

RHODESIA'S Wankie National Park is one of the world's truly great wild-life sanctuaries. Covering 13 000 square kilometres (larger than the State of Connecticut), in the north-west of the country, it contains some of the largest remaining concentrations of wild life on the African continent.

Elephants are numbered in their thousands here, even individual herds comprising several hundred animals. This has led the world's most-viewed wild-life television programme to describe Wankie as "Tusker Territory".

But it is the total appeal of this great national park that has won it such a reputation, not only among visitors, but with zoologists and wild-life experts. For here is a vast, protected wild-life system, from the elephants, rhino and large antelope, to the smallest animal. It is a glimpse of the richness and diversity of Nature, as it must have been when man was a co-existor, not a dominator.

Blended into this wild kingdom are three camps, all of which offer complete facilities for the visitor. From these camps, 480 kilometres of game-viewing roads extend into the surrounding country. Along some of these roads, waterholes have been created to provide water in the dry season for the animals, and at some, shaded game-viewing platforms have been erected. Here visitors may leave their cars

or mini-buses to sit and watch, from an ideal, safe vantage point, herds of different animals come to drink.

Moonlight viewing from these platforms is an unforgettable experience.

The accessibility of Wankie National Park has undoubtedly contributed to its world-wide reputation in an age when time is all-important. Salisbury, the capital, is only a few hours away by regular, scheduled air service, and the main Bulawayo-Victoria Falls highway runs near the eastern boundary of the park, with access roads to each of the three camps. In addition to the accommodation facilities within the park, the services of experienced tour operators are available for gameviewing drives.

The rise in tourist facilities which has taken place to cope with the increasing number of visitors to Wankie has not been allowed to spoil the essential character of the national park. Camps are of a limited size, and the number of vehicles allowed is controlled. Each visitor can thus enjoy the individual experience of seeing an elephant cow guiding her calf to water, a bambi-like steenbok peering through the grass at the roadside, the see-saw canter of giraffe across the veld, a pride of lion on a kill—in short, untamed Africa.



Air Rhodesia, the national airline, operates regular scheduled services to Wankie National Park Airport. These services connect directly with Victoria Falls, Kariba and Salisbury, with convenient connections with the remainder of the Air Rhodesia system.



Above: From the terrace of the Southern Sun Safari Lodge, a luxury hotel on the boundary of the Wankie National Park, near Main Camp, the visitor may view game at the water-hole 180 metres away.

Below: A wide range of accommodation is offered at Main Camp, from self-contained thatched lodges (below) complete with the services of a servant, to a camping and caravan park.

Main Camp is the largest of the park's three camps, and the headquarters of the Regional Warden. Below is part of the barlounge, contained in a thatched complex that also includes a restaurant and store, where photographic film, liquor and curios may be purchased. Near Main Camp are some of Wankle's most famous water-holes, on a network of game-viewing drives that extends south and west. Moonlight trips to game-viewing platforms at Nyamandhlovu water-hole are organised around the period of full moon if the weather is clear—these are the highlight of any visit to Wankle National Park. Main Camp is open all year round.

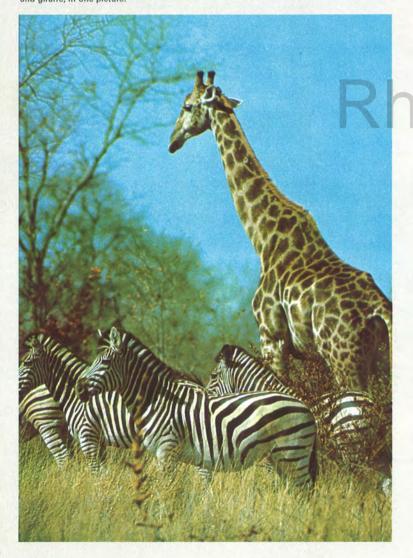






Above: Bird life in Wankie is both rich and prolific, from the large eagles and vultures, to the yellow hornbills (above), which at the camps are a great favourite with visitors.

Below: Many animals congregate together, particularly at water-holes, and many visitors are lucky enough to capture two species, such as these zebra and giraffe, in one picture.



Right: Wankie's game-viewing platforms are justly famous for the opportunity they afford the visitor to view large numbers of animals at close quarters. Within the park, tour operators offer transport on game-viewing drives in open-roofed mini-buses. These include the platforms in their tours.



Above: In addition to the big game, there are opportunities in Wankie to see the smaller species of animal, such as this steenbok, which all play their part in the complicated ecological pattern of this great national park.



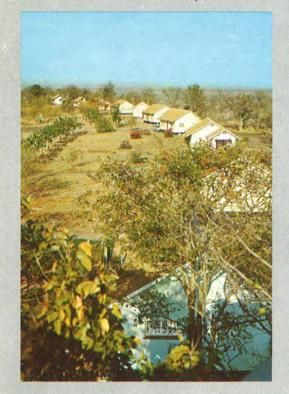
Below: Huge herds of African buffalo are often seen in the park. Deceptively docile in appearance, they are, in fact, among the most dangerous of wild animals.

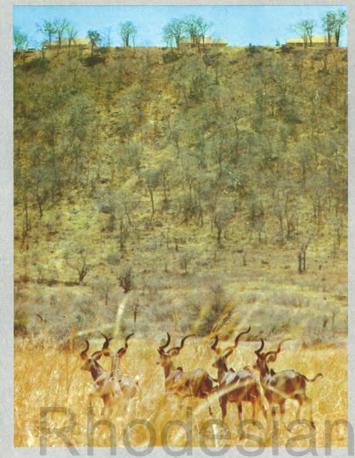


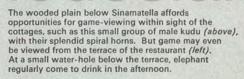
Left: At most waterholes in the park, crocodiles may either be seen basking in the sun, or partly submerged in the water.



Sinamatella Camp occupies a commanding position on a small plateau. The completely self-contained cottage accommodation (below) is arranged to provide uninterrupted views over the plain, 55 metres below. Established in 1966, Sinamatella is the newest camp in the park, but a large network of game-viewing drives has already been established.









Above: At Sinamatella a liquor-licensed restaurant provides, as at the other camps, a full service for visitors. There is also a small store, providing photographic film, liquor and curios.



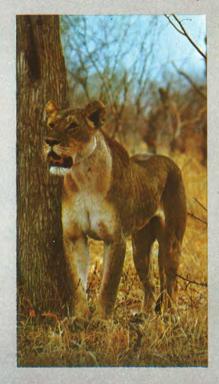


Nantwich Lodges (above) are 11 km west of Robins Camp, overlooking a small dam where animals come to drink each evening. Visitors may use the facilities at Robins Camp, the road from the lodges to the camp being open at night. The lodges are completely self-contained.

Robins Camp (left) is the northernmost camp in the park, being only
120 km south of the Victoria Falls.
As at the other camps there is a
restaurant serving breakfast, lunch
and dinner, and a bar service is
available. A store supplies
photographic film, liquor, curios and
general foodstuffs. There is also a
caravan and camping site. Robins
Camp and Nantwich Lodges are
closed during the rainy season
(November to May inclusive).



Below: The Robins Camp area is particularly noted for its large population of lion. This fine study of a lioness, watching a herd of antelope, was photographed only a few miles from the camp.



Left: Impala, although found all over Wankie, are particularly numerous around Robins Camp, and this probably accounts, in part, for the many lion found here. These graceful antelope congregate in small herds, and are noted for their prodigious leaps when alarmed. The males have finely formed, lyre-shaped horns.



Above: The magnificent sable antelope, Rhodesia's national animal, may be seen within the park, and are always a superb subject for the amateur photographer.

Right: The handsome waterbuck is just one of many species of antelope to be seen in the Wankie National Park.

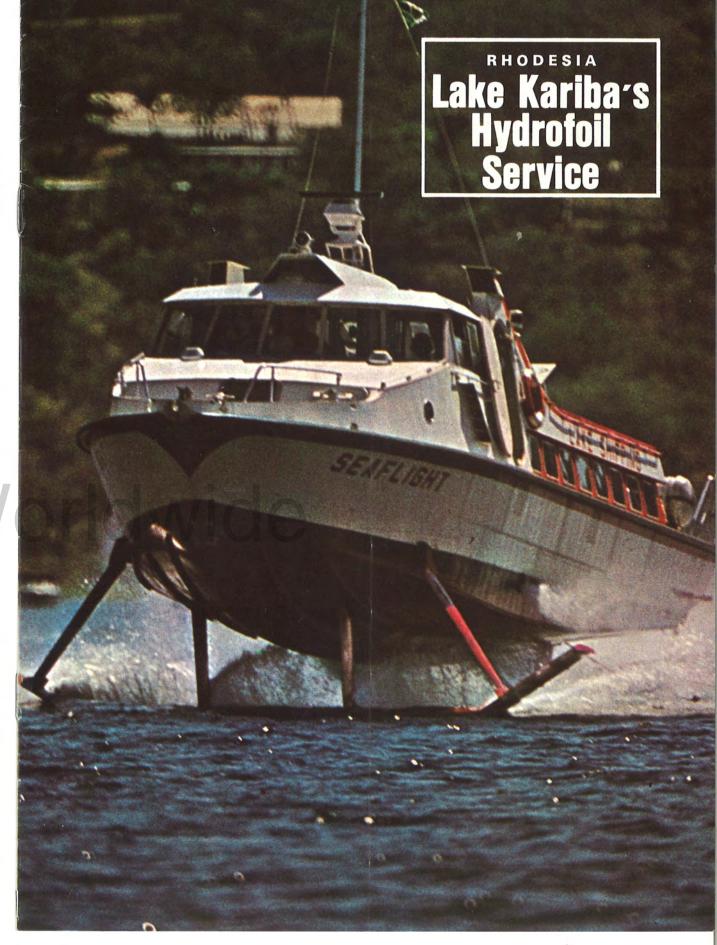
Below: A mud bath is an elephant's idea of bliss, for as well as depositing a cooling layer on its skin, the crust formed when it dries prevents insects from biting. It also serves to deepen the waterhole itself, for over the years many tons of mud are removed. Thus, the elephants' mud bath benefits all the animals that depend on the waterhole, and provides a fascinating spectacle for the visitor.





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The airy and spacious main cabin of the Sea Flight provides armchair comfort for 54 passengers, and the large windows allow everyone a view of the lakeside scenery.

AKE KARIBA, the largest manmade lake in the world, now boasts the most sophisticated form of high-speed water transport in Africa: the Lake Shipping Company's hydrofoil Sea Flight.

The hydrofoil is an unusual vessel: it has a conventional hull on which it rides at speeds below 36 km/h; above this speed, up to its cruising level of 64 km/h, the hull is lifted clear of the water on huge, wing-like foils at the bow and stern. With the water resistance of the large hull removed, the effect of the waves on the vessel are almost completely eliminated, resulting in a smooth and comfortable passage across the lake.

In addition to the wing-like foils on which the Sea Flight rides, there are other similarities between an aircraft and the hydrofoil. It is, for its size, a very light vessel, weighing only 25 tons, and is constructed entirely of aluminium. Within its main cabin are 54 aircraft-type seats which provide superior comfort for the passengers, and rows of large windows on each side allow everyone a panoramic view of the passing scenery.

Forward of the main cabin is an inside viewing deck where passengers may look through the large windows on the bridge, and watch the helmsman at the wheel. Passengers are not allowed on the outside deck of

the hydrofoil while it is moving. The dangers of being swept overboard by the 64 km/h wind the forward speed of the vessel produces are obvious.

During the passage the captain invites passengers to come up to the bridge to see how the hydrofoil is operated. It is typical of the friendly service the Lake Shipping Company provides, and is the highlight of the trip for many passengers, especially the children. The view of the lake rushing past from the bridge, which is three metres above the surface of the water, is one that sends most visitors searching for their cameras.

Below the bridge is a capacious toilet with hand wash basin. The

Circular tourist route

With the introduction of the Sea Flight hydrofoil service, which traverses the length of Lake Kariba on the longest scheduled hydrofoil service in the world, a complete, circular, round-Rhodesia tourist route is now available to the visitor.

Motorists arriving from South Africa at Beitbridge may commence their circular route by driving north-east (to the Zimbabwe Ruins, Salisbury and Kariba) or north-west (to Bulawayo, Wankie National Park and the Victoria Falls), linking up by travelling west or east on the hydrofoil service.

As can be seen from the maps, before the introduction of the hydrofoil service a motorist who had visited the Victoria Falls and who also intended to travel to Salisbury and Kariba found it necessary to return to Bulawayo over 443 km of road he had already traversed, then drive 442 km to Salisbury and a further 367 km to Kariba over a road he would need to follow again on his return to South Africa.

With the completion of this new tourist circle he can now drive 159 km south of Victoria Falls, take the hydrofoil service and be in Kariba the same day, or stop over at one of the lakeside resorts for a day or two. This effects a saving in road travel of over 1 300 km. And not only is the trip along the lake a unique experience, it relieves the motorist of a day behind the wheel.

The motorist's car is transported on a car ferry, which reaches Kariba the morning after the Sea Flight.

Thus a complete round-Rhodesia tour, including Rhodesia's Eastern Highlands, can now be made by the motorist, involving only 2 300 km of road travel.

Travellers who are flying by Air Rhodesia may also utilise the hydrofoil service by link-up services with the Sea Flight arranged from airports at Kariba, Wankie and Victoria Falls by tour operators.

