

# CLUNY WILDLIFE TRUST

## LIKOMA ISLAND - VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

### INTRODUCTION

Cluny Wildlife Trust promotes the wise and sustainable use of wildlife and its habitat for the benefit of local communities, private sector interests and government custodians.

Cluny Wildlife Trust is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation that aims at promoting the conservation of wildlife and its habitat in Malawi and the region.

The trust was established in 2001 by Derek and Shannon Macpherson and has the following objectives:

- To protect and conserve wildlife.
- To initiate, facilitate and manage Wildlife Management, Research & Tourism & Projects.
- To raise funds for Management, Research and Tourism Projects.
- To promote community involvement in Wildlife Management.

The trustees of Cluny Wildlife Trust recognise that Malawi's natural resources are dwindling at an alarming rate. To arrest and reverse this decline an enormous and co-ordinated effort will be necessary from all sectors including the state, the private sector, non-governmental organisations, local communities and responsible individuals. It is the trustee's intention that Cluny Wildlife Trust will play a significant part in the redeeming of Malawi's wildlife and other natural resources.

Cluny Wildlife Trust is focusing on two projects and a volunteer program on Likoma Island in Lake Malawi. Likoma is a fascinating Island with a rich history, situated just off the Mozambique shore of Lake Malawi in the northeastern part of the lake. Although Likoma lies in waters belonging to Mozambique it remains a Malawian possession.

In the late nineteenth century the Universities Mission to Central Africa (U.M.C.A.) established its headquarters on the Island. The Right Reverend Chauncey Maples was the first Bishop of Likoma who, in 1895, tragically drowned when his small craft capsized in rough waters off Monkey Bay. He had just months earlier been appointed to his position.

Early in the twentieth century (1903 - 1905) a cathedral was built from burnt brick and stone using local labour and Zanzibari stone masons. There remains, to this day, strong ties to Zanzibar and one can still hear Kiswahili spoken on the island. The cathedral is the size of Winchester Cathedral and continues to be the central feature and focus of the island. It houses many interesting artifacts relating to and dating from the time of David Livingstone.

The first of Cluny Wildlife Trust's projects aims at assisting the people of Makungwa Village in the north of the island to effectively and sustainably manage the last remaining indigenous vegetation on the island that happens to occur on their land. The second project is an initiative to build the capacity of local businessmen involved in tourism to more effectively market their business enterprises. The volunteer program provides an opportunity to people wishing to participate in the advancement of Cluny Wildlife Trust's two projects on the Island and at the same time offers an experience of a unique and fascinating part of Malawi.

## PROJECTS - The Conservation of the Makungwa Village Forest Area

On Likoma Island there is an area of approximately 70 hectares in extent that constitutes the Makungwa Village Forest Area. This area is the last remaining indigenous forest area of significant size on Likoma. The people of Makungwa Village have recognised the importance of this forest area to the maintenance of biodiversity and the contribution it makes to the fuel wood, building material and medicinal plant demand on the island. As early as 2002 the village leadership started an initiative to create a formal structure to manage the Makungwa Village Forest area and undertook to register a community based organisation with the assistance of the Department of Forestry. Subsequently the demand for fuel wood and building materials on the island has increased.

In an attempt to address this growing problem Cluny Wildlife Trust supported the establishment of a tree nursery in 2007. 16000 seedlings were propagated and have been planted in the Makungwa Village area and adjacent lands in the 2007/2008 rainy season.



Satellite Image of Likoma Island featuring the Makungwa Village Forest Area in the North East

If the Makungwa Village Forest Area is not to succumb to the ever-increasing demand on its resources an effective management plan needs to be initiated coupled with a greater effort to provide the people living in the areas with an alternative fuel wood and building material supply. To achieve this Cluny Wildlife Trust is assisting the people of Makungwa Village to develop a Forest Management Plan for the area and will continue to support a tree nursery and the establishment of community woodlots.



Oblique Aerial Photograph of the Makungwa Village Forest Area

## The Improvement of Livelihoods of Rural People Through the Promotion of Tourism on Likoma Island

Being an island of scenic beauty and historical significance Likoma attracts visitors in numbers that have given rise to an emerging tourist trade. In response to the increasing numbers of tourists in recent years a number of residents on the Island have begun providing tourist related services. Examples include the provision of accommodation, boating services and guiding services. This project aims at improving the ability of Island residents to market their tourism related activities to an ever increasing number of tourists visiting the Island by coordinating their efforts and improving their ability to advertise. This effort in building the capacity of residents will result in improved livelihoods for the people of Likoma Island.



Photographic Representation of the Deforestation of Likoma Island

Cluny Wildlife Trust is assisting a group of local businessmen in the following activities:

- The registration of a community based association of residents who are carrying on tourism related activities.
- The creation of an information centre to advertise the tourism related products available on the island provided by residents and,
- A training component to build the capacity of some of the people who are members of the association.



### Registration of an Association

A Community Based Organisation in the form of an association called The Likoma Islands Tours Association is currently being registered with the aid of Cluny Wildlife Trust and Mr. Alan Chinula of William Faulkner a leading law firm in Lilongwe.

The association will provide the means to coordinate an improved and combined marketing effort that none of the individuals would be able to finance through independent efforts. Through members agreeing to a code of conduct relating to business ethics the association will provide credibility for members and security for tourists utilising the services marketed.



## **Information centre**

To attract the tourists who arrive on the Island by ferry an information centre near to the docking site of the ferry has been identified as the most practical and efficient solution. It is the intention that this information centre be manned and supplies information regarding the services offered on the island by residents, in particular members of the association. Tourists arriving on the island would then be able to easily access this information and make use of the services thereby increasing the stream of revenue to the island to resident-owned businesses.



## **Training and Capacity Building**

For this initiative to succeed in the long term it is vital that there be the correct structures in place coupled with the matching skills to ensure sustainability. The two areas of importance are the management of the association and the management of the information centre. Cluny Wildlife Trust aims at training members of the association in both fields.

## **VOUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

Within the scope of Cluny Wildlife Trust's projects on Likoma Island there are numerous opportunities for volunteers to participate and contribute to the objectives of the various initiatives.

### **The Conservation of The Makungwa Village Forest Area**

- Central to this project is the development of a Forest Management Plan which has many different components. Contributions from either qualified people or students (preferably post-graduate) would move the process forward significantly. Details regarding the various subjects that need to be covered are available from Cluny Wildlife Trust but include conducting the following:
  - Forest inventory
  - Bird inventory
  - Mammal inventory
  - Fish inventory
  - Reptile inventory
  - Insect inventory
- The planting of tree seedlings is an ongoing project with two components, the nursery and the tree planting exercise. This activity takes place between July and January. There are opportunities to assist with the practical management of both components.

### **The Improvement of Livelihoods of Rural People Through the Promotion of Tourism on Likoma Island**

- There are many opportunities for volunteers to help in the outfitting of the information centre. The office space needs to be painted and furnished,

telephonic and e-mail communications need to be established and advertisements need to be designed and printed.

- The training component of this initiative could make very good use of the skills of teachers and business people alike and ranges from organization management to accounts and graphic design. More specifically training is needed in the following subjects:
  - Book-keeping
  - Business administration
  - Computer skills
  - Graphic design
  - Communications

### **Building Renovation Project**

Cluny Wildlife Trust is seeking to improve the volunteer accommodation and office space on the Island. The provision of running water to the house will improve the comfort and convenience of those staying there. It is CWT's intention to install a submersible pump, water tank and plumbing for a borehole near volunteer house. This initiative will not only improve amenities at the house but will also assist the other residents of the area in the provision of clean water.

### **VOLUNTEER CAPACITY**

Cluny Wildlife Trust wishes to attract mature volunteers with skills that can contribute to the project. It is envisaged that post-graduate students and skilled adults will be most suited to the project environment. Volunteers must have the ability and initiative to manage their own micro-projects without close supervision. They must also be comfortable with the extent of isolation that they will experience on this remote island. It is desirable that volunteers are capable of participating in small group initiatives and that they are amenable to communicating with people speaking English as a second language.

More specifically people skilled in the following areas will be able to contribute most significantly:

- Forest Management
- Natural sciences
- Graphic Design
- Advertising and Tourism Marketing
- Business administration
- Accounts
- Computers
- Communications
- Building
- Plumbing

### **VOLUNTEER COSTS**

The cost to the volunteer to participate in one of Cluny Wildlife Trust's project activities on Likoma will be USD 120.00 per volunteer per day. The reason that this is more expensive than some other organisations is that the cost of transport to and from the island is very high and the general administration costs of any activity is greater than on the mainland.

## **VOLUNTEER GROUP SIZES**

Cluny Wildlife Trust is able to accommodate groups of between 2 and 6 volunteers at any one time.

## **CONDITIONS**

Whilst volunteers will need to subscribe to a separate and comprehensive Volunteer Participation Agreement it is noted here that volunteers will be expected to:

- Abide by the laws of the country
- Abide by the rules of Cluny Wildlife Trust
- Support the initiatives of Cluny Wildlife Trust on the island and not deviate from that agenda

## **CONDITIONS ON LIKOMA ISLAND**

### **Accommodation**

Cluny Wildlife Trust has rustic accommodation in the form of a house on Likoma Island. There are four bedrooms, a sitting room, a kitchen and outside basic ablution facilities. Currently lighting is from kerosene lamps and water is collected in buckets from the lake for washing.

Volunteers need to look after their own cooking needs & domestic arrangements. Cleaning done by attendant.

### **Food and Water**

Basic food and clean drinking water are easily available on the Island. Volunteers will be expected to buy and cook their own food. Food expenses will be to the account of Cluny Wildlife Trust.

### **Medical Services**

There is a district hospital run by one doctor and two medical officers. The hospital has a stocked pharmacy, operating theatre, consultation rooms and wards for in-patients. The Island is serviced by two ambulances. Cases that are beyond the capability of the hospital are referred to Lilongwe or Mzuzu after the patient is stabilised. Evacuation in the event of an emergency would normally be by aircraft arranged by Cluny Wildlife Trust.

Cluny Wildlife Trust will maintain a first aid kit on the island. Alex Chitanda, Cluny Wildlife Trust's representative on the Island is trained in first aid.

### **Security**

The island has a history of good security. There is a police force resident on the island that takes care of security matters. Volunteers would be responsible for their personal belongings.

### **Communication**

Cluny Wildlife Trust will provide at least one cell phone per group of volunteers. Local calls will be paid for by Cluny Wildlife Trust. International personal calls will be paid for by the volunteer.

### **Transportation**

Transport to and from the island will be by aircraft or by vehicle and boat. Transport on the island will be by foot as the distances are not great. There is the possibility that bicycles will be provided for volunteers whilst on Likoma.

## **CONCLUSION**

It is hoped that this document provides a reasonable overview of Cluny Wildlife Trust's volunteer initiative on Likoma Island and the conditions that can be expected there. There is opportunity for both academically and practically minded volunteers to participate in the project's activities. Cluny Wildlife Trust believes that this initiative will benefit volunteers and islanders alike and looks forward to many successful visits!

**To apply for the Likoma Island Project, please visit the World Camp website and submit a volunteer application.**

**<http://www.worldcampforkids.org/application.htm>**