

KALISOSA VLEI

A JAFUTA FOUNDATION PROJECT FOCUSED ON COMMUNITY, CONSERVATION & WILDLIFE

FLORA FACT FILE

situated in the south-western corner of the Zambezi National Park, the Kalisosa Vlei is a dune trough of grassland fringed by an ecotone of silver terminalia and surrounded by *Baikiaea plurijuga* (zambezi teak) woodland on kalahari sands dune crests. endemic to this region, these forests have an upper-storey dominated by zambezi teak, african rosewood, mukwa, wild syringa and bush willow.

kalahari sands are deep, loose and well-drained buff-coloured soils, which are an intermediate between the two other soil types of the region: the darker, finer, more fertile red sands and the pale, coarse, loose, infertile white or grey sands.

characterised by powerful afternoon thunderstorms, the short and erratic rainfall season from mid-november to mid-march brings an average annual rainfall of between 450-600mm which can reach highs of 800mm and lows of 300mm. the mean annual temperature is approximately 21.5°C, with the mean monthly temperatures at about 30°C during summer and 17°C during the cold dry winter season from april / may through to october / november.

vegetation composition & structure

principal upper-storey species

zambezi teak .

other upper-storey associates

mukwa . mungongo . african rosewood .

pod mahogany / bush willow .

african blackwood / ordeal tree .

sub-canopy species

african wattle . red bush willow .

spine-leaved monkey orange . lavender croton .

kudu berry . snake bean . horn pod / wild rubber .

silver terminalia .

under-storey species

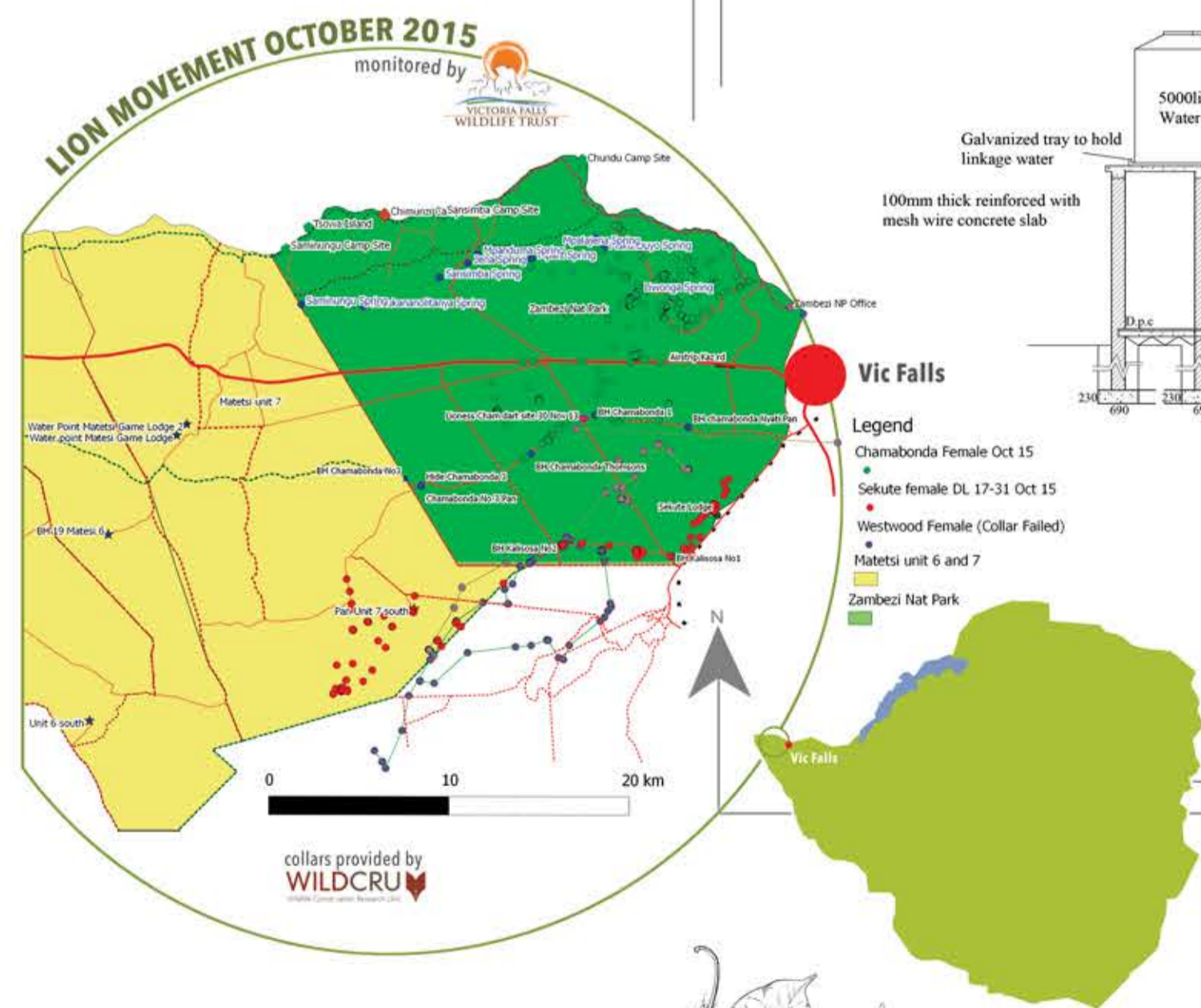
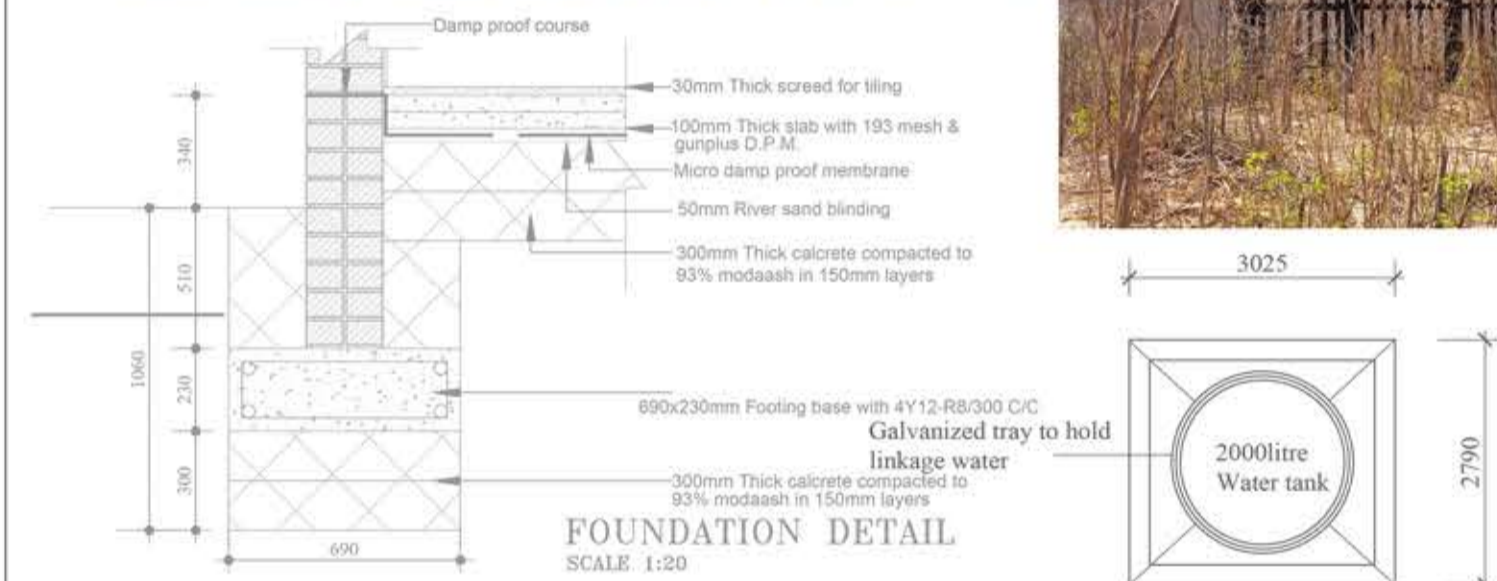
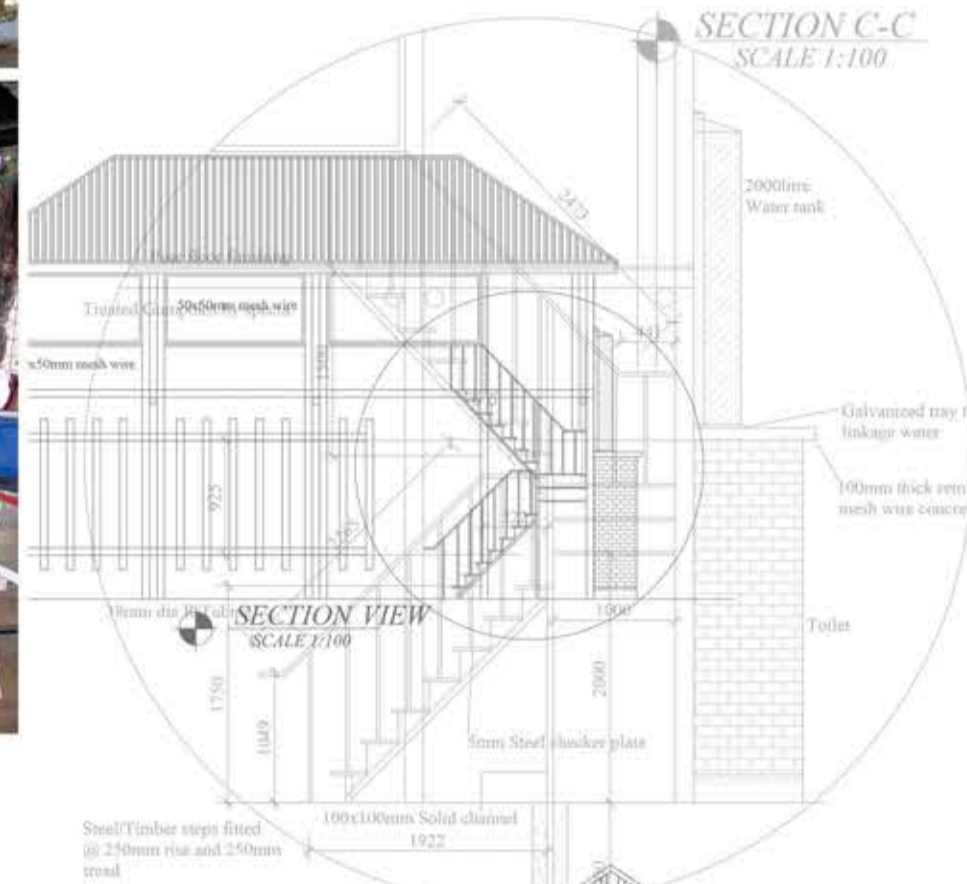
white bauhinia . jasmine pea . donkeyberry .

grey grevia . chinese lantern .

poison-grub commiphora . blade thorn .



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winter months in Zimbabwe are long and dry. small rivers, pans and dams slowly dry up and the animals have to travel ever further to find water. the rapid advancement of human activity into previously untouched wilderness areas has had a disproportionate effect on the available land for animals to roam, thereby raising the incidence of human wildlife conflict. finding a well-balanced solution can be simple but costly.

to this end, the Jafuta Foundation identified a need to resuscitate and develop the Kalisosa Pan, a previously isolated area of the Zambezi National Park, that already had a 12 year dormant borehole. by installing a solar powered pump and constructing a game viewing platform, the hope was that the animals would return and the wildlife enthusiasts would follow, bringing in much needed funding for the Park, and drawing the wildlife away from human settlements.

finances were quickly raised through the Jafuta Foundation's donor network and a solar powered pump capable of pulling 30 000 litres of fresh water to the surface per day was installed. construction of the platform started soon after, between 2 large african rosewood trees, known locally as *umtshibi* trees, using 60 recovered gum poles, pine wood and concrete for the core structure, chroma deck roofing to maximise airflow and walls of steel mesh wire to protect against dangerous wildlife and scavenging baboons and monkeys. the platform floor was erected to a height of 4m to enable viewing over the waterhole and surrounding vlei, with the surrounding walls and roof towering a further 6m into the glossy green tree tops, covered in creamy white blossom during spring. the building process was long, spread out over a 6 month period, due to the inaccessibility of the area and weather.

the *umtshibi* tree, an indigenous hardwood and almost evergreen, is highly sought after for its timber, fruit and bark. over-exploited by the mining and railway industries for more than a century for its durability, stability and easy workmanship, this reddish-brown rosewood can be found all the way from the mine shaft and railway track into the office and home. the fruit, a broad, woody pod, is a valuable source of food, having saved many a life in times of famine. the brown seed of the fruit is baked in ashes and pounded to a paste, while the fleshy red aril is used to make soup. the pinkish-creamy bark, valued as a treatment for skin ailments and wound healing, is pounded and applied as a paste to the affected area. over and above all this, the *umtshibi* is a welcome source of shade in the scorching hot summer and a well hidden resting spot for leopard, as can be seen from the claw marks on the one tree!

the water brought life and it brought the animals. Kalisosa now hydrates a diverse population of wildlife ranging from vast herds of dusty elephant all the way down to the spectacular plum coloured starling. The sandveld region has seen a resurgence of positive human wildlife interaction that will continue to increase as word of the platform spreads in the right circles.

FAUNA FACT FILE

animals

elephant . lion . leopard . african civet . large & small-spotted genet . caracal . serval . african wild cat . buffalo . blue wildebeest . warthog . giraffe . burchell's zebra . sable . kudu . eland . impala . common duiker . steenbok . waterbuck . bushbuck . tree squirrel . lesser bushbaby . vervet monkey . chacma baboon . porcupine . scrub hare . honey badger . slender mongoose . banded mongoose . dwarf mongoose . black-backed jackal . side-striped jackal . spotted hyena

birds

black-headed heron . cattle egret . abdim's stork . white stork . marabou stork . hamerkop . red-billed francolin . swainson's spurfowl . natal francolin . shelley's francolin . crested francolin . coqui francolin . helmeted guineafowl . grey crowned crane . secretarybird . kori bustard . red-crested korhaan . crowned lapwing . blacksmith lapwing . double-banded sandgrouse . burchell's sandgrouse . african mourning dove . red-eyed dove . cape turtle-dove . laughing dove . greenspotted dove . namaqua dove . meyer's parrot . red-chested cuckoo . levaillant's cuckoo . jacobin cuckoo . diederick cuckoo . verreaux's eagle-owl . spotted eagle-owl . barn owl . african barred owl . pearl-spotted owl . african scops-owl . pennant-winged nightjar . fiery-necked nightjar . common swift . african palm-swift . red-faced mousebird . brown-headed kingfisher . european bee-eater . white-fronted bee-eater . southern carmine bee-eater . little bee-eater . lilac-breasted roller . european roller . southern ground-hornbill . african grey hornbill . southern yellow-billed hornbill . red-billed hornbill . green wood hoopoe . african hoopoe . black-collared barbet . crested barbet . cardinal woodpecker . rufous-naped lark . fork-tailed drongo . arrow-marked babbler . white-browed robin . white-browed robin-chat . african paradise flycatcher . red-backed shrike . lesser grey shrike . fiscal shrike . tropical boubou . grey-headed bush shrike . white helmet-shrike . black-backed puffback . greater blue-eared starling . plum coloured starling . red-winged starling . red-billed oxpecker . yellow-billed oxpecker . african black sunbird . white-browed sparrow-weaver . southern masked weaver . red-headed weaver . red-billed quelea . southern red bishop . pin-tailed whydah . shaft-tailed whydah . long-tailed paradise whydah . village indigobird . jameson's firefinch . blue waxbill . cinnamon-breasted bunting . golden-breasted bunting

birds of prey / raptors

lappet-faced vulture . white-headed vulture . white-backed vulture . hooded vulture . african fish eagle . bateleur eagle . brown snake eagle . black-chested snake eagle . steppe eagle . tawny eagle . martial eagle . wahlberg's eagle . african harrier hawk . dark chanting goshawk . african goshawk . gabar goshawk . black kite . yellow-billed kite . black-shouldered kite . lizard buzzard . shikra . little sparrowhawk . black sparrowhawk . lanner falcon . amur falcon . lesser kestrel

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