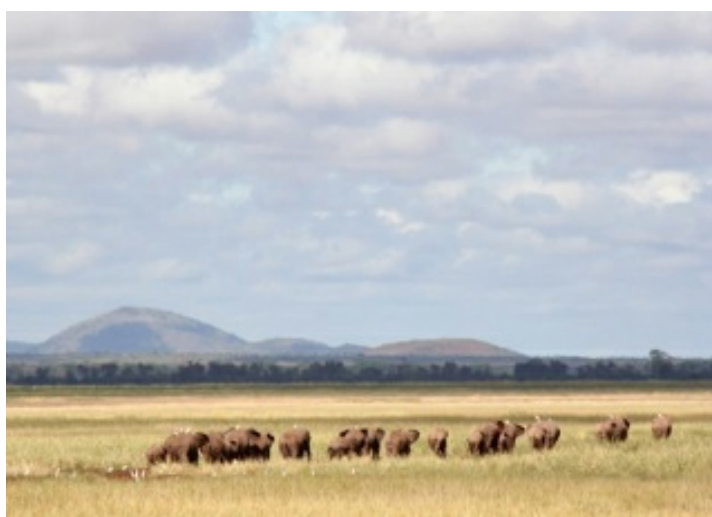
Amboseli Book Chapter Summary, 22 The Future of the Amboseli Elephants

by Harvey Croze, Cynthia J. Moss & W. Keith Lindsay

The greatest threats to sustainable wildlife conservation in Amboseli are permanent settlements along the National Park boundary, fragmentation of the ecosystem through ongoing subdivision of group ranches, uncontrolled and unplanned development, competition for water and grazing areas (especially in and around the central swamps), the bushmeat trade, the spearing of lions and elephants, and poaching for ivory.

The most urgent conservation goal must be to ensure wildlife access to dispersal areas by means of a lasting compact based on equitable benefit sharing with the surrounding Maasai community.

Whatever it takes to ensure the future of the Amboseli elephants and



ecosystem, the solutions will have to be a mix ingredients from four broad arenas--scientific, social, economic, and moral--and are bound to pertain to many other populations in Africa. Throughout this book, we have attempted to illustrate ways in which the unique knowledge of the Amboseli elephants revealed by our studies can inform other scientists and managers. We must now leave it to the next generation of researchers and conservationists to refine the linkages, motivate the decision makers, and further demonstrate the value of this study to understanding elephant biology and behavior and to conserving the elephant's future.

Elephants face so many challenges and threats today in Africa due to loss of habitat and growing human populations. It seems to us unconscionable that people want to add to those threats by killing them for fun or for ivory trinkets or by capturing living elephants, tearing them from their families, and sending them to zoos. Help us advocate for free-living elephants, for space and peace for them.

Cynthia Moss
Director

giving opportunities, please contact:

Betsy Swart at eswart@elephanttrust.org; tel +1-508-783-8308.

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