

NIASSA CARNIVORE PROJECT

Promoting coexistence with lions and other large carnivores



Our mission is to conserve lions and other large carnivores in Niassa National Reserve in northern Mozambique in collaboration with the Mozambican government and local communities.



Beehive Fences Being Tested in Niassa

Elephants are fearful of bees, so they naturally avoid beehives! This has been put to good use in Kenya by [Save the Elephants](#)' Dr. Lucy King, who developed beehive fences to stop elephants from raiding crops. In December, Dr. King came to Niassa to help Mbumba Marufo (our community manager) and six beekeepers from Mbamba build a test fence, funded by [STE](#) and the [Elephant Advocacy League](#). Five of the beehives have been colonised, and elephants have been avoiding the fenced area. The fence uses no wire (which could be stolen for snaring), instead it uses baobab and car tyre rope. Food security for the villagers who live in Niassa is a top priority of ours. Not only will crops be protected from raiding by elephants, but the community is expected to harvest considerable amounts of honey for consumption and sale, providing an alternative income.



Good News and Sad News About Lions

Our 2012 survey confirms that the Niassa lion population is increasing. There are currently 1,000 to 1,200 lions here; this remains one of the most important strongholds in the region. Unfortunately, some of the increase may be due to food available to lions from elephant carcasses left behind after poaching. Still, we are grateful for any sign that the lions are holding their own under the threats of snaring, retaliatory killing, and illegal hunting. On the night of February 15th, a lioness broke into a villager's goat corral in Niassa and killed two goats. She was chased away but came back twice, killing two more goats, before being killed. We regret the loss of the lioness and recognise the loss in livelihood for the farmer. The good news is that the community reported the incident right away and Reserve Management responded immediately. This incident gives us an opportunity to help the goat owner fix his corral so that this does not happen again.



Environmental Centre Progress Continues

The first phase of construction of the new Environmental Centre took place in 2012. We completed the office, storeroom, deck, Agostinho's house, and laid the foundation for the 5 cottages for children and teachers. Amazingly, this was all built by 22 unskilled men from Mbamba Village as a skills training course under the tutelage of two expert builders, one from Mozambique and one from Kenya, and our pro-bono architect, Romina Goana. The men learned masonry, brick-making, carpentry, plumbing, and thatching. The construction team received certificates for skills learned in November. In April, construction will resume. This is such an exciting project and has full community support. Thank you to [WCN](#), the [Handsel Foundation](#), and [Houston Zoo](#) who made this possible.

