

# The HBF Howzit

*All the latest news from Galagos Wildlife Conservation*

JANUARY 2012

ISSUE 7



## This Month.....

**Page 2** – Project Focus: Construction of 'Elephant Proof' camera trap houses.

**Page 3** - Volunteer's Corner

**Page 4** – Monthly Feature – Caught on Camera

**Page 5** – Sighting of the month

**Page 5** – Conservation Updates



## Project Focus: Construction of 'Elephant proof' camera trap houses

This month the team has been hard at work developing an idea to protect the camera traps placed out in the field. In this part of the world on many occasions you return to collect the camera only to find it has been stomped on by an elephant, chewed on by an inquisitive hyena or if you're really unlucky it has disappeared completely! Sometimes, and this is cause to be joyful, you find it in the bush metre's away from the site you placed it. On other, not so joyful, occasions it is never seen again having been carried off into the sunset by a mischievous elephant who then tosses it aside once bored with his new found toy. Many an irate researcher has returned from a day in the field with tales of broken or lost cameras.

So this month a number of large concrete square blocks, with a cavity on one face of the block for the camera trap to fit snugly into, have been constructed.



Firstly, two steel boxes were created; one for the large concrete block, the other the size of the camera. Once made the smaller box was placed face down on the floor of the larger block. Some re-enforcing and a plastic pipe (for easy movement of the heavy block once cast) were also placed into the large box before being filled with cement.

Then the waiting game began, and yes it is as exciting as watching paint dry! Luckily, there were lots of other tasks on the go while the cement was drying. Two metal bars were welded onto each side of the mould to make it easier to turn over when ready to come out. When it had started to set it was turned upside down and gently knocked until the block came out of the mould.



After the concrete block was removed from the mould a metal plate was placed over the camera trap with a hole cut to the size of the lens and flash and secured in place with metal bands around the block.



And on a Saturday morning the finished blocks were placed out in the field at various waterholes with rocks packed around them for extra security. So watch this space to see if an 'elephant proof' camera trap house has been created. Check out page 4 for pictures captured in January.





## Volunteer's Corner



A young male Lion



Banded Monqoose cooling off in the camp birdbath



Cheeky Giraffe

**Volunteer's Pics from the Field** – Many thanks to **Tamara Bouwman**

In February we look forward to welcoming **Rebecca Forst, Alexandra Kastner & Sumalee Khosla** to the team

*Michelle and I met in South Africa back in 2005 where we volunteered with another company similar to GWC. The experience captured our hearts and we both knew one day we would return to do it all over again when life permitted. We heard about GWC through a friend and knew it was the perfect fit for us. The reserve is absolutely beautiful and so private it's unbelievable. We didn't have to pull away from animal sightings as "paying tourist" vehicles from lodges breathed down your neck to move away like many other reserve's.*

*Going out on morning game drives were our absolute favourite. This is the time that it really hits you where you are and how wonderful life really is. Sit back and take it all in...*

*The camp is large, well outfitted and comfortable. The staff is also absolutely amazing. Dave is especially great as he is so easy to get along with and so passionate about his work. I guess we weren't your typical volunteers as we already had an idea in our heads of what to expect as we had done something like this before. But let me tell you GWC far surpassed our expectations and we are so thankful!*

*Thanks GWC. Hope to see you the future!*

**Amanda and Michelle – USA, January 2012**



# Monthly Feature – Caught on Camera

Here's the first Caught on Camera monthly feature, where each month we'll showcase the best images captured that month on the project's camera traps.



Bushnell 01-25-2012 05:03:30

Brown Hyena



Bushnell 01-25-2012 13:06:15

White Backed Vulture



Bushnell 01-25-2012 09:51:20

Marabou Stork



Bushnell 01-24-2012 03:29:42

Spotted Hyena



Blue Wildebeest



Warthog



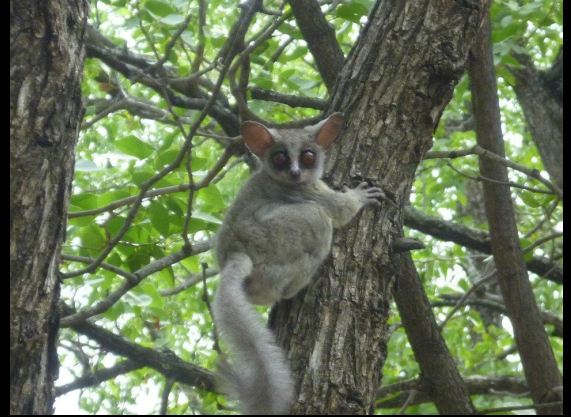


## Sighting of the Month – The Lesser Bushbaby (*Galago Moholi*)

Dave managed to get a couple of great daytime photos of our namesake this month. A very rare treat as these little tree dwelling primates are nocturnal and sightings are usually just a pair of big round eyes in the spotlight at night leaping from tree to tree.

**Diet & Behaviour** - The Lesser Bushbaby feeds on insects and the gum of trees and obtains moisture by licking up dew or rainwater from cracks and crevices. Their eyes cannot move in their sockets so their heads are constantly active when searching for prey. Adults forage alone but companions do meet to interact and congregate before going to sleep during the day in groups of up to 6. Adults males, however, tend to avoid confrontation with each other by maintaining individual territories. They are also very particular about their appearance and will spend much time grooming with their 'toilet' claw, a modified pointed claw, before embarking on a nights foraging expedition. The Lesser Bushbaby is preyed upon by larger owls, snakes, servals, wild cats and genets.

**Breeding** – A set of twins are born before the rainy season begins and this is immediately followed by a second estrus with another set of twins born before the onset of the next dry season. Gestation last 125 days and females will mate with up to six males during estrus.



**An interesting but rather random Fact:** Many African tribes are superstitious about this primate. Their laughing, chattering sounds are attributed to a mysterious snake with a feathered head, arranged in a rainbow of colours, which kills evil intruders by pecking a neat hole in their head!

Why not take a break from hectic life and come and join us for a 'lekker' time and experience this amazing beautiful place for yourself whilst giving back to nature.

Contact Us:

[info@gwcvolunteers.com](mailto:info@gwcvolunteers.com)  
+27 736215838

or visit our website  
[www.gwcvolunteers.com](http://www.gwcvolunteers.com)

Also, don't forget to check out our fantastic Summer 2012 Prices on offer now for the months of June-September!

Taking Wildlife Conservation back to what it once was; a once in a lifetime affordable experience that truly makes a difference.

Hope you all have a fantastic month and we're looking forward to a great 2012 and meeting many of you soon ☺

Nicole  
Volunteer Coordinator

## Conservation Updates

Instead of our usual fact file feature we have decided to change this section and instead make a note of recent conservation news or articles of great interest we have read the previous month.

In January we came across a great article highlighting the issues surrounding the increasing number of operations offering interactive or close-encounter experiences with wildlife. Many of us may have thought about what it would be like to cuddle a lion cub or ride an elephant but do these operations really contribute to research and conservation as they claim?

Copy and paste the following URL into your web browser to read 'Think before you Walk'

<http://www.panthera.org/sites/default/files/Think%20Before%20You%20Walk.pdf>