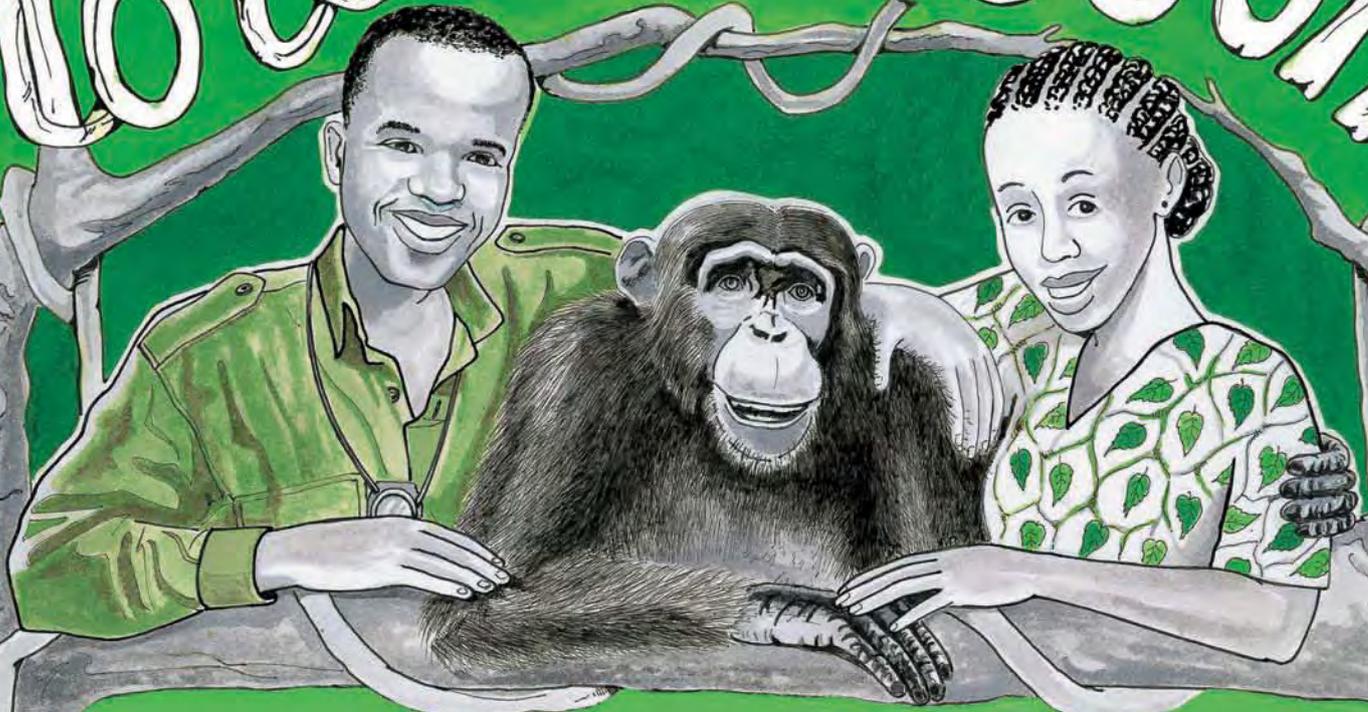


# Forest Wisdom



Journal No. 6/7  
January 2007

I've got  
air-conditioning here  
in the forest!



# FOREST WISDOM

## A NEWSLETTER FOR ALL OF YOU: FOREST WISDOM

- Villagers living near a national park
- Everyone who works for the conservation of forests
- Tells the story of special forest inhabitants: chimpanzees
- Shows the problems and threats to the forest
- Supplies information
- Answers your questions and invites you to contribute to this newsletter
- Invites you to protect the great forest, this national heritage which is also yours



*Ponts à franchir pour rejoindre les villages autour de la forêt de Zياما en Guinée Forestière*

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WCF – Africa c/o CSRS, 01 BP 1303, Abidjan 01, Côte d’Ivoire



Photos: Zoro Bertin Goné Bi

*Spectateurs assistant au théâtre en Guinée Forestière*



**Hello and good health to you all!**

Some months ago somewhere in the Taï National Park...

"Two men are silently walking through the forest. The poacher with his gun is walking ahead, followed by his young porter searching the trees for red monkeys, also called colobus monkeys. They suddenly hear chimpanzee noises and turn towards them. Peering through some bushes, they find themselves face to face with a group of chimpanzees in full action. "Quick, shoot them!" the young man is whispering. But the older man hesitates at these words: "No, wait! In the village they have always said that chimpanzees are like humans. Let's have a look to see if this is true."

What they then see leaves them gaping in surprise. Just a few meters away, a young chimpanzee approaches a bush, breaks off a twig and carries it in his mouth to a driver anthill. At the anthill he uses the twig to fish for ants. Next to him, a young female takes a hard fruit looking like a bottle gourd and hits it with all her might against the root of a tree. When the fruit breaks, she carefully peels the seeds and eats them. Her little one comes running, giving little cries. His mum answers by offering him half of the freshly gathered fruit and they sit side by side eating. Finished, they amble off into the forest with the rest of the group, never realizing that the poachers were watching from behind the bushes. They leave the two

poachers very impressed by what they have just witnessed. "They use tools and share food just like us!" Both men are so stunned, that they don't find the will to fire.

"It must be right what they said in this theatre play that has been performed in the local villages. And also this song the children were still singing after the theatre group had left ... it is true!" murmured the old man, who still hadn't recovered.

In the end, the same thoughts concern all of us – in the town or in the forest, in Ivory Coast or in Europe. Will I become fatally ill from eating chimpanzee meat? Will the rain stay away if I cut the forest down? You can read all about these and other important issues in the newsletter "Forest Wisdom." Remember: All our acts are connected with one another. The well-being of all the living beings is at risk when the balance of nature is disturbed. The forest is important for the survival of the chimpanzees and the elephants, but it is just as important for the growth of the cocoa tree and for the quality of our own drinking water. When you fight with your own means for the respect of nature, it is in your hands to save your rich and intact nature. You share the responsibility for the future of your region.

*See you soon,*

*Christophe Boesch*



*Also read page 12 about the different activities in your region.*



Hunters, PLEASE, spare the life of the chimpanzees!

## KNOWLEDGE OF OUR ANCESTORS

Henri Téré and Hedwige Boesch



*Calpocalyx aubrevillei* Pellegr. (Mimosaceae)  
Local names in Ivory Coast: *Guépiézou* (in Apollo),  
*Man-touè* (in Guéré), *Mârou-tou* (in Oubi), *Moué-tou*  
(in Kroumen)

This tree is one of the most important plants in the dense and humid West African forest extending from Ivory Coast to Sierra Leone. It is a big tree of 25 meters height with a regular trunk that quickly branches out and a smooth, whitish bark. Its leaves are made up of 5 or 6 smaller, smooth and opposite leaves, the folioles. These folioles are long, oval shaped and have an extended point. Its fruit is a strong, 24 to 29 cm long and 7 to 9 cm wide woody husk with a delicately pleated surface. It contains 3 to 5 big seeds. The seeds of this tree with its many virtues are in demand by humans and very much appreciated by animals (duiker, monkeys, mice, rats, chimpanzees). It grows in Ivory Coast in the valleys of Bas Cavally, mainly between the southern perimeter of the Taï National Park and the Sassandra river. Its history is unique...

There was a time when men lived in harmony with the tropical forests. One year, when there was a big famine, the villagers decided to send their young

people into the forest to search for different kinds of nutritious plants. They discovered a many of the trees called *Calpocalyx aubrevillei* and everyone started to gather their seeds. The seeds were so numerous that some of the young people lifted their head only after many hours... only to realize that they had become lost forever! After this fatal event, the village elders forbade all the children to gather the seeds of the *Calpocalyx aubrevillei*. This prohibition was only lifted years later by the traditional authorities. Since this day, the tree has been used in many ways:

### *Culinary fabrication of indigenous salt (photo p. 11)*

To obtain salt, one burns green or dry pieces of wood from the *Calpocalyx aubrevillei*. The ashes are put into a conically formed basket made out of leaves from swamp plants (e.g. *Raphia* or *Haloplegia*). Perforated leaves are also placed on the bottom to serve as a filter for the water poured over the ashes. The collected filtrate is then boiled until all the liquid is evaporated in order to get salt crystals which are recommended to persons with blood pressure problems.

### *Soap fabrication*

To get soap, the ashes of the *Calpocalyx aubrevillei* wood are put into a kettle, mixed with water and brought to a boil. After the mixture has thickened, oil is added to form a paste that can be molded into balls or bars. But look out, only if one knows the exact dosage of the mixture, does one get the desired product!

### *Preparation of seeds for consumption*

The seeds are kept in water for 1 or 2 days until their skin becomes soft and can be removed. Because of their very bitter taste, the kernels are then put into a kettle and are boiled 3 or 4 times. They can then be eaten like yam roots with oil, chilli pepper or meat.

### *Domestic use of the wood*

The wood is used for the fabrication of traditional shoes or clogs. It is also used as firewood or charcoal. Smouldering wood pieces keep the fire burning for a long time and are used as torches or matches.

### *Medical use*

The decoction of the seeds gives a bitter water that is used for the treatment of diabetes, the treatment of wounds and the cure of the scabies. Given as a drink or used for a lukewarm bath, it can also ease malaria symptoms.

## GRÉGOIRE NOHON TALKS ABOUT... PATROLLING

Hedwige Boesch

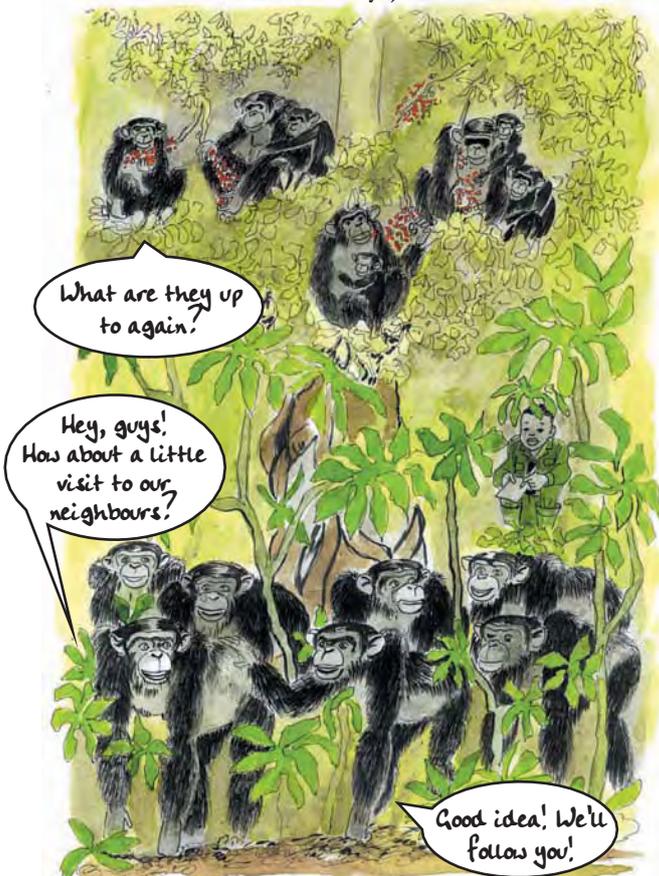
*How chimpanzees use patrols to test the strength of their neighbours with the idea of conquering their territory:*



While he has a rest in the village, Grégoire invites the park agents he knows to have a beer with him. He tells them what is happening in the forest between two neighbouring chimpanzee communities. Only yesterday morning, he followed them into strange territory...

I was with Brutus and the males Kendo, Macho, Falstaff, Rousseau, Snoopy and Darwin in the Southeast of the territory. A bit further away, the females and the young chimps were eating their fill of figs in a tree loaded with fruits.

The males don't eat! They just stare at each other...



... then start to move away without calling or drumming. Silently and in single file, they move towards the border of their territory... Me too, following them at the end of the file... They walk quickly, but without dragging their feet through the dead leaves. They also avoid wood pieces that could crack under their weight. Seized by a feeling of danger in this atmosphere of secretiveness, I instinctively behave in the same way.



We're now more than one kilometer inside the territory of the strangers. I don't recognize the terrain anymore and have to use my compass to orient myself. They're sitting all together on the trunk of a fallen tree. Brutus and Kendo are reassuring themselves by holding each other by the shoulder. They all look attentive, but still don't make any sound.

Suddenly, one can hear some little chimpanzee cries coming from not very far away... As if on order, my males get up, all with hair standing on end. They're looking into the direction of the cries holding their breath. Three of them are holding each other by the shoulder to calm down. Then, they move silently towards the cries.



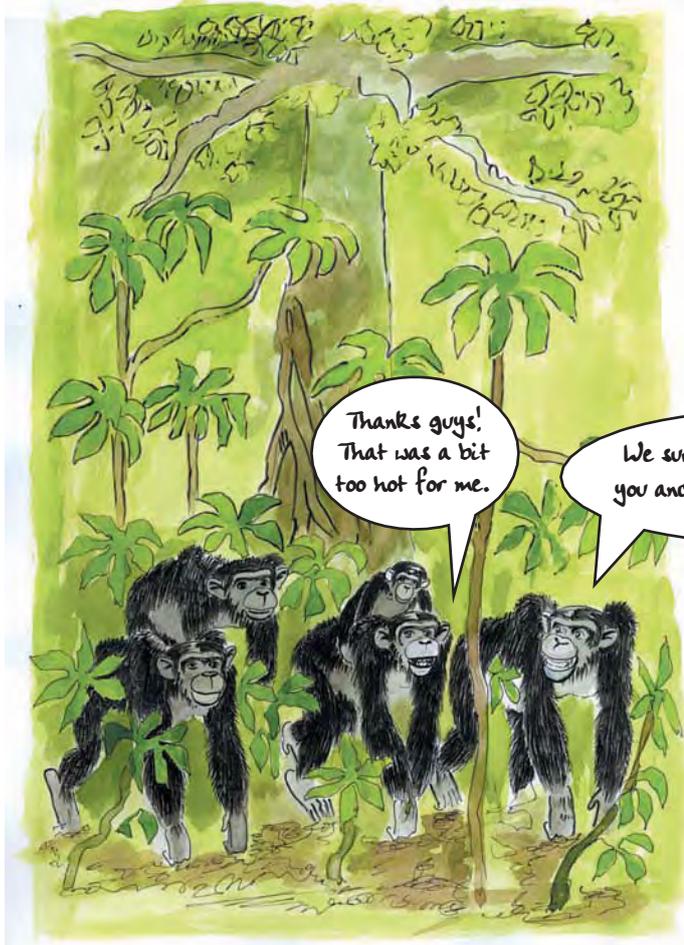
## GRÉGOIRE NOHON TALKS ABOUT... PATROLLING

They stop discreetly under a big tree, attentively scrutinizing the canopy vegetation. And in fact, up there are the "strangers": a different group of chimpanzees eating their fill of figs with visible pleasure and content grunting. We observe them silently for a while, without moving.



After 20 minutes, one of the little ones sitting in the tree gives a cry. This is the signal to attack! Brutus and the others explode with aggressive cries, get on their hind legs and drum their chests, all hairs standing on end. They look frightening. Macho charges halfway up the tree. The strangers are completely surprised. Quite a few of them rush down to the ground and, chased by the others, flee in a panic.

Rousseau and Darwin have stayed under the tree, because a mother with her child didn't dare to flee and is now screaming in alarm and for help.



Thanks guys!  
That was a bit  
too hot for me.

We surely wouldn't have left  
you and your child with these  
invaders.

She's not left behind. Three of the foreign males come back to help her and wildly attack Darwin and Rousseau, who don't push the issue. The female with its child is rushing down and disappears, saved this time... It's perfectly silent. The crucial moment of the attack lasted barely more than 5 minutes!

But now Brutus and the others celebrate their advantage over their neighbours with a 10-minutes of drumming and victorious hoo hoo shouting. Then they quietly go home.

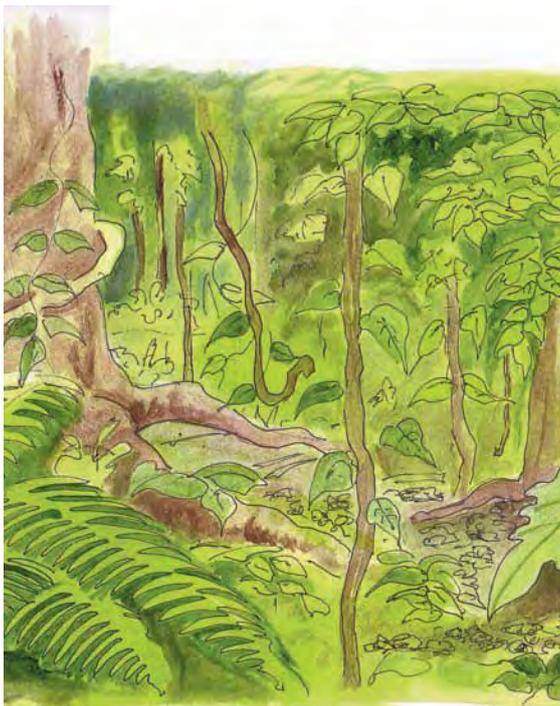


We are the strongest!  
They ran away.

Next time we'll get  
them...and then for  
good!



“This time...”, Grégoire says, “the encounter passed without causing harm. But sometimes they leave serious injuries. It makes one think about the similarity between humans and chimpanzees. See you soon!” The park agents resume their patrol. After what they just heard, they have plenty to think about and discuss.



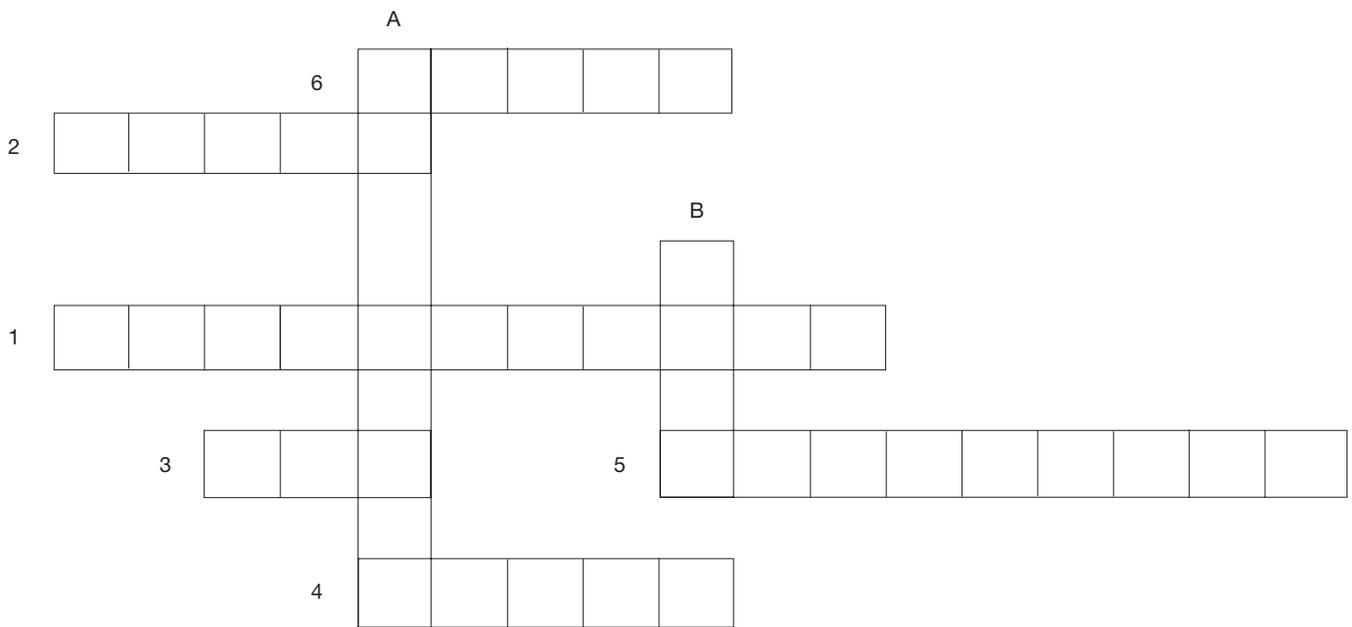
#### *Information on the purpose of the patrols*

- The male chimpanzees of a community defend a territory of normally 10 to 20 km<sup>2</sup>

#### *Every month they go on patrols to:*

- make sure that no stranger has entered their territory
- control the food resources of the territory
- see and get to know the females of neighbouring communities, who switch communities just before they become adults
- preventively attack their male neighbours, who also go on patrols for the same reasons
- regularly take neighbouring females hostage for several hours and sometimes even for several days

# HOTCH-POTCH...

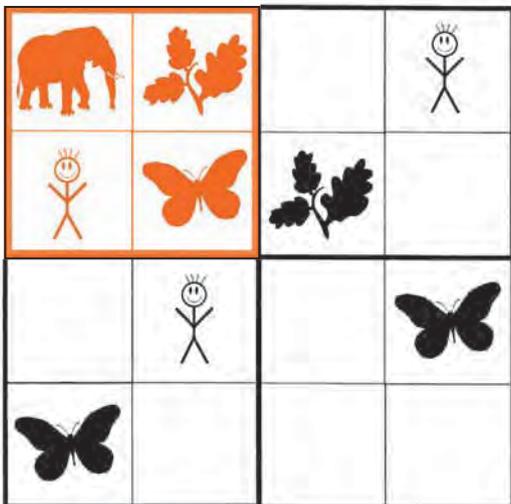


Put the following words into the grill by placing the letters in the right order:

IHMNAPECZSE  
STNE  
CFEES  
OLOST  
ATI  
EORIRTTYR  
PFRIOTOTN  
OANBC

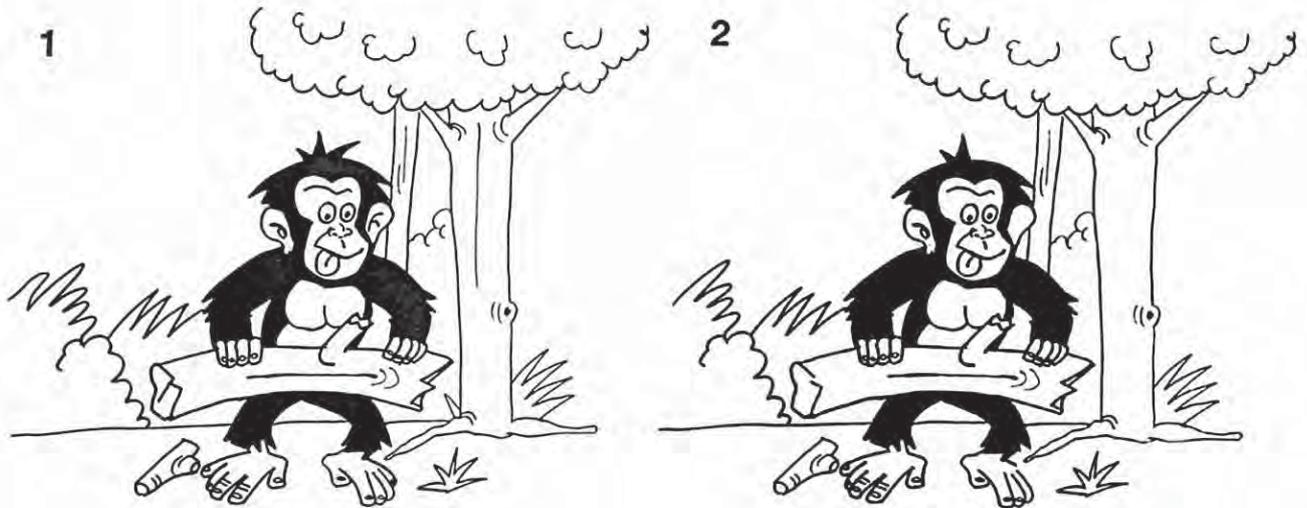
Clues:

1. They are the closest cousins of the humans.
  2. National Park in Abidjan, soon hosting an exposition about the environment.
  3. National Park in the West of Ivory Coast, where the heroes of this journal live.
  4. The chimpanzees use them for instance to get to their food (sticks, rocks...).
  5. Forest zone occupied by a chimpanzee group who also defends it against the intrusion of other chimpanzees.
  6. Researchers count them to estimate the number of chimpanzees in a region.
- A. Track left on the ground by the passage of an animal.  
B. Every chimpanzee makes one in the evening in the trees to sleep in.



The rules for this sudoku are very simple and consist of just one sentence: Fill the empty fields with the symbols in a way that they turn up only once per line, per column and per square (as for example in the orange square).

There are 7 differences between the 2 drawings.  
It's up to you to find them!



Find the following words in the grill and cross them out:

C	A	R	N	I	V	O	R	E	S
H	O	C	N	A	B	R	L	P	A
I	L	O	W	A	T	E	R	T	V
M	I	E	S	S	P	T	L	F	A
P	O	C	O	H	K	L	I	O	N
A	S	I	A	P	R	F	F	R	N
N	O	N	P	N	A	I	E	E	A
Z	T	L	E	S	P	R	A	S	H
E	H	U	M	A	N	E	D	T	T
E	W	C	F	C	O	M	O	E	E

- BANCO
- CARNIVORES
- CHIMPANZEE
- COMOE
- WATER
- ELEPHANT
- ESSPT
- FIRE
- FOREST
- HUMAN
- LION
- APE
- LEOPARD
- PARK
- SAVANNAH
- SOIL
- TAI
- SEL
- LIFE
- WCF



Watch out! The words can be written vertically, horizontally, backwards or even diagonally.

Have you found all the words? Well done! Now find the answer to the following question by assembling the letters you haven't used:  
Now that you have read this newsletter – what do you think the chimpanzees hope for from us?

**T**  
- - - - -



Lucie Bah of the village Kati prepares the indigenous salt from *Calpocalyx asbes* (see page 4).



Photo: Bertin Akpatou

## WCF AND ITS PROJECTS...

Ilka Herbinger

### WCF and its projects in your region

Imagine: for 3 years now, more than 90.000 people have watched the theatre play "The chimpanzees are our cousins" in several hundred villages around Tai, Banco and Marahoué National Parks in Ivory Coast as well as in the Fouta Djallon, in Guinée Forestière and around the Gola Forest in Sierra Leone. Young people from these regions even created six new theatre groups to continue talking about the conservation of the nature around their home villages.



### Is it worth continuing our environmental education activities?

Christophe Boesch

We left it to independent and neutral researchers to ask you this important question. That's why some of you were contacted by sociologists of the Universities of Abidjan, Freetown or Conakry before and after the theatre group had passed. Their work has confirmed, that the majority of the people who watched the play is now convinced that the chimpanzees really have to be protected. On the other hand and just as important, we found out that from now on the chimpanzee will be a totem for many of you and sometimes even for whole villages. Also, some of the poachers and planters seems to have become aware of these problems and respect the life of chimpanzees when they meet them in the forest or in their fields.



*The team of sociologists led by T. Winnebah of the University of Njalla in Freetown (Sierra Leone) at work around the Gola Forest*

These reactions encourage us to continue our projects! This proves in fact that the films and the theatre helped to make the life of the chimpanzees

known, because very few people have the privilege to personally observe these animals in their forest.

Photos: Thomas Winnebah

## WCF AND ITS PROJECTS...

Ilka Herbinger

### The theatre company “Taïbou” performs “SOS Chimpanzees” in Guinée Forestière

In April 2006, Zoro Gone Bi Bertin and Yasmin Moebius from the WCF, accompanied by Bami Fampé from Guinée Ecologie, arrived in Guinée Forestière with the members of the theatre company “Taïbou” and its director Magassouba Aicha Deen. The play “SOS Chimpanzees”, which the group had performed in 2005 in the Fouta Djallon, was adapted for the situation in Guinée Forestière and very successfully performed. Almost 7000 people participated in the performances in 15 villages near the classified forests of Diéké, Bossou and Zياما as well as in the Mount Nimba Reserve. The discussions were very lively and made two things clear: on one hand, the chimpanzees in Guinea are protected by law, on the other hand, deforestation is a crisis for humans as well as for chimpanzees. The films and newsletter were also



Photos: Zoro Bertin, Goné Bi

very much appreciated. People, open to learn about the life and the behaviour of the chimpanzees in their forest, expressed the wish that we return regularly to their region.

THANK YOU all for this support!

*The company Taïbou and its audience in Guinée Forestière.*

### A special day in the life of 120 pupils of Soubré, Petit Tiémé and Wonséaly in Ivory Coast

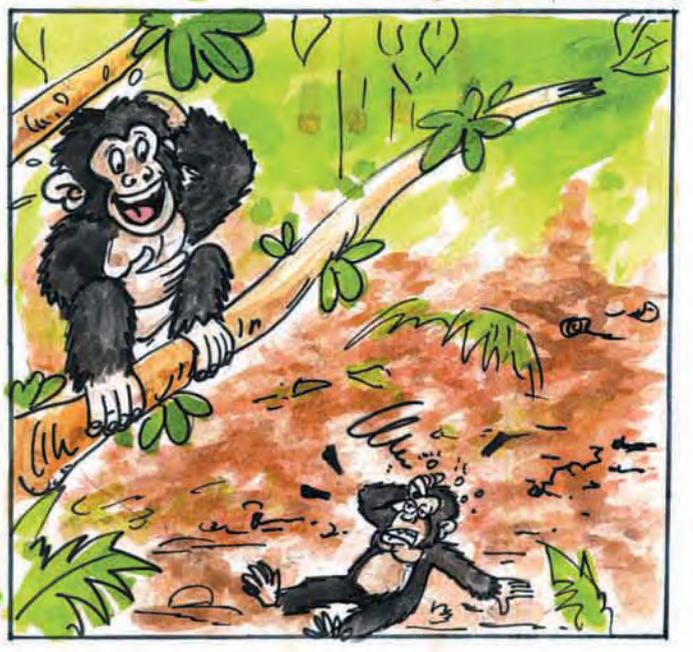
This special day, 21 November 2006, was organized by Mr. Hilaire Guilahoux, the Unit Coordinator for the environmental and school exchange projects, and the Director of WCF in Africa, Ilka Herbinger. In the presence of the authorities of the Taï National Park and from Soubré, all the objects made by German pupils for their schoolmates in Ivory Coast were officially handed over. Started in 2005, this project linking a German school with schools in Ivory Coast (see n° 4, page 12), was continued in 2006. The exchange of ideas, documentation and artisanal objects between the African and European pupils is symbolic of the need for understanding and tolerance between the nations. A big THANK YOU to all the participants for this good example!



*Activities, including the visit of an Ivorian hospital and the presentation of traditional clothes, during the school exchange day in Soubré.*



Photos: Ilka Herbinger



I've told you a hundred times not to scratch yourself with both hands at the same time!

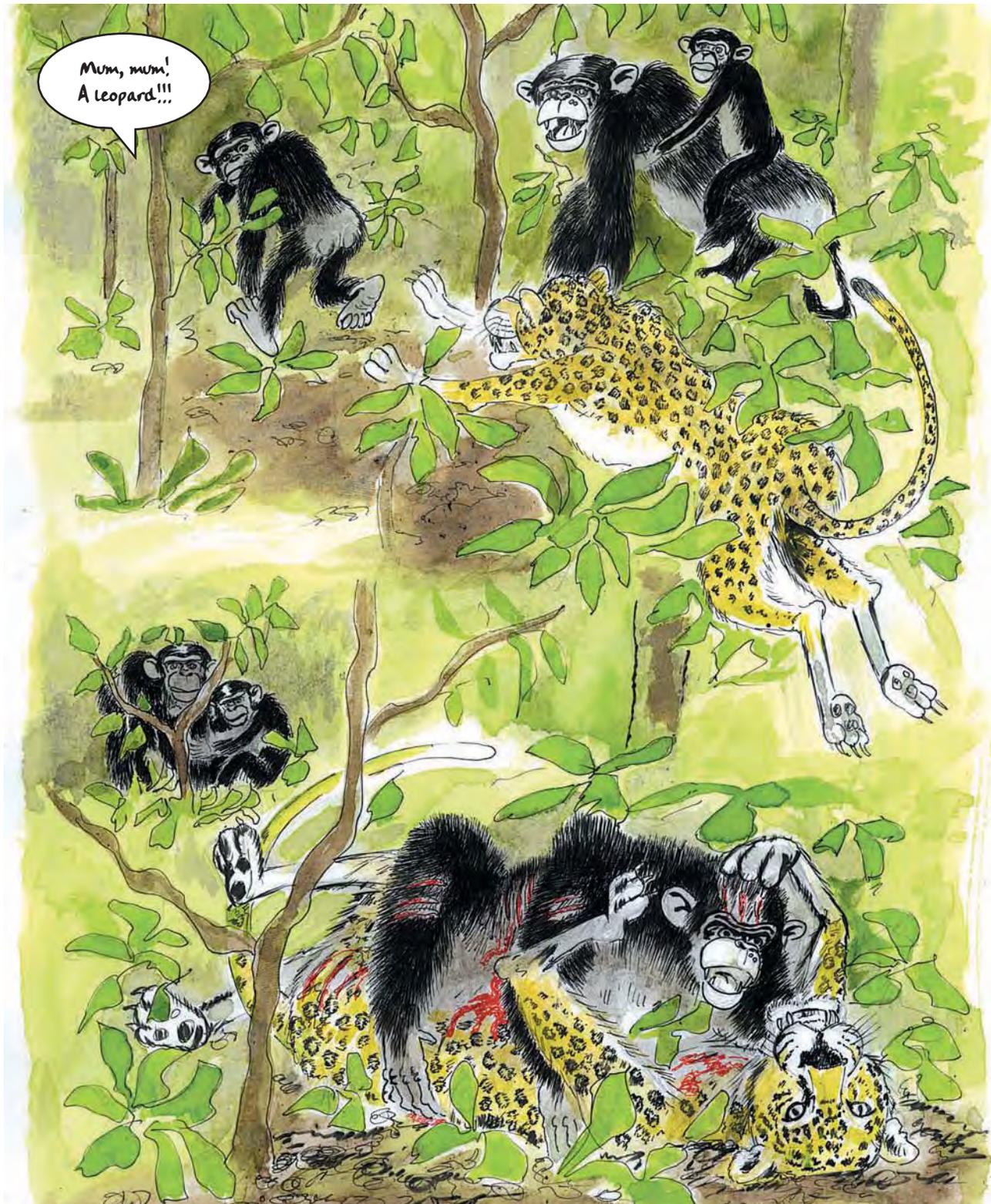
## ELLA – A FAMILY HISTORY (3 AND END)

### THE LEOPARD ATTACK

Hedwige Boesch

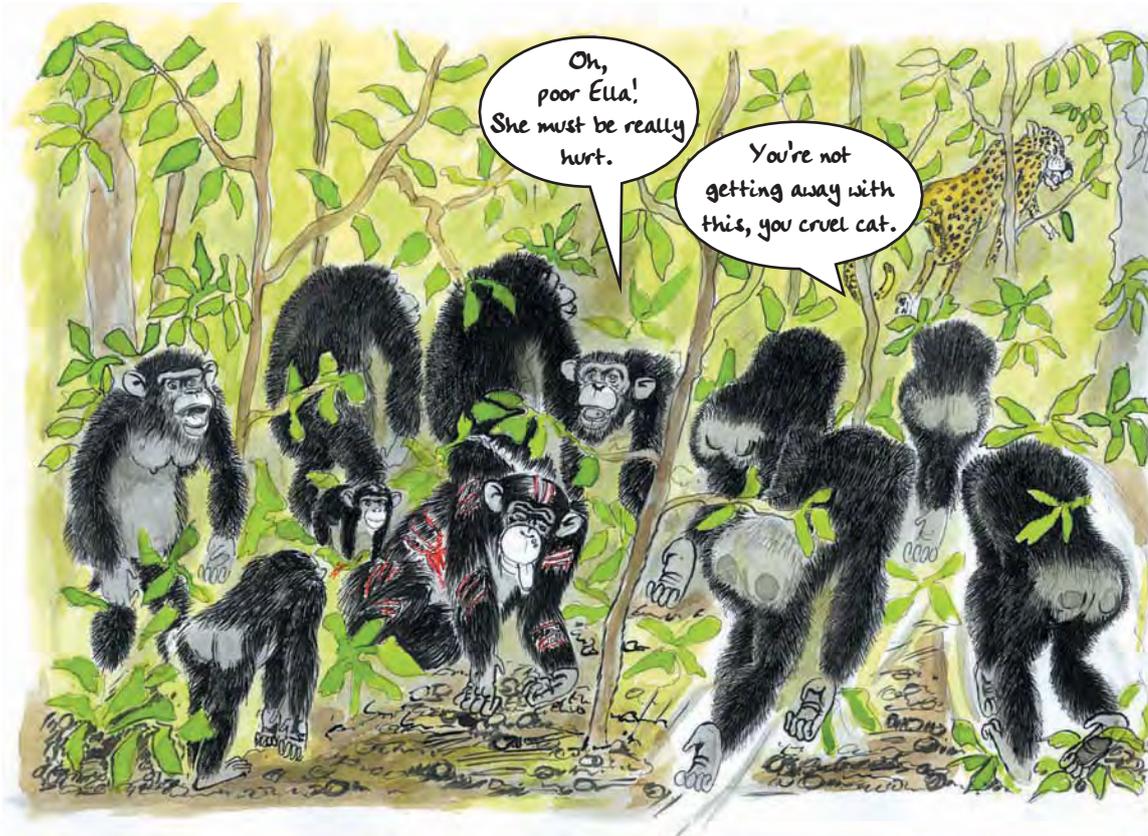


*January 1990: Ella has succeeded! Her son Kendo is the boss. Fitz, his second, is steadily at his side. Gérald, the youngster, often joins them and the three of them make a real clan together with Ella, the matriarch, and her allied friends Fanny, Ricci, Gala as well as their children.*

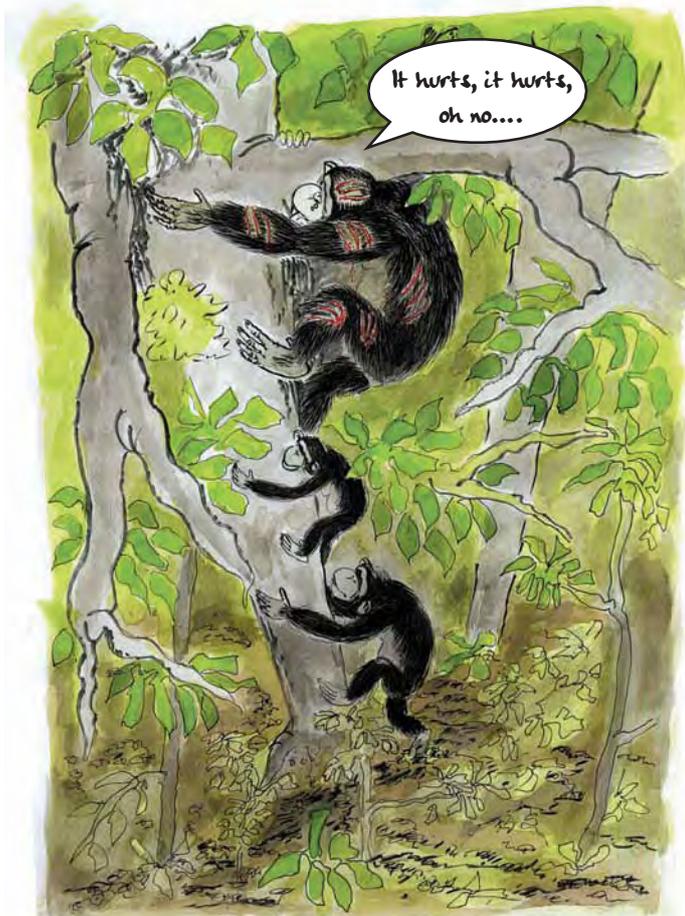


Ella is on a walk alone with Gérald and her youngest baby, when suddenly a leopard leaps towards Gérald. Without hesitating, Ella hands the baby to Gérald and launches herself at the leopard, screaming with terror as they tumble in deadly combat. While Ella grapples with the leopard, Gérald and the baby retreat to the safety of a tree.

## ELLA – THE LEOPARD ATTACK



All the chimpanzees nearby give violent cries. Ondine, Salomé, Kiri and Goma come running with howling. Kendo, Fitz, Brutus and the others run at the double after the leopard who flees as fast as he can because, wounded, he couldn't hunt anymore.



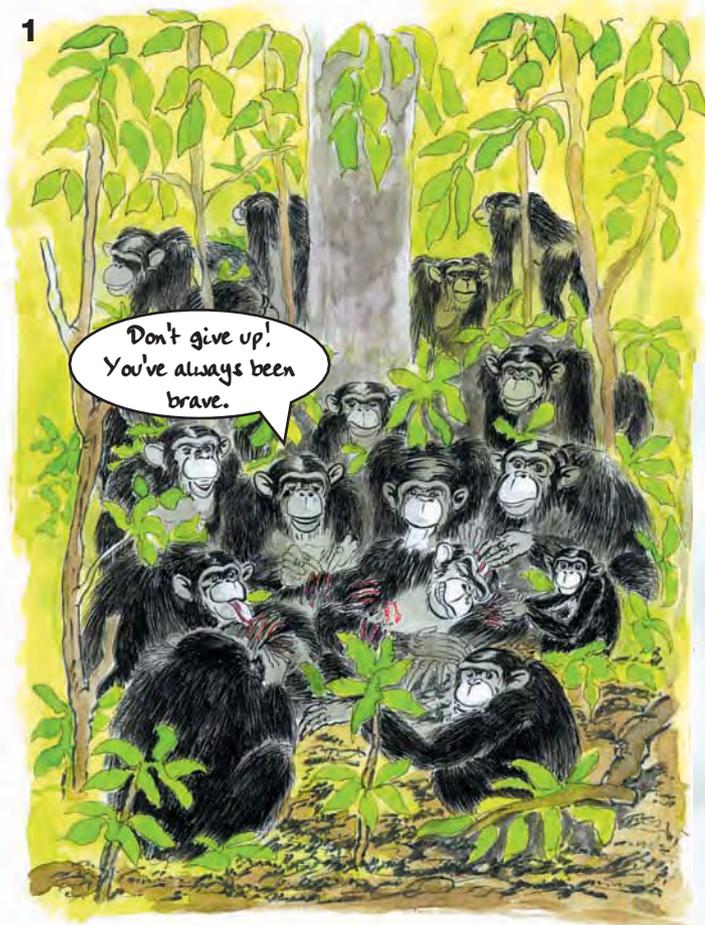
Ella, bleeding heavily and very weak, takes shelter in a tree with her two little ones, who are still in shock but – thanks to mum – alive.



Kendo and Fitz rejoin their mother. They wipe her wounds, lick off the blood and clean her injuries.

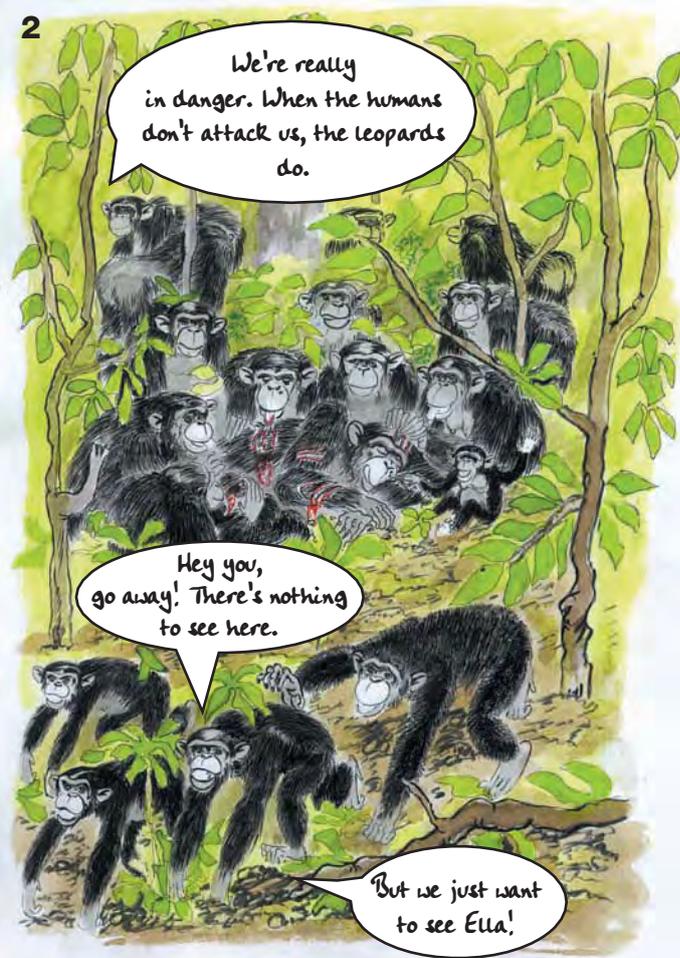
## ELLA – THE LEOPARD ATTACK

1

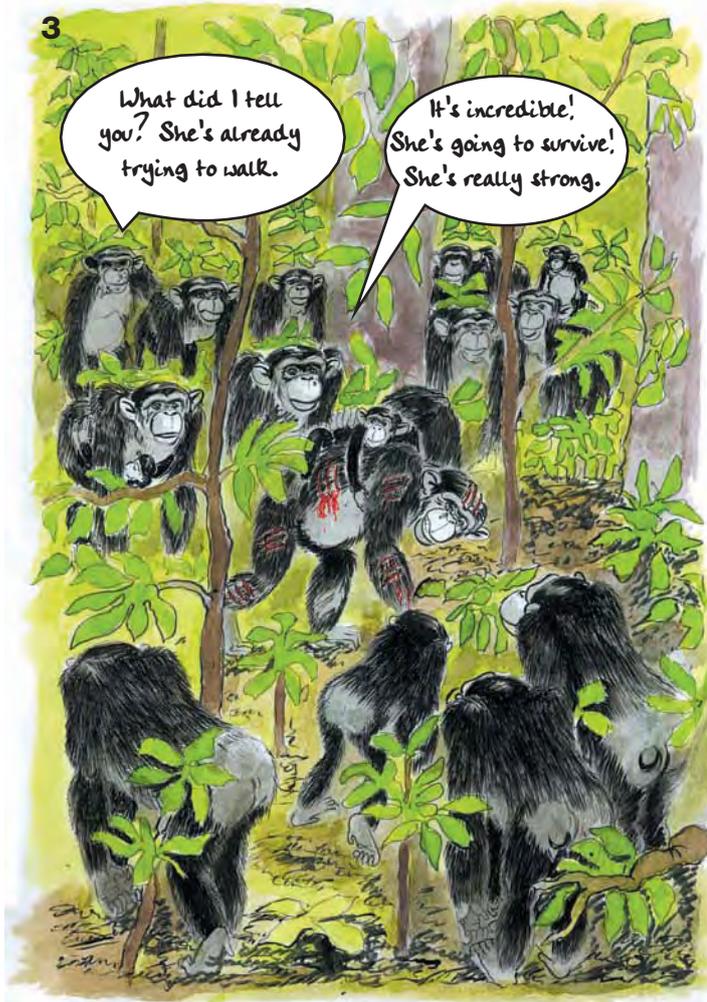


Ella climbs down to the ground where she is surrounded by about 15 chimpanzees who lick her numerous wounds: on her chest, in her face, on her neck, her arms, her hands, her feet and on her back. They delicately clean away the dirt making little hou-hous... The males keep guard and scrutinize the undergrowth.

2



3



After 3 hours Ella tries to walk again... Carefully, she moves forward, but without using her left arm. Despite her suffering she carries her baby, who gives little moans to get on her back. The whole group follows her.

Kendo keeps watch to see that his mother is not jostled by the others taking care of her. He chases away some youngsters.

## ELLA – THE LEOPARD ATTACK



Because she is too tired, she stops. The group waits for her, tending her wounds again and keeping watch over her all day long.

Ella will survive her injuries. The history of this family continues for many more years. Kendo stays the boss for 2 years. After that, clever as he is, he cedes power almost without a fight to his brother Fitz who has now more “punch”. Like this, the power stays in the family! Unfortunately and despite his energy, Fitz doesn't survive long. He is taken by an illness, and then it's Macho, old and experienced, but still in form, who has his “come-back” and takes command of the group again.

### *Information:*

It's very rare in animals that wounded are cared. The behaviour of the Tai chimpanzees is absolutely remarkable.

- The care consists mainly of cleaning the injuries and licking running blood.
- If an individual has died as a result of its injuries, the chimpanzee don't clean them, but keep guard over the corpse, as we saw in the case of Tina who was killed by a leopard (see n° 3, pages 9–11). This marks the beginning of the comprehension of death.

# THE WCF AND ITS PROJECTS...

Ilka Herbinge

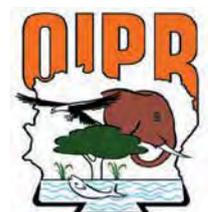
## The "House of Nature" in the Banco National Park

The WCF, in collaboration with the OIPR, has undertaken to renovate the "Maison de la Nature" ("House of Nature") and many international researchers helped to realize a first exhibition.

Among the attractions are 17 posters on different subjects, such as elephants, primates, bats, reptiles, birds, the National Parks of Ivory Coast, bush meat and its dangers etc. On a TV screen interested people can also watch great films about the nature and discover animal sounds. There is also a "nature path" in the park, where visitors can identify with the researchers and dedicate themselves to exciting observations. One can even crack nuts and fish ants just like the chimpanzees! Several guides are at disposal for the curious to help, inform and monitor during the tour and the activities. Come one and all to Banco and bring your friends!



The Nature Centre in the Banco National Parc in Abidjan with its posters and interactive workshops.



Office Ivoirien des Parcs et Réserves, Management of the protected areas in Ivory Coast

Photos: Ilka Herbinge

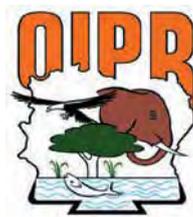


## THE TAMTAM ...

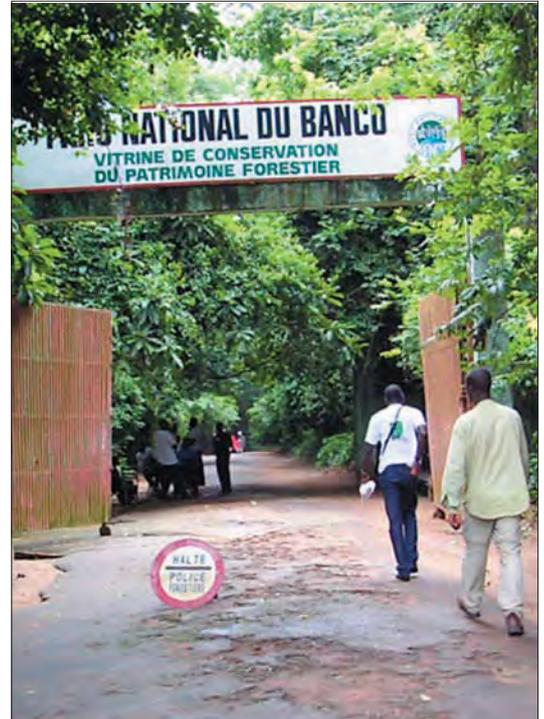


### Bio-monitoring in the Banco National Park near Abidjan, Ivory Coast (see also n° 5, page 8)

The WCF, with approval of the OIPR, employs guides who have already gained first results: Their faunal survey shows that there is a group of more than 10 chimpanzees surviving in this small national park in the middle of the biggest city in Ivory Coast! This is a near-miracle and we want to do everything we can to ensure that this continues to be a reality. Nevertheless, there are many attacks against the park, both against the plants and the surviving animals. The Banco National Park is a precious jewel at the disposal of all the city dwellers who love nature. And there's a special attraction awaiting them: the House of Nature!



*Chimpanzee night nests in the Banco National Park*



*Main entrance of the Banco National Park in Abidjan, Ivory Coast.*



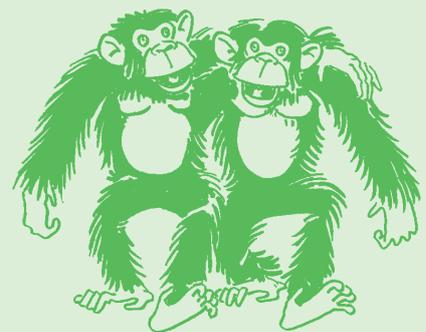
Hedwige Boesch, the Director of WCF Europe has won the second prize of the company "Yves Rocher" in Switzerland for her commitment for the conservation of the chimpanzees in their natural environment, the tropical forest. The prize money, the sum of CHF 5.000 (more than 2 million CFA), she donated to the projects of WCF.

The prize money, the sum of CHF 5.000 (more than 2 million CFA), she donated to the projects of WCF.



On the occasion of its 150th anniversary, the "Zürcher Tierschutz" (Zurich animal protection society) organized a banquet in support of WCF. The remarkable result: 30.000 CHF (more than 12 million CFA) were provided for our projects: this in addition to the support already delivered by this organisation over the past 4 years. A huge THANK YOU to our Swiss friends!

### Ongoing



- First visitors in the "Maison de la Nature"
- News from the research project in the Taï National Park in Ivory Coast
- What's going on in the Cavally and Goin-Débé classified forests?
- What about the projects carried out by the villagers?
- and, luckily, more theatre!