

# **WILDLIFE ACTION GROUP**

## **THUMA TELEGRAPH DECEMBER 2018**

BY LYNN CLIFFORD



## December 2018

Dear Donors, Friends and supporters

2018 has gone with a blink of an eye. I just can't believe its half way through December and the year is almost over.

This year has been so positive and full of action and excitement. We are now beginning to see the rewards of all the hard work over the years.

We started the year with de-snaring Barak who was found very sick and we thought he would die. We deployed our first elephant collars to enable us to track some elephants who are breaking the fence and raiding community crops.

The road from the main gate to Base camp saw a total makeover, with communities assisting us to grade the road.

Aug through to Dec we saw so much wildlife with most ellie breeding herds with new calfs , showing good growth in populations.

Illegal activity was at an all time low in 2018 and most prosecutions had positive outcomes.

Mid year saw excitement when we discovered eland are living in Thuma.

Another 12 orchids have been discovered in Nov and Dec, showing Thuma to be home to over 40 orchids..

Communities have played a major role this year and been very much involved in development both inside and outside the Reserves. Relationships are being nurtured and grow stronger and with that we are seeing positive impacts on the natural resources of both Reserves. Over 25000 tree seeds planted on the west and over 8000 school children are part of the conservation education project.

We have improved some buildings at Base camp including building a water hole close so we can watch wildlife from Pride rock.

Human elephant conflict rocketed on the western side of Thuma and late November we ended the year by extending the solar powered fence line another 11 kms on the western side of Thuma.

We are so grateful for all the support you have given us in 2018, without we could not have achieved any of this. And of course thank our brave and dedicated Rangers for all the hard work protecting both the habitat and Wildlife of Malawi.

We also thank our in country partners DNPW, Department of Forestry, LWT, African Parks and USAID.

Already next year looks very exciting with many new projects.

We wish you all a very Merry Christmas and healthy and peaceful New year.

Warmest regards as always

Lynn and Scouts





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Chakuse - this huge old gentleman getting a sat collar placed on him, Thanks to REA and WAGI for funding.





A very proud moment for me as rangers salute as we leave the area where first collar was deployed and also my first time back in the air since my accident.





Barak was darted twice in a month to treat injured leg. We did not find a snare but we are delighted to see he is walking without a limp and he has gained weight again.





With funding from USFWS communities on the Western side of Thuma saw many projects which brought alternative sources of income and has been one of the driving forces that has seen charcoal activity stop.





Thuma looking incredible during visit by Elephant Crisis Fund team.

Photo credit - Jane Wynard





Drone shot of Plateau area.





Planting trees by communities.





Eland sighted in Thuma for first time since 1998. And later in year we found camera trap photos of two calf's





Reto continues to discover and photograph some of the incredible creatures of Thuma.







MERRY CHRISTMAS AND WISHING YOU ALL A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR