

# Amara Conservation News

The Newsletter Of Amara Conservation, Ltd.  
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## Rescuing Baby Burra An Inspiring Survivor

We've committed to sponsoring the care of this little elephant, Burra. He was found with a snare wrapped tightly around his neck and ear, by a team who were chasing elephants off farms around the park. He fell behind as he was so weak, and his mom left him.



Lori visits baby Burra. In spite of a serious injury, it looks like he'll pull through.

Danny Woodley and Isaac Maina removed the snare, with Herculean effort. (see page 3) Danny is the Warden of Tsavo East Northern Area, an area over 5,500 sq miles/ (More on page 3)

## Keeping things Rolling A New Truck, a New Team

We have paid for the purchase of a vehicle for a new desnaring team in and around Tsavo National Park, with the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust. Poaching has been severe in this area, and the Trust is experienced at this kind of work. The new team started work on 28 Feb, and brings the total number of teams working there to 3. They found 200 snares in the first day, and over 1000 in

the second month. They also caught a poacher with 19 dead Dik-diks (see page 4), who is now in the hands of the proper authorities.



The New Vehicle

This team started out being staffed by Sheldrick Trust employees, but (More on page 4)

## Building Trusts

### It takes more than money

In December 2001, we met with some of the Sheldrick Wildlife Trust, who run an elephant



Lori with Daphne Sheldrick

orphanage in Kenya, the only of it's kind. This is how we ended up committing to the support of the baby elephant Burra, and supporting another anti-poaching team on the borders of Tsavo. (More on page 3)

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## A Class of their Own - Our ongoing work with the schools in Kenya.

The Nursery school that was built in May and June of last year is going strong. We are waiting for some local political concerns to resolve before we go back there and get more things going for the children.



The School at Lonyore

We've seen some of the kids and they are fine - the drought of last year has abated for now, so things are looking up for the community there, although they did lose most of their stock, particularly cattle.



Samburu children painting

We still plan to go to the nearby Primary school and give them some assistance. The school needs rebuilding of a number of classrooms, books and other

supplies, and lots of educational support. This school is located in a remote area bordering on the Northern Frontier District.



Lori with some children at another school in Samburu District.

This is in a place where wildlife isn't extensive. If we can help them to better their lives through education, and they can learn, for example, how others, not too far away, have reclaimed their land for wildlife, we can help them in real ways. There are similar communities where lodges have been built and the communities run the lodges themselves. As a result, they keep their cattle, sheep and goats off the land, and the elephants and other wildlife have come back. They keep their land safe from poachers and everyone is thriving, as they receive all the revenue from the lodges. These places are in a part of the old northern elephant migration routes.

## Hungry, To Learn A Word About the Kids

We've all probably had our parents tell us how rough they had it, walking 10 miles to school each day, and so on. The

"...If we can help them to better their lives through education, they can learn how others, not too far away, have reclaimed their land for wildlife ..."

amazing thing about many of these children is that they DO walk ten, perhaps twenty miles to school, and in spite of being undernourished, they arrive enthusiastic and hungry for knowledge.



These kids were in fact a significant factor in inspiring Lori Bergemann to establish Amara Conservation. Education is very important to these people, and they all have to pay school fees, which aren't always easy to come by.

## Rescuing Baby Burra (Continued from page1)

He is working very hard. He and his wife are also caring for the baby leopard, Mtito, for whom we raised over \$1,000. Isaac was



The irresistible Mtito

the head keeper at the elephant orphanage, and is now the team leader for the new de-snaring team. Little Burra was found near an area called Bura, so Daphne Sheldrick named him "Burra". We are paying for Burra's full keep, which is \$750/month,



Removing the snare from Burra

at least for the first 6 months. We have also supplied the vehicle for and are pledging more support for Isaac's team. (Isaac's team is called the "Bura Team" by the

Trust, partly in honour of the little elephant, and also because the area where he was found is one of their prime work areas at present.) There are a lot of snares there.



Although he bears the scars of his injuries, Burra is now able to flap his ears, an important elephant cooling mechanism

Burra is an example of the pointless tragedies perpetrated by snares, but he is recovering nicely in the care of the Sheldrick Trust, with his new family of keepers and other little orphaned eles.

## Building Trusts (Continued from page1)

It is through building trusting relationships like this that Amara can be most effective. The people who have been living in and doing work in Africa for years know what is needed. We have also developed a good working relationship with Simon and Tanya Trevor and Ian Saunders of the African Environmental Film Foundation. They have helped us enormously in our gaining understanding of the real situation on the ground. The work they are doing is very important for the

"...Burra is an example of the pointless tragedies perpetrated by poachers ..."

future of Africa, making educational films for local people in their own languages, which are then distributed free of charge to be shown to as large an audience as possible.

## Reel Progress Supporting the AEFF

Simon Trevor, the founder of AEFF, has won numerous international awards throughout his 40 years of filming wildlife.



Lori with Simon Trevor of the AEFF

We will both be showing those films that have been produced, and helping to raise funds for their continuing work. What they are doing is vital for the future of people who have no other real means of learning how they can impact their future. We hope to continue supporting their efforts, and hopefully raise funds to bring the films stateside.

## Keeping things Rolling (Continued from page1)

they are finding it important to employ some locals to help, and we need to raise funds to pay these salaries. Lori was out in the bush working with the team for a few days, and they are working in the harshest of conditions, over vast areas, to protect the land. As Isaac, the team leader said, a snare is like a land mine, it stays there until an animal gets caught in it and dies, unless it's removed.



One common poacher's tool, a flashlight with a car horn attached. It stuns the animals so they can be killed easily.

There are reasons for this snaring. Poverty is a problem in Kenya, and catching some animals for sale or to eat is the easiest way for some folks to get by. There are also large cartels working to process and ship this meat. The bottom line problem is, however, that if left unhampered these people will empty the parks and the country of wildlife entirely in a very short time and that would be devastating for everyone. Tourism is Kenya's second largest source of revenue, and without these animals, no one will go there. The wildlife there have adapted to live in these harsh environments, and will continue to do so and

thrive if left alone. This becomes a self-sustaining resource for everyone. The land in and around Tsavo is arid scrub, and not suitable for cultivation or grazing. Therefore, in conjunction with desnaring, it is essential to get into the local communities and help them to learn about the consequences that their actions will have on their environment. This seems quite obvious to those of us in the West. Most of us have grown up with television, movies, and schools to teach us about our environment - these people in rural Africa have none of those resources. We can help them to see how destruction of the environment and the wildlife in fact causes more poverty, and to show that there are alternatives.



Poachers Captured in the Chyulu Hills

This can be best accomplished by the desnaring teams getting to know the local residents, identifying the needs of their schools, and helping to address them. Because education is so important to these people, helping them with their schools is the best way to help alleviate some of the poverty, and thus some of the reasons that they set snares to begin with. Showing the films that have been produced by the AEFF (see page 3) will also be a major

"...We need to help the children and the adults to see, in ways that they can understand and will be receptive to, how they can save their own world ..."

component of environmental education for these people. We have donated a vehicle to the Maasailand Preservation Trust, an association of 4 large Maasai owned ranches in the Chyulu Hills region bordering Tsavo, with a combined area of over 1 million acres. They are cooperating to protect their land. Their primary focus is to guard against bushmeat poaching, which has become a serious threat. They had been using bicycles and traveling on foot, our vehicle will help them greatly. Lori was in the region in March when they caught some poachers who had killed over 20 antelope in one late night raid. We were told that the two men they caught were from the wealthiest family on the bordering ranch. When asked why they were doing this they said it was because it was what they did best and enjoyed doing it. This was clearly not a matter of desperate need, and clearly demonstrated the desperate need for education. This kind of activity is just not sustainable, for the animals or the people. Snaring is also addressed by the MPT's Game Scouts.

## Key Accomplishments of our First Year:

- Rebuilt a small school in Northern Kenya, and developed proposals for work with other schools.
- Networked with key people and organizations in Kenya.
- Supported important desnaring team in Tsavo.
- Forged a good working relationship with the Sheldrick Trust and AEFF - great people doing important and hard work.
- Bought the truck for the Maasailand Preservation Trust, thereby helping secure a very important area outside and adjacent to Tsavo, in the Tsavo - Amboseli ecosystem.
- Sponsored, via donation from an individual, the care of the rescued baby elephant *Burra* (See pg. 1)
- Sponsored, again via private donors, the raising of the tiny leopard cub *Mtito*, who was found in Northern Tsavo. (See pg.3)
- Established an office and home in Kenya, became a legal entity in Kenya, the US and the UK.

## Some Goals For the Coming Year:

### It Takes More Than Money

We intend to solicit volunteers and internship programs through major universities throughout the coming year. The administrative aspects of running an organisation like Amara Conservation quickly become more than one person can reasonably handle.

### Expanded Financial Support

Although it does indeed "take more than money" to do this sort of work, if we've learned one thing in our first year, it is that funding an operation of this nature is a full time job in itself. To that end, we're soliciting greater corporate & individual support.

### Continued Work in Tsavo

This is an especially critical time for the wildlife in Kenya. Although the Kenya wildlife Service does an excellent job with the funds available, those funds are dwindling, partially due to dwindling tourism dollars, and partially to the evolving political landscape.

### More Work With The Schools

Helping the people of Kenya preserve their Future through education is an involved process that requires first assessing their real needs with community leaders, and then devising plans to implement needed assistance. The only thing that makes this job easy is the eagerness to learn on the part of the children.

"What happens in Africa happens to all of us on this planet. Who wants to live in a world that cannot sustain its wild heritage?"

## A word from the founder of Amara Conservation

I have learned a great deal in the last year, since forming Amara, with the help of many of you.

It has always been my dream to be able to make a difference, and I now know how to do that, in the most effective manner, and in a place that is most deserving of our help. Amara is a bridge from those of us in the western world to those of us in the underdeveloped world. What happens in Africa happens to all of us on this planet. Who wants to live in a world that cannot sustain its wild heritage? Now in 2002, when we've all weathered the test of time, how can we let go of any more of this precious heritage?



Lori Bergemann  
Executive Director  
Amara Conservation