

Project Update: June 2016

With the end of the otherwise extremely poor rainy season this year, an intense shrivelling up of rhino browse plants has started earlier than usual. Parched grass blankets the landscape with natural waterholes drying out prematurely in May-June. Roads and river crossings began to be cleared hence offering easier access. Poaching is on the decline due to African Parks Malawi's hands-on law enforcement operations. Sighting frequency of rhinos has increased due to the thickets opening up. I started to use censor beam cameras at salt licks, frequently used trails and major waterholes. Occasional VHF scans from helicopter complements ground data. The two black rhino babies born last year have grown greatly and the female calf treated of a serious snare injury last August has recovered fully. In July a major rhino darting operation will commence during which old transmitters will be replaced. The research constituent is in good progress.

