



WILDFOTO

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PhotoMail is an occasional picture newsletter for those with an interest in photography, nature and the environment, travel, Africa, Zambia, African life and current affairs. And especially for those who just like looking at pictures. Send your feedback - PhotoMail will be developed in line with what its subscribers want to see. PhotoMail is available for free subscription by emailing me at wildfoto@wildfotoafrica.com

The Story Behind the Pictures:

Life in the Shadows 2: GIFT'S STORY

Almost every aspect of the daily life of African people with albinism is dictated by their rare and unfortunate condition - a quirk of genetics which means they lack normal pigmentation in their hair, skin and eyes. It makes for a life which most of us would find agonizing, even unbearable.

Most media coverage of Africans with albinism is centred on the news-grabbing extremes of their physical abuse, mutilation and even murder. Such coverage makes little mention of the adversities they face every day - including stigma & extreme discrimination, isolation & exclusion, serious health & vision problems, and public ridicule. And all this every day, day-in, day-out.

So this story, from the new reportage project 'Life in the Shadows: Albinism in Africa', is about the ordinary: the ordinary daily story of African people with albinism, a story that few of us know about.

Accompanying the exhibition photographs are the subjects' own stories of their daily lives, in their own words.

In this PhotoMail, the story of a 7-year old African girl with albinism as told by her mother, Sharon. Her name is Gift and she lives with her mother and brother in one of the poorest of shanty townships. These pictures and Gift's story are featured in the current issue of Trek Magazine, the alumni publication by the University of British Columbia, Canada at <http://trekmagazine.alumni.ubc.ca/>



"Gift Chanda ... was born as an albino. After her birth, the nurse said she's an albino and I told her father that I have an albino baby. He said he cannot have an albino child and he told me that I am on my own and that's how he left me and my baby. I named her Gift because she was my gift from God and my husband."



"I didn't know how to take care of her - I was selling vegetables with her on my back without knowing that I am damaging her skin. I am staying in a very small house with no plaster, so flies and mosquitoes are biting her. As a result she started having sores, rashes and ringworms etc. That's how the problem of the skin started, as young as she is."



"...people say that for me to have an albino I am cursed including the baby. I am being laughed at and the child too. They're calling her names that she looks like an animal because of the dotted skin. Some are calling her a woollen doll etc."



"My family cannot eat with my albino girl. They cannot share anything like cups, spoons, bath tubs etc. they say her mouth looks like a pig, so they can't share anything with her. She's being neglected by my own family and her father. As she was coming out to urinate it was night time. People screamed at her thinking she was a ghost."

Exhibition Visitor News:

Since the online launch of the exhibition 8 weeks ago, visitor numbers now total over 90,000 from 109 different countries. To see the exhibition, please go to: www.wildfotoafrica.com >NEW Work.



WARNING - Some visitors may find some of the exhibition content graphic and disturbing

CAN YOU HELP?
A number of exhibition visitors have asked how they can help the cause of Africans living with albinism. If you want to help, please contact me via the website's email contact link (without any obligation) and I'll put you in touch with a direct action group which has now been now formed to assist, in partnership with the Lions Club International. Thank you.

PRINTS SALE - 50% OFF STOCK ITEMS FROM SPIRIT OF THE LAND PANORAMIC AFRICA

Typical framing illustrations



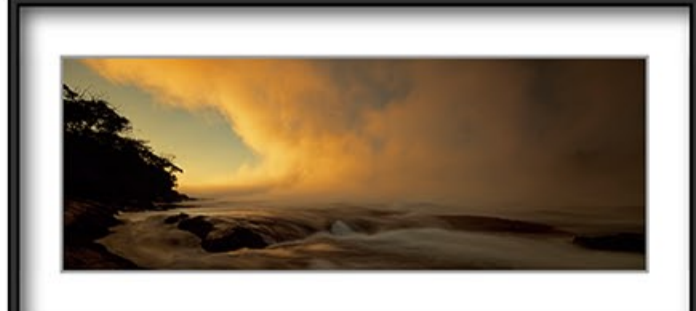
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PHOTOGRAPHER FOR HIRE

Stephen Robinson is a photographer operating from his Zambia base. He undertakes photo assignment work in the corporate, industrial, mining, donor-aid project and environmental fields, including the production of photo based communications, advertising and promotional media. Medium format panoramic photography and aerial work are specialities.

This commercial work supports his nature photography speciality, including landscape, environment, conservation and wildlife work - and including his well-known panoramic photography project and exhibitions on the remote landscape, peoples and environment of Zambia.

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More life stories from 'Life in the Shadows'

Turning a lens on Urban Africa

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In the Footsteps of Artists

More Landscape Africa B&W

and the stories behind the pictures

Back Issues - all back issues of PhotoMail can be seen at www.wildfotoafrica.com

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