

NATURE NOTES

Your Up To Date Information From
Nature Encounters Tours & Travel,
Petersen Photography & Simply Safari
Issue # 11 Spring 2005

NATURE ENCOUNTERS TOURS & TRAVEL 2005/2006 DEPARTURES!

Group Departures . . .

Pricing includes international and domestic air (land only pricing available), luxury accommodation, most meals, tips/gratuities, donation to a wildlife conservation group you will be visiting, safari videotape with you in it!
Pricing is per person based on double occupancy.
If paying by credit card please contact us.

2005 GROUP DEPARTURES

MOST OF OUR AFRICA GROUP DEPARTURES ARE SOLD OUT – THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT! SPACE IS AVAILABLE ON THE FOLLOWING . . .

Nov. 9 – 13, 2005 Polar Bears Abound!

Led by Photographer – Carol Petersen \$2,445CDN
Another Arctic Adventure! 1 night in Winnipeg – 3 nights at the Lazy Bear Lodge in Churchill! Most meals – great bears, cultural tours and dog sledding! We can arrange air for you or use your Aeroplan or Airmiles Points! Don't delay – only 10 seats available.

SEE CAROL'S SAFARI REPORT NEXT COLUMN!

2006 GROUP DEPARTURES

February 3 to 16 Kenya/Tanzania Getaway

Led by Zookeeper Garth Irvine \$TBA CDN

Feb. 15-21 Mountain Gorilla Extension \$TBA CDN

Babies Babies Everywhere! The beauty of Kenya and Tanzania wrapped into a tried and true itinerary. See the wildebeest and zebra during their calving season as well!

February 23 - Mar. 5, 2006 The Magic of Galapagos

Led by Zoo Keeper – Mona Keith \$7695CDN

Amazon Rainforest Extension - \$1795CDN

An amazing boat! An amazing place!
Amazon Rainforest Extension available.

See Mona's Article on Page 3!

OTHER 2006 ITINERARIES TO WATCH FOR!

May 2006 – Kenya & Tanzania

September 2006 – Zambia with Mona

September 2006 – Botswana with Carol

TBA – Family Safaris with Rose

WATCH

WWW.NATUREENCOUNTERSTOURS.COM

FOR THE LATEST UPDATES

SAFARI REPORT! By Carol Petersen

POLAR BEARS ABOUND – OCTOBER 2004

Another amazing arctic adventure! This small but fun group took off from Winnipeg Thanksgiving weekend 2004 – ready for the cold and snow of Churchill, Manitoba. Weather was with us this time as we toured the historic sites of Churchill with super guide Wally in shirtsleeves!! Should have brought sunscreen! Our days on the tundra vehicles were filled with ptarmigan, arctic fox, the black derivation of red fox (unique and



beautiful) and of course the great white bears. We were treated to many behavioral observations thanks to the presence of a large male whose main purpose was to harass a mom with 2 cubs and the other local individuals. He was curious and very handsome – often reaching up to the very bottom of the window line of the vehicles affording great images and even the odd “steam” on the lens – no my head was not even close to this image . . . All in all – a great trip, great bears – wonderful lodge and we will do it all over again in prime time November 2005 – Join us!

SIMPLY SAFARI - SIMPLY A SHOPPING ADVENTURE!

At Simply Safari, we have soooo many stories about groups and individuals that are supported by purchases made at our store. Every newsletter, we will bring you one of these stories. Last issue we featured Kazuri Beads of Kenya, this issue . .



TRIBAL TEXTILES - ZAMBIA

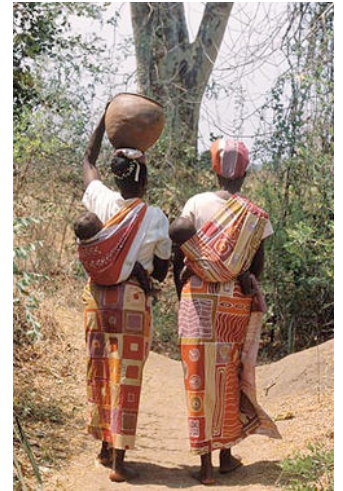
Tribal Textiles is design-led and produces 100% cotton hand-painted textiles in Zambia. Their extensive collection includes bedcovers, duvet sets, wall hangings, cushion covers, throws, sarongs, bags, accessories and a selection of table linen. The traditional line features tribal and indigenous designs derived from African art. Tribal Textile's contemporary designs include Geometric, Indo-Afro, Floral, Retro and Organic ranges. Additionally, we offer fun and dynamic children's range, all featuring Africa's favorite animals! Both durable and colorfast, these designs will transform any interior and outdoor living area. Tribal Textiles' team of artists and painters take enormous pride with each individual creation, with some pieces taking up to a few days to complete. No two items are the same, each having a

story and character of their own. All designs can be produced in any of our beautiful sun-baked colors. It is the richness and diversity of these color combinations that are fast becoming the trademark of Tribal Textiles. Gillie Lightfoot founded Tribal Textiles in 1991. Inspired by traditional African design and driven by her passion for art, Gillie selected a small team of local artists and translated her dream into a reality. Tribal Textiles is based in Zambia in the heart of the African bush, on the edge of the South Luangwa National Park. It is their aim to generate further employment to assist in the improvement and development of Zambian people's lives within our local community. Since they are located in a rural region of Zambia with extremely limited employment opportunities, they are committed to providing fair employment, training and a good working environment; enabling staff to gain a good measure of self sufficiency and increased quality of life.

Fabric Making Process

- Begin with the cutting, sewing & fraying of 100% cotton fabric.
- Individual designs are produced with starch solution & sun-dried.
- All designs are hand-painted, utilizing our many colourways.
- The cooking process, in an industrial oven, makes the textiles color fast & fully washable.
- Following cooking, each piece is washed and dried in the sunshine.
- The starch designs are carefully removed to reveal the colorful designs.
- The final process includes sewing & pressing, in preparation for packing.

Submitted by Tribal Textiles, Mfuwe, Zambia.



CONTACT US . . .

SIMPLY SAFARI

TRADING POST MALL-BRAGG CREEK, AB
403) 949-8401

*** WINTER HOURS ***

WED TO SAT - 11-5

SUNDAYS & HOLIDAY MONDAY'S 12-5

MAY 20 TO SEPTEMBER 5

MONDAY TO SATURDAY - 11-5:30

SUNDAYS & HOLIDAY MONDAY'S 12-5:30

WWW.SIMPLYSAFARISTORE.COM

Contact Us . . .

Petersen Photography Ltd. &

Nature Encounters Tours & Travel Ltd.

Box 472, Bragg Creek, AB Canada T0L 0K0

Toll Free 866-949-3007

www.petersenphotography.com

www.natureencounterstours.com

MAKE TRACKS

SAFARI REPORT!

THE MAGIC OF ZAMBIA March 8 – 21, 2005

**By Mona Keith, Zoo Keeper/Tour Leader
South Luangwa National Park was not shy
in sharing its treasures with us.**

It provides one of the best opportunities to see one of my favorite animals, the hippopotamus! The Luangwa River boasts at least 50 hippos per kilometer, one of the highest densities anywhere in Africa. We were able to observe them going about their daily and nightly routines. From lounging in the lagoons scarcely visible beneath the dense floating mat of Nile cabbage, to magnificent full views during our evening and morning game drives. At night we could hear them loudly munching the grass and “dung-spraying” outside our cabins. We had one close encounter when one hippo was late retreating to the water one morning. His proximity to the path held up our arrival to breakfast but offered an unrivaled view of the huge behemoth.

The valley also offers the unique opportunity to see one of the 9 subspecies of giraffe. The Thornicroft giraffe is found only in the Luangwa valley. We saw them everyday and their elegance and attentive gaze made a special connection with all. We also spent many enjoyable moments watching the intricate social behavior of many of the animals. From the non-stop activity of a troop of baboons, the energetic “pronging” of impala, to a lioness casing out a group of impala for their potential as a meal once it got dark.

Our excellent night drives offered a glimpse into a world we so seldom see. At sunset as we chatted around our vehicle enjoying a drink, a lone elephant, the largest animal on earth, loomed out of the darkness without a sound! Once back in the vehicle and using a spotlight we marveled at seeing the bright-eyed elephant shrews, genets hunting in the grass, galagos clambering about in the trees, nightjars flitting about in the headlights of our vehicle, hippo, hyena, lion and more. We could smell the huge herd of buffalo before we could see them and then we were engulfed in them, hundreds of animals milling around. Just when we thought the elusive leopard was going to elude us, only a few minutes away from the Lodge, on our last night drive, a gorgeous male leopard appearedWOW!



The birdlife in the valley is splendid. Appropriately, we reached our 100th bird species with the Trumpeter Hornbill! In the heat of the afternoon, when most of the animals seek

shade and rest, we followed suit. While relaxing we enjoyed two presentations and left donations for 2 ongoing projects in the area. The first was on animal communication by the well-known safari guide and biologist, Derek Solomon. He spoke of the ‘dawn chorus’ of birds ... “Hey! I survived the night and this territory is still occupied”; elephants communicating for vast distances using ultrasound both above and through the ground; the complex communication of hippos both above and below the water; the Puku’s whistle, the impala’s grunts, and more. It opened a new aspect of game drives for the group learning to listen as well as to look. For the second, Rachael McRobb gave a presentation on the courageous efforts of the South Luangwa Conservation Society and its anti-poaching efforts, striving to preserve the valley’s incredible wildlife for future generations.

We ended our adventure with a visit to Victoria Falls. With the Zambezi River close to full flood the deafening sound of the water plummeting 100m into the gorge could be heard from our hotel. Donning ponchos and umbrellas in a feeble attempt to protect our camera gear, we took in all sensations that only one of the seven natural wonders of the world can produce.

A happy but tired group returned home to Canada – some with luggage . . . some without – oh the perils of travel - full of memories of a wonderful land and great wildlife!

WANT TO TRAVEL WITH MONA IN 2006 . . .

THE MAGIC OF GALAPAGOS – TOUR DEPARTURE FEBRUARY 2006 WITH MONA KEITH! BOOK NOW!



Interested in exploring a unique and isolated group of volcanic islands 960km off the west coast of Ecuador? Eager to spend a week aboard a luxury cruiser, visiting different islands everyday? Then join us and immerse yourself in the natural wonder of the landscape and wildlife that is the GALAPAGOS

ISLANDS. In 1959, the government of Ecuador, to whom the islands belong, declared the Galapagos a National Park. Therefore, the natural wonders of these islands remain intact for us to venture forth and experience. We’ll delve into a world that peaked Darwin’s scientific curiosity and imagination 170 years ago! We’ll cruise the islands in the comfort of a 90’ air-conditioned boat, accommodating 16 passengers, with 8 crew. Enjoy the fine food, private en suite cabins and a large covered sundeck.

Many of the islands will be explored by boat as well as on foot. The magnificence and beauty of the birds and reptiles that dominant the scene will astound you. Some are found nowhere else in the world! “Endemic” to the Galapagos - they have existed for thousands of years with no land-based predators so are very approachable. We will enjoy time among some of the 22 species of reptiles, 20 endemic to the archipelago and some even to individual islands. Watch your step as you maneuver your way through the numerous crusty looking algae eating marine iguanas close to the paths and lounging about on the rocky shores. They are the only sea going lizard in the world! Inland we’ll find the larger land iguana, which can grow to a meter in length and weigh up to 13 Kg and the giant tortoises or “Galapagos” which give the islands their name. These giant tortoises and land iguanas fill the ecological role of larger mammals elsewhere. Mammals are noticeably few on the islands. Only two bats species, two rice rat species, the Galapagos fur seal and the sea lion are natural to the islands. When the islands were colonized millions of years ago very few mammals could make the long grueling sea voyage unlike reptiles, which can withstand greater variance in temperature and long periods without food and water. The birds of course would have been blown of course in storms, lucky to have landed on these islands with nothing else around but open ocean for thousands of square miles.

Enjoy the colors & antics of many of the 29 species of land birds & 19 species of sea birds (5 endemic). Of the most famous are the 3 species of Boobies. The Masked Booby with its brilliant white body in contrast to the jet-black wing markings. The Red-footed Booby which is the most numerous but less commonly seen as it resides in the outer islands, and the incredible Blue-footed Booby. The azure blue of their feet are best displayed during its dramatic landing “salute” and its parading during courtship. Other birds to behold are the Frigate birds with the male’s brilliant red inflatable throat sac which will certainly catch your eye as well as the attention of a mate to which they are intended. The flightless cormorant, penguins, pelican and gulls will keep your cameras clicking.

Not as photogenic as some of the others, the famous Darwin Finch’s tell an amazing story. All 13 species found on the islands have evolved from a single group of ancestors 3 million years ago. The main difference between them is the size and shape of their bills. Showing the main selection pressure was due to the different types of food available. These little finches and the giant tortoises were the fuel that lead to Darwin’s theory of evolution resulting in his classic work “The Origin of Species”.

We will spend time pondering the questions such theories bring to mind as we watch, swim and photograph the creatures that make the Galapagos Island like nowhere else on earth!

If the Amazon Rain Forest suits your fancy as well, we will be spending 4 days on the Napo River canoeing and walking among some of the oldest growth forests in the world. The birdlife is prolific and is seen at eye level on the canopy tower. Red Howler Monkeys, Kinkajou and if you’re lucky – sloths will also be seen – keep your eye open for some of the cat species too!

**SPACE IS LIMITED - Contact us for more details
866-949-3007 or www.natureencounterstours.com!**

STUFF . . .

. . . FROM CAROL PETERSEN,
OWNER OF NETT, PP & SS

**SLIDE/VIDEO
PRESENTATIONS COMING UP!**

NATURE ENCOUNTERS TOURS & TRAVEL

TOUR LEADER SLIDE/VIDEO SHOW!

Join Garth Irvine, Mona Keith and
Rose Fodor as they take you to Africa,
Galapagos and Churchill.

**MAY 18, 2005 7PM
CUPE UNION HALL
5112 - 3RD STREET SE CALGARY**

**ADMISSION \$3 WITH PROCEEDS GOING TO
GORILLA AND CHEETAH CONSERVATION!
NEED MORE DETAILS? CALL (403) 949-3007**

"GLIMMERS OF HOPE"

An Evening With Stephen Lewis

UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for
HIV/AIDS in Africa

June 5, 2005 - 4pm

MacEwan Hall, University of Calgary

Tickets \$20.00 - General Seating

Call (403) 275-6935 or Toll Free (888) 622-6337

BREAKING NEWS!!!

CHEETAH CONSERVATION FUND CANADA

**RECEIVES CHARITABLE STATUS!
NOW YOUR DONATIONS WILL GO
TO PROTECT CHEETAHS AND
THEIR HABITAT IN AFRICA AND
YOU WILL GET A TAX RECEIPT!**

**AS WELL - CHECK OUT OUR
CHEETAH PRODUCT AVAILABLE
FOR SALE ON
WWW.SIMPLYSAFARISTORE.COM**

DID YOU KNOW . . .

- The longest elephant tusk ever recorded measured 11 Feet, 1 and 1/4 inches (that's 331.12 cm) . . .
- The heaviest ever recorded tusk was 230 pounds . . .
- An elephants skull is not made up of solid bone, but has a lightweight honeycomb structure . . .
- That given the choice, male giraffe will browse at the higher part of the tree or bush whereas females prefer to browse below 2 metres. Another useful means of identification in the field when you cant see the obvious and you don't have binos to see those bald patches on the male horn tips!!!

**NEXT ISSUE OUT IN JULY - WATCH
FOR OUR KENYA, TANZANIA AND
RWANDA SAFARI REPORT!**

KUDU'S TO BE CONFUSED WITH KUDO'S

To Mona Keith for our Safari Report on Zambia and info on Galapagos!

To West Dalhousie School, Fountains of Mission and Altadore School for their Cheetah Conservation Fund Donation.

To Marilyn W for the Kadjiado School Donation!

To past travel clients sending cards and wishes to Paul & Kirenga - guides extraordinaire now "hitched"!

To My Simply Safari Gang - Janet, Sandra, Sally, Amelia, Jane & Susan - what a treat it is to work with you - a very special team! ASANTE SANA!!

To the gang for labeling, stuffing and sending again and again and yet again & again!

How lucky I am to know you . . .

THE LAST WORD

Yes, counting down the sleeps to my next trip to Africa. This year will be a busy one with a total of 3 trips between May 19 and Oct. 1. What does that mean exactly - no - not even close if you're thinking NETT is rich and famous! How about - NETT, SS & PP supports a number of families by

1. Increasing tourism which provides jobs to the local folks
2. Purchasing art & craft directly from crafts people
3. Donates directly to wildlife conservation groups wherever we visit.

**Walking the talk
thanks to all of you!**