

DRILL INFO



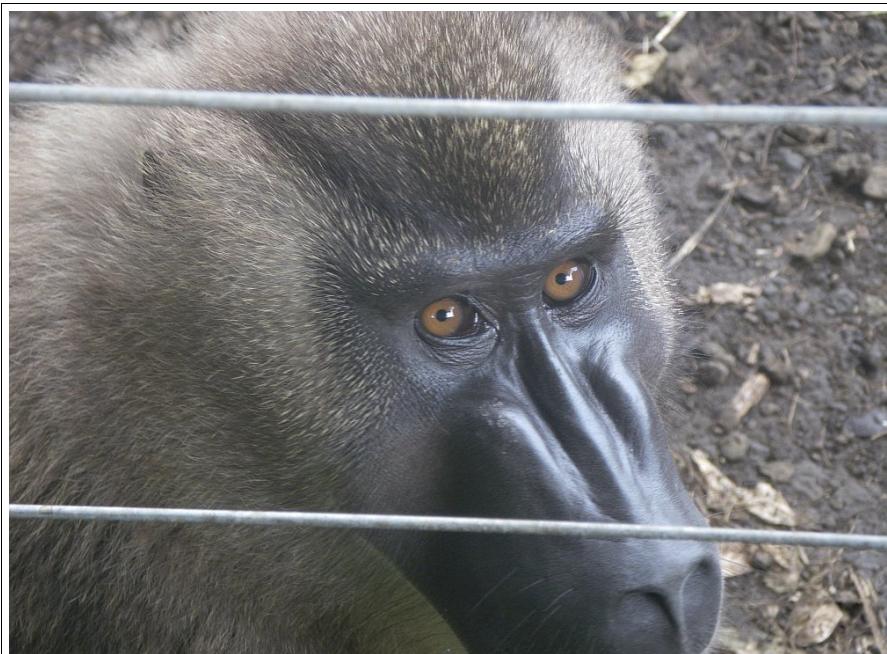
Issue 8, August 2009

Dear members, dear friends of the drill,

In this issue we'd like to take you on a journey to the "Limbe Wildlife Centre" in Cameroon. Our secretary Kathrin Paulsen took this journey last year and visited the world second largest group of drills with over 50 animals in Limbe.

Enjoy reading it.

Your editorial team



Young Drillmale at LWC

Visiting the "Limbe Wildlife Center" (LWC)

Last year a long preserved dream came true: I work with drills at the Hannover Zoo for over 15 years now and been through quite a lot with them. I also joined the foundation of the society "Save the Drill" over 5 years ago and do their correspondence work since then. To complete my joy there was only one thing missing

To see drills in the wild!

Because of the really rare number of about 3000 animals in the wild this is nearly impossible. So I decided to visit the "Limbe Wildlife Center" in Cameroon.

This decision was easily made because I got to know the project leader Simone de Vries in January 2008 at the Zoo in Nordhorn.

She was holding a speech about her work at the Zoo (during her holiday in the Netherlands) and we were able to give a donation from "Save the drill" to her (see in Drill news No. 6 July 2008).

After long preparations like vaccinations, applications and agreements I started my 4 week long journey to Cameroon in September 2008.

The LWC was founded in 1993 by "Pandrillus" (the Drill Rehabilitation and Breeding Center DRBC) in Nigeria and the Ministry of Environment & Forests (MINEF) in Cameroon. Till then it was a small zoo at the outskirts of Limbe at the Atlantic Shore. There they are keeping and nursing orphaned primates and animals which were confiscated. After arranging social groups it's the far goal to reintroduce these groups into the wild.

During my stay there were 17 indigenous monkey-species, like 16 gorillas, over 40 chimpanzees, around 70 other primates and of course - drills. They were living in a group of over 50 individuals! This size of a drill group doesn't exist in any zoo. Especially because the total amount of drills kept in captivity outside Africa is only around 75 animals.

The LWC is also one of the most successful projects for the keeping and rehabilitation of gorillas in Africa.

Another important aspect is the integration and information of the local people. There are a lot of educational possibilities for different groups like for instance students and nature groups. They also teach lessons in schools and make excursions with the pupils.

After having a pleasant flight I was given a friendly welcome in Limbe. The city lies beautifully at the Atlantic Shore being a holiday resort for a lot of people. It's quite a rich city in the poor country of Cameroon.

I was welcomed by Simone who carried a 5 week-old Preuss's Guenon and Sandy, a volunteer, who took care of a traumatized young chimpanzee. So I was introduced to the work of the Centre immediately. After settling in my room at the new and very comfortable "Volunteer House" I went immediately to the Centre the next morning.

What I saw there surpassed my imagination. Even though I heard about the large drill group with several adult males before I never forgot that scene.

The weather and the light in Cameroon are absolutely fantastic: The temperature and the humidity were impressive. The rainy season was over, so it rained only at nighttimes. Still the humidity was over 90 %.

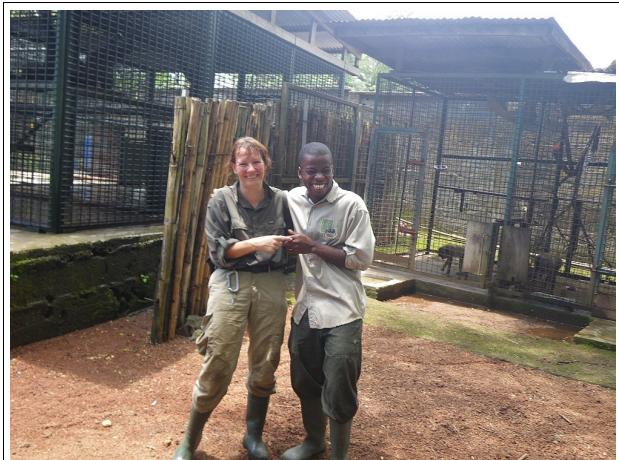
Neither the working conditions or the working materials or the food for the animals are comparable with the ones in middle Europe.

The monkeys in Limbe are fed completely different than here in Europe. Mostly they give fresh leaves and fruits to the animals because vegetables are quite expensive.

The food is paid by the government. Big amounts of bananas are delivered regularly. They grow in plantations at the sides of Mount Cameroon. It's the highest mountain of Western Africa, which covers the whole country with fertile volcanic soil.

But first I had to work in the food-kitchen.

To protect the animals from possible infections and to give me the chance to adapt myself to the climate conditions my first job was to sort the bananas.



With my colleague James

This job was done not only by the volunteers but by all the employees who worked in the kitchen. They all had really fun doing it and did some impressing singing by the way.

I was aware that it is completely different to work and live in Cameroon than it is here in Germany. So I took my working gloves with me. These were the ones I used to clean the cages with at Hannover Zoo. I hoped not to be the “white sissy” in Cameroon. But I was wrong. The employees, especially the ones at the quarantine section were instructed to wear gloves and a mouth protection. Also the volunteers had to wear them too (which wasn’t easy with the climatic conditions).

So not only the keepers really impressed me but also Felix Lancaster the project leader at that time, the veterinarian Doctor John, his assistant Akih and surely Simone worked really hard. Also all the employees of that team were great in keeping up the high level of the veterinary/medical and hygienic standard.



Eveline, Victor and Jonathan

samples and checked on all the vital functions.

Sadly I couldn’t witness the integration of both drills into the group because their time in quarantine wasn’t up yet.

But there was another sub adult male (nearly 8 years old) living next to the area of the group who had eye contact to the group. They let single drills pass over to his cage to get used to him and it all went without problems.

I also used the opportunity to work with the gorillas and the chimpanzees. The little female chimp I got to know at my arrival was integrated to the “baby group”. She needed to rest with her keeper from time to time to recover from playing with the other three chimps, who were up to 2 years old.

I spent my evenings with “Dina”, the little Preuss’s Guenon I also met directly at my arrival. She still needed milk and a lot of tender, love and care because she still was traumatized by the loss of her mother. Most of the young primates suffer from that loss being taken from their mothers by hunters who shoot the adults to get the babies. “Dina” was brought by a farmer to the centre who said, that “she fell out of a tree and her mother ran away”.

But the times that Guenons fell out of trees because they were so many are long time gone, today the Preuss’s Guenon (as is the drill) is one of the most endangered monkey species of Africa.

I also had the opportunity to visit a school together with the keeper Wilson.

During my stay 2 new drills arrived at the quarantine ward. They were about 3 to 4 years old and were confiscated from illegal keeping. They had to stay at the quarantine for 3 months before they were taken to the other drills in the group. Both animals were examined closely under anaesthesia (using the easy metabolised inhalation).

Even though the electricity wasn’t working all the time, so you couldn’t count on the surgical lamps (always have a flashlight with you !) the examinations were extensive and thoroughly. They did blood pressure-control, took the temperature, checked the teeth, took blood

There the employees of LWC give lessons on a regular basis. It was really impressive to see that Wilson used a lot of enthusiasm and personal effort to tell the kids about the bushmeat problem, protection of species and the destruction of their environment. The employees of LWC know that the future of the primates of Africa depends on the children of Africa.

Sometimes in the future I surely will visit the LWC again. I'll be happy to eat rice and beans with my keeper-colleagues for lunch or to drink a cool Castell with Bama in the evening.

I'm already looking forward to this.

Kathrin Paulsen



Together with Wilson at school

Short news around the Drill

Frankfurt: On the 19th of February 2009 the 4-year-old "Dori" dies in a tragic accident.

Hannover:

- After a long suffering from an orthopaedic illness the 13-year-old "Micky" died on the 5th of March 2009.
- On the 1st of May 2009 the 14-year-old "Daphne" gave birth to twins. Sadly one of the male twins died shortly after birth. The other one, "Tiko", is growing quite well.

Hurdy-Gurdy music at the second Grafschaft garden festival

Roland Wolf from Dortmund and his friends Ute and Franz Weber from Cologne and Ueli Temperli from Zurich played their hurdy-gurdys at the 2nd Grafschaft garden festival at the Nordhorn Zoo. Even though it was bad weather they collected an amount of 100 Euros and donated it to "Save the drill". We also would like to thank again Mr. Wolf for his donation of 500 Euros that he gave to "Save the Drill" together with his extensive archive.

We thank the following people for their donations:

Frau Dr. Lottelore Ebeling
Herrn Kai Setzer
Frau Christa Groll
Fam. Walburga und Holger Wientjes
Frau Julia Flachmann

We are happy to welcome our new members:

Verena Behringer
Jan Bauer
Philipp Plate
Ronny Häusler

We thank the company VisionConnect for the continuous support of our homepage and the provision of the whole transfer-volume.

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