

OPERATION: RESCUE BOROMOKO

AN ORPHANED BABY BULL



MARA CONSERVANCY
Protecting the Mara Triangle
www.maratriangle.org



NAIROBI ORPHANS' NURSERY

Over the past three decades the Nairobi Nursery has successfully hand-raised over 150 orphaned elephant calves. These innocent baby elephants have been orphaned due to numerous reasons including poaching, human-wildlife conflict and natural disasters.

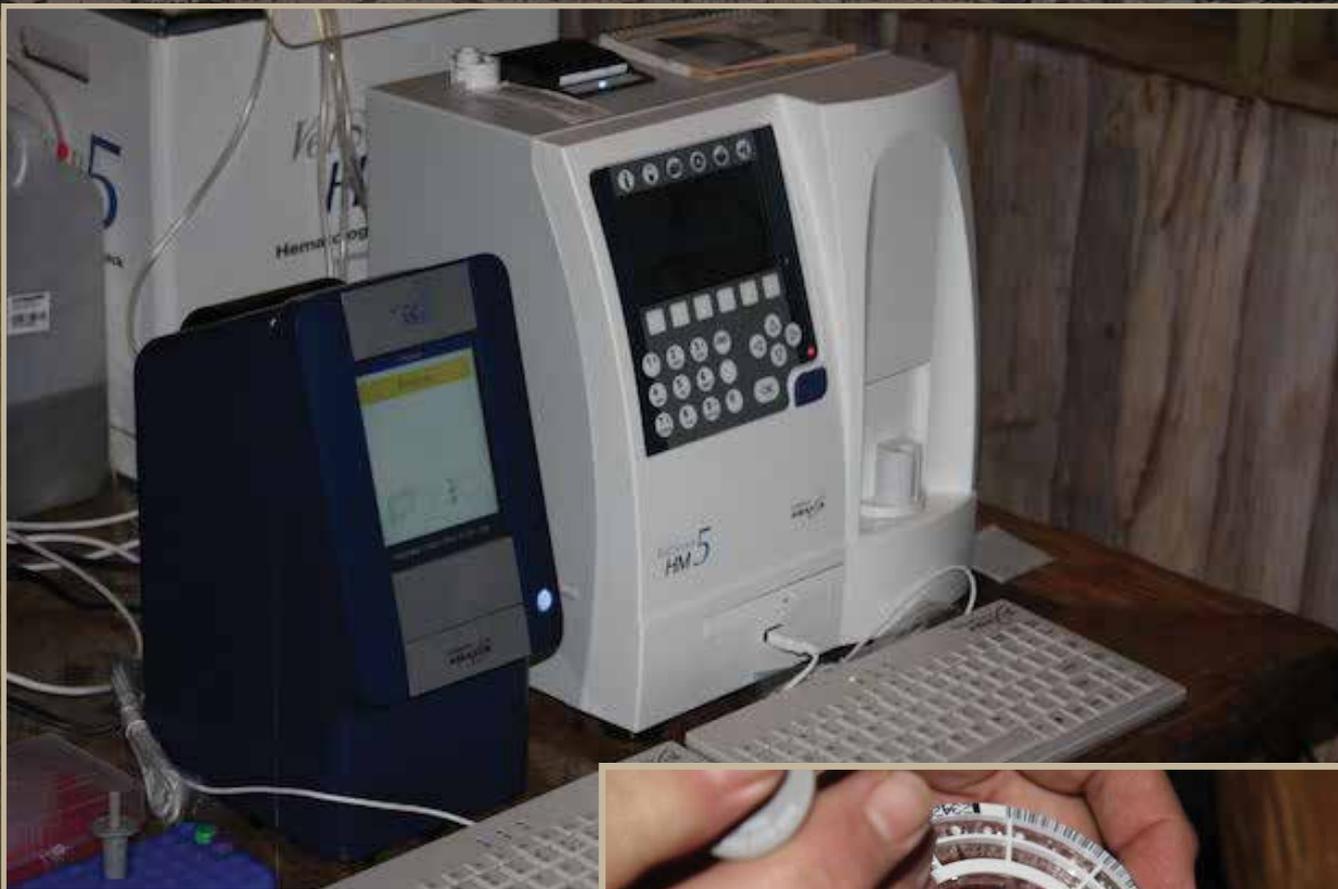
Contributing Authors:

David Sheldrick
Dr. Clay Wilson
Baerbel Koehler

THE Mara Conservancy received a call from Brian Heath, the Chief Executive of the Mara Conservancy, about an abandoned baby elephant who had been observed for a couple of days on the plains of the Mara. Numerous elephants were in the area, moving through but this baby bull was seemingly an orphan because he never successfully integrated. Observation reported that this calf had not fed on any milk, and was very much peripheral to the herds, sometimes kilometers apart. The calf was left another day to see if anything changed and if his mother would return. There was a young female, too young to be his mother, who was clearly agitated and concerned about the little baby bull's fate and she was torn between remaining with the herds, and providing protection for the baby. It was thought that maybe she could be the sister of the little bull.

The David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust (DSWT) rescue team was called and alerted that the calf was getting weaker as he had not fed at all during observation, and if he were to remain unattended by the wild elephant herds he would fall prey to the predators. **It was now obvious he was an orphan.** The DSWT team flew to the Kichwa Tembo airstrip and was met and collected by Mara Conservancy Scouts and together with Brian Heath driven to the place the young calf still wandered the plains. On route to his location they passed plenty of hyenas and a pride of lions; which highlighted the fact that

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VetScan VS2 Chemistry Analyzer and VetScan HM5 Hematology Analyzer in use on location.



he had survived the night and was extremely lucky. As they drove up close to where the baby calf was they could see the young female who had been most concerned about him, but even she was quite a distance away by this time. As the team leapt from the car to capture the baby the second landrover was strategically positioned to protect the men just in case the young female decided to charge. The little baby put up little resistance and was restrained in minutes. He was clearly very weak by this time. He was lain down on the stretcher, strapped and placed in the back of the landrover and immediately driven to the airstrip to the waiting aircraft. There at the airstrip we attempted to hydrate the baby calf. He was then loaded into the plane and flown to Nairobi, a journey of just under one hour.

He arrived in the DSWT Nursery late evening, the sweet little calf of approximately 15 months old settled down quickly and was relieved to have the company of the others and milk. The calf was hooked on his milk bottle almost immediately and with his pale amber eyes was instantly recognizable. After a complete blood chemistry and examination, it was only a couple of days before he was out with the others. We have called him Boromoko after the area where he was rescued. Boromoko loves to linger with the visiting foster parents in the evening when coming home to his stable and has to be tempted by his milk bottle in order to proceed to his stable. This is his unique little idiosyncrasy which of course endears him to everyone. The fate of his lost mother has not been confirmed, but there has been poaching reported in the Mara ecosystem in recent months.

Boromko's rescue and journey



Boromko's rescue and journey. (From left to right.)

Top:
Arriving at the Kichwa Tembo private airstrip.
Boromko being rescued by DSWT team and Mara Conservancy Scouts.

Middle:
Boromko being restrained with little resistance.
Transporting Boromko from the plains of the Mara to the airstrip.
Loading Boromko onto the aircraft before heading to Nairobi.

Bottom:
Boromko lingering with the visiting foster parents.