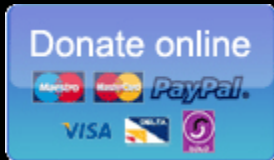




January 2011



find your pride @ www.lionalert.org



ALERT is proud to present our patron...

Sir Ranulph Fiennes

with ALERT Chief Operating Officer & presenter of ITV's Lion Country

David Youldon

in London for one night only.

To book [click here](#)



Monday 17th January 2011

**7.30pm @ The Mermaid
Conference & Events Centre
Puddle Dock
London EC4V 3DB**

Ticket prices

£40.00 per person or £25.00 with
a valid student card / OAPs /
under 18s

UNABLE TO JOIN US?

You can still help us by making a
donation to ALERT by clicking the
image below

Donate online

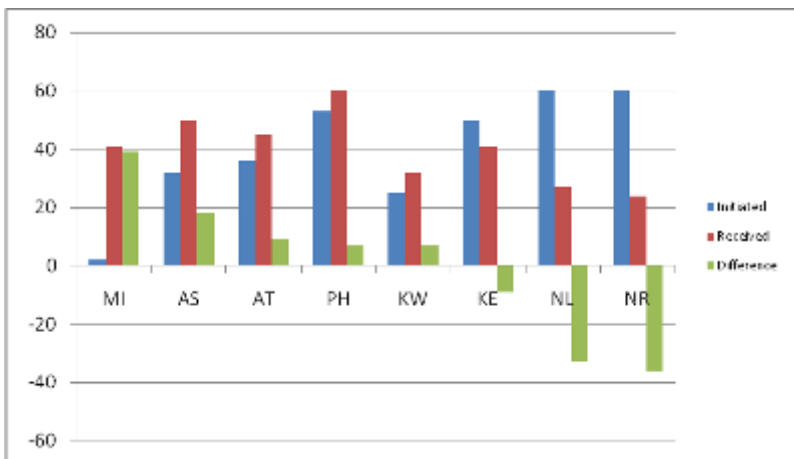


Life in the Pride at the Ngamo release site has become increasingly difficult to observe this past month as the annual rains hit the Zimbabwean Midlands making access to the site impossible on some research sessions.

We do know that the pride has been making regular kills; achieving an estimated daily meat intake of 7.27kg per lion per day in December; well within expected limits despite the new challenges they face now their world has turned wet and green.

Weekly body condition scoring confirms that the lions are capable of keeping themselves well fed.

Analysis of social interactions are also showing Ashanti as being seen by the pride more and more as the dominant female; possibly due to her potential pregnancy of Milo's first litter of cubs to be born within the site. Athena, Phyre then Kwali seem to be the next most dominant.



As you can see from this chart Milo is still clearly at the top of the tree; but Ashanti is increasingly the recipient of social interactions at a higher rate than she initiates them, a possible sign of greater dominance within the pride. Phyre, as we expected, continues to be the lioness that most others want to greet and seems to be playing a bonding role within the group; as we predicted.

To continue getting more regular updates on the progress of the pride visit our Facebook [page](#).



On the following page you will see a chart that attempts to represent the kinship levels between each of our female pride members based on the likelihood of lions being observed together at the first sighting of the pride during each research session over the past two months.

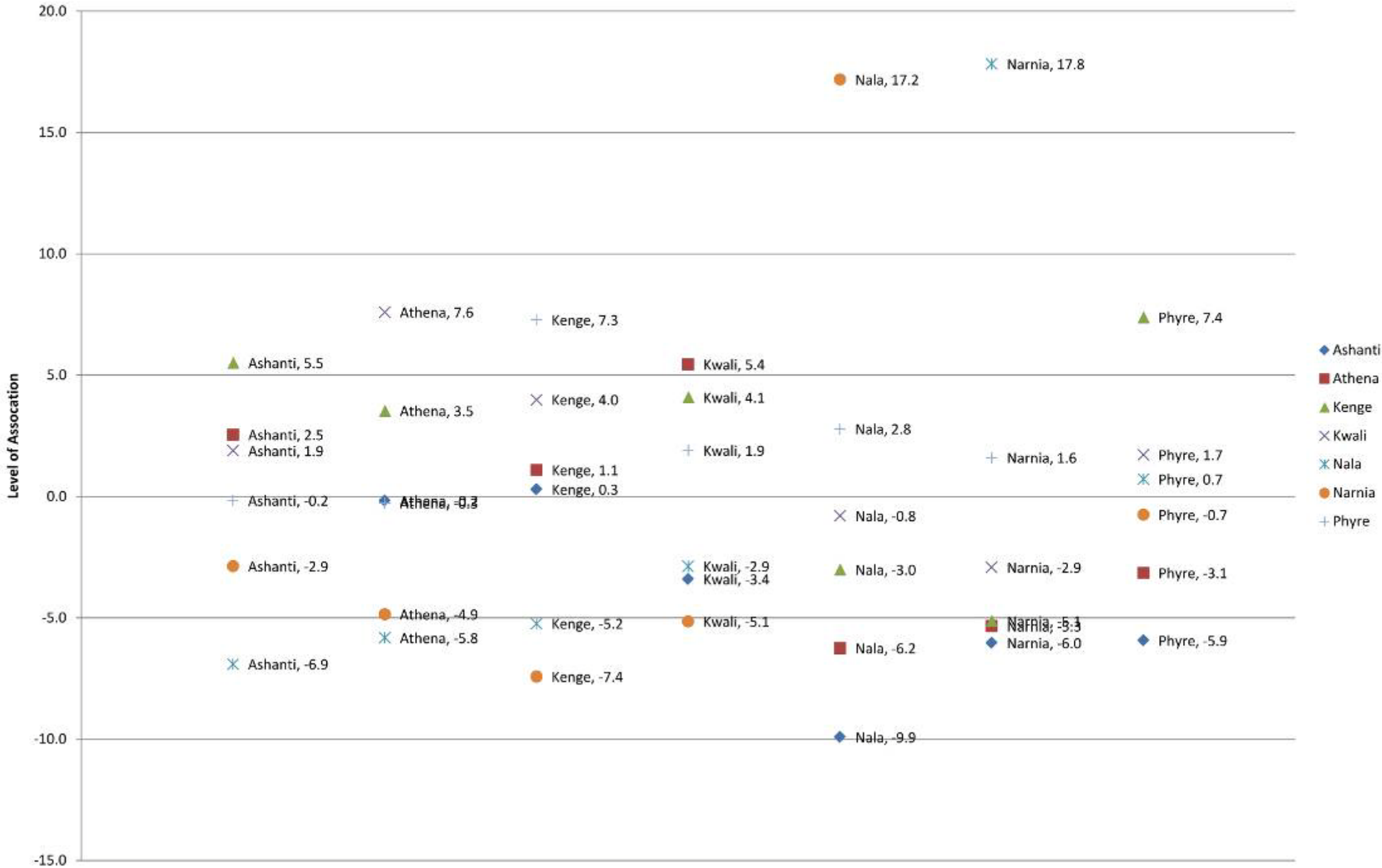
The highest data points reflect the greatest level of kinship, which as you can see, and coming as no surprise, is between the young sisters of Nala & Narnia. The next closest kin are Phyre and Kenge followed by Athena and Kwali, although Athena's preference for Kwali is greater than Kwali's preference for Athena, shown by Athena's data point for Kwali being higher than that of Kwali's for Athena.

The lions with the lowest level of preference for another specific lion are Ashanti, Phyre and Kwali shown by the smallest range between the highest and lowest data points. This is no surprise as Ashanti is the alpha female, Phyre is the most social and Kwali is the latest addition to the pride and, therefore has to play catch up when it comes to creating social bonds with all the other pride members.

Over this time period each female is, on average, most likely to be observed with between five and six other lions, including Milo. Kenge and Phyre are most likely to be found in the largest groupings (5.94 and 5.93 respectively) whilst Ashanti is found in the smallest groups (5.67), but only marginally smaller. Milo was observed away from the rest of the pride on 47% of occasions, which is completely normal.



Representation of kinship between the females of the Ngamo Pride





Have you ever wondered what it would be like to [work for an active conservation and community project in the heart of Africa?](#)

Have you got professional qualifications or experience?

Can you spare a minimum of two months to join our team?

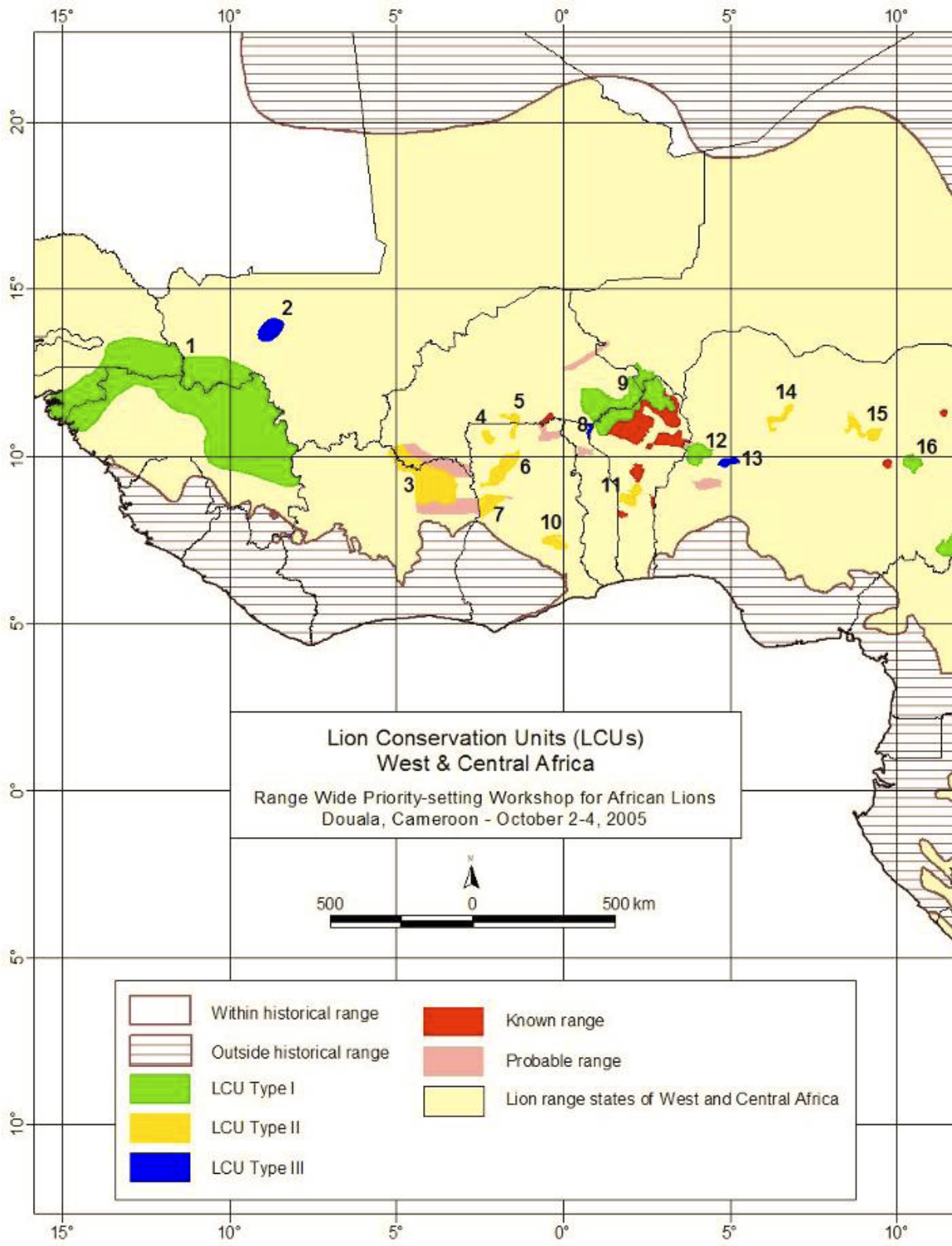
Then the [ALERT Internship Programme](#) has been created for you!

We are providing graduates and skilled individuals unique and unrivalled opportunities to experience the complexities and challenges involved in working for a non-governmental organisation (NGO) in Africa.

The ALERT Internship Programme is a chance in a lifetime for anyone who is seeking to improve their CV with a view to employment within the international development or conservation fields, or if you just have a desire to use your skills for good; to give back to Africa.

[Download the brochure here](#)

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The Status of lions in West Africa: maybe as few as 760 lions remain...

ALERT conducted a review of the results from two major surveys of lion populations within West Africa; Chardonnet (2002) and Bauer & van der Merwe (2004 – pre-published in 2002) in light of the latest evidence with a view to confirming a most likely current estimate for lions in the region as we head into a new decade.

Using both national estimates as well as working within the framework of Lion Conservation Units (LCUs) as established during the Lion Conservation Strategy for West and Central Africa Workshop held in Cameroon in 2005 and reported in 2006, this review found that current population numbers give rise to considerable concern for the long-term viability of the species within the region.

Two countries; Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire have been reported to have lost their remaining lion populations, joining the Gambia, Sierra Leone and Mauritania that lost their lions in recent history. Liberia has never been reported to have had lions whilst Togo has no confirmed resident populations.

Of the 16 LCUs defined by the IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group (2006) ten can be considered to no longer hold lions, with a further four holding very low numbers of 3 – 24 animals. Only two LCUs (1 and 9) hold sufficient lions to consider them potentially viable.

It is difficult to determine whether lion populations within West Africa have declined over the past decade although an estimate of 760 animals is lower than the often quoted estimate of 850 – 1163 for the region. The estimated lower figure may be a result of better estimation rather than an observed decline in lion numbers.

It should be considered that the data upon which most of this review is based are speculative at best, whilst the updating of these estimates, especially as regards Lion Conservation Unit 9 only compounds that speculation. This underpins the further need for more accurate census information within the region.

To download the full report (1.51Mb) please click [here](#).

Fig 1 (left): Lion Conservation units in West Africa (source: IUCN SSC Cat Specialist Group, 2006)

The Daily Pride

Ruma jumps
on buffalo



VOLUNTEERS [click here](#)

ALERT partners with Living Earth Adventures

Living Earth Adventures offers exciting photographic

tours and safaris for photographers of all levels. We invite you to experience sensational landscapes and have up-close encounters with wildlife while developing your photographic skills. Every detail of our tours is designed by and for photographers. Whether you encounter bears in Alaska, visit the majestic sand dunes in Namibia, or interact with orang-utans in Borneo, we make sure you will have the most spectacular photographic opportunities. At the same time, we give back. All our tours and safaris are sustainable, and we give high priority to supporting conservation and community development projects.

By joining one of our photographic holidays, you will make a positive impact on the area you visit.

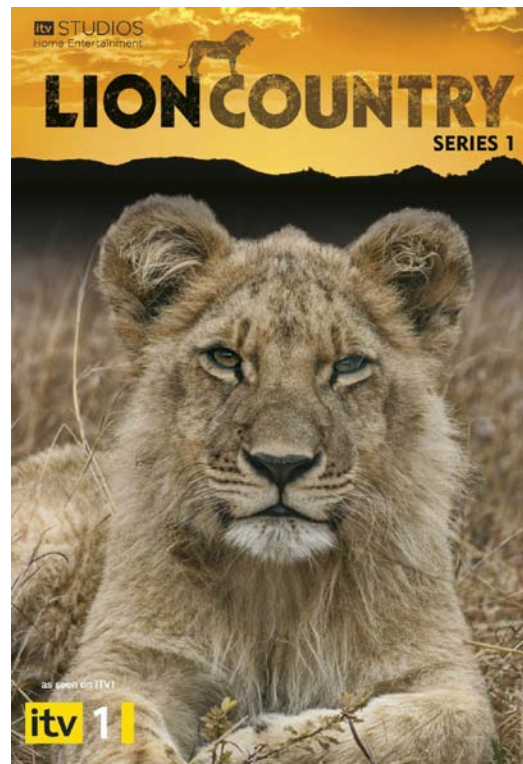


Each tour is led by a professional wildlife photographer.

"Our vision is to share our passion for the natural world with photographers. Our aim is to provide photographers with incredible opportunities. Our passion is to give back to the areas we visit."

LION COUNTRY
RELEASED on
DVD on 24th Jan

eBay takes unwanted
gifts off your hands



For many of you, Christmas will have brought unwanted gifts. ALERT has teamed up with Mission Fish, the charity arm of the market-place phenomenon; eBay.

Users who post items for sale can elect to donate a portion of the final sale price to a charity of their choice.

The process is simple to use; just search for African Lion & Environmental Research Trust in the donate to charity field. The rest is automatic with Mission Fish making all the necessary transactions for you to ensure the Trust receives the percentage you choose.



Tanaka aka Meggie currently taking part in night encounters at Antelope Park has recently made two impressive kills. The first was a juvenile impala followed by a wildebeest.

Tours operating in 2011

Predator & Big Five Photographic Safari, South Africa: November 2011



Magical Picos de Europa Photographic Tour, Spain: June & September 2011



Glaciers, Volcanoes and Waterfalls Photographic Tour, Iceland: May 2011



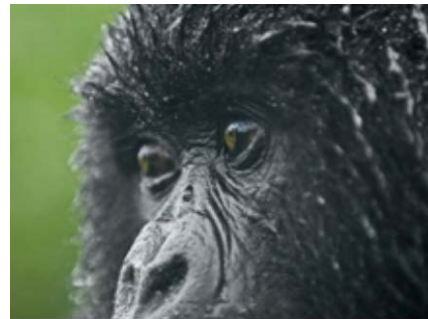
South Luangwa Wildlife Wonder: July 2011



Sahara, Atlas Mountains, and Marrakesh Photographic Tour, Morocco: November 2011



Maasai Mara and Gorilla Photo Safari, East Africa: July 2011



Big Five Photography and Conservation Volunteer Project, South Africa. Operating in all months in 2011



For more information go to www.lionalert.org and click on the "photographic tours" link in the Quick Links section on the right of the home page.

The long awaited release of series one of the popular Lion Country series on DVD format will take place on 24th January 2011. The series is available from a number of on-line retailers including amazon.co.uk, play.com, hmv.com and direct from the ITV website.

The DVD is coded for region 2 so viewers in other regions will require readily available multi-region players to view the content.

ALERT does not know at this point whether the DVD will feature any bonus footage but seriously hopes a bloopers reel is not included (lol).

Series one, except episode five, continues to be available on youtube and via the ALERT web site (http://www.lionalert.org/pages/lion_country.html) in low-resolution. This new DVD will bring the series to your TV in its original glorious high definition version.

Series two of the series will hit screens in the UK in February. The broadcast has been delayed whilst the episodes are reformatted to six by one-hour episodes rather than the original twelve by thirty minutes.



Two more kills took place this month with the impressive form of Kutanga taking a zebra at our Antelope Park project site, whilst in Victoria Falls young Mvuthu made his first kill, taking a monitor lizard.

Staff expect both these lions to make further kills soon, although in each case their siblings are showing less impressive hunting form.



ALERT announces the release of the annual calendar. To get yours visit <http://www.cafepress.co.uk/lionalert.187534793>



Coming soon; Lion Country in hardcover. Final artwork is being worked on by renowned wildlife photographer Chris Weston.

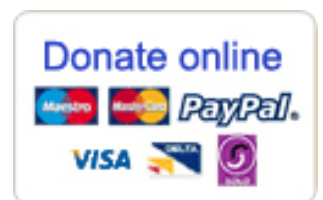
Amazon is already offering the book for pre-order at http://www.amazon.co.uk/Lion-Country-Chris-Weston/dp/1901268594/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1291706152&sr=8-1

At our Livingstone site in the Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park Rufiji has joined the illustrious list of those lions that have worked out how to crack open a tortoise to get to the meat inside.



ALERT would like to apologise to those of you who had hoped to attend a fundraising event in Manchester in January.

With the economic climate as it is we felt the lack of interest at the point when we would have had to put down funds for the venue hire was unlikely to change. As such we took the action to only run the London event.



Some of the studies that ALERT has already facilitated ...

Kristin Arguedas of Princeton University visited Victoria Falls to look at the ever present human / wildlife conflict and specifically whether social influence is a better promoter of conservation attitudes than education alone amongst affected communities. Undergraduate thesis in Psychology

Simon Jansen of Wageningen University in the Netherlands was in Livingstone studying the differences in hunting success and prey preference in a different group compositions of lions. Masters thesis in Biology / Animal Ecology.

Lisa Clifforde of the University of Exeter has an ongoing study for her MPhil looking at Behavioural Sequencing and Character Development in Lion Cubs.

Hannah Rae Kokes of Manchester Metropolitan came to Livingstone looking at the influence of human presence on play behaviour and development in captive bred lions cubs. Masters thesis in Animal Behaviour

John Murphy of the University of East Anglia completed his Masters thesis in Environment & International Development focussed on Exploring the Motivations of Participants in Volunteer Conservation Tourism and their Understandings of Biodiversity Conservation.

Oyvind Handberg of the University of Oslo completed his undergraduate thesis in Development Studies looking at Voluntarily Ending Aid Dependence, whilst Andreas Doppelmayr on the same course looked at the Economic Impacts of Tourism in the Livingstone Area, Zambia.

Sibonokuhle Ncube of the National University of Science & Technology in Zimbabwe completed her undergraduate thesis in Forest Resources and Wildlife Management looking at the Influence of Social Upbringing on the Activity Pattern of Captive Lion *Panthera leo* cubs: Benefits of behaviour enrichment. This study has now been published by the journal Current Zoology..

Jennifer Bradley of Newcastle University completed her paper, *Life as a Lion on the Red List* for her BSc Zoology course.

Roseline Mandisodza of the University of Zimbabwe completed her Masters thesis in Tropical Resource Ecology entitled The Rehabilitation of Captive Bred Lions (*Panthera leo*) in a Semi-Wild Environment for Release into the Wild: Case Study of Antelope Game Park, Zimbabwe.

Some of the completed papers of these studies are available for download [here](#).



STUDY WITH US on the ALERT Facilitated Research Program

For more details click [here](#)

"Deciding to undertake a postgraduate thesis was a huge life decision for me and the whole process seemed quite overwhelming at first. I had an idea of what I wanted to do, but turning that into a viable research study was a daunting prospect. Given that my field work was to take place in Africa my university was limited in how much support they could provide.

The team at ALERT were hugely helpful as I prepared for my study. Their thorough understanding of the animals that they work with and the environment that they operate in was incredibly useful to me in establishing my methodology and making sure that it would really work on the ground. They handled all the logistical arrangements for me and have been incredibly supportive as I have embarked on this journey.

I would highly recommend ALERT to anyone interested in carrying out a research study in Africa."

Lisa Clifforde, MPhil, Exeter University



Give as you Earn...

The money you and your staff earn in just a few minutes at work or during your lunch break can really help our conservation and community development efforts. This program is available to all UK employees being paid through the PAYE system.

What is Payroll Giving?

It's an easy way for your employees to support ALERT's vital work. When they are paid, your payroll department deducts their donation and it is passed automatically to ALERT. Your employees just need to decide how much you want to give. The donation is tax-free so if they pledge £5 a month they only pay £3.90 – the tax man pays the rest.

What are the benefits for your company?

Payroll Giving is quick and easy to set-up and administer. It is an ideal way for you to show commitment to the causes that your employees care about. It provides a further staff benefit and creates a common sense of purpose in them. By encouraging your employees to give, you create sustainable income for ALERT and other worthwhile charities. Your organisation can also qualify for a Payroll Giving Quality Mark to demonstrate your commitment to charitable support.

What will this mean for my payroll staff?

All modern payroll systems can facilitate Payroll Giving, usually as a simple tick box option. Your payroll staff will deduct the amount, as any other pre-tax deduction and forward it on to your Payroll Giving Agency who will distribute the monies to the chosen charities. There are no tax forms for them to complete and record keeping is straightforward. Your selected Payroll Giving Agency will guide you through the process to ensure that your scheme runs smoothly from the start.

How do I sign up?

If you are not already offering Payroll Giving we suggest you take a look at the following link;

<http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/payrollgiving/employers/questions.htm> for details of how to set up a Give as You Earn program at your workplace.

Your staff can either go to www.cafonline.org/Default.aspx?page=7026 and print off the "Give as You Earn Direct Donation Form" or email us at info@lionalert.org and we will send one out.

Your employees will hand the completed form to your Payroll Department and then they can relax, knowing that while they are at work, their money is working hard too – making possible the full range of ALERT projects.

ALERT recommends www.cafonline.org as a Payroll Giving Agency