

The Musango Bull Elephant



The bull as he was depicted in a recent painting by Larry Norton ("Musango Bull near Bumi Hills")



Musango Bull & a guest from Bumi Hills in Nov. 2009 photographed by Garth Thompson

"The killing of such a great Tusker is made more tragic by the fact that these living monuments are so rare, and I am appalled that he was shot by a hunter whose fraternity is one of the main custodians of such magnificent animals and our wildlife heritage."

There are two pictures here. The one is a painting of the "Musango" Bull Elephant by well known artist Larry Norton, and the other is a photograph taken by Garth Thompson, one of Africa's best known professional guides.

Two facts emerge from these pictures. The first is the extraordinary beauty and size of this elephant and the second is that it is so patently obvious that this is a gentle creature, allowing anybody to approach it closely. Musango is also wearing a clearly visible satellite tracking collar. Indeed, Roger Parry having been given authority by National Parks to dart this elephant, was able to easily get within a few meters of it before firing the dart.

This elephant was estimated to have another 15-20 years of life ahead of it.

He is now dead.

He was shot around the 23rd of May, 2010 by a professional hunting organization in the Omay North area, adjacent to Lake Kariba. This hunter did nothing illegal, according to existing law within Zimbabwe. It is not illegal to shoot a collared animal (unless specially protected by the minister). But the international and local reaction to the ethical and moral issues involved in this incident has been overwhelming.

Accordingly the aim of this petition is twofold;

1. To request the authorities, once the Minister has given special protection status to any animal, to take immediate and proactive steps to inform all hunters and hunting institutions of such protected status. The Musango Bull was regarded by many as part of Zimbabwe's national heritage, and is now gone.
2. To get the ZPHA to define their own ethical and moral standards in relation to collared animals, and specifically this elephant, and to fully investigate, with independent observers, in situ the killing of the Musango Bull.

How to support? E-mail a letter or sign the attached petition and send it to musangobull@yahoo.com