



A Tribute to an old friend.  
Evariste Schayo. c.1952-2002.

I first met Evariste on a visit to Rufiji River Camp in the Selous where he worked as driver/guide. We seemed to hit it off straight away with a friendly rapport and had a great time together. We talked a lot and he was very keen to learn about birds. He was extremely interested but like most guides he learned by seeing rather than from books. I remember him punctiliously noting the names of birds we saw in a notebook with the Page number in Newman's alongside. As the trip progresses he would call out 'Page 38' faster than I could name the bird. He did not know its name but he knew which page it appeared on in the book. An amazing man seen here dining *al Fresco* in the heart of the Selous while we staked out a Waterhole used by Wild Dogs.



I also remember with amusement the evening we came upon this seemingly abandoned Buffalo Calf stuck in the mud. Of course we had to rescue it! It was very weak and we kept pouring water into its mouth. We set to and dragged and dug it out in stages at the same time keeping a wary eye out for 'trouble' in the shape of predators or the herd returning. Eventually it was standing on firm ground and having paused to recover started to bawl loudly while we wondered how to get it in the car. We had the decision made for us when Mum returned at a canter with her head down. Evariste

beat me to the safety of a tree by a short head.

When I returned to the Selous in February 2002 Evariste was there at the airstrip to greet us and guided for us again. We had a dodgy car with a sticking solenoid and his preferred method of curing this was to beat it with a Tyre lever even when there were plenty of Elephant around to push if need be.

Sadly this was to be our last trip with him as during our trip he caught a fever and despite rushing him to Hospital in Dar he died leaving a wife and seven children. It has taken me nine years to return to the Selous and his memory is still with me.