

Welcome to Club Zeb



# Table of Contents

How our story begins ..... **3**

Kenya..... **4-9**

Tanzania ..... **10-15**

Mozambique..... **16-21**

Zambia..... **22-27**

Zimbabwe..... **28-33**

Botswana ..... **34-39**

Namibia..... **40-45**

South Africa..... **46-51**

Seychelles ..... **52-57**

Mauritius..... **58-63**

About the author ..... **64-65**

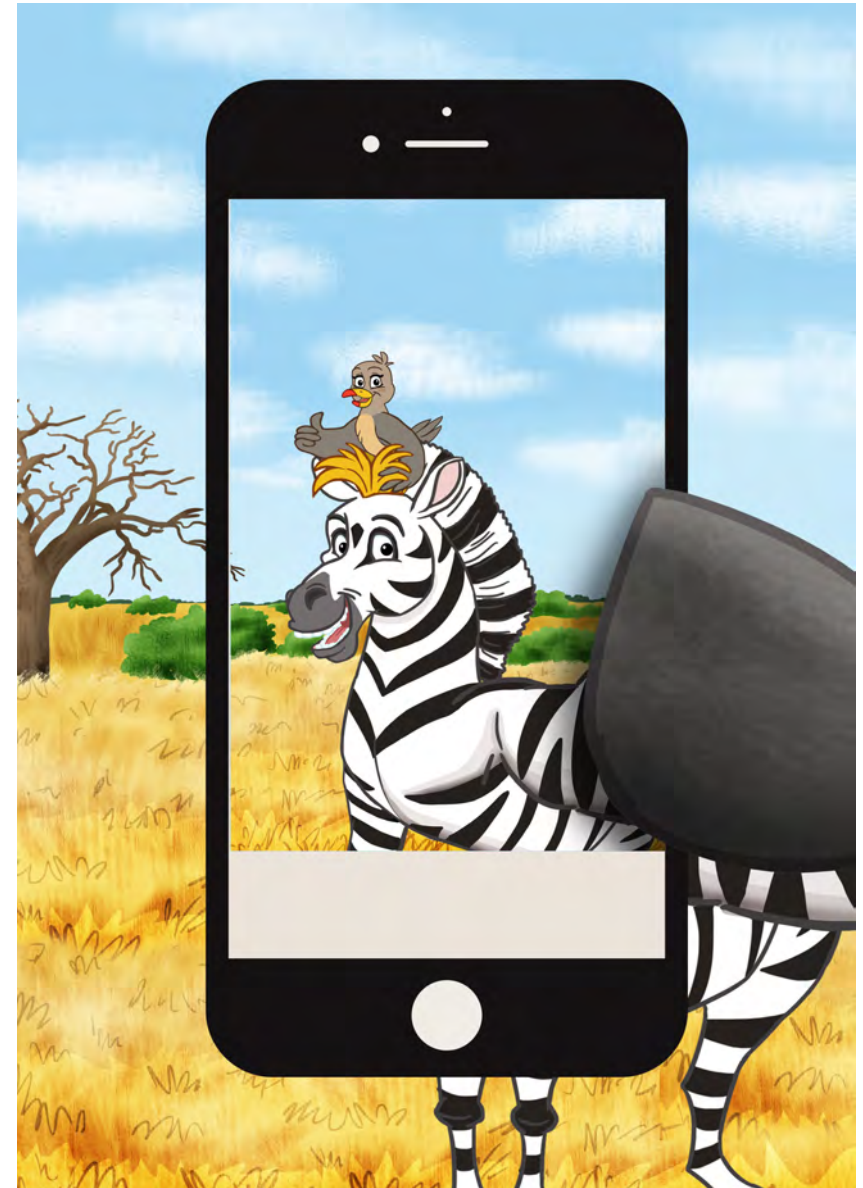
## How our story begins

Hey kids! My name is Zebediah Zebra – you can call me Zeb, for short! That’s my best friend Oki Oxpecker. Can you see us taking a “selfari” – that means a selfie on safari!

Oki and I have been on many exciting adventures throughout Africa and we want to tell you all about them.

While sightseeing, we met so many friends along the way. In every country we visited, we made a friend who told us about their country and showed us around.

This is the tale of our safari, and we hope you enjoy visiting all the pages provided by our safari friends.







# Zeb & Oki's Adventures in Kenya



*Kenya was the first country that Zeb visited on safari! He looked around the country with Oki Oxpecker. Now Oki writes about their trip, including their hot air balloon ride over the Maasai Mara National Reserve!*

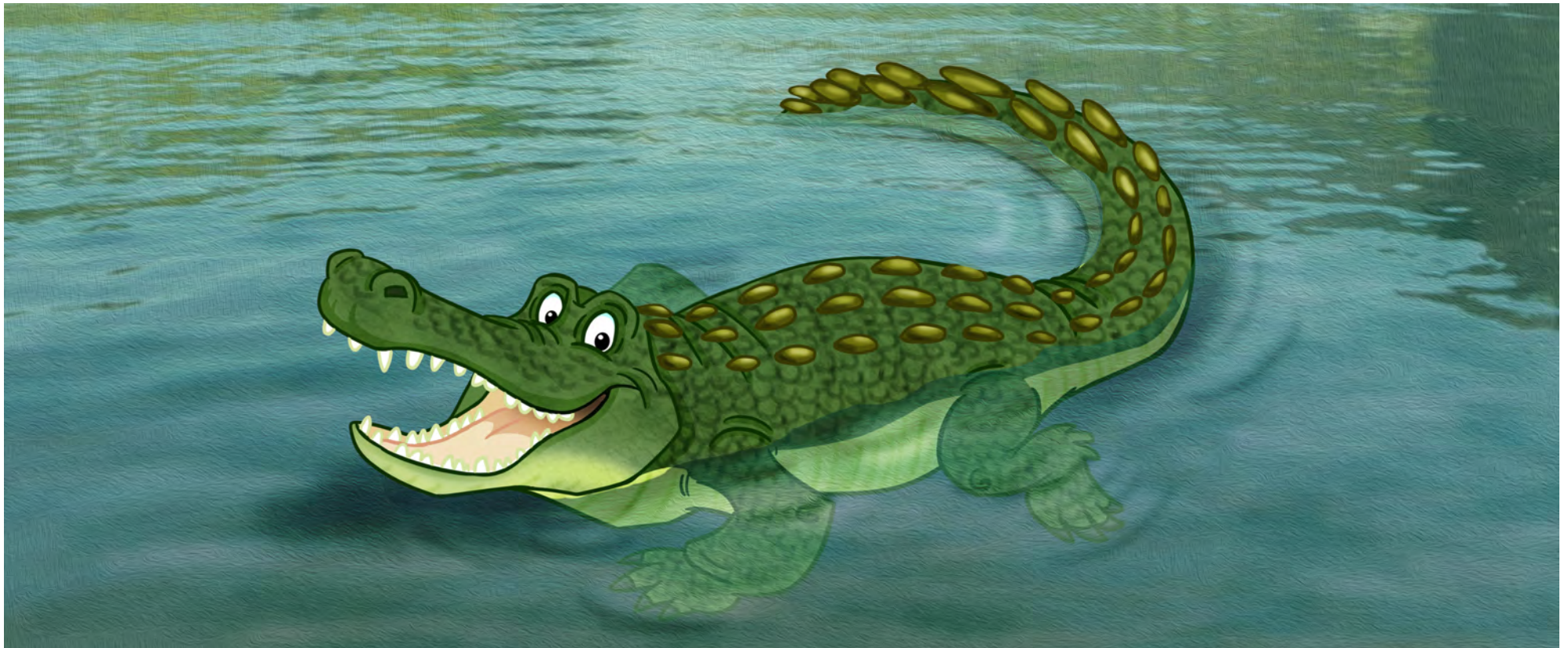
'Oki' everyone!

“Jambo”! That’s hello in Swahili – a language spoken in Kenya. My name is Oki and I am an oxpecker.

My friend Zeb Zebra has asked me to write about our trip to Kenya, which happened last year. So I’m going to tell you about a few of our favourite areas and show you some pictures. I really hope you’ll like them!

We’ll begin with the Maasai Mara National Reserve. This area is famous for the Great Migration! Huge herds of wildebeest, zebra, and two types of gazelle move through the area in search of food, from July until October!

Seeing the Great Migration is one of many things you can do in the reserve. You can watch the herds while you are on a game drive, or you can take a hot air balloon ride and have a look from the skies!



That's what Zeb and I did. The herds' crossing of a river called the River Mara is spectacular! When crossing the River Mara, an enormous crocodile with huge teeth came at me and Zeb, and we ran away... all the way to Amboseli National Park!

Amboseli is another of our favourite areas of Kenya. It has lots of different features – plains, woods, and swamps. The swamps provide water for wildlife all year round, so there is plenty to see here.

In fact, Amboseli is well worth a visit if you love elephants!

That's because you can get very close to the gentle giants, which is something Zeb and I really enjoyed.

Other activities available in Amboseli are game drives, biking, and horse riding!



Third on the list of favourite areas is the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, which is great for game drives, as well as visits to local villages to find out how the people live. There are plains, wetlands, hills, and the only forest in Kenya, which is called Ngare Ndare. And there's also the majestic mountain called Mount Kenya! Of course, when you have so many different types of scenery within an area, you have lots of different types of wildlife.



Something else I love about Lewa is a group called the Northern Specialty Species.

There are five members of this group, and one of them is the Somali ostrich. The others are Grevy's zebra, reticulated giraffe, beisa oryx, and gerenuk.



The Samburu National Reserve is the fourth favourite area. Zeb and I love this reserve because, as well as containing a wonderful range of wildlife, it is home to the Samburu people.

The Samburu people have lived in the reserve for about 500 years. They herd cattle, sheep, goats, and camels, and they wear very colourful clothes and jewellery. When they dance, they make a circle and jump as high as possible off the ground!

Finally, Zeb and I really like Laikipia! This area has lots of different features, so there's all sorts of wildlife. You can explore Laikipia in many ways – game drives, bike rides, horse rides, and camel rides!

Best of all, though, you can visit a couple of wildlife sanctuaries – the Rhino Sanctuary and the Sweetwaters Chimpanzee Sanctuary. It makes me happy to see animals being so well looked after!

I hope you've enjoyed my story about Kenya. If you're going on safari here soon, I wish you a very happy safari!





'Wilay' everyone!

## Zeb & Oki's Adventures in Tanzania



*After Zeb and Oki had explored Kenya, they travelled to Tanzania and met Wilay Wildebeest! Wilay showed them lots of exciting sights, such as the huge Ngorongoro Crater that formed after a volcano erupted. Now he tells you some of the highlights.*

“Habari” (hello in Swahili)! I am Wilay and I’m a wildebeest. Now, my friend Zeb Zebra has asked me to tell you a few things about the wonderful country of Tanzania. I met Zeb and his friend Oki Oxpecker last October, in a park called the Serengeti. The Serengeti is just one of the areas on a route taken by hundreds of thousands of wildebeest, and zebra, and gazelles, every year. This route is called the Great Migration. We migrate to find food. It’s very exciting to see.

The Serengeti really is special. It has plenty of plains – big grassy areas where we herbivores like to graze. A herbivore is an animal that eats plants, in case you were wondering. In some places, there are hills too – and some of these have rocks on top. And in the north, there are two rivers and some forests.

If you are hoping to see a lot of wildlife, the Serengeti is an excellent choice. As well as all the Great Migration herbivores, there are lots of big cats, such as lion, leopard, and cheetah. There are crocodile in the rivers and monkey in the forest. And there are loads of birds. You can enjoy rides out to see all these species, and some camps offer activities especially for children. Arts and crafts, films, games... lots of fun for you all.

Picture time! After I had shown Zeb and Oki the Serengeti, we moved east to the Ngorongoro Conservation Area. When you say “Ngorongoro”, you leave out the “N” and the “n” – “Gorogoro”. The Ngorongoro is a volcano, but don’t worry – it won’t blow up while you’re here. The last time it erupted was over two million years ago, and scientists don’t expect it to go up in smoke again for a very long time. When it last erupted, it blew its top off. BOOM!



After the explosion, an enormous dent was left on the top. This dent is in the shape of a bowl and is called a crater. Today the crater contains a lot of water and is very popular with thirsty wildlife.

There are woodlands too, so, just as in the Serengeti, you can go on a game drive and you are sure to see a massive amount of wildlife.

Some camps provide children's activities as well – nature walks around the rim of the volcano, for example. That's fun too.

We also had a pleasant few days in Lake Manyara National Park, another of my favourite areas. This park isn't as well known as the Serengeti and the Ngorongoro Crater, but to my mind it is well worth a visit. It's a pretty little place, with a lake, as you'd expect.

In fact, the lake makes up two-thirds of the park.

There are many fine sights in Lake Manyara. They include the Great Rift Valley escarpment. This is a very tall cliff that rises up over the edge of the water. I also like the flocks of pink flamingos feeding in the middle of the lake.



Well, it's picture time again now, and here's an unusual chap called a tree-climbing lion – another fine sight in Lake Manyara. Do you know, I was so surprised when I saw him that I broke wind. I thought Zeb and Oki would never stop laughing.

Our last stop on Old Wilay's Tanzania Tour was the Selous Game Reserve. I don't know whether any of you are keen on geography, but this park is some way south of the Serengeti, the Ngorongoro Crater, and Lake Manyara. It's enormous, and full of wildlife. Zeb, Oki, and I found that the Selous was a very watery place. It contains not only a big river called the Rufiji, but a lot of other rivers and streams too. You can go out on a boat and have fun spotting hippos and water birds.

On the subject of water birds, here's a picture of three friends we made while we were in the Selous. These birds are called pelicans. They live in the Rufiji river and they like to eat fish. Can you see the pouch under each beak?



The pelicans use this to catch fish, like a sort of basket. Well, that's all from me, for now. I hope you've enjoyed reading about my country – or just looking at the pictures, if that's what you prefer. Tanzania really is wonderful, and I'm sure you'll have a splendid safari if you decide to come here.







## Zeb & Oki's Adventures in Mozambique



*Mozambique was the third country that Zeb and Oki visited on safari. A giraffe called Jira took them to the sea! Now Jira writes about the happy times they had looking around two groups of islands.*

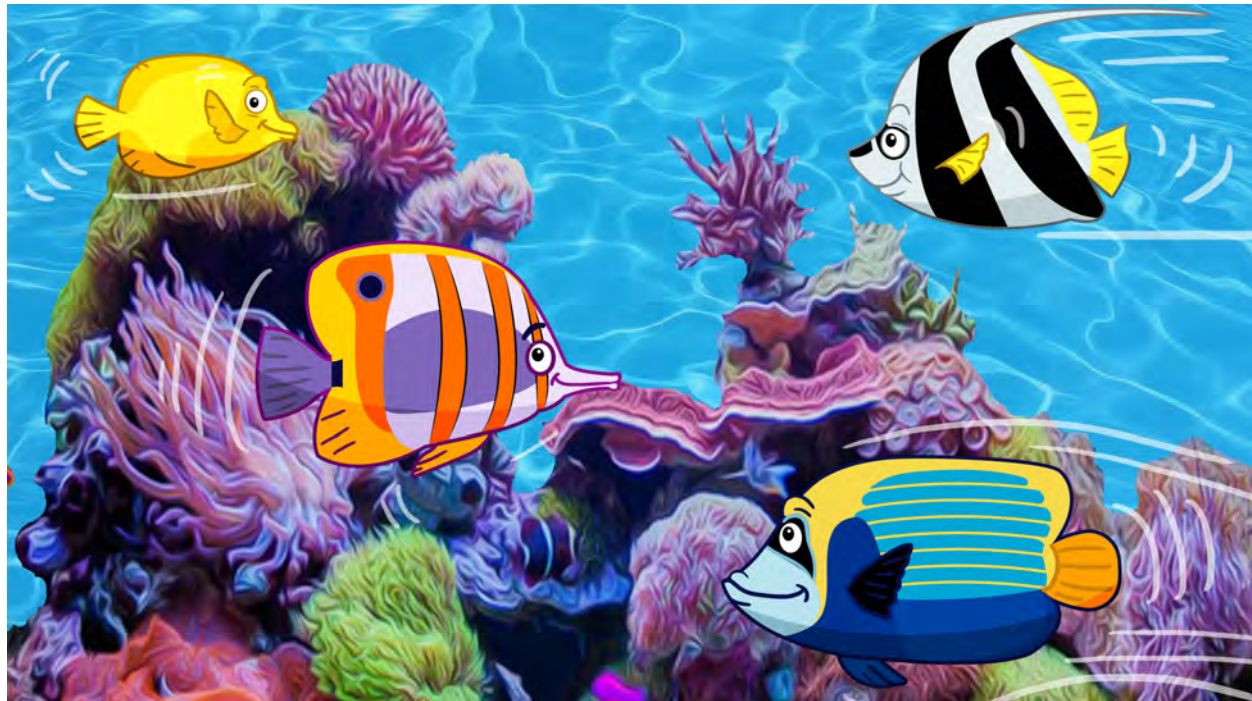
'Jira' everyone!

“Ola”, children – that’s “hello” in Portuguese! I am Jira, a giraffe from Mozambique.

I have been asked to write about my country for you, by my friend Zeb the Zebra. It is my pleasure to do this! Zeb and his friend Oki Oxpecker came to Mozambique last year, and I was happy to show them around!

I have two favourite areas of Mozambique, and both are out at sea. So I took Zeb and Oki to the seaside!

We began in Quirimbas Archipelago, which is known as “the Quirimbas”. An archipelago is a group of islands. This archipelago is situated off the northern coast of Mozambique. Zeb, Oki, and I had quite a long journey to get to the coast, but once we were there we found a lilo and we were able to row to the islands! You can see us rowing in the picture at the beginning of this chapter. It was fun!



Our journey from the coast to the Quirimbas was quite long too, but it was well worth it. The archipelago is beautiful! There are long stretches of white sands and clear blue waters. It is great fun simply to play on the beach, but you can also enjoy some sailing, fishing, diving, and snorkelling! The reefs around the island are full of colourful coral.

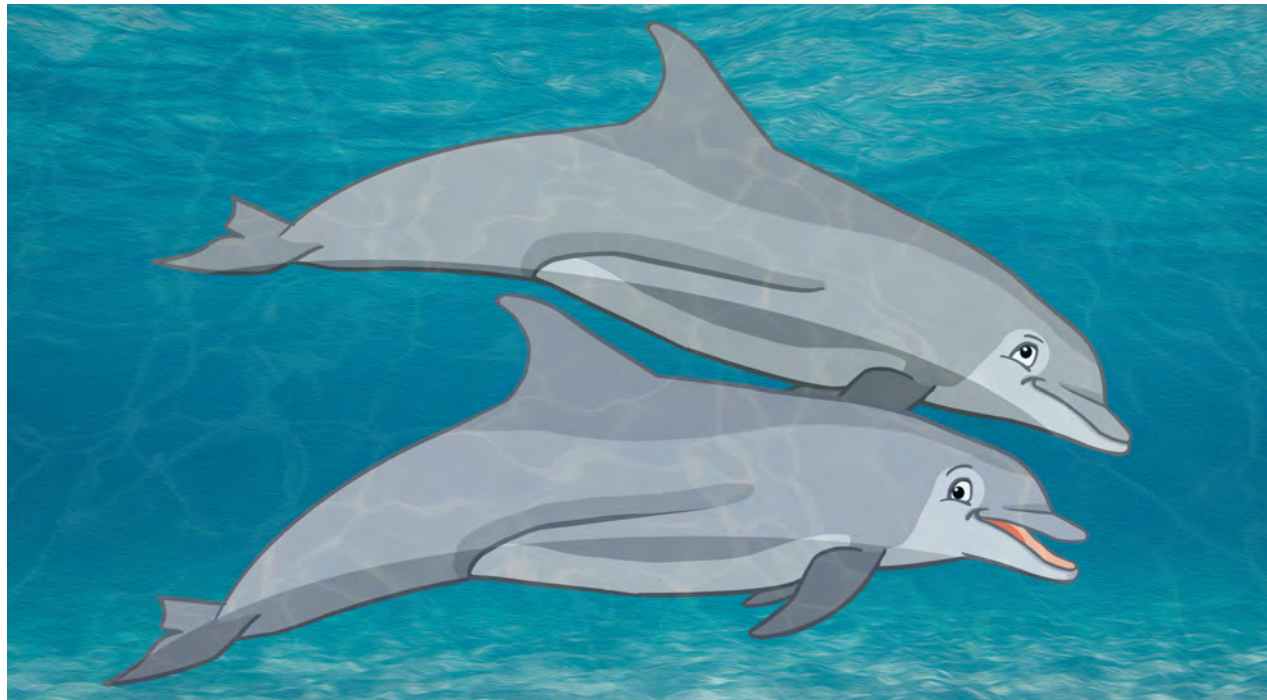
You can expect to see sea turtles too, as well as seahorses, sea cows, whales, dolphins, and hundreds of types of fish!

One day, Zeb, Oki, and I enjoyed an amazing sight! We were relaxing on one of our favourite beaches. Zeb was building sandcastles at the time, while Oki and I were talking about sea birds. There are a lot of sea birds here too! Anyway, suddenly we heard a loud splashing sound coming from the water. We looked up, and it was a huge humpback whale!



After all the excitement, we were sad to leave the Quirimbas. But we had plenty of fun at our next stop! That was Bazaruto Archipelago, which is located off the south coast of Mozambique. This too is a lovely group of islands! They have charming names, such as Benguerra, Santa Carolina, and Pansy Shell.

The activities you can enjoy on Bazaruto are similar to those available on the Quirimbas. Bazaruto has some gorgeous beaches, where you can relax and play. Its seas are full of life – all sorts of colourful fish, as well as seahorses, sea cows, whales, and dolphins. Zeb, Oki, and I loved looking out for dolphins from our lilo!



We all had such a wonderful time in the Quirimbas and Bazaruto. If you are thinking of going on holiday to the seaside, these archipelagos must be high on your list! You could also visit as part of a trip called a “bush-and-beach”.

This is when you go on safari first, and then you go to the sea!

Examples of a bush-and-beach are Tanzania-and-Quirimbas and South-Africa-and-Bazaruto.

Just imagine... a few days on safari, seeing lots of big cats, elephant, buffalo, and so on, followed by a few days at sea. Fabulous!

I do hope you have enjoyed reading about our adventures.





'Leila' everyone!

## Zeb & Oki's Adventures in Zambia



*Zambia is perfect for travellers who like the idea of going on a really wild safari! When Zeb and Oki arrived here, they met a leopard named Leila. Now Leila tells you about their trip around her country. It was pretty wild!*

“Shani” (hello in Bemba), kids! I’m Leila, a lady leopard from Zambia.

Last year, I met Zeb Zebra and Oki Oxpecker, while they were on safari in Zambia. They asked me to show them around the country, and now Zeb has suggested that I write about my favourite areas for you! I love talking about Zambia.

Unlike a lot of other countries where you can go on safari, Zambia offers you a really wild holiday! There are far fewer visitors and the camps where you can stay are very remote, so the experience is all about the wildlife. Zambia is the perfect place for adventurous families! You can even visit Victoria Falls, perhaps before or after your time on safari. Victoria Falls is the world’s largest waterfall! Zeb and Oki certainly enjoyed the wild feel of the country, once Zeb had stopped worrying that I was going to eat him!

We started our trip in South Luangwa National Park. The South Luangwa really is beautiful. It has grasslands, woodlands, and a lovely river, called the River Luangwa. The river is full during the months of the wet season, but during the dry season we leopards and other wildlife have to try hard to find water. You might see a lot of us around a single pool, if you come to the park at this time.



The wildlife here includes four of the group of animals known as the “Big Five”. These are lion, rhino, leopard, elephant, and buffalo. The only one missing is rhino! There are lots of other animals, such as hyena, jackal, giraffe, wildebeest, zebra, and wild dog. Zeb was thrilled when we came across three wild dogs in the South Luangwa – he hadn’t seen wild dogs before!



The birdlife of the South Luangwa is excellent, and it's pretty special in my next favourite area too! This is the Lower Zambezi National Park.

There's a picture of me, Zeb, and Oki in the park at the beginning of this chapter. We've just arrived here, and we're relaxing on the banks of the River Zambezi, which is the most famous feature of the park.

Two big birds called cranes are flying over the river. These are wattled cranes! The wattle is the fleshy bit hanging from their neck. In the river, there are hippos, buffalos, and elephants. We stayed here for a long time, just watching all the wildlife!

You can go on game drives in this park too, and at some camps children aged 12 years and over can take part in walking and canoeing.

If you are younger, you can enjoy games and cookery!

Next, Zeb, Oki, and I went to Kafue National Park, which is west of the Lower Zambezi. Kafue is one of the largest national parks in Africa! It has vast stretches of woodlands, including gorgeous evergreen forests. These stand on the banks of its river, which is called the River Kafue. There is a lot of savanna too – savanna is grasses amidst a few trees, where all the plant-eaters like to graze.



Kafue is another of Zambia's wild places, great fun to explore. Zeb and Oki loved it, and Oki was so excited when we saw these little lovebirds!

For the last part of our trip, we went to Victoria Falls. This is the biggest waterfall in the world! For a long time, we simply stood and stared at the water as it came crashing down the steep cliffs and splashing on the river below. Fantastic! In fact, the spray that rises off the river gives Victoria Falls its name in the language of the local Tonga people. They call the waterfall “Mosi-oa-Tunya”, which means “The Smoke That Thunders”.

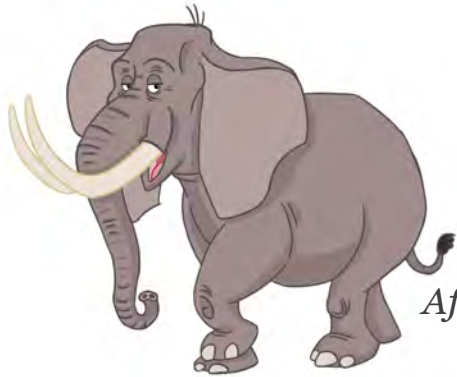
There are so many things you can do here! The Victoria Falls area includes Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park, which has a section of rainforest. There aren't any leopards in this park, but there are lots of lion, as well as elephant, buffalo, giraffe, zebra, antelopes, hippos, crocodiles, and plenty of birds.

At Victoria Falls itself, you can enjoy tours of the waterfall, trips over Victoria Falls Bridge on a tram, helicopter flights, river cruises, and sliding over the river in a harness! Once you are older, you can try more activities. Here's Zeb doing a bungee jump!





YELLOW ZEBRA SAFARIS



'Elimu' everyone!

## Zeb & Oki's Adventures in Zimbabwe



*After they had looked around Zambia, Zeb and Oki decided to explore Zimbabwe. Their guide was Elimu, an enormous elephant! They enjoyed many different activities together, including a microlight flight! Now Elimu writes about the trip.*

“Mhoro shamwari”, dear children. By that, I mean “hello friend” in Shona! My name is Elimu and I am an African elephant. I live in a national park that is close to the largest waterfall in the whole wide world! The waterfall is called Victoria Falls and my home is Victoria Falls National Park. Hurrah!

Last year, I was in the national park splashing about in the river, which is known as the River Zambezi. This is where I met my good friends Zeb and Oki! They had just enjoyed a safari in the neighbouring country of Zambia and they were standing on the river bank, looking for someone to show them around Zimbabwe. I was delighted to help! Now Zeb has asked me to tell you a little bit about our travels around Zimbabwe. So I’m going to talk about the areas we explored.

We began in Victoria Falls. As I have mentioned, this is the world's largest waterfall! It really is a spectacular sight. If you look at the beginning of the chapter, you can see the water falling down the cliffs and splashing on the rocks below. Splish! Splash!

I'm sure you're wondering what Zeb, Oki, and I are doing in the first picture. We are flying in a microlight! It was a bit of a squash to get everyone in, but we had super views.

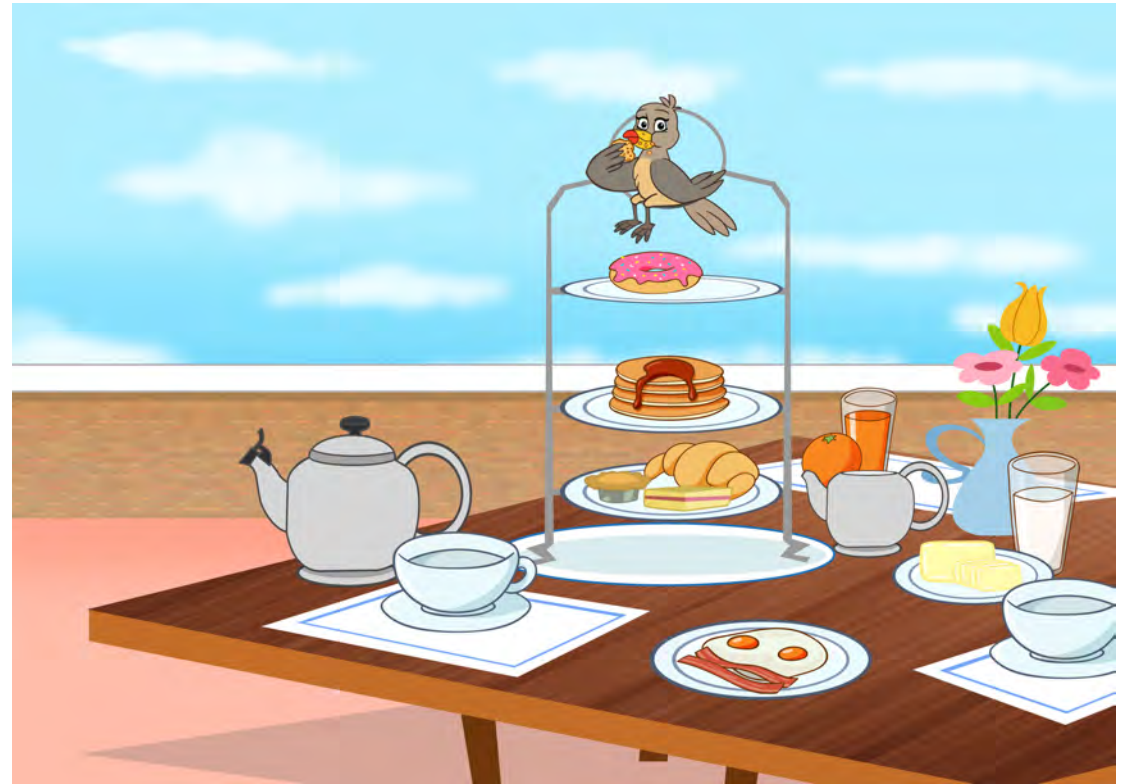
The microlights take off from Zambia, so we had to pop across the border to take our flight. However, there are lots of things to do around Victoria Falls in Zimbabwe too!

For example, you can take fascinating tours, exciting tram rides, scenic river cruises, and thrilling slides over the river!

The area is excellent for safari activities as well. You can go on game drives in Victoria Falls National Park, to see lion, rhino, buffalo, hippos, crocodiles, and many antelope species. You can also see elephants, just like me!

Well, after all these activities, Zeb, Oki, and I were rather tired, so we went to a little place called Stanley's Terrace for tea. Here's Oki, tucking into a snack!

After a few days at Victoria Falls, I decided to take Zeb and Oki a little way north-east to Lake Kariba. This is a man-made lake – in fact, it's the biggest man-made lake in the world!



Lake Kariba was made between 1958 and 1963. Before it was made, the men burned down all the plants in the area where they were going to put it. As a result, the bottom of the lake has plenty of food for fish!

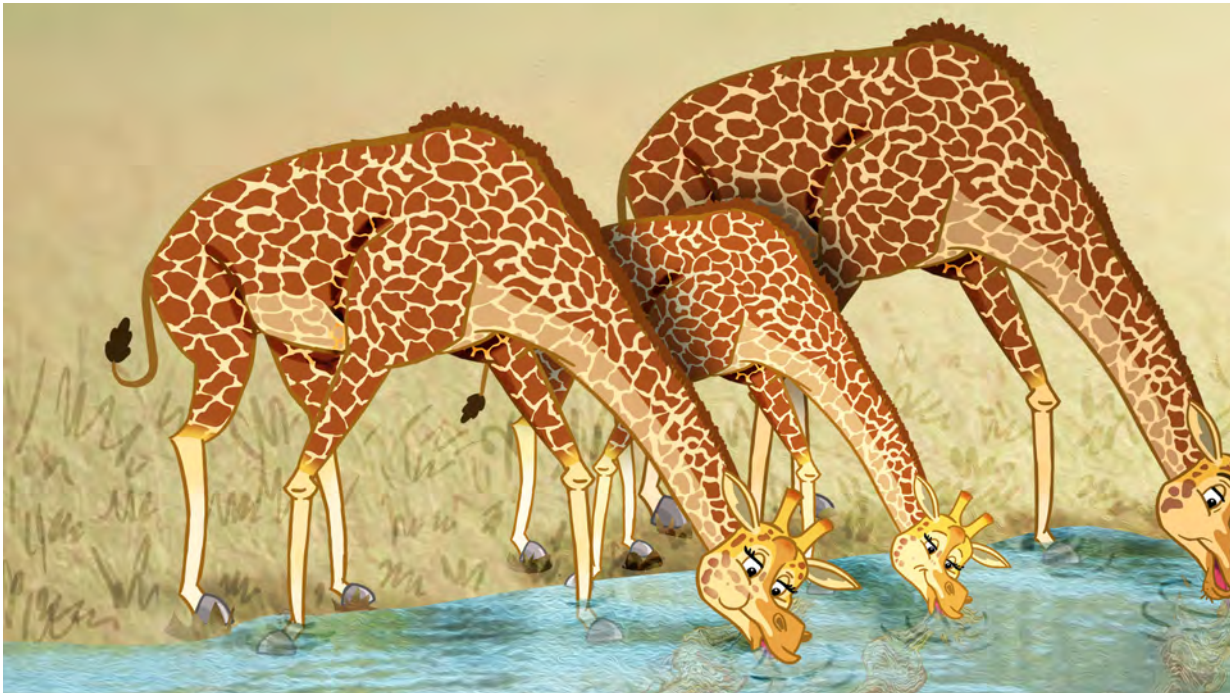
Next, we travelled farther north-east, to Mana Pools National Park. The word “Mana” means four in the Shona language – the same language I used at the beginning of this chapter, in saying hello to you. There are certainly four large pools here, but there are lots of little pools too!

There are also sandbanks and islets, or little islands. And around the pools are lush forests, with ebony, mahogany, and fig trees. I was not surprised when Oki told me that Mana Pools is thought to be one of Africa's most beautiful national parks! It really is very charming indeed.

You can see a lot of wildlife on game drives in Mana Pools. Lion, leopard, cheetah, hyena, elephant, zebra, antelopes, monkey, baboon, and some 350 species of birds! One day Zeb, Oki, and I were just passing under a big fig tree, when Zeb spotted a baboon high up in the branches, having a snack! That was one of many highlights of our time here.







For the last part of our tour, we went north-west to Hwange National Park.

This park is pretty special too. It has a wonderful range of desert sands, grassy plains, woodlands, wetlands, and some very tall palm trees! Game drives in Hwange are amazing. There is so much wildlife!

During the dry months here, it really is very dry, and the wildlife has difficulty finding enough water. Luckily, there are people who are able to help, by making waterholes. Just before the end of our safari, Zeb, Oki, and I spotted these three giraffes having a long drink at one of the waterholes. Hurrah!

I do hope you've enjoyed reading about Zimbabwe, dear children. I have so many wonderful memories of my time on safari with Oki and Zeb. Perhaps, one day, you will visit my country and make memories too!





'Balinda' everyone!

## Zeb & Oki's Adventures in Botswana



*Botswana was the sixth country that Zeb and Oki visited on safari. They met a brave buffalo called Balinda, and they explored an exciting mixture of dry areas and wet areas! Now Balinda tells you about their travels.*

“Dumela” (hello in Tswana), girls and boys. I’m Balinda Buffalo, from Botswana. I hope you’re all well today!

Zeb, Oki, and I went on safari last year! We visited four amazing areas of Botswana and I’m going to tell you a little bit about each of them. The Okavango Delta was our first safari destination. This is my home! You can see a picture of the Delta at the beginning of this chapter. Zeb is treating me and Oki to a mokoro excursion! A mokoro is like a canoe. The birds perching on my head and shoulders are red-billed oxpeckers. They look like Oki, except that they don’t have yellow on their beaks. The Delta is full of birdlife!

There are lots of animals here too. That's because there's a good supply of water for us all year round. This water comes from the highlands of a neighbouring country called Angola. The Delta collects water like a big basin, but the area around it is actually quite dry! All my family love living here, along with rhino, elephant, wildebeest, antelopes, giraffe, zebra, and hippos.

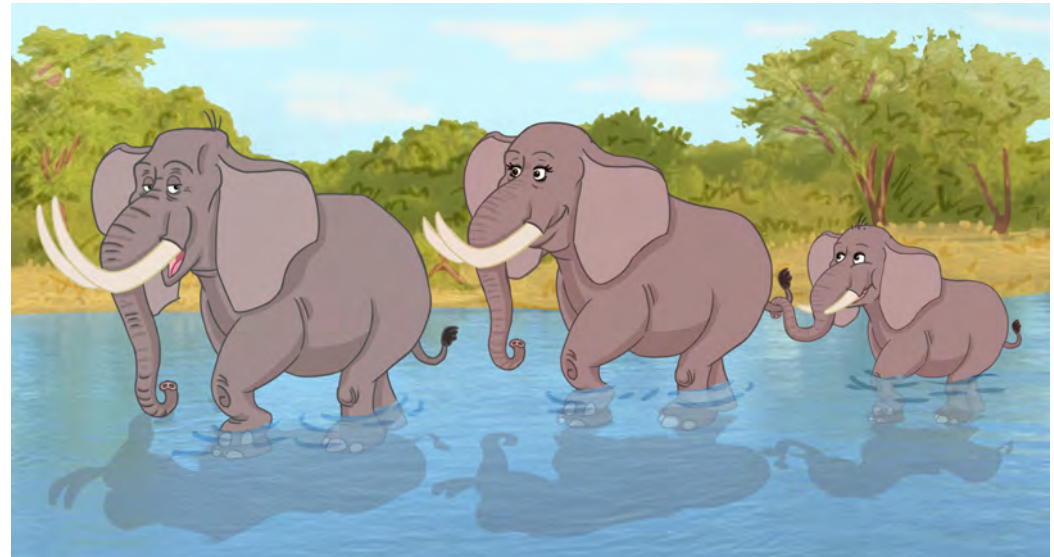
The big cats live here as well – lion, leopard, and cheetah. I must admit, we buffalos wish they lived somewhere else! I've had a few fights with lions, which is why I have scars on my rump. The Delta is famous for fights between lion and buffalo.



Chobe National Park was the second area Zeb, Oki, and I went to on our safari. It's north-east of the Okavango Delta and also has loads of wildlife! You can enjoy lots of activities in Chobe too! Activities especially for young people include nature walks, colouring, and learning which tracks belong to which animal.

Chobe is the third largest national park in Botswana. Game drives here are really interesting, as you see so many different landscapes and so much wildlife. You can even go on boat trips! Zeb, Oki, and I were on a boat trip when we saw these lovely elephants, crossing the water together.

We also saw elephants in the Linyanti, which was the next place we visited. This area is in the north-west corner of Chobe. It is split into three reserves – Linyanti, Selinda, and Kwando.



All three have lots of water for wildlife, including some gorgeous lagoons!

The Linyanti has woodlands too. You can enjoy game drives, boat trips, and children's activities such as making bows and arrows, cooking on a camp fire, and learning animal names.

We then ended our trip by visiting the Makgadikgadi Pans during the dry season, so it was very very dry!

This area is in the east of Botswana and the pans are enormous stretches of salt. In the word "Makgadikgadi", the two "g"s are silent, so it's "Makadikadi".

The pans are the remains of a large lake and close to a desert called the Kalahari. This really is an amazing area – Oki thought it was like being on the Moon!

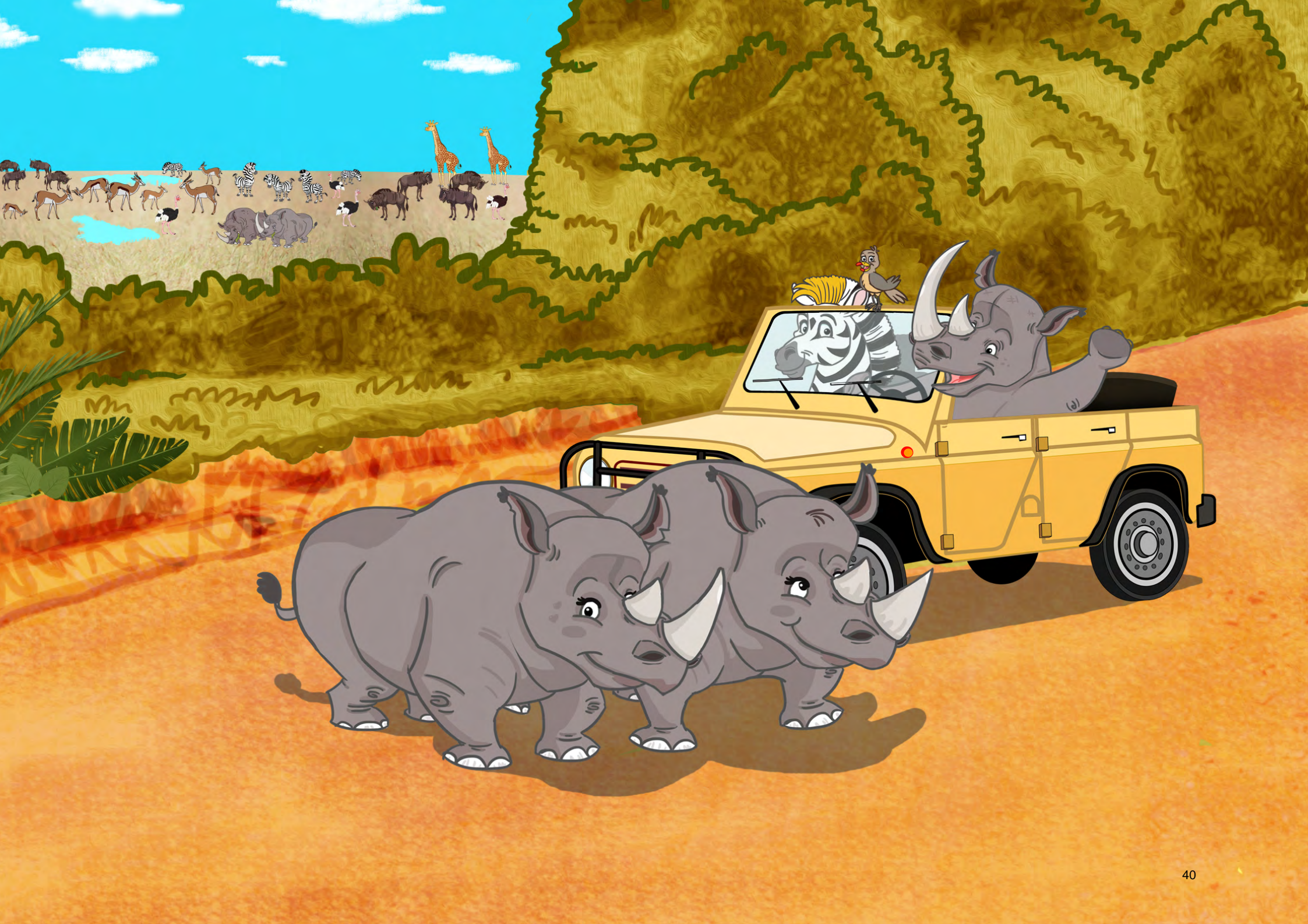
During the dry season, the pans don't have much wildlife. Nevertheless, we saw a few snakes and lizards, some tortoises, and we made friends with a gang of meerkats. Some camps offer horse riding, walking with the local bush men, and even quad biking across the Pans!

As you can tell from this picture, Zeb, Oki, and I loved our quad bike ride.



We have decided to visit the Pans again together soon, when it's the wet season. Zeb has heard that so much grass grows on the Pans during the rains that huge herds of zebra and wildebeest come here! And there should be lots of birdlife for Oki.

I had such a wonderful time on safari with Oki and Zeb. I hope you've enjoyed reading about it! Botswana is a beautiful country, perfect for a special holiday.







'Rudo' everyone!

## Zeb & Oki's Adventures in Namibia



*You will love Namibia if you enjoy looking at amazing scenery! Zeb and Oki were guided around this country by Rudo, a friendly rhino. They saw loads of wildlife and they even went surfing together! Now Rudo writes about all the fun they had.*

Wa lalapo, kids. That means “Good day” in a language called Oshiwambo! Howzit? My name’s Rudo and I’m a rhino from Namibia, otherwise known as the coolest country in the world! I usually spend all my time in a place called Etosha National Park. All my friends live here. It’s great!

But last year, a zebra with a yellow stripe in his hair turned up in the park. And with him, there was a little lady oxpecker. The zebra dude said his name was Zeb, and that he and Oki Oxpecker were looking for someone to come with them on safari all around Namibia. For some reason, he asked me! I thought about it, but not for long.

I said a firm “YES!” and Zeb said, “Aces!” Little Lady Oki flew onto my head and did a dance.

We started in Etosha, then we made our way to three other areas. Zeb and Oki loved Etosha. There's so much wildlife here! If you take a look at the top of this chapter, you'll see us all on a game drive together. There's a couple of my rhino friends crossing the road, and in the background there are more rhino, zebra, wildebeest, giraffe, gazelles, and ostrich!

Etosha has elephant too, and lots of meat-eaters – lion, leopard, cheetah, hyenas, and wild dog. Visitors can drive themselves! You can choose where to explore and when to stop to look at the wildlife.

Little Lady Oki asked me to stop when she thought she saw an owl! This was a ginger dude called a Pel's fishing owl. He was roosting on a tree branch in the south of the park. When he heard us, he opened his eyes, called "Hellooo!" to us, then went back to sleep. Cool!

As well as game drives, some camps in Etosha offer activities just for kids – like arts and crafts, and nature walks!



After we had looked all around Etosha, Zeb, Little Lady Oki, and I kept driving, travelling north-west to Skeleton Coast National Park. The Skeleton Coast does not have anywhere near the amount of wildlife there is in Etosha, but this is where you come for amazing scenery! We really enjoyed our drives and walks along the coast. It is not safe to swim in the sea here, but you can check out the seals and even see some shipwrecks! And the Skeleton Coast has massive sand dunes – for most of our time here, we were simply staring at things and shouting, “WOW!”

We shouted “WOW!” a lot while we were in Damaraland too. That was our next stop on the safari. It’s in the west of Namibia – we drove here from the Skeleton Coast. Damaraland is a very dry place, so there is not much wildlife.

However, the area is home to a type of elephant called “desert-adapted elephant”. These elephants are different from the elephant in Etosha, for example. They have bigger feet, so they are able to walk easily over the desert sands.

They have longer trunks, so they are really good at digging for water! And, most important, they don’t need to drink as much water as the Etosha elephants. Pretty cool!

Damaraland also has black rhino. Woo-woo! A big highlight of our trip was a day at a place called Twyfelfontein. This is a valley, with slopes made of smooth sandstone. On the sandstone there is rock art, which was made during the Stone Age, about 6,000 years ago. Zeb, Little Lady Oki, and I had great fun naming the animals shown on the rocks. Can you find the rhino in our picture?



We enjoyed our time in Damaraland so much, we were sorry to leave! But there was just one more place we wanted to visit on our safari. This was Sossusvlei! Sossusvlei is also in the west of Namibia, but much farther south than the other areas we had seen. Like the Skeleton Coast, it is famous for its scenery. Here, we saw enormous orange sand dunes, as high as the sky!

There are lots of exciting things to do in Sossusvlei. You can go on game drives, nature walks, horse rides, hot air balloon rides, and quad bike rides!

Zeb, Little Lady Oki, and I enjoyed all of these activities. But what we really loved was surfing down those enormous dunes. Super-cool!

I hope you've had a great time reading all about our travels in Namibia.



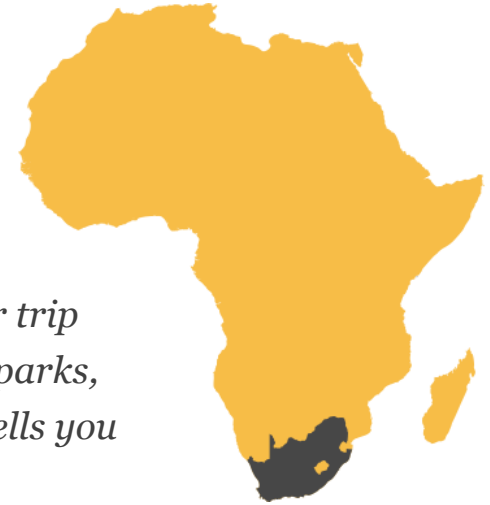




'Lencho' everyone!

## Zeb & Oki's Adventures in South Africa

*South Africa has so much to see, Zeb and Oki thought their trip would never end! A lion called Lencho showed them safari parks, coastal towns, and the big city of Cape Town. Now Lencho tells you about a few highlights of the journey.*



"Sawubona" (that's "hello" in isiZulu), welkom ("welcome" in Afrikaans), and nice to meet you, children! I'm Lencho the lion, from the Rainbow Nation, South Africa.

I live in Kruger National Park, and until last year I hadn't travelled very far from my family. But one day Zeb Zebra and Oki Oxpecker came to the Kruger, looking for someone to join them on a trip around South Africa. I put up a paw and shouted, "ME!"

At first, Zeb was worried I would eat him up! However, once I'd explained he was far too skinny to make a good meal, he calmed down and we began to plan our trip.

We started in my homeland. The Kruger is in the north-east of South Africa, close to the border with Mozambique. And it's enormous! It is almost as big as a country called Wales, in the UK!

The Kruger has lots of plains and woodlands. There are two rivers – the Limpopo and the Crocodile. As you might expect, the Crocodile river is full of crocodiles!

Other wildlife you can look out for on game drives includes lion, rhino, leopard, elephant, and buffalo, known together as the Big Five. Zeb was pleased to see plenty of zebra, while Oki waved happily at all the birds in the park. She particularly liked this chap, a Bennett's woodpecker, who is wearing a bright red hat!





Some camps in the Kruger offer activities for children. These include animal tracking, nature walks, stargazing and visits to the local schools! After Zeb, Oki, and I had looked around Kruger National Park, we travelled west, to Madikwe Game Reserve. Madikwe is next to the country of Botswana and it used to be all farmland. It is famous for a project called “Operation Phoenix”, in which 28 types of animals were brought into the reserve.

Well, there are still a few farmers in Madikwe today, but most of the land is all for the wildlife. In fact, the reserve has its own “Top Ten”, which is the Big Five plus cheetah, hyena, wild dog, giraffe, and hippo. Game drives here are great! And there are lots of other things for young people to do, such as fishing, swimming, and baking.

A Madikwe highlight, for Zeb, Oki, and me, was spotting this charming fellow called a pangolin.

He was very friendly and full of information. It was a real pleasure to meet him!



Next it was time to travel south, for our journey along South Africa's Garden Route. The route runs for over 200 kilometres! Mostly it goes beside the sea, but sometimes it goes inland and you get amazing views of mountains.

Zeb, Oki, and I stopped off at various places on our journey, but our favourite place was Oudtshoorn. In fact, dear Oki was dizzy with excitement! That was because this town is the ostrich capital of the world. You can visit ostrich farms to find out all about these big bold birds.



For the final part of our holiday, we travelled west to Cape Town! This town is known as the “Mother City” because it is so big. And as you would expect of a big city, there is an immense amount of things to do.

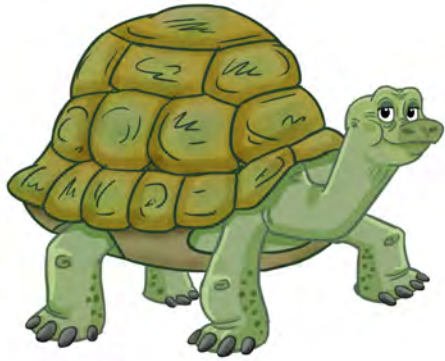
Zeb, Oki, and I loved our trip to Cape Town’s Victoria & Alfred Waterfront. It has its own shopping mall, a craft market, and street entertainers. There are restaurants too, and the Two Oceans Aquarium for those who are interested in sea life. Zeb spent a long time looking at an octopus. It was waving at us with all eight tentacles! What a delight to see.

My highlight, however, was taking a cable car all the way up the city’s Table Mountain and then hiking to a well-known landmark called Lion’s Head.

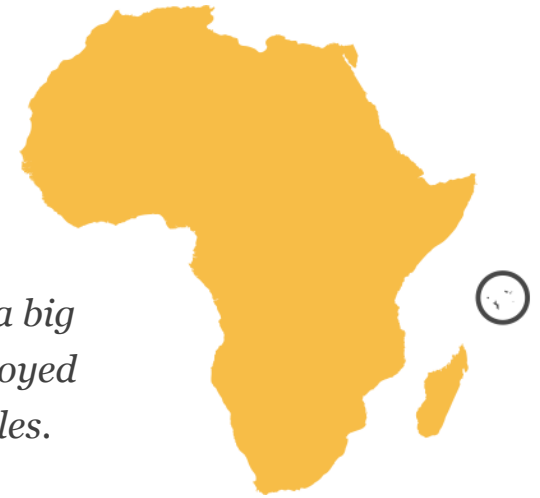
From here we had amazing views of Cape Town and, of course, the coast. The picture at the beginning of the chapter shows Zeb, Oki, and me gazing out over the Mother City, admiring a whale mother and child in the sea. We saw penguins too, at a place called Boulders Beach. That was excellent!

We were all very impressed with Cape Town, and with South Africa in general.





## Zeb & Oki's Adventures in the Seychelles



'Tomas' everyone!

*After their safari, Zeb and Oki flew out to the Seychelles for a big beach break! They met Tomas, a giant tortoise, and they enjoyed exploring a lot of different islands and seeing little sea turtles.*

*Now Tomas writes about the trip!*

"Komman sava", my young friends? That means, "How are you?" in a language called Seychellois Creole. I'm Tomas, a giant tortoise from the Seychelles.

Zeb and I met for the first time last year, when he landed his light aircraft on Bird Island, my home. It is a beautiful island! I saw Zeb and Oki land, and I decided I would greet them. I learned that they were on a very long holiday, travelling from their home in Kenya across much of eastern and southern Africa. I was amazed! And now, they had come to the Seychelles and they were looking for someone to show them around.

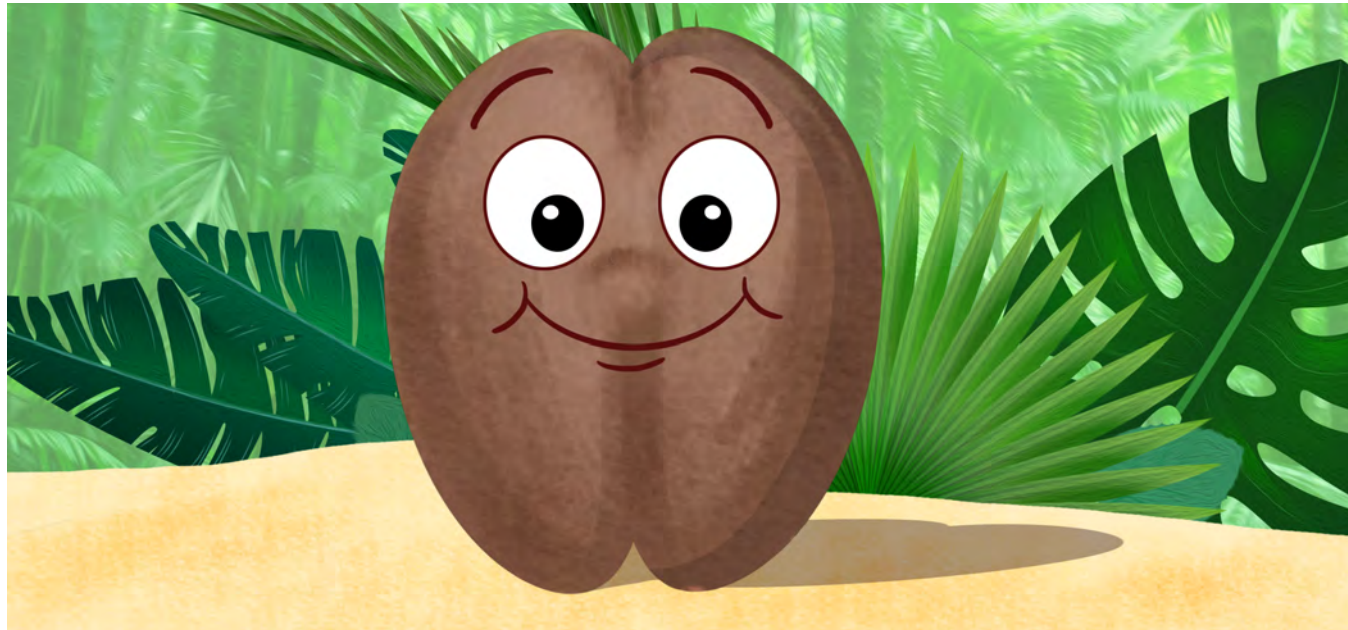
I said I would be happy to do this. Zeb clapped his front hoofs together and Oki danced for a while. It was all very pleasant. And now I am writing about the highlights of our trip. We began by flying to Mahé.

The flight from Bird Island to Mahé took just 25 minutes, featuring lovely views of the sea. Mahé is south of Bird Island and it is the largest of all the 115 islands that make up the Seychelles. Mahé belongs to a group known as the “Inner Islands” and has all sorts of places where visitors may stay – guesthouses, hotels, and resorts. And it has beautiful beaches where you can swim and play. Here are Zeb and Oki building sandcastles together. I was having my afternoon nap at the time.



Other activities you might enjoy on Mahé include snorkelling, kayaking, fishing, and sailing. You can also take hikes in the island’s forests. And the capital city, which is called Victoria, is well worth a visit, I think. It has a museum, a market, the famous Clock Tower, and gardens full of interesting plants and spices. Yum!

After a week on Mahé, we flew 44 kilometres north-east to Praslin. This is another of the inner islands and the second largest island overall. Like Mahé, it has plenty of places where you can stay. It also has forests that are excellent for hiking, and wonderful white-sand beaches too.



However, Praslin does have something special, all of its own. That is a nature reserve! It is called Vallée de Mai, which is French for May Valley. Here you can spot the Seychelles black parrot, blue pigeon, and sunbird, as well as snakes, lizards, and frogs. But the park is best known for its sea coconut palms and the nuts they bear. These nuts grow in pairs and perhaps for that reason they are called “love nuts”. How charming!

The next stop on our tour was an island called La Digue. La Digue has a different feel from Mahé and Praslin. Very few cars are allowed here, but there are plenty of oxcarts. Having a ride on an oxcart was just one of many things that Zeb, Oki, and I enjoyed. We visited the main village of La Passe and the Union Estate. The estate was a coconut factory and it has been turned into a theme park. You can take a tour of the old Plantation House, go horseback riding, play on the local beach, and see some giant tortoises. Huzzah!

The island has a nature reserve too. This is a real treat for birdwatchers. Here is one of the birds we saw. It's a black paradise flycatcher.





Our trip to the inner islands was the first part of our holiday. The second part was visiting the Outer Islands of the Seychelles. We got back into Zeb's light aircraft and flew to Frégate, Desroches, North, Cousine, Denis, and Bird, in that order.

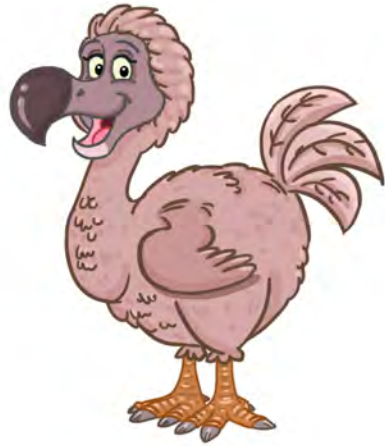
I hope Zeb will not mind, but I must mention that our best days were spent on Bird Island.

The birdwatching here is excellent, and there are a lot of sea turtles too. The female sea turtles climb up the beaches to lay their eggs in the sand. When the eggs hatch, hundreds of tiny turtles come out and race down the sands and into the sea.

It is absolutely thrilling. If you look at the first image of this chapter, you will see a picture of Zeb, Oki, and me helping the tiny turtles down to the water.

Zeb and Oki told me that this was a huge holiday highlight for them. It was a magical end to our time together in the Seychelles.





'Daudi' everyone!

## Zeb & Oki's Adventures in Mauritius

*The island of Mauritius was the last place that Zeb and Oki visited. They were surprised to meet a dodo called Daudi there! Daudi took them all over the island and even up a big mountain! Now she tells you about the highlights of their travels.*



"Bonzur", my little ones! That means, "Good day!" in Mauritian Creole. My name is Daudi and I'm a dodo from Mauritius. One day last year, I was sitting in the sun on top of a mountain called Le Morne Brabant, when I saw a small yellow aircraft. As it passed over my head, I peeped in and saw a zebra and a little oxpecker bird.

They looked so pleasant, I wished to meet them! I rushed down the mountain as fast as my legs could carry me, and I was ready to greet them when they came in to land. To my delight, they asked if I would like to take a trip around Mauritius with them! I was so excited, I couldn't speak! I jumped in the air and shouted "Woo-hoo!" several times! Dear Zeb turned to Oki and said, "I think that's a yes!" Then little Oki started jumping too and soon we were all beginning our journey.

We started by visiting some of my favourite beaches. The coast of Mauritius is truly beautiful, with soft white sands, clear blue seas, and tall palm trees swaying in the breeze! It is lovely to relax or play in the sunshine. And whether you go to the north, east, south, or west coast of the island, there is something for everyone to enjoy.

For example, Mauritius is wonderful for watersports! Diving is possible for older children, and many of the resorts have a dive centre where you can learn how to dive if you have never done this before. You can snorkel too. And the resorts also have kids clubs, which offer activities such as swimming, windsurfing, golf, tennis, cooking, arts and crafts, reading, and computer games!

The coasts are also excellent for nature lovers, with plenty of sea birds to spot while you are walking along the shore. And if you take a glass-bottomed boat ride, you can see all the fabulous fish and colourful coral below the surface of the water! You can go on submarine rides too, which is what Zeb, Oki, and I did. It was a real thrill!



Zeb has asked me to mention the food at the beach resorts, because it's pretty special! Most of the resorts have a big range of restaurants, with food from many different parts of the world – Creole, Asia, America, and Europe. Woo-hoo!

After our time on the beaches, we travelled to the capital city of Mauritius, Port Louis. The city is in the north-west and it was named in honour of King Louis the fifteenth, from France. There are many exciting things to do here! A good place to start is the Blue Penny Museum, which focuses on Mauritian history and art.

And the Natural History Museum has three galleries – one for birds and land animals, one for sea animals, and one for dodos.



Once we had rested, we were ready for the last part of our trip.

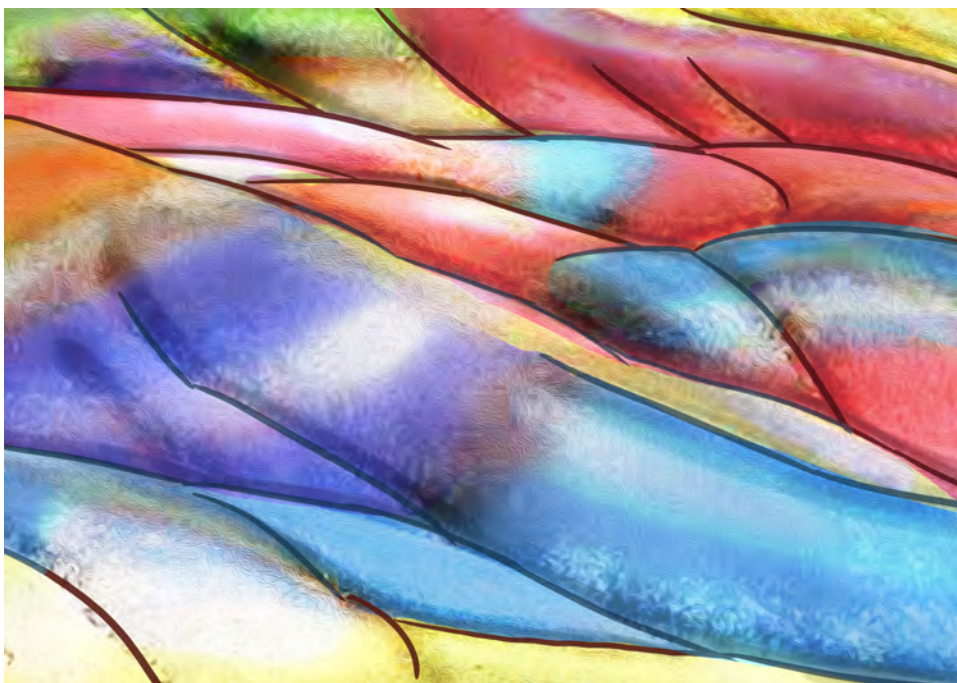
This was our visit to Black River Gorges National Park, in the south-west. This is another area that is ideal for nature lovers!

Black River Gorges has mostly forests and marshy heath. There are two types of forest. On the hills, the forest is humid, like a rainforest, whereas lower down it is quite dry. There are lots of different hiking trails and picnic areas along the way.

Many of the wildlife species you might spot while on your hike are found only on Mauritius! The birds include olive white-eyes and grey white-eyes.

There are also the Mauritius parakeet, kestrel, cuckoo-shrike, bulbul (a songbird), fody (a weaver), and pink pigeon. The pink pigeon is my favourite!

As for mammals, there are Mauritian fruit bat, rusa deer (with big ears), and wild pigs. Black River Gorges really is gorgeous – hoo-hoo! – with its lovely waterfalls and views out to sea.



You could stop off at the Seven Coloured Earths! These are sand dunes in seven different colours – red, yellow, green, blue, purple, violet, and brown.

We ended our trip by climbing up Le Morne Brabant. When I described how amazing the views are from the top, Zeb and Oki were keen to see everything for themselves!

Zeb has strong legs, so up he trotted with me and Oki riding on his head and shoulders. If you look at the beginning of chapter, you will see a picture of us all enjoying the views.

We had such a fun time here! I felt sad when I waved goodbye to Zeb and Oki, watching their yellow aircraft fly off into the sunset. But they have promised to return soon! And perhaps some of you will come for a holiday on my beautiful island. Woo-hoo!

## About the Author

Felicity Teague

Felicity, or Fliss, is YZ Julian's cousin! She has been working with Yellow Zebra Safaris for a long time.



It's her job to write about all the safari parks and camps you can read about on our website. She also checks the blogs that the Sales team put together, to make sure there aren't any spelling mistakes!

Outside work, Fliss is a creative writer and a poet, and she was delighted when we asked her to help with the children's section for YZ.

She loved thinking up all the safari characters you'll meet in this book, working with Andre (the illustrator), Julian, and the YZ team.

## About the Illustrator

Andre at Green Family Studios

Andre is an internationally acclaimed illustrator/graphic designer who has lived and worked in both Italy and Ireland. Andre began developing his drawing skills as a child.

Having graduated in 2005 from L'Accademia Delle Belle Arti University in Torino, Italy, Andre now works as a freelance graphic designer and illustrator.

He has illustrated many children's books that promote children's well-being and he is happy to use his talent to convey good principles.

Andre's wife, Elena, handles public relations and acts as Andre's agent for his work as an illustrator. Together, they believe that education is about the acquisition of new information.



# Bird Island

*A poem about Tomas the Tortoise's home in the Seychelles  
by Felicity Teague*

A pocketful of paradise, bird isle,  
immersed in cyan seas, beset with shoals  
of spot trevally crossing coral pile,  
electric-blue carangue on food patrols.  
Ashore, brown bar-tailed godwits chirp a'ights,  
while speckled plovers skate the slick white sands  
and turnstones probe for periwinkle treats;  
then ak, ker-ak! a sooty flock alights  
on coco-palms within the forest lands  
of vines and orchids, moist pink lily streets.

Paeon to conservation, ground doves sing  
as white-tailed tropicbirds may safely nest  
among the roots of she-oak trees or wing  
the Seychelles skies in smart tailcoat and vest.  
How Esmeralda smiles and nods his head,  
approving as his turtle friends are tracked  
and granted haven beach to lay their eggs;  
for all long winter, in a tunnelled bed  
a tiny baby leaps from shell fresh cracked  
and scrambles seaward, flapping arms and legs.