

## A VISIT TO KAFUE

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The most exciting news that ever reached my ears came when the president of our Young Farmers' Club announced that the national organizer had invited two boys from the Club to visit Kafue National Park. I was even more excited when I knew that I was one of the two. It took what seemed to me five years, but was actually five weeks, for the day of departure to come.

On 4th October the President told me that he had bought tickets for our journey, which was to be the following night. At 10 p.m. on the 5th we were on the train to Lusaka.

We were disappointed to find that our friends from Livingstone were not on the train and even more so to arrive at Lusaka and find nobody to bring us to Munali. Late in the morning, however, we were taken to Munali by a van from that school. Here, the secretary of the Munali Young Farmers' Club rang the organizer who came and took us to Bwacha Hotel in Lusaka. We spent two nights at this hotel.

On Sunday morning, 8th October, our party started on its 300-mile journey to Tree Tops School Camp in the park. This party consisted of Young Farmers from various schools, chief among which were Munali, Chikuni, and Ndola Secondary School.

### LONG JOURNEY

The journey was long and dirty, and the day indescribably hot. We drove through Mumbwa at about 12.45 p.m. and at 2.05 p.m. we entered the park through the "Eastern Entrance".

From then on we saw game such as kudu, wart-hog, and roan antelope. We reached Kafue Hook pontoon at about 3.55 p.m. On the other side of Kafue more game was seen.

We saw puku everywhere along the Rivers Kafue and Lufupa. Also, animals such as hartebeeste and eland were seen. At 7 p.m. we reached Tree Tops at which camp we were to lodge.

This camp is built under a giant baobab on the southern end of the Busanga Flats and near the River Lufupa. Before we went to bed we were given camp rules and the rules of the park in general.

On the following morning the lecturer in charge asked our sponsor to take us to the Hippo Pool to see if any hippo could be sighted. Here we saw more than forty hippopotami as they came out to blow. In the afternoon we began our tour of the park, to see different animals. We went out four mornings and five afternoons.

Within those five days, fortunately, we saw most of what I shall call the important animals such as buffalo, wildebeeste, zebra, lion, cheetah, elephant, impala, sable antelope, monkeys, hyena, waterbuck, red lechwe, jackal, and bushbuck. Pukus and buffalo were seen by hundreds; the

latter are most plentiful in the Busanga Flats. We counted ourselves lucky to see a number of hippos on dry land.

As our party drove through the Busanga Flats it encountered very many different types of birds. A python and various species of fish seen increased my delight many fold.

This camp (Tree Tops) is there for the good of schoolboys and girls of all races. Ours was the first group of Africans to stay there. Black and white boys and girls enjoy the same conditions at this camp. The camp, which is run by the Game Preservation and Hunting Association, was like home to us ; we had electricity, a small library, and hot and cold water taps were at our disposal. In the thickets around the station, however, tsetse proved most annoying.

#### MAIN AIM

The camp had been established with the hope of making us, the future men and women of our country, admire wild game and thus make great efforts to preserve what game there is in our bush.

The fact that I did not see a single animal for 104 miles of motoring from Mumbwa turn-off to the eastern entrance is enough to prove to me that uncontrolled hunting is a threat to game life. My belief was further confirmed when, after entering the park, I began to see big herds of animals.

I take this opportunity to pay my sincere tribute to the Game Preservation and Hunting Association for having favoured us so much and made it easy for us to visit the aforesaid park

I also thank Mr. Hewitt, the National Organizer, for his part in bringing us the lessons we enjoyed while there.

On 14th October we started back to school. Tired but happy we reached Lusaka at 5.15 p.m. on the same day. When I am among my friends at school, my memory carries me back to my happy days in the park.

NOTE : Samson Mwaba is a pupil at St. Canisius College. He sent the above essay to *Nshila*, the African magazine, published by the Information Department of the Government of Northern Rhodesia. It is re-published with permission.