OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR THE

ZIMBABWE PROFESSIONAL GUIDES ASSOCIATION

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To all our sponsors, we would like to acknowledge the trust you have placed in us and the belief you have shown in our mission. Your support has not only helped us run successful events but it has also empowered us to continue our efforts in making a positive difference in the lives of those we serve.

From the Chairman's Desk:

Dear Members,

It's a true privilege to serve the association for a third year.

Our members, husbands and wives, colleagues, supporters and friends of the Association gathered at the end of last year to celebrate the spirit and strength of our Association during the Safari Weekend. The AGM, the dinner, and the Safari Show were more than just events on a calendar, they are milestones that reflect our commitment to excellence and unity.

A heartfelt thank you must go to Nadine, Monica, and Sophie. You have carried the weight of the events coordination and organisation with incredible grace. We see the long hours, the attention to detail, and we are deeply grateful. You've made it all look effortless, though we know it was anything but.

This year, as we go back to work, I'm reminded that our work in the field is only possible because of the support we receive at home. We thank all that support, from families to friends and colleagues, who will make our journeys through 2026 possible.

Z.P.G.A. continues to be more than a professional association. It is a community. It is a bridge between generations, between professionals and enthusiasts, between tradition and progress. No other body brings together guides and hunters in such a unique, constructive, and passionate way. That unity is our strength.

I would like to take a moment to recognise the tireless efforts of our Executive Committees, past and present, whose vision and leadership have shaped the path we walk today. To our dedicated consultants, Nadine, Monica, and Mike Bromwich, your behind-the-scenes commitment, your patience, and your unrelenting dedication are the backbone of this organisation. Thank you for everything you do and will do to promote and support Z.P.G.A. throughout 2026.

To all of our members, your continued support, your constructive input, and your belief in our mission are what fuel our progress. Thank you for standing with us.

While we have accomplished much, our journey is far from over. Our constitution provides us with a clear sense of direction, sixteen objectives that call on us to safeguard our wildlife, preserve our ecosystems, and uphold the highest standards of professionalism. These goals are not just words on paper, they are our compass, guiding our every action.
As we move forward into 2026, let us do so with purpose, unity, and pride in what we represent.

Warm regards,
John Laing
Z.P.G.A. Chairman

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3. *MUTUAL BENEFICIAL PARTNERSHIPS By working with safari operators and advertisers, we are creating opportunities for companies to give back to the community while also promoting their own brands.*

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- Sable -

Changing Landscapes and a Vanishing Wilderness

By Mike Bromwich

It is happening before our eyes, yet we seem not to see it. Here today, gone tomorrow, or so it seems. But is it really like that? You be the judge.

Much has changed in Zimbabwe over the course of my life, some eighty years or so. The change was once slow: a little here, a little there. But over the past few decades, it has gained alarming momentum. We see it, yet we don't. We are not oblivious to what is happening around us, but all too often we see it as someone else's problem. The question is: if I ignore it, will it go away?

Our landscapes are changing before our eyes. Wilderness areas are shrinking. Let me walk you through some of the changes I've seen.

Mana Pools, a World Heritage Site, Zimbabwe's "wildlife gem" is now a mere shadow of what it was forty or more years ago. The floodplain, once covered for centuries with annual and perennial grasses, shrubs, and riparian trees, some mature, some saplings, others just emerging, was alive and flourishing. It was a paradise for game and birds: guinea fowl and francolin were abundant.

But now, as it was ten or more years ago, Mana is almost a desert, as the photographs show. Gone are the tall swathes of lush Panicum grasses, the saplings and shrubs. The call of the spurfowl is no longer what it was. The vegetation understory has vanished, and forage is in short supply, as the hedging and browse lines clearly indicate.

I'm not here to criticize, but simply to highlight the insidious changes that have taken place. For those who were never privileged to visit Mana in its prime, you may accept it as it is today, and yes, the magic of Zambezi sunsets remains. But the truth is, the Mana Pools of today is a pale reflection of what it once was. I only wish you could have seen it then.

Where have all the sable gone? Once the prized species and major drawcard of the Matetsi Safari Area, Zambezi National Park, and western Matabeleland, their numbers have shrunk beyond belief. In the 1960s and '70s, they were the most common antelope in the region. Dave Peddie, in his studies in the late 1970s, counted over a thousand sable along just 20-odd kilometers of the Westwood Vlei in Matetsi Unit 7. Victoria Falls Game Scouts reported sable numbers exceeding a thousand on Chamabonda in the mid-to-late '60s.

So what happened? Why have sable numbers declined so drastically? Is it hyena predation, bush encroachment, habitat degradation, or a combination of all three? In my humble opinion, the primary factor is predation by hyenas. While we are increasingly aware of their role as predators, this is still underrepresented in modern wildlife management strategies.

Incidentally, I spoke with Adrian Read this past Monday (the 8th) and learned something new. During the weekend's annual game count in Chamabonda, he witnessed a pack of nine hyenas attempting to take down young elephant calves. Though he didn't see an actual kill, he described the attacks as highly coordinated. "They knew exactly what they were doing," he said. Clearly, they've done it before.

Perhaps it's time to revisit, with appropriate limits, Ted Davison's predator control policy, which he implemented to rebuild game populations in the early days of Wankie Game Reserve.

Let's talk about the Safari Areas. Chete, Umfurudzi, and Tuli are now defunct. The viability of Charisa is questionable. Can we even consider Deka or what little remains, a true safari area? In my view, it simply offers a small quota to whoever hunts there, and not much more.

Summer '79 - driving through Panicum repens

The Mana Wilderness - 1977

The Magic of the Zambezi persists...

1978 – the late Tim Wellington walking on the flood plain

1980 – Parks Research planning the Valley Elephant count – a more idyllic scene would be difficult to find.

Barren and harsh - Todays Mana...

Chipinga Safari Area (Chipengayi) never really was viable. What of Doma and Hartley? Do we ever hear about Hurungwe or Charara anymore, are they still viable hunting blocks?

I'm simply asking: what has happened to these wildlife lands? What is their current status? Have they quietly slipped away? Once again, it just seems to happen...

Rivers—the lower Deka River is polluted and dead. Despite the ban on alluvial mining in August 2024, illegal activities continue along the Mazowe River. Unregulated miners, including Chinese firms, are still operating, causing significant environmental damage and water pollution. This threatens not only the environment, wildlife, and tourism in Umfurudzi, but the very future of this river itself.

A tributary of the Odzi River, which runs through Penhalonga and once provided water for thousands of people, livestock, croplands, and pastures, is now heavily polluted. Its waters are murky and reddish-brown, and the riverbed is choked with silt. What does this mean for Osborne Dam, Manicaland's largest? Will it follow the fate of Lake Chivero—polluted, poisoned, and ecologically dead?

There are very few rivers in this country untouched by illegal mining. We must not give up pressing EMA and other government agencies to take action. Their inaction is unacceptable. Much of this illegal mining is out of sight, and therefore out of mind to most. But it is happening at a much larger scale than people realize. We are a water-dependent nation. Our rivers are our lifeline, and they must be saved. In ten years, it may be too late.

There's much more I could write, but I believe the point is clear: change is happening. We must not be complacent. Take note. Be objective in your observations. Every report, every sighting, every change recorded helps to build a clearer picture.

I don't want to foist extra work on our chairman, but I encourage you to raise your observations and concerns. I know he has plans to build a platform to address environmental issues—let's support that vision.

Class III Traps and the Question of Bird Lime

Earlier this year, I was asked to review the Trapping of Animals Control Act, specifically regarding Class III traps, with a focus on "bird lime." A concerned citizen in Victoria Falls raised the question after seeing glue traps for sale and wondered whether they could be classified as bird lime and thus be regulated.

According to Appendix 13 of the Act, bird lime is listed as a Class III trap. However, the Act provides no definition of what bird lime is. Traditionally, bird lime is a sticky natural substance used to trap small birds by smearing it on branches where birds perch. In Southern Africa, it is made from chewed mistletoe fruits (Plicosepalus sagittifolius), which are then applied to twigs.

While regulation of such traditional substances is complex, the Act does allow the Appropriate Authority for any given land to use or permit the use of Class III traps (see Sections 10 and 11).

Glue Traps: A Modern Concern

Glue traps were likely unknown in Zimbabwe when the Act was drafted, though similar devices existed elsewhere. The modern glue trap was patented in 1980 and is designed to catch rodents. However, the trapping method causes extreme, prolonged suffering. Animals become stuck to the adhesive surface, enduring pain and stress for hours or even days.

Key concerns with glue traps:

- Cruelty: Animals struggle, break limbs, or even chew off body parts in attempts to escape. Many die from exhaustion or suffocation.
- Indiscriminate trapping: Non-target species, including protected birds, are often caught.
- Potential misuse: Glue traps could easily be repurposed for illegal trapping of small birds or mammals. Once one person demonstrates effectiveness, misuse can spread rapidly, posing a serious threat to wildlife.

Recommendation

Glue traps have already been banned in several countries, including the UK, Ireland, New Zealand, Iceland, and the Australian state of Victoria. Whether or not their sale is widespread in Zimbabwe is irrelevant—the cruelty they inflict and their potential for misuse are reason enough to act.
It is strongly recommended that glue traps be classified as Class I traps and banned outright.
The suffering they cause surpasses even that of animals caught in snares. The environmental and ethical implications demand precautionary and preventative regulation now.

The suffering might well be worse than that of an animal caught in a snare!

These pictures tell their own story

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- Harris Auto Parts
- LA PIAZZA
- The Bayete Collection
- The Social Kitchen
- Musketeers Guest House
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- Shearwater VIP Club
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The Role of CAMPFIRE in Modern Conservation

By John Laing

A Revolutionary Idea Ahead of Its Time

In the heart of southern Africa, Zimbabwe once stood at the forefront of a conservation revolution. In 1989, the government launched a bold and unprecedented initiative: the Communal Areas Management Programme for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE). At a time when most conservation models relied on strict protectionism and exclusion of local people from protected areas, CAMPFIRE offered a radically different approach, empower rural communities to manage and benefit from the wildlife around them.

The principle was simple, yet profound: if rural people bear the cost of living with wildlife, they should also reap the rewards. CAMPFIRE granted Rural District Councils (RDCs) the authority to lease wildlife-use rights (especially for trophy hunting and tourism) to private operators and ensured that a portion of the revenue would flow back to the communities living in communal lands.

The model was groundbreaking. Communities in districts such as Nyaminyami, Binga, and Guruve saw tangible benefits: boreholes were drilled, schools were built, clinics were stocked, and jobs were created. Wildlife populations, particularly elephants, began to stabilize or increase in some areas due to local stewardship and reduced poaching. CAMPFIRE was hailed globally as one of the most successful examples of community-based natural resource management (CBNRM).

But more than three decades later, as the world changes and conservation challenges evolve, the central question emerges: what is the role of CAMPFIRE in today's conservation landscape?

Challenges in a Changing Landscape

While CAMPFIRE's early days were marked by optimism and tangible results, the years that followed revealed significant challenges, some structural, others political, and many economic.

One of the most persistent criticisms has been inequitable revenue distribution. In many districts, the bulk of the income generated from wildlife use remained at the RDC level, with only a small portion reaching the wards or households intended to benefit. This disconnect eroded trust and led to disillusionment in communities who no longer saw wildlife as an asset, but as a burden.

Simultaneously, global shifts in conservation policy and wildlife tourism began to impact CAMPFIRE's core revenue model: trophy hunting. Western bans and restrictions on the importation of hunting trophies, particularly from elephants and lions, led to a decline in international hunters and a drop in income for CAMPFIRE districts. This situation put strain on districts heavily dependent on hunting revenue and exposed the programme's overreliance on a single income stream.

Moreover, human-wildlife conflict (HWC) intensified. As human populations expanded and land use changed, encounters between people and wildlife increased. Elephants trampled crops, buffalo destroyed fencing, and predators killed livestock. In some tragic cases, people lost their lives. In such a context, without visible benefits from wildlife, local tolerance plummeted.

At the same time, climate change is adding a new layer of complexity. Droughts, erratic rainfall, and shifting vegetation zones are making it harder for both people and wildlife to survive in marginal rural areas.

Despite these challenges, CAMPFIRE has not collapsed. It still exists in over 30 districts, and in some, it continues to function as a vital link between conservation and community development. But there is a growing recognition that the programme must evolve if it is to remain relevant and effective.

Reimagining CAMPFIRE for the 21st Century

CAMPFIRE's foundational idea, that conservation must benefit local people, remains as powerful today as it was in 1989. But to meet modern challenges, the programme must adapt to a new conservation era, one that demands transparency, innovation, and inclusivity.

First, governance reform is essential. Revenue must be distributed more equitably, and communities must have a greater voice in decision-making. This means empowering village-level institutions, increasing financial transparency, and ensuring that benefits reach the households most affected by living with wildlife. Participatory budgeting, community audits, and real-time revenue tracking could all help restore trust.

Secondly, CAMPFIRE must diversify its income streams. Trophy hunting, while still legal and carefully regulated in Zimbabwe, cannot be the sole pillar of rural conservation finance. Photographic tourism, ecotourism, carbon credits, and payments for ecosystem services (e.g., through REDD+ schemes) offer new opportunities that align with both conservation and global climate goals.

Third, there is a need to rebuild the image of CAMPFIRE, not just locally, but globally. It must be seen not as a relic of the past, but as a living, evolving model of community-based conservation. Donors, NGOs, and government agencies must re-engage with the programme, not to control it, but to support it as a uniquely Zimbabwean innovation that could once again inspire the world.

Finally, CAMPFIRE must re-centre its focus on people. Conservation should not be an abstract idea imposed from above, but a lived reality that respects the knowledge, values, and aspirations of the communities it aims to serve.

In a world where conservation is increasingly dominated by large NGOs, digital campaigns, and global narratives, CAMPFIRE reminds us of a simple truth: wildlife does not thrive unless the people who live with it do too.

As Zimbabwe charts its way through climate, economic, and political uncertainty, CAMPFIRE still holds the seeds of a powerful idea, that conservation can be local, inclusive, and just.

Let it not be forgotten. Let it be reimagined

The Insect Apocalypse Has Arrived

By David Sussin

A night with no insects sounds pretty good.

Sitting out with your drink of choice under the stars, maybe in the backyard, or maybe around a campfire. In the brisk air around you, there's nothing: no buzzing mosquitoes, no chirping crickets, no random beetles flying onto you.

And even better, no deadly wasps or bees. Just calm silence.

Sounds pretty good, until you notice the other details: stands of flowers unpollinated and dying, trees bearing no fruit, entire gardens left lifeless.

Of course, we need insects.

It's not hyperbolic to call them the architects of life on Earth. They pollinate 80% of flowering plants and a good deal of the crops that feed humanity.

A single bee colony can visit two million flowers in a day, transferring pollen that generates the fruits, vegetables, and nuts we depend on. Without insects, we'd face global famine. But pollination is just the beginning. Insects form the foundation of nearly every terrestrial food web. They decompose organic matter, recycling nutrients back into the soil.

They control pest populations, preventing any single species from overwhelming ecosystems. Birds, bats, amphibians, reptiles, and countless other animals depend on insects for survival, remove insects, and these creatures follow them into extinction.

In healthy ecosystems, insects process leaf litter, aerate soil, and transfer energy from plants to higher-level predators. They're nature's cleanup crew and delivery service rolled into one. Lose them, and forests stop regenerating properly. Dead organic matter accumulates. Ecosystems begin to rot from within.
Suddenly, all that buzzing at night sounds comforting.

Except it might be ending sooner than we think. A study published last month (September 2025) by the University of Carolina at Chapel Hill titled "Long-term Decline in Montane Insects Under Warming Summers" reveals an ominous decline in insect populations.

Even scarier, it’s happening in parts of the world we assumed were safe from humanity’s impact. For over two decades, UNC researchers monitored flying insect populations in the pristine montane ecosystems (the middle-level forests in the mountains) of Colorado’s Rocky Mountains, areas untouched by direct human interference.

These remote high-altitude meadows and forests were wilderness refuges, places where nature still functioned unmolested by human intrusion. Yet in this very place, scientists discovered a catastrophe unfolding in slow motion.

The study covered a 20-year period. During that span, researchers found insect populations declined an average of 7% annually. By the end, 72% of the insects were gone. This isn't an expected, natural adjustment or fluctuation. It’s a collapse happening in real time. The decline matches the rate found in heavily human-altered agricultural land. But now, it’s happening in the wild.

So why is it happening? Statistical analysis strongly links the trend to increasing summer temperatures. Daily minimums increased 0.8°C per decade, and as temperatures rose, the typical seasonal rise in insect abundance shifted to a seasonal decline. But climate change isn’t the only factor. The findings from this remote Colorado ecosystem signal a severe threat to high-elevation environments, which depend on insects to thrive.

It’s what makes these results such a red flag.

The UNC study’s findings of local insect decline are happening at a staggering rate, in a place where climate change and human activity can’t fully explain it. The results could signal the early stages of a planetary ecological breakdown so rapid, it would make previous mass extinctions pale in comparison.

If insects are disappearing from protected wilderness areas, nowhere on Earth is safe. Waves of extinction could crash over entire continents.

Continued on page 19...

Z.P.G.A. Diary

January 2026

- 31st 05:30am – BVC Course One Starts

February 2026

- 5th – BVC Course One Ends
- 8th 05:30am – BVC Course Two Starts
- 14th – BVC Course Two Ends
- 15th – Shooting Proficiency (Hre)
- 16th – Oral Interviews (Hre)
- 17th - 18th – Theory Exams (Hre)
- 20th – Z.P.G.A. Talks (Barney O'Hara) Byo

March 2026

- 19th – Z.P.G.A. Talks (Paul Hubbard) Hre
- 20th – Z.P.G.A. Talks (Woody Cotterill) Byo

May 2026

- 1st - 3rd – L. Zam Canoeing Proficiency
- 22nd – Z.P.G.A. Talks (Nicky Pegg) Byo

September 2026

- 13th – Shooting Proiciency (Byo)
- 14th – Oral interviews (Byo)
- 15th - 16th – Theory Exams (Byo)

October 2026

- 25th - 27th – U. Zam Canoeing Proficiency

November 2026

- 01st - 07th – Proficiency Examination

"Something missing? Keep us informed by sending an email to marketing@zpga.org"

"Embrace the beauty of today, for it holds the seeds of tomorrow's memories."

ZIMBABWE PROFESSIONAL GUIDES ASSOCIATION
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Ethics Are Everything!

Membership Statistics - 2026

It's a collaborative effort

Z.P.G.A. Members Breakdown by Qualification

Number of Members	Qualification
92	ASSOCIATE
3	ASSOCIATE LIFE MEMBER
11	CONSERVATION PARTNER
7	CUBS
56	FULL PG
148	FULL PH
8	HONORARY LIFE MEMBER
5	INDUSTRY SERVICE PROVIDER
101	LPH LICENSE
3	RESTRICTION

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It seems as though we always have something positive to say about membership figures, here is why:

2020 ended with an active membership of 281
2021 ended with an active membership of 350
2022 ended with an active membership of 412
2023 ended with an active membership of 444
2024 ended with an active membership of 442
2025 ended with an active membership of 421

"Z.P.G.A. Membership is a Privilege NOT a right"

Our Association continues and deliver!

Z.P.G.A. MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS

Z.P.G.A. FULL MEMBERSHIP

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2. Access to our members only WhatsApp group
3. Z.P.G.A. branded merchandise
4. Access to educational and training material
5. Exclusive benefits & discounts from suppliers/providers
6. Access to cutting edge tourism news & policy developments as it affects hunting & guiding countrywide
7. Opportunities to give back to the community
8. Networking opportunities
9. Monthly newsletters & articles

Z.P.G.A. ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP

1. Access to our associate member WhatsApp group (admin only posts)
2. Z.P.G.A. branded merchandise
3. Monthly newsletters & articles
4. Access to educational and training material
5. Access to cutting edge tourism news & policy developments as it affects the hunting & guiding countrywide
6. Opportunities to give back to the community

Z.P.G.A. CONSERVATION PARTNER

1. 4 x Membership cards which entitles the holder to membership discounts
2. Access to the Z.P.G.A. associate member WhatsApp group
3. Representation at government, industry and Zimbabwe parks levels
4. Representation of Zimbabwe at all levels for tourism, locally and abroad
5. Engagement with Zimbabwe parks and ministry
6. Involvement in conservation initiatives such as the leopard, lion, elephant and rhino workshops for strategic planning for these key species
7. Representation at shows and events when we can for members and Zimbabwe
8. Marketing of Zimbabwe for tourism
9. Uplifting local tourist facilities and standards
10. Engagement with foreign NGOs for assistance and betterment of our industry

Z.P.G.A. CUBS MEMBERSHIP

Teaching your children how conservation and sustainability efforts will impact their lives is crucially important to the long-term survival of humanity & wildlife.

More and more people are starting to appreciate the value of conservation and causing as little harm as possible to the planet. It's especially important to teach these lessons to the next generation. Children, when given the right information, are usually eager to embrace a conservation approach to living.

It's up to parents and other adults however, to instil this knowledge in kids at an early age.

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Email us today on secretary@zpga.org and we will send you an application form

Classic Lasagna Recipe ("Lizania")

BY LAURA SMITH

Ingredients

For the Meat Sauce (Ragù):

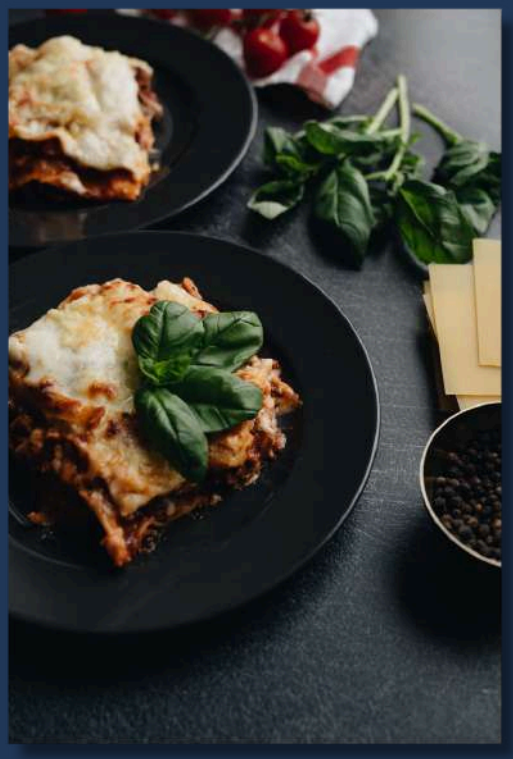
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 500g (1 lb) ground beef (or a mix of beef and pork)
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- 800g (28 oz) canned crushed tomatoes
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp dried basil
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Optional: 1/2 cup red wine
- Optional: 1 tsp sugar (if tomatoes are too acidic)

For the Béchamel Sauce:

- 4 tbsp butter
- 4 tbsp all-purpose flour
- 3 cups (750ml) milk, warm
- Salt, to taste
- Pinch of nutmeg (optional)

For Assembly:

- 9–12 lasagna noodles (pre-cooked or oven-ready)
- 2 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- Fresh basil or parsley for garnish (optional)



Instructions

1. Make the Meat Sauce:

1. Heat olive oil in a large pan over medium heat.
2. Add onions and garlic, sauté until soft (2–3 min).
3. Add ground beef, cook until browned.
4. Stir in tomato paste, cook for 1 minute.
5. Add crushed tomatoes, herbs, salt, pepper, and optional wine/sugar.
6. Simmer uncovered for 20–30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Set aside.

2. Make the Béchamel Sauce:

1. In a saucepan, melt butter over medium heat.
2. Add flour, whisk constantly for 1–2 minutes to form a roux.
3. Gradually add warm milk while whisking to avoid lumps.
4. Cook until thickened (about 5–7 minutes). Add salt and nutmeg.

3. Preheat Oven:

- Preheat to 180°C (350°F).

4. Assemble the Lasagna:

1. Spread a thin layer of meat sauce in a baking dish.
2. Add a layer of lasagna noodles.
3. Spread more meat sauce, then a layer of béchamel, and sprinkle with mozzarella.
4. Repeat layers: noodles → meat sauce → béchamel → cheese.
5. Finish with béchamel and top with Parmesan.

5. Bake:

- Cover with foil and bake for 25 minutes.
- Remove foil and bake another 15–20 minutes until golden and bubbly.

6. Rest & Serve:

- Let lasagna rest for 10–15 minutes before slicing.
- Garnish with chopped parsley or basil if desired.

acacia

WE ARE PROUD TO BE ASSOCIATED WITH THE Z.P.G.A. & HAVE BEEN OFFERING THIS COVER TO MEMBERS OF THE Z.P.G.A. SINCE 2013

WE HAVE SETTLED A NUMBER OF CLAIMS OVER THIS PERIOD, ESPECIALLY FOR TEMPORARY TOTAL DISABLEMENT & SOME CLAIMS HAVE BEEN IN EXCESS OF US$30,000

A SUMMARY OF THE COVER IS:

- PROFESSIONAL GUIDES & TRACKERS PERSONAL ACCIDENT COVER
  - 24 HOUR PERSONAL ACCIDENT COVER, WHICH INCLUDES 'PROFESSIONAL HUNTING' ACTIVITIES
    - OTHER HAZARDOUS PASTIMES/ACTIVITIES NEED TO BE DECLARED (SUCH AS FLYING AS A PILOT, HANG GLIDING, PARACHUTING, ETC)
    - NOTE - COVER IS FOR ACCIDENTAL INJURY & THEREFORE IS NOT 'LIFE INSURANCE' SO COVER EXCLUDES DREADED DISEASES & ILLNESSES
- SCHEMES
  - THERE ARE 4 DIFFERENT LEVELS OF COVER AVAILABLE
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Continued from Page 13...

When insect-dependent ecosystems begin failing simultaneously across multiple regions, mountain forests lose their pollinators and decomposers, making them unable to regenerate.

You end up with dying wilderness around the globe. And without insects to control herbivore populations, plant communities will collapse, accelerating soil erosion. Watersheds destabilize. The very landscapes under our feet begin to unravel.

Bird populations, already declining globally, would face catastrophic crashes as their primary food source vanishes. Amphibians, already among the most threatened animal groups, would lose another crucial dietary component. The extinction cascade would roll upward through every trophic level.

But perhaps the most terrifying aspect is the speed. A 70% drop in just 20 years suggests we're not dealing with the gradual environmental changes that allowed previous ecosystems to adapt. We're witnessing ecological system failure happening faster than evolution can respond.

If this pattern holds globally, we may be looking at the sixth mass extinction—happening not over millennia, but over decades. The difference is that this time, there's no asteroid to blame, no volcanic eruption to point to. There's just the relentless, invisible pressure of a warming climate systematically dismantling the ecosystem.

Unlike previous mass extinctions, this one comes with the unique horror of being entirely preventable—happening while we watch, measure, and document the last days of life on Earth.
Could a loss of the insect population really drive these dramatic changes? We may find out.

In the meantime, listen closely when you go outside at night. The first signs of collapse will be the silence.

When Africa Breaths Again

By John Laing

Soft and gentle fell the rains,
November wept on thirsty plains.
From dust to bloom, the grasses stirred,
A whispered song by earth was heard.

Trees unfurled their emerald hands,
Calling life across the lands.
Impala danced in morning light,
Zebra foals took trembling flight.
Wildebeest, in mother's grace,
Brought new life to time and place.

Africa, she rose once more,
As she has through ages yore.
A breath, a pulse, a sacred drum
To nature's rhythm, life had come.

But January bore a different song,
The skies grew heavy, the rains grew strong.
Swollen rivers broke their bounds,
Tearing life from sacred grounds.

Kruger weeps beneath the flood,
Carving scars in ancient mud.
Golden dreams have blocked her veins,
Choked by greed and poisoned gains.
Once-free waters now are caught,
Held in dams that peace forgot.

We feed upon her, limb by limb,
And wonder why her light grows dim.
But she, the mother, still forgives,
So long as something wild still lives.

Let the grass rise, tall and proud,
Let no chains be nature's shroud.
Protect the wild, defend the free,
The soul of earth, the breath of tree.

For we are not her masters, no,
We are seeds she let to grow.
And if we wish to still survive,
We must help the wild thrive.

So walk with care, and walk with grace,
Leave no scar upon her face.
For when Africa breathes in peace again,
So too shall we, her wayward kin.

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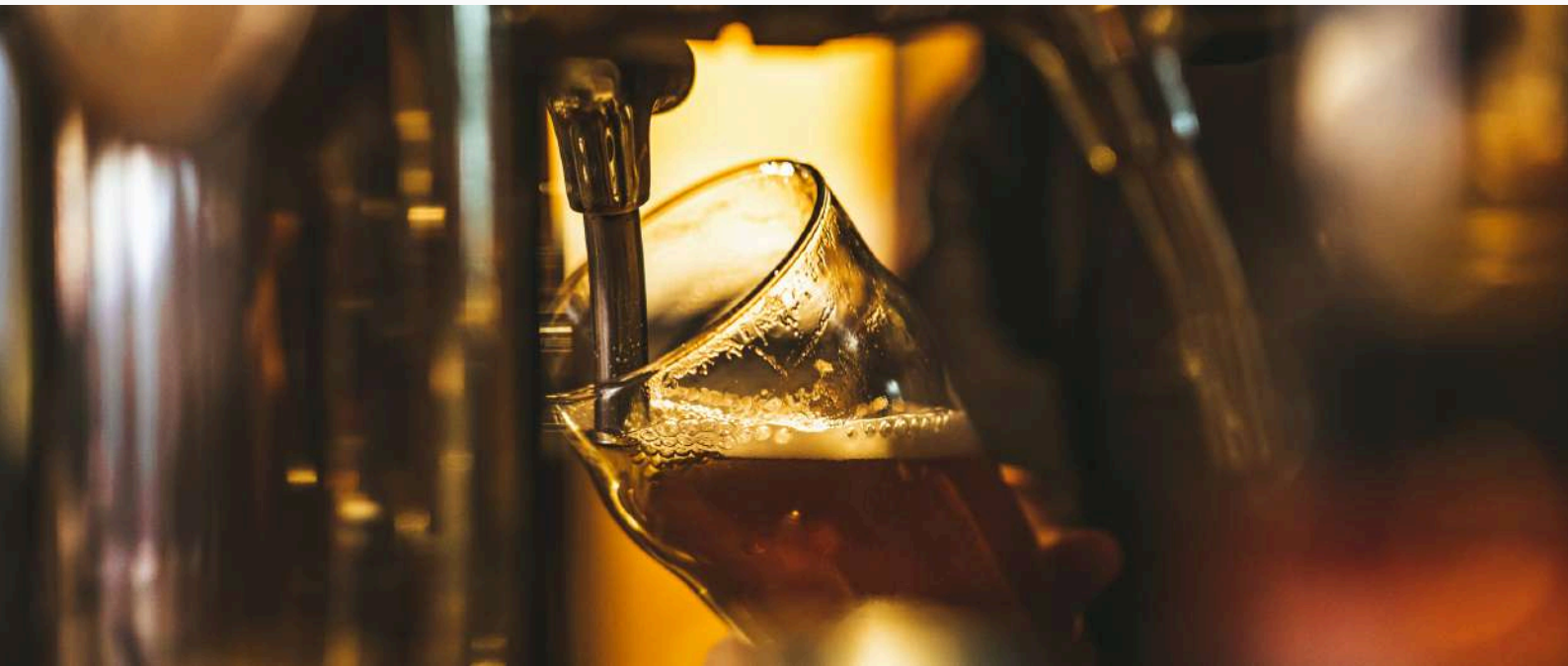

Tourism-Only Border Post Opens Between Two Iconic Parks: Kruger and Gonarezhou

By Big Sky Supplies

A new tourism-only border post between South Africa and Zimbabwe is now operational, but access is limited and must be arranged in advance. The crossing links the Pafuri area of Kruger National Park to the Sengwe area of Gonarezhou National Park, entirely within protected conservation land. As part of the Great Limpopo Transfrontier Conservation Area (GLTCA) initiative, the border post superbly avoids the long haul around Beitbridge!
For the conditions of entry, contact details and the full Joint Media Briefing text, read our blog published 03.07.25, here https://bigsky.co.zw/tourism-only-border-post-opens-between-kruger-and-gonarezhou/

A tip for owners of Stanley flasks
Avoid over-tightening the stopper as this will reduce the flask's effectiveness and lifespan. The Stanley flask is highly effective in retaining heat and the resultant pressure build-up will compress the stopper. Tighten the vacuum flask stopper just enough to create a secure seal but avoid using excessive force. This protects the flask and ensures safe use.

For more information on the Built for Life™ Stanley Classic Flask range visit our online store: https://bigsky.co.zw/product/stanley-vacuum-flask-classic-hammertone-green/

Regularising Vehicle Ownership
Readers of June's edition of the Z.P.G.A. Newsletter who might have missed our notes on the mandatory ZBC car radio Listener's Licence, can learn more here https://bigsky.co.zw/the-zbc-car-radio-listeners-licence/ (Also see the proposed ZBC exemption form).

At the time of writing, the Act has not yet been gazetted and the exemption process does not apply. However, we suggest this is a good time to regularise the ownership details of your vehicle/s. The ZBC exemption declaration form includes this: "I am the registered owner of a motor vehicle being _____". This development, combined with the digital centralisation of the vehicle register, is another incentive to get your vehicle/s into your own name.

Safe journeys,
Sean Q. and the Big Sky Team

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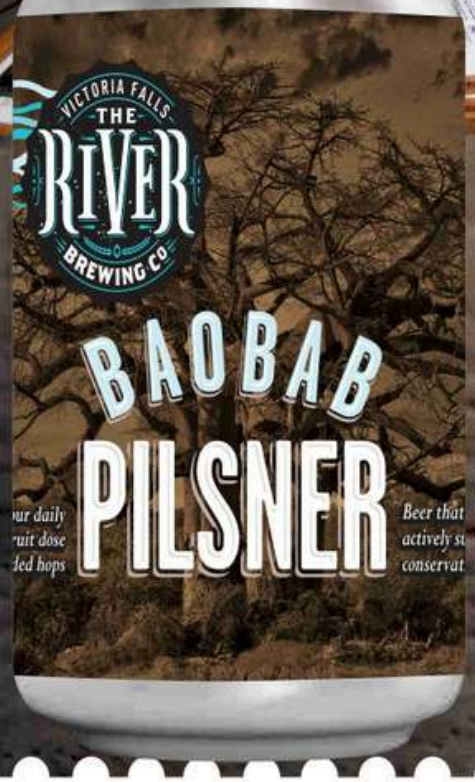

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SHOULD YOU REQUIRE ANY INFORMATION OR ASSISTANCE

Contact Us

The Z.P.G.A. committee is here to assist you. To enable us to answer your questions in a timely manner, please would you firstly contact Nadine Laing on secretary@zpga.org and request to be put in touch with one of the following sub-committees and the relevant committee member will gladly assist you.

Below you will find the various sub-committees, a short description of what their role and function is and a contact email address should you want to get in touch.

- Z.P.G.A. – Chairman John Laing - chairman@zpga.org
- Z.P.G.A. – Vice Chairman Pete Fick - legal@zpga.org
  - Legal & Ethics
  - Guiding Code of Conduct
- Z.P.G.A. – Secretary - Nadine Laing - secretary@zpga.org
- Z.P.G.A. - Harare Office - Monica Sinclair - hreoffice@zpga.org
- Z.P.G.A. - Bulawayo Office - Ash Burton - secretary@zpga.org
- Z.P.G.A. - Victoria Falls Office - Zeb Laubscher - secretary@zpga.org
- Z.P.G.A. – Finance - John Laing - finance@zpga.org
  - All payment issues
- Z.P.G.A. – Marketing & Advertising - John Laing - marketing@zpga.org
  - All branding including Membership Cards
  - Membership Discounted Rates Initiative
  - Fundraising
- Z.P.G.A. – Education and training - David Carson - education@zpga.com
  - SAVE Valley Conservancy initiatives
  - All Exam related issues
- Z.P.G.A. Next Generation - Ant Kaschula
- Z.P.G.A. – Research - Rob Lurie - research@zpga.org
  - Ensure compliance with trophy off-take in terms of ethics as well as sustainability
  - Cat ageing & Research
  - Attendance to & at quota setting workshops
  - Assistance with any NDF requirements that may come up from time to time
- Z.P.G.A. – Awards - Duncan Watson - awards@zpga.org
  - To discuss and agree what awards shall be current or pertinent to the industry
  - To look at and agree end of year award nominees
- Z.P.G.A. - Recruitment - Safari & Travel - safaritravelrecruitment@gmail.com

"The Z.P.G.A. committee stands united, dedicated to serving and supporting you on your journey."

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