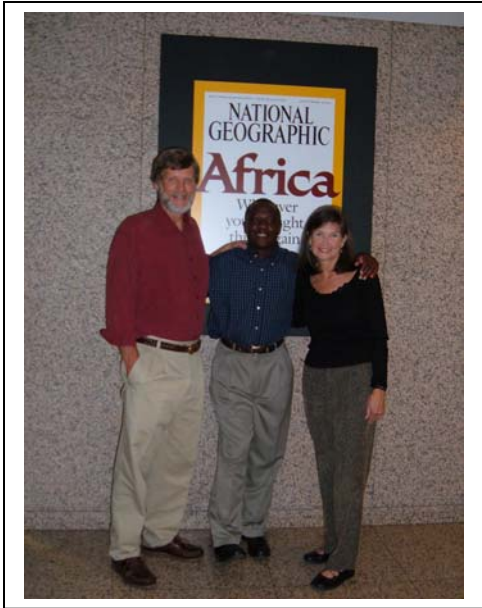


October, 2005

Dear Everybody,

Our work in Zambia was honored in the September issue of *National Geographic*. Then the **National Geographic Society** invited Hammer Simwinga, the more-than-charming and effective Zambian who directs the continued community development work we established in North Luangwa, to come to Washington DC to give a presentation with author Alexandra Fuller and *Geographic* editor Oliver Payne. The Owens Foundation was asked to cosponsor Hammer to make the journey and presentation, and what a safari it turned out to be.



Straight from the remote reaches of northern Zambia, Hammer traveled to Johannesburg where he encountered his first-ever-automatic doors, elevator, and plastic key card. In a Bemba version of *Crocodile Dundee* he met these challenges with ingenuity and then flew on to the Atlanta airport, where he was lost between Concourse E and Baggage Claim for two hours. He discovered apple juice and olives. He gave a live radio broadcast on *National Public Radio* describing our project and his team's continuing work in North Luangwa, and then on to Washington DC for a tour of our nation's monuments. As we rounded a corner, he looked up to see his name in lights at the *National Geographic* building.

In front of a very enthusiastic audience, Hammer told how, after nearly 20 years, our project has assisted 20,000 Zambians with loans, jobs, improved agriculture, education and health care. Alexandra Fuller gave testimony to the refreshing prosperity she found in the villages near North Luangwa National Park as she prepared the article for *National Geographic*. Our hearts warmed as Hammer told of the progress:

- From the 14 remote villages we first assisted, the *North Luangwa Wildlife Conservation and Community Development Programme* **now reaches 52 villages!!!**
- **Family food stocks have doubled** and NLWCCDP has built food storage facilities to protect stocks.
- **The income of villagers who stopped poaching and joined our program has increased 100-fold.**
- There are **new schools AND adult education**. Parents seeing their children being educated (many for the first time), also wanted to attend, so night classes have been established for them.
- The *Traditional Birth Attendants* (TBAs) continue to improve village health through **Family Planning**, critically important **AIDS prevention**, delivering babies, teaching hygiene, first aid, nutrition and more.
- NLWCCDP actively **empowers women** who were without a voice or support. Now these same women own businesses and have assets. They have found a voice in their future and that of their children.
- The project is **sustainable, managed and operated by Zambians**, and expanding every year.

The planting of chili peppers around the crops to keep out marauding elephants is working! Hammer had everyone in the audience laughing when he described how the elephants would chomp a mouth full of peppers, and then trot away sneezing. A field that suffered elephant damage in the past had none after the chilies were planted. There are many more challenges but this is definitely a rewarding step in the right direction.

And because of all the progress, as Hammer told *National Geographic*, **the elephants of North Luangwa are safe**. That park, once nearly depleted of wildlife, is now the most secure park in Zambia. The poaching of elephants is low. Frankfurt Zoological continues to support the Game Scouts, and we greatly appreciate that.

After Hammer's presentation people lingered for more than an hour to talk about the work. Our host at *National Geographic* advised later that they had received very positive feed back, and said, "Who knew – Hammer is a rock star?!" Well, we knew. He and his colleagues, with help from all of you and UK based Harvest Help and others, have kept the work going, and going. There is not a better success story anywhere.

Of course, we dare not rest on our laurels. Hammer, the people, and the elephants still need our help. We must expand the buffer of human prosperity around the Park. Some women still lack even a bar of soap for the TBA to use when delivering their baby. The TBA's need supplies, umbilical clips (to prevent infection after birth) and simple stethoscopes, farmers need seeds, students need basic school supplies, trucks need diesel and tires, villagers need more oil presses and beekeeping equipment. We want to help develop solar box cooking to save village women from walking half of every day in search of firewood and destroying the forests as well. The sun is free! Hammer cooked 'n'shima' (corn porridge) under the hot Georgia sun in a simple box cooker and plans to do the same in Mpika. Hammer's trip to an American hardware store (like an exotic museum for most of us) inspired a plan to make cheap, strong roofing shingles out of discarded tar and sand. There was even talk of making diesel fuel out of sunflower seeds! As always, you make the difference and we still need you and greatly appreciate your help and so do Hammer, his team and the people and wildlife of North Luangwa.

In case you missed it, we wrote the cover story for *Natural History Magazine* (July/Aug 2005) about our findings on the North Luangwa elephants. Since 93% of the elephants were shot by poachers, the social life of the elephants has been totally scrambled. More than 50% of the births are by adolescent females as young as 8.5 years old, where as before poaching, females first gave birth at 15 or 16. The once powerful matriarchs and family units are gone. After poaching, one quarter of the family units consist of only a single mom and her 'only child.' Ten per cent of the groups are made up of orphans with no adults at all – an elephant version of Lord of the Flies.



And just as in that story of isolated teenage boys, the young male elephants formed gangs and became more aggressive than in normal elephant society. It all seems very familiar and disheartening. Yet at the same time, these unusual behaviors are probably the elephants' best chance for a recovery.

But poaching devastated the elephants of Zambia, and they have not recovered yet. With only 7% of the population remaining it will take many years for them to reach a viable and stable density. Our research showed that one third of the family units had no adult elephants because so many had been shot. There are very few older males, almost none of the large "tuskers" found in the first half of the last century. We only saw one 'tusker' in eleven years. That is why we were very disappointed to learn that Zambia has opened elephant hunting again. At the right time, in the right place, hunting can be part of a wise conservation program, but we believe that the hunting of elephants in Zambia at this time is very premature and we urge them to reconsider.

We are also very disturbed by the actions of the Botswana government to forcibly remove Bushmen from the *Central Kalahari Game Reserve*. This reserve, where we studied lions and brown hyenas for eight years, was established for Bushmen, living their traditional lifestyles, as well as for wildlife. It seems that so many different interests – diamond mines, cattle barons, developers – want a piece of the Kalahari now. But the Bushmen have been there for many years, and deserve to be treated with dignity and human rights.

Back to good news: We are pleased that, at last, our new book is finished. It is titled, **Secrets of the Savanna**, and is being released in May/June 2006 by Houghton Mifflin. It chronicles our many adventures while saving the elephants and helping the people of N Luangwa. It reveals how much we learned about ourselves by studying a highly stressed elephant population. The elephants have a lot to tell us; it would benefit us to listen.

There is still so much to do, but we are winning in North Luangwa. We have been doing this job for thirty-one years, and what keeps us going is to concentrate on the successes, the progress, and the hope. Hammer gave us an enormous dose of joy and energy to support him as much as we can. Everything we are working for – the recovery of elephants, security for villagers, habitat for grizzly bears; conservation of wild places – improves the earth and makes it a better place for all of us. Thanks so much for being the foundation of that hope.

Cheers,

*Delia and Mark*

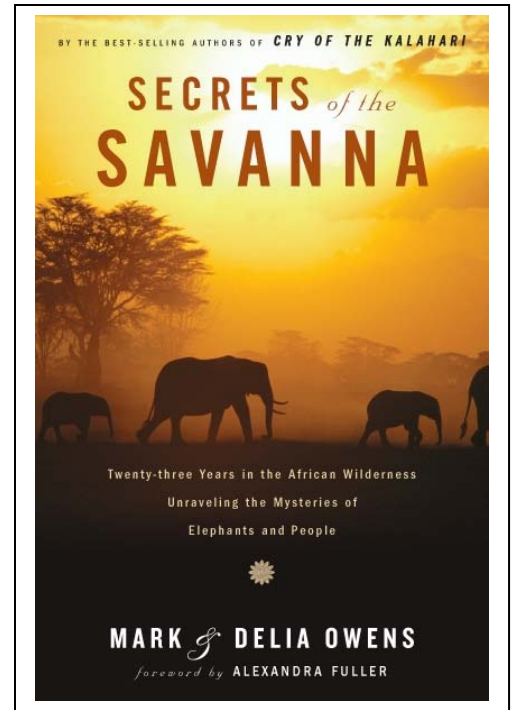
Delia and Mark

...More from Mary:

**Would you like to host an autograph party for Mark and Delia?**

Mark and Delia's new book, **Secrets of the Savanna**, will be released by Houghton Mifflin in May/June 2006. They will be touring the country to promote the book through lectures and book signings. Reaching people with their books is the best way Mark and Delia can continue to help the wildlife and people of North Luangwa and the Northwest. As always – we look to you for help.

**Let us know if you would like to invite Delia and Mark for an autograph party. It would be a huge help and they will greatly appreciate your support. This is all you have to do:**



1. **Host a party** at your house or other location in May or June of 2006. **Invite friends** and associates who would be interested in buying the new book and provide simple refreshments.
2. You would call a bookstore in your area and ask them to supply the books. **The bookstore does the rest:** brings and sells the books and returns all unsold copies. There is no expense or responsibility for you.
3. If Mark and Delia are not already coming to your area, you may be asked to contribute to their travel costs.

Please contact Tammy Johnson at the Owens Foundation if you are interested and provide a date and the estimated number of people you think will attend and she will help you with scheduling and advice. (P.O. Box 870530, Stone Mountain, GA 30087 PHONE: 770-270-0729. EMAIL: [Padman2@adelphia.com](mailto:Padman2@adelphia.com)).

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**ADVOCACY INFORMATION:** *LETTERS COUNT AND DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE:* for more information on the items below, please see our website ([owens-foundation.org](http://owens-foundation.org)) or call our office.

1. **IVORY BAN:** Please contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or your home country CITES representative, and the CITES secretariat (address below) and ask for a complete ban on the commercial trade in ivory. Without a market, poachers will not be encouraged to kill elephants for their tusks.
  - **CITES Secretariat:** 15, Chemin des Anemones -- Case Postale 456, CH-1219 -- Chatelaine -- Geneva, Switzerland. PHONE: 4122-979-9139-40, FAX: 4122-797-3417, EMAIL: [cites@unep.ch](mailto:cites@unep.ch)
  - **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service** -- 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Room 432 -- Arlington, Virginia 22203
2. **DIAMOND MINES/LIONS/BUSHMEN/ IVORY TRADE - IN THE KALAHARI:** Please write the government of Botswana stating that you cannot visit Botswana until it stops the hunting of threatened populations of Kalahari lions, diamond mining in the *Central Kalahari Game Reserve*, trading elephant ivory, and mistreating and dislocating Bushmen.
  - **The Honorable FG Mogae**, President of the Republic, Private Bag 001, Gaborone, Botswana
3. **ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT:** There is a continuing move to weaken the ESA in clever ways. Please contact your representative and urge them to protect and strengthen the *Endangered Species Act*.
  - **For Address Info:** Write - *The Office of the Clerk of the US House of Representatives/US Capitol* -- Room H154 - Washington, DC 20515 -- PH: 202-225-7000, or email for info [www.clerkweb.houses.gov](http://www.clerkweb.houses.gov) - or email your representatives directly through the following link: [www.house.gov/writerep](http://www.house.gov/writerep)
  - **President George Bush**, The White House - Washington, DC 20500 Email: [president@whitehouse.gov](mailto:president@whitehouse.gov)



## HOW TO HELP

**Your donations are greatly needed and appreciated. There are no small donations. Every penny is a big plus in protecting wildlife, their habitat and the people who live near them. Please give what you can. We cannot do it without you.**

Here are more ways to help:

**SPONSOR A LECTURE:** Delia and Mark are offering a professional lecture tour beginning in early May 2006 for a base fee of \$7,000, plus travel expenses. If you know anyone (including contacts at private high schools, colleges and universities, museums, zoological societies, etc.) who would be interested in sponsoring a lecture, or for more information, contact Mary Dykes or Tammy Johnson. Thank you to Woodward Academy of Atlanta, Georgia (11/10/05) and Berry College of Rome, Georgia (11/08/05) for sponsoring lectures this November. If you would like to attend these lectures, contact Mary or Tammy for details.

**MATCHING DONATIONS:** Some companies match employee and retiree donations to accredited 501(c)(3) non-profits such as the Owens Foundation. Matching donations multiply your giving and empower conservation. Contact me for more information. Thanks to those who already have!

**LEGACY PLANNING:** You can touch the future by including the Owens Foundation in your Estate Planning. Because of your caring, generosity and forethought, you can continue your advocacy for conservation far beyond your lifetime. Thanks to those who have already made this important pledge. **Contact me (that would be Mary) for more information on Legacy Planning through:**

- **Will, Living Trust or other plan:** A simple bequest can name the OFWC as recipient of a fixed amount or a percentage of your estate just as you can designate specific family and friends.
- **Annuity or Life Insurance Policy:** Designated as payable to the OFWC.
- **Retirement Plans:** Designate OFWC as a beneficiary of all or a percent of your Retirement Plan.

**RECOMMEND A FRIEND:** If you know someone who shares our passion for conservation, please introduce them to Delia and Mark's work. Send me their contact details and I will forward information to them. **Our database is confidential.** We do NOT share our donor information with anyone...EVER.

- **To receive conservation updates and/or newsletters by email:** email [marydykes@mindspring.com](mailto:marydykes@mindspring.com)
- **New email or postal addresses.** Please advise - saves dollars to be used for conservation, not paperwork.
- **Donation by Credit Card** can be made at [www.owens-foundation.org](http://www.owens-foundation.org) or by calling me. (3% to CC Co.)
- **Foreign currency donations** must be made by wire transfer, US\$ money order or check or by credit card.
- **Online purchases** via OFWC web page link to [www.Barnes&Noble.com](http://www.Barnes&Noble.com) generate income for our work.
- **Recycle used Cell Phones:** See our web page link to recycle cell phones at no charge & make \$ for OFWC.

**DONATIONS FOR NORTH LUANGWA:** Thanks to all who have shipped school & medical supplies to North Luangwa. They are GREATLY needed and appreciated. Still needed are: **School Supplies:** Crayons, pens, pencils, erasers, chalk, wildlife books & magazines (used are fine.) Paper is too heavy to ship. **Medical Supplies:** Dial or other antibiotic soap, sterile latex gloves Betadyne, antibiotic ointment/cream, gauze pads & rolls, first aid tape, Band-Aids, Ziploc bags. **Sewing Supplies:** Women's groups can use any fabric, thread or sewing notions. **Shipping:** Label medical as *Hygiene Supplies*, school and craft donations as *Education Supplies*. List on the USPS Customs Form as a *Gift* with a low value. Ship USPO surface/no insurance. Use sturdy boxes, w/ 2 strips of duct tape in each direction and overlay edges w/2-inch plastic tape. Use USPO "M BAG" for books at \$1 per pound, 11 lbs minimum and 66 lbs maximum per box. **SHIP TO: NLWCCDP, P.O. Box 450210, Mpika, Zambia**

If you do not wish to receive the *Dear Everybody* please contact me and I will remove your name from our files.

**Cheers, Mary Dykes/Administrative Director - OFWC, PO Box 870530, Stone Mountain, Georgia 30087 USA**  
Phone: 770-270-0729 FAX: 770-934-8337 -- Email: [marydykes@mindspring.com](mailto:marydykes@mindspring.com) or Tammy Johnson,  
Administrative Assistant at [padman2@adelphia.com](mailto:padman2@adelphia.com) -- Web Page: [www.owens-foundation.org](http://www.owens-foundation.org)