

Iifa Lemvvelo



The Newsletter of the Natural History Museum **2019**
of Zimbabwe, Vol. 1 No. 2

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Natural History Museum of Zimbabwe

Offices at: Centenary Park, Corner Park Road &
Leopold Takawira Avenue,
Bulawayo

Regional Director's Welcome

Welcome to our next museum newsletter where we keep you informed of the we are doing behind the scenes. In May we celebrate International Museums Day, where we reflect on our relevance in a constantly changing society. I would like to share this quote which is so apt to museums- "if you don't know history (cultural or natural), then you don't know anything. You are a leaf that doesn't know its part of a tree." - Michael Crichton. With all our activities at the museum, we aim to increase your understanding of the world around you....All we need is for you to step into our world. So please support us and join in.



Entrance fees

Locals: Adults \$3
Children (5-14yrs) \$1
SADC Countries: Adults USDS7
Children (5-14yrs) USDS5
International: Adults USDS10
Children (5-14yrs) USDS5

Upcoming Events!!!!

- **The Dynasties continue!!**
Join us every Wednesday at 1 pm for Sir David Attenborough's new BBC series. Follow the true stories of five of the world's most celebrated, yet endangered animals. These families fight for their own survival and for the future of their dynasties.
- **Lion 10th April.** A two year journey of a Pride of Lions in the Maasai Mara
- **Painted Wolf 17th April.** Filmed in Mana pools and shows the life and struggles of two packs
- **Tiger 24th April.** A Bengal Tiger raises for cubs to adulthood
- **Lunch time talk on Monday 15 April**
Dr Albert Chakona from the South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity, Rhodes University will present a "Nationwide inventory and distribution of Freshwater fishes and frogs in Zimbabwe
- **Holiday movies \$4/person**
Friday 12th - Smallfoot
Wednesday 17th - Incredibles 2
Wednesday 24th - The Lego movie 2: The 2nd part
Thursday 25th - The Grinch
Friday 26th - Ralph breaks the internet
- **An outing in Sauerstown to discover the early history of Bulawayo coupled with the Friends of the Museum AGM on Saturday 4th of May 2019 (see more information on last page).**



Mushroom Art Competition



NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF ZIMBABWE

af Alliance Française
Belavaya - Zimbabwe

MUSHROOM ART COMPETITION

Original work in any Medium

Any Fungus or Mushroom

ONLY on A3 or A4 paper

Visit the **MUSEUM FUNGI DISPLAY** for inspiration

AGE GROUPS
9 & 10 years
11 & 12
13 - 15
16 - 18
Adult

Fantasy or Real

All entries submitted by the end of May 2019 to:
The Secretary,
Natural History Museum
L. Takawira & Park Road
Bulawayo

Enquiries: Contact Ms C Sharp +263 772 347 135

Museum club is back.



NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF ZIMBABWE

MUSEUM CLUB

ENROLMENT FOR ALL 7-14 YEAR OLDS

HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:

- Club meetings over the holidays
- Monthly nature walks every last Saturday of the month (Starting 9am, March 30th)

FOR ALL INQUIRIES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS PLEASE CONTACT:

THE MUSEUM: natmuse@netconnect.co.zw
RAYS: rays.trust@zimgone@gmail.com

naturalhistorymuseumzimbabwe.com



friends OF THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

2019/20 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEES

PAYABLE IN USD, RTGS & ECO CASH AT PREVAILING BANK RATE

PENSIONERS - USD 5

INDIVIDUAL - USD 10

FAMILY - USD 20

SOCIETY / GROUPS - USD 25

INCLUDES 2 FREE ENTRIES PER YEAR TO THE FOLLOWING SITES:
THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM, KHAMI RUINS & WORLD'S VIEW

VALID FROM 1ST APRIL 2019 - 31ST MARCH 2020

naturalhistorymuseumzimbabwe.com

Renew your Friends of the Museum Membership and don't forget to join us for the outing and AGM

INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM DAY 2019

By Dr M. J. FitzPatrick



The worldwide community of museums will celebrate International Museum Day on and around 18 May 2019. Participation in International Museum Day is growing among museums all over the world. In 2018, more than 40,000 museums participated in the event in some 158 countries.

The International Council of Museums (ICOM) which is an international body governing all Museums proposes a theme each year since 1977 and this year's theme is **MUSEUMS AS CULTURAL HUBS: THE FUTURE OF TRADITION.**

The role of museums in society is changing and while we continue with our primary missions – collecting, conservation, communication, research, exhibition – museums have transformed their practices to remain closer to the communities they serve. Today we work more closely with communities and encourage them to become the custodians of their own heritage sites to safe guard this heritage (both cultural and natural) for future generations. The World Monuments Watch Fund have provided us with funding to work alongside the Matobo Communities in recording and conserving the Rock Art sites present across the hills. We also work with Dambari Wildlife Trust in environmental conservation education programmes with senior school children in various schools in the Matobo Hills. Annually we have a Heritage Quiz open to all primary schools across the country, and this year we have seen the expansion of this quiz, and the finals for this are held on International Museums day, and this year the venue is the Museum of Human Sciences in Harare.

The Western Region of National Museums and Monuments are custodians of many diverse cultures

and we have many community and site museums to represent this: these include the site museums at Pomongwe, World's View and Nswatugi Cave Matobo, Khami, Old Bulawayo, Binga (Batonga Community Museum) and Hwange (Nambya Community Museum). At present the Nambya Community Museum is undergoing a revamp. As cultural hubs we house all the cultural objects from the different communities from the past used by these communities for various purposes such as hunting, mining, farming, trading, music and dancing and we strive to promote interest in these traditions.

We hope that you will visit one of our Museums on International Museum Day and continue to support our programmes throughout the year as we endeavor to educate and entertain, while raising awareness on sustainable heritage management practices for the benefit of the future generations.

MATOBO WATCH DAY REPORT

By Charity Nyathi

Theme: Fostering a community centered approach to rock art preservation

Matobo Watch Day was held on 17 October 2018 at Silozwe Primary School in Matobo. The event aimed at promoting community engagement in managing the rock art sites within the Matobo Hills World Heritage Landscape. The objective of mobilising local community members for awareness on conserving rock art sites was well achieved by the turn out of

over 400 local community members. The outreach also spread to surrounding schools with over 900 school pupils from Silozwe Primary School, Silozwe Secondary School, Lushumbe Primary School, Gwandavale Primary and Nduna Primary School gathering for the event. Headmasters and School teachers were also in attendance in support of the event which is in line with the new Heritage Studies curriculum.



The event was graced by the Deputy Minister of Primary and Secondary Education who is also the Member of Parliament for Matobo North, Honourable Edgar Moyo. He implored communities living in areas around the National Park to play a leading role in safeguarding and protecting heritage sites. The Member of Parliament for Umzingwane District, Retired Brigadier Levy Mayihlome was also present to address the public about the need to jealously safeguard our heritage. The objective of extending awareness to politicians and public icons was achieved in this regard as we are expecting them to support our forth coming efforts from higher office and ministry levels.



A speech by the Heritage Manager (Mrs. Charity Nyathi) was given to the local community as a plea to conserve the rock art. This focused on human induced

conservation problems to rock art. The members of the community were encouraged to desist from graffiti and vandalism of rock art sites.



Various Stakeholders took turns to address the public about the importance of rock art. The Environmental Management Agency (EMA) also took time to encourage the community to desist from lighting and spreading veldt fires which have of late destroyed the cultural landscape. EMA is one of the most relevant government department whose mandate is to provide the sustainable management of natural resources and protection of the environment, the prevention of pollution and environmental degradation. Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Authority, Matobo Conservation Society, Amagugu International Heritage Centre, Cecil John Rhodes Ndebele Cultural Village, Dambari Wildlife Trust and other stakeholders and research organisations took turns to support the community based initiative to rock art preservation.



Traditional leaders also supported our efforts to reach out to the community; the major aim was to have rock art widely valued as a unique cultural treasure and to be recognised as an integral part of cultural identities and unifying links for humanity to our environment. Village Heads, traditional leaders and local authority representatives came from various wards within Matobo and they heard the plea that rock art is a diminishing and threatened treasure that requires on-going commitment and responsibility from all levels of societal leadership to preserve it.

Celebrations of cultural heritage took centre stage in between talks and speeches. The day was marked by cultural dances from local groups, songs and poems

from school children. The objective to restore a sense of ownership within the locals and build local activism and support towards heritage preservation was accordingly launched through the long period of intense preparations by these groups towards the watch day.



The 17th of October turned out to be the hottest day of October so far hence we could not do the site tour which had been planned for. Silozwane cave is located on top of one of the steepest mountains which proved almost impossible to access in the heat that recorded the highest temperatures in the season.

Media Coverage

Prior to the event the Heritage Manager, Charity Ndlovu pre-recorded a voice over clip on Skies Metro FM talking about the oncoming event and extending a welcome to the public who could make it to Matobo. Pre and post event alerts were posted on the Natural History Museum of Zimbabwe Facebook page. Four media houses covered the event, The Chronicle, Sunday News, Daily News and Newsday. Two of them will make them feature articles in days to come and the Chronicle has already published the story where they covered the Guest of Honours remarks when he was addressing the participants. This story can be accessed through the following link; <https://www.chronicle.co.zw/minister-urges-communities-to-safeguard-heritage-sites/>.

FROM TACOS TO CADAVERS: EXTRACTS FROM MY JOURNEY AS A ZIMBABWEAN-TEXAN GRADUATE STUDENT

By Dorothy C. Madamba

National Museums and Monuments of Zimbabwe prides itself as an institution that has provided the public and its staff great learning experience since the early 1900. I had the privilege of being a recipient of this service when I embarked on my journey as a graduate student in Texas USA between July 2015 and December 2017. Attaining an Master's degree qualification had been at the top of my list and yet far from rich because of personal economic challenges until a team of professors from Sam Houston State University came through and Dr. Jerry Cook offered me an assistantship position.

Becoming an Entomologist

My BSc. Project was entomology based and got me intrigued by the little buggers leading me to end up employed in the entomology department at the Natural History museum in Zimbabwe. I always felt inadequate in my knowledge on the subject while on the job despite all the conferences and training provided and so I had high hopes and expectations for my American education and I am pleased to say I was not disappointed.

It was St Augustine who said “The world is a book and those who do not travel only read one page”. It took me a more that 9000 miles journey to the Northern hemisphere to only begin to comprehend what he meant. My college town was in Walker County, Texas. If you grew up watching Chuck Norris you will understand my excitement when I actually met his niece! Who would have imagined I'd end up mingling with the Walker Texas rangers?

In adjusting to the student life, no one ever warned me of the social side; roommates, living arrangements and most importantly culture shock. After a bit of adjustment, it was time to sample the cuisine and thanks to a newfound Hispanic friend Ed, tacos (the street ones), became one of my favorites. I also had the privilege of introducing a few of my friends and the entire Bridges at Sam Club to sadza, which they loved.

Talking of culture shock, it was everyone assumption that everyone had their choice of alcoholic beverage such that one of my classes during my first semester was at Humphreys bar where we discussed interview skills while everyone shared a pitcher of beer. Before I even get into the work and academic side, my college experience was enriched by community, the friends I made, the societies I joined and the religious groups that I was part of. To mention a few, I was part of the SHSU International Students Organisation (ISO) in which I rose to Vice Chairman in my final year. In this and all the other communities I met wonderful and helpful people who went out of their way to make sure I was comfortable.



Over the next 2 ½ years I took 34 credit hour classes of the required 32, “focused achiever”. I had a wide range of training and hands-on experience in systematics (especially understanding packages like TnT and other software for systematics), engaging discussions on the species concept, general and forensic entomology, GIS and Statistics. My most engaging and critical think tank scratching topics would have to be Introduction to evolution and molecular evolution courses, especially discussions on the possible origin on life and man. What appealed to me the most about the difference between my undergrad experience at NUST and my masters program at SHSU was the teaching approach. Totally limited spoon feeding and a lot of DIY where I was actively involved in how much information I acquired on every subject. Syllabi were available in the first lecture complete with the schedule of major things like quizzes, trips, assignment due dates and exams. Nothing major would just pop up as an afterthought so everyone was able to walk into class already knowing the content of the lecture and hence able to engage in meaningful discussions during the lecture. I also liked the style of student presentations that were graded, they encourage team work. I noticed that generally American students at my campus did not find it easy to approach each other and work together for one reason or the other so this style encouraged meeting outside of class and better interaction among students. The biggest lesson I walked away with is everyone has a weakness and needs the strength of others to fill in for those weaknesses. My weakness was believing that I could totally do everything I wanted to do but I learnt in life that everyone has their special areas where they could really have more impact if they directed more time and energy investment exclusively into it.



The body farm

I wish you could see my face light up at the mention of the body farm! The main topic that had me excited about learning at SHSU was the idea of working at an actual body farm with forensic science expert entomologist Dr. S Bucheli (who quickly became a mentor and friend), microbiologist Dr A Lynne and a spectacular chemist, Dr Haines! I was part of a laboratory group investigating several angles of cadaver decomposition and I was thrilled to dedicate a lot of hours into my chunk of work investigating “Effect of *Ignatzschineria indica* (Gammaproteobacteria: Xanthomonadales) on Rate of Decomposition in Mice”. Part of this work was presented at the Entomological Society of America and the American Society for Microbiologists conferences.

While in Zimbabwe, I had been limited mentally in terms of what plans were feasible, that is one thing I was grateful to not have while studying and working in the research field at SHSU. On the work and research front there were no financial limitations on my part, (won’t mention the student life and personal finances here) this encouraged me to think wide and wild and come up with so many study topics and attend conferences to present those research.

Graduate student assistantship

My enrolment arrangement at SHSU was a work study and I was a graduate research assistant to Dr Jerry Cook, the then VP of research. I was designated at the newly established SHSNHC which I took part in helping the Collections Manager Dr. Will Godwin to set up at a new and bigger collection. While working there I participated in and initiated some research on Strepsiptera, Diptera genus *Rhinia*, among other small projects.



While working at SHSNHC, I was introduced to a lot of experts who are crucial partners and required skills for any museum to function. Display artists, researchers, librarians to mention a few. It is at this place that a working journey was initiated with Discover Life and a project to investigate the status of moth diversity and taxonomy, comparing Africa and North America. A publication of this research proposal is available as an article in Southern Lepidopterist news.

With the acquired skills and resources, I am excited to have a chance to possibly implement the ideas, work through the challenges and create a competitive brand of entomology research in my fields of interest. These include taphonomy, entomophagy, biodiversity informatics, systematics and taxonomy with orders Diptera and Lepidoptera but not limited to them. I enjoyed the company of and interactions among researchers at conferences and would love to be instrumental in the formation of the Entomological Society of Zimbabwe to promote dialogue and collaborations among researchers within our borders.

Special thanks go to family and friends, my employers National Museums and Monuments, Sam Houston State Natural History Collections, Sam Houston State University and especially my undergraduate “minions” who eased the thesis workload.

Friends of the Museum AGM

The Grange & the founding of modern Bulawayo

Date :4th of May 2019. Time: 14h30 for 15h00

Possibly the oldest surviving building in modern Bulawayo is Dawson’s Store, part of the historical centre that became The Grange Hotel. Built in the 1880s, it was the trading post run by James Dawson in the “Whiteman’s Town” next to King Lobengula’s royal capital of Bulawayo [*eMahlabathini*]. During the Anglo-Ndebele War of 1893 most Europeans took flight in the immediate months prior to the conflict. However two men remained, staunch friends of the King- William Filmer Usher and Fairbairn. With the destruction of the Ndebele capital as British South Africa Company forces advanced, these two men took refuge on the roof of Dawson’s store, the only substantial brick building remaining. Protected by the word of the King, there they remained until the invading forces arrived. This building, although modified in the 126years, remains and we will be entertained by several talks on the events and personalities involved in this and later history of this site and the Sauers Town suburb.

The Grange- northern end of Kenilworth Road, Sauers Town. For those who don’t know where this, take the Victoria Falls Road, turn right at the old Portuguese Club onto Jacaranda Avenue. Cross the stream and take second road to the left [Kelinworth]. Proceed straight to the very end where there is a gate leading off to the left with a sign **The Grange**

Bring chairs and Refreshments.

Design and layout by P. N Tshabangu (NHM)