

# DRILL INFO

Rettet den Drill e.V.  
save the drill  
...mehr als Artenschutz!



Edition 14, July 2012

## Support for the drills in Cameroon.

Last summer, 'Rettet den Drill e.V.' received an urgent request for help from the 'Limbe Wildlife Center, Cameroon'. [ see also 'Drill Info # 13] Over 80 drills are living there currently. The animals were either confiscated from being held illegally, or were 'donated' as it were, by private people. This is because many of the young are sold as pets, after their mothers have been shot by the hunters for meat. These, often only weeks old youngsters, weakened by the wrong diet, often hurt during the capture and severely traumatized, have very limited chances for survival. If they are sold to private households, they will at age 2 have become too wild and dangerous and are mostly held alone and in small cages somewhere in the backyards. It has become illegal in Cameroon to keep primates in private homes, and there are severe fines for doing so. This means that the animals will often be 'donated', after they are discovered, in order to avoid the conflict with the authorities.

At the 'Limbe Wildlife Center, the animals are housed first in the quarantine station, examined and then step by step integrated into the larger group.

For this purpose they are housed in 'separation-cages', from which they can observe and learn to know the group. The keepers then decide, after exact observations, which animals of the group the new-comer will be introduced to first.



Workings inside the Drill enclosure

These important segregation areas were in very bad state of repair and needed improvement. In addition the regular area of over 1000 sqm also was seeing signs of deterioration from the weather and the length of time it had been standing and needed fixing to keep it from caving in at some points.

For this, money was needed desperately and so Dr. Ainare Indioaga, the Director of the Center contacted 'Rettet den Drill' with the urgent request for financial help.

There are, to be sure, many wild-life organizations that are working to help with protection of species and with this also support the Limbe Wildlife Center financially.

However, often the drill is still 'the forgotten African ape', as many are focused on the seemingly more spectacular gorillas and chimpanzees.

'Rettet den Drill e.V.' is at the moment the only German organization solely focused on helping this endangered species. We were able – because of YOUR help!- to cover the entire costs for the repair of the main area as well as the installation of the segregation area. Enabling a complete renovation.

In March of this year, I traveled to The Cameroon for 2 week, to check on the work at the Center. Not only did I have an opportunity to help with the actual construction work, but I was also able to observe the arrival of a new animal. Government workers delivered an aprox. 3 year old male to the Limbe Wildlife Center, in a small

wooden box.

This animal had been kept by the former 'owners' by tying a rope around it's waist. It must have been used on the animal for a very long time already, as it had almost become part of its flesh. Luckily there was no open wound, meaning the animal did not have to have more treatment.

The little one, whose name is 'N'guzi', is going to be in the quarantine station until the end of June, while being thoroughly checked out medically and before being added to the group. We all agreed immediately that he will thrive there, because his cheeky character will make him a fine addition in the group.



*N'guzi*

For the animal, like little N'guzi, it is a tremendous improvement to have the segregation area restored and to have this and the group area involve more natural structures: large platforms have been constructed. They are connected by large, long ropes and are a valuable addition to the living-space of the drills. Some trees have also been planted protected by fences, to withstand the destructive ambitions of the drills, while growing. In one area a large hill was arranged by moving lava rocks together, which had been there already, and plants have been added. These plants are



*N'guzis old rope*

watered by the self-feeding water-troughs, which offer fresh water to the animals continuously and offer shelter and hiding places, which is used by some of the animals already now.

The 3rd project that was financed by 'Rettet den Drill', was the renovation of the 'Drill- Tower'. This is a small observation tower, which gives visitors an opportunity to look over the large group area.

We had 3 information signs printed in Germany, following the direction of the people in Limbe Wildlife Center [ weather and in particular UV resistant]. These signs unfortunately could only be made in a size to fit my largest suitcase. They are now displayed the newly renovated Drill-Tower and provide visitors, who can rest on a bench, with important information about drills.



*Natural Drill habitat at the foot of Mount Cameroon*

The Director of the Limbe Wildlife Center, Dr. Ainare In-dioaga and I drove to an area situated near the foot of Mount Cameroon.

Former hunters, who now offer their enormous knowledge about the animals, the distribution and the type of environment they live in, to people protecting them, took us into a natural habitat of the drills. Of course we did not spot any of these scarce and shy animals, but it was very memorable and impressive for me to be standing there.

As a "souvenir" however, I found an old empty bullet-shell, which took me back to reality. Despite this, the place has become a small part of 'paradise' as the Limbe

Wildlife Center long term plans are to re-introduce the group of drills from the center into nature, exactly here!

This project is in its infancy, but the first small steps have been taken: the hunters now earn their living by harvesting the leaves used as food for the drills in Limbe. In addition, talks have begun with the regional representatives and political leaders there. They look forward to the project, as it brings sustainable jobs to the region and therefore a new perspective for the people.

Since there is a close contact between the administration of 'Rettet den Drill' and Dr. Ainare Indioaga, the director of the center, we will be able to report more at this years full membership meeting at the latest.

### **This years full membership meeting will be held on August 25, 2012 at the Hellabrun Zoo in Munich.**

All members will receive their invitation in time.

I will report on my trip to The Cameroon with many pictures and the details of the projects we are helping to finance.

We hope many of you will attend.

The „Rettet den Drill“ Team

### **New:**

### **Science Corner** by *Dr. Verena Behringer and Tanya Wolf*

#### **Focus on: Drills in science**

In this section we will present the newest and exciting results of the research relating to drills, so you will be in the know about the news in regards to drills.

#### **„Are brightly coloured male drills important and sexy?“**

This was the question Marty and his colleagues explored in a paper about: 'Dominance, colouration, social and sexual behaviour in male Drills –*mandrillus leucophaeus*- published in 2009 in : The International Journal of Primatology [ DOI 10.1007/s10764-009-9382-x].

In the view of the authors, the drill was a prime research object for this study, since there is such an obvious difference between the genders and male exhibit such a distinct skin colouring. Until the research done by Marty and his colleagues, there existed speculations on the meaning of this colouration in males, but no scientific research. For this research the authors studied 17 male animals in the 'Drill Rehabilitation and Breeding Center in Nigeria'. The study started with the assumption that the intensity of the colouring in males had a correlation to the rank inside the group, since this had been recorded scientifically with Mandrills. The second assumption was that these brightly coloured males held more attractiveness for females. To substantiate this idea, digital pictures and behavioural data was examined. Indeed, the higher the rank, the more in-



Male Drill picture: Lindsay Maess



Colouring of adult male Drills  
picture: Lindsay Maess

tense the colour.

It was also observed that high ranking, brightly coloured males were often seen to have the company of females, especially females that were able to reproduce. The authors mentioned that this may be due to the rank of the male and not only due to the colour intensity as such. The result of the study for now is: brightly coloured males are important, since they appear to have a higher rank.

In addition Marty and his colleagues mentioned that it would surely be of interest to study the correlation between colouration and rank of males via hormone tests, as it has been done with Mandrills.

In addition it was noted that there still is a need to close the gap in understanding the social structure of free-living drills, which may offer more assumptions and explanations.

Marty et al, 2009

#### News briefs about Drills:

**Munich:** On the 12th of June it finally happened, the two drill females 'Kaduna' (\* 2004 Stuttgart Wilhelma) and 'Afi' (\*2006 Port Lympne Wild Animal Park/GB), eagerly anticipated companions for the male drill 'Bakut', arrived at the Zoo Hellabrun. The two are full sisters and arrived in Munich from Port Lympne.

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Frau Renate Greßner, Frau Helga Weißenfels, Herrn Walter Riedel, Frau Regina Koller, Herrn Werner Jensen, Herrn Dr. Fendler, Herrn Dr. Heiner Engel

#### We are happy to welcome the following new members:

Gabriele Ulmann, Daniel Heise, Markus Haak, Tom ten Tesscher, Christian Lassen, Dr. Marion Pausch

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