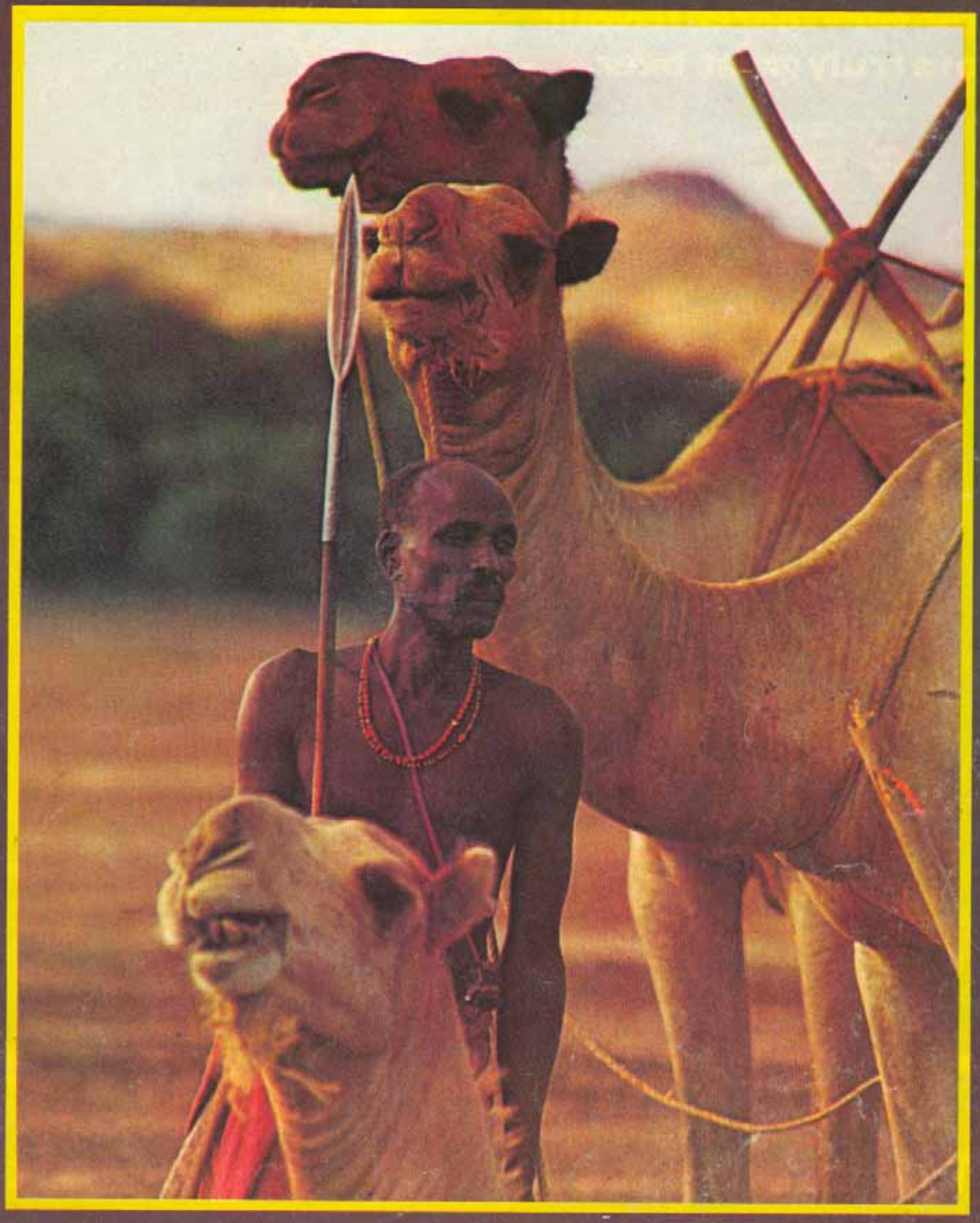
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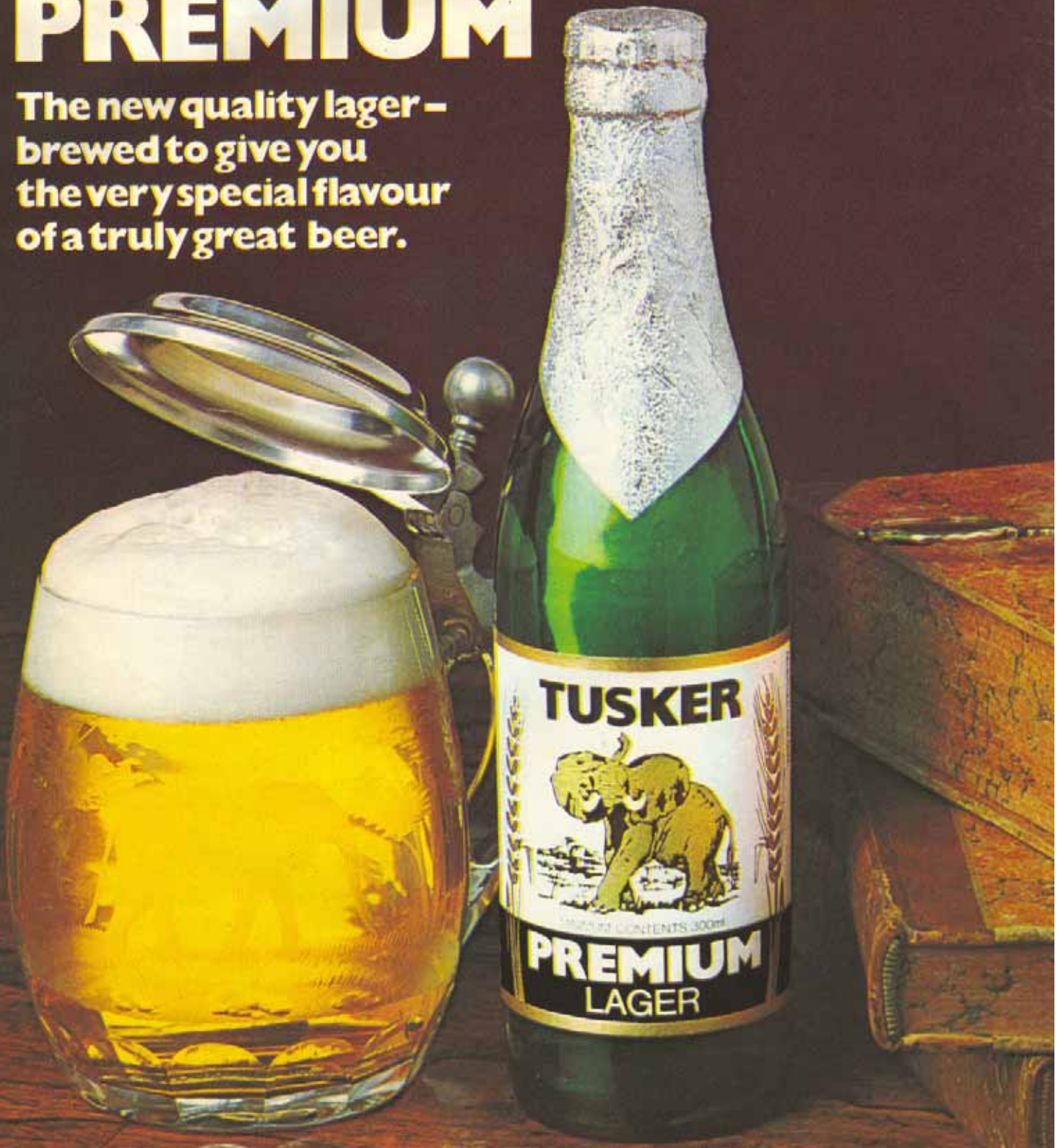
Vol. 7. No 1



THE MAKING OF A MAN IN KENYA'S DESERT NORTH.

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Africana

Incorporating "Panda News," the quartely review of World Wildlife Fund-Kenya.

GUEST EDITORIAL: SOLOMON OLE SAIBULL,

Minister of Natural Resources and Tourism, Tanzania

The Serengeti and the rest are a world responsibility

THERE is a new emphasis in Tanzania's wildlife policies — towards greater protection of the resource and away from any form of "direct utilisation," including sports hunting. This is now applied in our management, research and teaching practices.

As an indication of the changing attitude, the word "game" is being replaced with "wildlife" in describing the *living* resource we are committed to conserve.

I believe that in the past the concept of conservation in East Africa was confused. It appeared that the overriding policy of the "Game Departments," as they were called, was the protection of wildlife for recreational purposes; for providing sport for a relatively few affluent and invariably white hunters.

These people did not hunt for subsistence, nor even to make their fortune. They hunted strictly for pleasure, and since they wanted this to last, they were prepared to help in the conservation of game. In some ways a paradoxical situation — wildlife protection for the purpose of wildlife destruction.

But at least the "pastime-hunters" were concerned that their "game" species remained in existence, whereas the illegal hunter — the poacher — and the trade he supplies have no such concern. And it is on this topic that I should like to comment in more detail.

It started when local residents, mostly of Arab and Indian descent, discovered they could make a comfortable living and even become rich through dealing in the products of dead wildlife, notably ivory and rhino horn.

The beginnings of the business in East Africa were modest, but from the middle of the sixties it grew out of all proportion, causing serious depletion of the wildlife stock which persisted until quite recently.

This has now largely stopped, but such trafficking as there is in poached wildlife and in live animals and birds may be beyond the resources of any single country to control. What is necessary now is international action against the major markets abroad. So long as these markets are allowed to operate without restraint, the elimination of poaching and smuggling in East Africa will be an impossible task.

We know who the smugglers are and we know their agents in the field — mostly African tribesmen. Somali, Kikuyu, Kuria, Chagga, Pare and Maasai probably in that descending order of menace although poaching has spread to a number of other tribes. But due to their wide-ranging nomad wandering in East Africa, the Somali are the most notorious and the most elusive poachers. They are also involved in the smuggled export of wildlife "products" and so are a complete chain in themselves to the markets.

Arabs and Indians rarely engage in the "field work," but they are the recipients of African poaching. They are the smugglers, the traffickers, the fat middlemen who connect the poachers to the overseas buyers.

These chains must be broken somehow, and broken decisively. The governments in East Africa can individually step up their action against local operations. Improved co-operation between neighbouring countries against poaching and smuggling would help. But the decisive action would be the closure of international trade in endangered species and the regulation of the market for other species and their products.

I must emphasise, however, that what I am suggesting would to some extent hurt the fragile economies of some countries, such as Tanzania. The consequence would be to reduce legitimate State "utilisation" of wildlife, — and this, I think, ought to be made good through increased support for the local conservation effort by the international community.

At present, international demand for wildlife products exceeds the capacity of the trade in East Africa to supply it. This increases the profitability of both legal and illegal dealings in wildlife and the result is a continued progress to extinction of a number of species, most obviously the black rhino.

It is therefore imperative that the world demand be reduced and thereafter strictly controlled in respect of threatened and endangered wildlife. Otherwise, one by one, these species will disappear forever from the face of the earth. And this "One Earth" we have will be the poorer for it.

In East Africa, we understand that the rhino, the elephant and other species are

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non-renewable natural resources of great economic importance, actual or potential. We know we must not waste or misuse these resources. But neither should the world watch passively as African wildlife declines to the point of no return. Conservation, as I suggested, is a global responsibility.

The export of ivory and rhino horn has been, and could continue to be, a thriving business for Tanzania. The international markets will take as much of this "primary produce" as we could supply.

But we would prefer to conserve, which is to keep alive, our remaining stocks of wildlife. The constraint, ultimately, is only the cost of doing so.

With this in mind, I should like to further explain official attitudes and policies towards wildlife in Tanzania and to reinforce this editorial appeal.

We believe that *regulated* trade in live animals and birds which are not threatened or endangered is acceptable. This is a business which can be controlled, assuming the countries concerned have the will and capability for the essential monitoring. As I have said, all trade in endangered species should be banned, except where the supply helps the regeneration of the species in reputable wildlife research and breeding institutions which may eventually export back to the country of origin and so re-establish or strengthen the local stock. To stop this exchange would of course be foolish.

So far as Tanzania is concerned, there are only five sources of supply to the legal trade in wildlife "commodities."

- Products obtained from animals shot on official "control operations," in protection of crops, livestock and human life;
- Products recovered from poachers and illegal dealers;
- Products from animals cropped to preserve the natural habitat;
- The product of dead, found animals;
- The product of strictly controlled, licensed hunting in certain parts of the country.

However, we estimate that only a third of the volume of wildlife products exported at present from Tanzania derives from these legitimate sources of supply. The rest comes from illegal activity — from poaching and smuggling.

We do what we can to counter this, of course, but we feel that the time has come for the international community to pay greater attention to our concern about the decline of a number of species in Tanzania. Not many of them are endangered to the extent they are elsewhere in East Africa, but we are worried about the future of black rhino, all the big cats, zebra and one or two antelope species.

What we are doing ourselves is to further strengthen our anti-poaching forces and to reduce licensed hunting in the current July-December season. There will be no hunting of rhino at all during this period. But beyond these limited counter-measures, we can do little more without outside assistance.

There is virtually no private money for conservation in Tanzania, nor any coming into the country. The costs are borne almost entirely by the national Exchequer — and this includes the maintenance of the Serengeti, Ngorongoro, the Selous and twelve other parks and reserves. This is a significant drain on our resources for which there are other priorities.

In my view, it is not right for the world to insist that Tanzania guarantees the preservation of this "world heritage in trust" if, in the process, the people of Tanzania must go without adequate food, water, clothing, shelter, health and education facilities. Clearly the basic needs of the people must be met, after which we could guarantee that Serengeti and the rest Shall Not Die.

The world should of course understand this and if there is genuine international concern for wildlife and wilderness conservation in East Africa, I suggest there is an outstanding opportunity in Tanzania for a practical expression of this concern.

The sponsored or assisted development of tourism is one way in which Tanzania's commitment to preserving the parks and reserves could be reinforced. But, so far, no international agency is willing to provide aid in this area because tourism is regarded simply as a "business." Yet we are convinced that so long as the development is properly planned and administered, tourism is also a main support and an important instrument for conservation.

In Tanzania, we know what to do in terms of tourism development, and where to do it. But we do not have what I call the "transformative resources" to implement the plans properly — or even implement them at all. We have all the reports and recommendations we could ever use; that much assistance has been given us. We need no more reports, only "transformative resources."

For this reason, we appeal to the international community, to the developed nations, for substantial assistance in the two areas I have discussed — in controlling the trade in respect of wildlife species whose survival is in the balance; and in developing conservation-orientated tourism.

We are optimistic that with this assistance, together with proper management and planned exploitation of wildlife we can provide the guarantees that the world requires from us: That we protect and preserve our natural resources, our wildlife and parks, not only for our own benefit but for mankind in general, present and future.



YOU, SIR, ARE A LOUSY ESTABLISHMENT MAN

A sell–out to popular opinion and the Kenya Government on the issue of managing the National Parks

SIR — As a long-time reader of *Africana* and frequent visitor to Kenya, I was pleased, if somewhat surprised, to see the excellent article "A Time For Sense Not Sentiment on Culling the Game" by Robinette and Blankenship in your December '78 issue. Of course it's 20 years too late, but isn't that because during those 20 years the truth has been systematically suppressed?

After the pleasure of reading this intelligent and cogent article, it was doubly disturbing to read the subsequent guest editorial by Iain Douglas Hamilton.

How very disillusioning that a man, who has long been admired and respected by those of us who must follow wildlife issues from a distance, has chosen to disregard facts which are readily apparent to casual readers and occasional visitors and which should be even more apparent to men actually in the field.

I can't imagine what Mr. Hamilton was thinking when he chose to label as "out-of-date" the issues raised in both the "sense-not-sentiment" paper and the Esmond Martin interview with Peter Beard. Since when are the essential principles of ecosystem conservation out-dated?

Mr. Hamilton's espousal of the cause of romantic ruralism was so cunningly presented and his refutation of opposing views so largely based on evasive innuendo that I feel compelled to clarify some of his points.

For one thing, Mr. Hamilton writes rather loftily of his work in Manyara, yet neglects to mention the recent die-off of one-third of its elephant population. What does this have to say for his much vaunted policy of minimum interference?

Later in the editorial, he states that *(ex-Tsavo Research Project Scientist)* Dr. Richard Laws endorsed a policy of elephant culling in Tsavo. Unless I am reading Mr. Beard's interview incorrectly, this is simply not so. Dr. Laws *stopped* a programme of arbitrary culling and instead urged a scientific sampling of elephants over a five-year period. This sampling, which would have involved less than half the number of elephants originally targeted for culling, was not a management recommendation but was instead a means of finding out what to recommend. Dr. Laws' plan was prevented and his suggestion ultimately resulted in his being asked to leave the country.

One of the few remarks of Mr. Hamilton with which I have no quarrel is his admission that there is no simple answer to the problem of overcrowded elephants in Africa. No, there certainly is not, but there *are* steps which can be taken to at least begin the process of correction. Such as honesty.

The scientific research compiled by Dr. Laws and the original Tsavo research team, much of which was reiterated by Robinette and Blankenship, so clearly indicates the immediate need for strict park management that I cannot understand why your magazine continues to hide behind platitudes and rhetoric. Why this artful manipulation of the facts? Why this clever defense of past and present errors? Could it be that your magazine and Mr. Hamilton are stuck with having backed the wrong horse? If so, then admit it and stop insulting our intelligence with glossed-over treatments of urgent subjects and with your alarmingly condescending commitment to ignoring, twisting, or dismissing all evidence which does not support the laissez-faire theory of game management.

If the editors of *Africana* prefer to take the expedient route of subscribing to the popular and established point of view on wilderness development, then I believe they have abdicated their responsibility to its readership and hopelessly compromised its legitimacy as a spokesman for the conservation concern. We concerned "outsiders" whose money you'll take, but whose opinions you don't want to hear unless they conform to your own, are at a loss. Who are we to turn to for leadership in and realistic appraisals of 20th century man-made problems which nature alone simply can not correct?

The survival of elephants in Africa can not be accomplished by the elephants themselves. Intervention by man in the form of scientifically planned culling, fire control, population dynamics analysis, and other measures, is the only reasonable solution.

Unless we are willing to accept the continuation of unparalleled animal and habitat destruction, a new approach to the function of African National Parks must be accepted.

Two years ago, I was privileged to attend the World Wilderness Conference where Dr. Kenneth Tinley delivered a paper on "The Maintenance of Wilderness Diversity in Africa". Dr. Tinley emphatically presented the case for meticulous land-use planning and exposed the idiocy of the notion that national parks should be absolute sanctuaries, a notion that is advantageous only to central government and private enterprise.

Mr. Hamilton would do well to read this paper, or, if he doesn't care to take the time, to at least read the letter by Eston W. Kabuitu in the very issue of *Africana* as his editorial. In three short paragraphs, Mr. Kabuitu says it all.

It is not out of mere sentimental regard that I concern myself with the fate of the African elephants — do not delude youself that all of your foreign readers cry themselves to sleep at night over *The Orphans of Tsavo* — rather, I am becoming more and more uneasy with the increasingly obvious parallels between the elephants' fate and our own. This parallel, I notice, is a major theme in the works of Peter Beard.

I am quite curious as to why you illustrated his interview with a photograph of Richard Bell and a Ugandan "excusion", plot in a high rainfall area. How does this relate to Tsavo? I am forced to conclude that you deliberately stooped to the insidious ploy of showing the superficial greening of a Ptomkinesque landscape without even mentioning the fact that the ecosystem photographed requires not green grass but woody browse.

As to the text of the interview itself, I shall charitably overlook the innumerable typographical errors and address myself to



This cartoon is republished from "It's our World Too. "Collins for WWF) The book is available from WWF—Kenya at Shs. 26/- (Incl. p.)

THE EDITOR: 'AFRICANA,' P.O. BOX 49010, NAIROBI, KENYA.

the introduction. Having followed Mr. Beard's career since the first *End of the Game* in 1961, I am growing very bored with the constant gratuitous references to his supposedly flamboyant lifestyle.

Personally, I couldn't care less if he goes out with the world's most beautiful women or the world's ugliest men and I fail to see its relevance to the readers of *Africana*. What I *do* care about and am grateful for is that so much of the energy and attention of one of the world's most gifted photographers has been focused on an issue of concern to us all. It is all well and good for the sentimental school to claim that if only the elephants were left alone, they would eventually obtain a dynamic balance with the habitat but it is Mr. Beard who shows us this "dynamic balance" with his photographs reminiscent of the Gadarene swine poised at the edge of the cliff, of elephants huddled together in a wasteland searching for food, or eating the bark of trees.

I can only wish that even more of his compelling vision was concentrated on Africa, that his voice was louder and more often heard (though perhaps not so obscured by rage and disgust, however justified). As it is, it's scarcely listened to at all for Mr. Beard has committed the social blasphemy of presenting us the facts without the usual trimming of apologies, excuses, and distortion. This he is able to do precisely *because* he is (in your terms) an "outsider", he has no constituency to answer to, no job to lose, no power or position to maintain; he has the freedom to speak the truth. Genius, after all, is simply articulating, or in this case, photographing, the obvious. It is *not* the muddied thinking and juggling of half-truths which seem to be the primary vehicles through which *Africana* and the Kenyan eco-scientist set justity their opinions and theories. Mr. Beard, Dr. Laws, and the others may be saying things that we would prefer not to hear, but we would be wise to remember that while Cassandra was never believed, she was always proved correct.

This letter is not intended to be an indictment of either *Africana* or Iain Douglas Hamilton but merely a plea. There can be no future without a realistic assessmnent of past mistakes and present problems. *You* have the platform from which to launch an honest appraisal of the questions and concerns I have raised and I urge you to do so without regard to political considerations or provincial loyalties. I am eagerly awaiting your response.

Mrs. Wm. H. Piper,
1192, Park Ave.,
New York,

●*The letter, I suspect, is a con. A sleight of hand by the master of man-management himself, Peter Hill-Beard. It would be ungallant to call the literate and well-informed Mrs Piper a "front person," but the typical Beard style of sense and truth buried in bullshit is unmistakable.*

First the truth:-

●*Beard, Laws, Piper & Co. are right. Elephant in Tsavo should have been shot (scientifically culled) before they damaged the park, ate themselves out of a habitat—and died of starvation and stress;*

●*David Sheldrick, former Warden of Tsavo and a greater man than them all, was wrong in declining to execute the elephants. A reasonable human response, but on present evidence a mistake;*

●*Beard, Blankenship, Piper & Co. are right in insisting that wildlife and wilderness in East Africa should be subject to "strict man-management," although this assumes that we're going to be able to find enough manpower, finance, expertise and integrity for the job they have in mind.*

●*Anyone who supports the opposite policy of "letting Nature take its course" is wrong. The Order of Nature in East Africa is already disrupted by disorderly human intervention. In effect, an irregular, unofficial man-management by land-grabbers, poachers and assorted political bandits, including a few ecologists.*

All this, I might add, is yet another restatement of the editorial opinion of the Editor of this magazine — and has been since 1971 when Peter Beard first offered his end-game papers for publication.

Note the singular, Mrs Piper: "Editor." And note the distinction between editorial *and* contributed *opinion which on the Tsavo business has been a kind of dysentry of dialectic.*

Which leads us to the other matter... that which overlays Beard's sense and truth and is, in fact, the substance of Mrs. Piper's letter

A pathological analysis is indelicate, and perhaps unethical. But sometimes the stream of abuse from correspondents ought to be examined in detail and shown up for exactly what it is. In this case, a number of aberrations are indicated of both physical and psychosomatic origin, as follows:-

(i) Missing organs

Specifically those issues of "Africana" in which the views of Messrs. Beard, Laws, R.M. Watson, I.S.C. Parker and the like were not suppressed but published in full. Only libel and sedition omitted. Plus the occasional technicolour desriptions of local wildlife scientists, e.g. "self-seeking kiss-asses (sic): jugglers; politicians...and competitive jealous little runts."

(ii) Selective vision

●*Example:*

Subject sees Iain Douglas Hamilton's "rural romanticism" whatever that is, but failed to see his accurate prediction of an elephant die-off in Manyara and the alternative he proposed to the park management's policy of "laissez-faire" or "minimum interference." (Africana Vol. 5 No.8)

(iii) Dyslexia

Gr. *dus,* "bad": lexikos, "word." A mental aberration of word distortion and/or reading the reverse image of what is written.)

●Example:

Subject has read in the magazine "an alarming condescending commitment to ignoring, twisting or dismissing all evidence which does not support the "laissez-faire" policy of game management... and of taking the expedient route of subscribing to the popular and established view on wilderness development."

Whereas, the words actually printed (Africana Vol. 6., No. 11.) are as follows:-

"I personally (the Editor) would support other priorities:-

●*"The formulation of a policy for efficient man-management of each national park and reserve related to the specific wildlife/habitat conditions in these areas, plus whatever is needed in terms of budgets, equipment and manpower....*

●*"The reorganisation of the (Kenya Government's) Department of Wildlife Conservation and Management for more commitment, competence, imagination and ethics in its administration."*

*Word distortion is also evident in the subject's reading of the magazine as pro-(government) Establishment: (*Ref: inter al. *Africana, Vol. 6 No. 6: "A Kenya Odyssey.")*

(iv) Deja-vu

Subject "charitably "overlooks" numerous typographical errors which were in the proof sent to P. Beard, but not in the interview as published. (They were mostly corrected before publication.)

(v) Partial Amnesia.

●*Example:*

Subject remembers that Dr. Laws talked the Kenya Government out of a management cull in Tsavo, but forgets that he carried out a scientific cull of 300 elephant before talking himself out of a job. (His resignation was required not so much for his game management theory — the man is acknowledged the best in his field — as the offensive manner of his delivery.)

There is more...Evidence of clinical hysteria in a general composition of the letter...euphoria ("Beard the genius")...and over-production of bile (the jaundiced reference to Daphne Sheldrick's "Orphans of Tsavo...."

But enough said. Too much, perhaps — except that the objective of the full diagnosis is reasonable:-

To persuade intelligent contributors like Messrs. Beard, Pipper & Co. to read the magazine more often and more closely; make sensible, detached judgments on the issues discussed; and put forward these judgments with more manners and less offence — **Ed.**

IAIN DOUGLAS HAMILTON ISN'T SO GREAT EITHER

SIR. — I do not normally read "Africana" magazine, so that it was only last week that someone pointed out to me that your issue *(Vol.6 No. 11)* carried a photograph of me seeming to endorse Iain Douglas-Hamilton's comment on Peter Beard's book, *The End of the Game.*

More of that later; in the meantime, I read through the issue and was quite favourably impressed: it looks as though much of the sentimental rubbish has been drained off into "the other magazine", leaving the more interesting material in "Africana."

I felt, however, that Iain Douglas-Hamilton's article. entitled *"Why Resurrect the Dead Elephant Issue",* was an exception to this happy state of affairs. Iain Douglas-Hamilton's argument boils down to two points:-

● There is no such thing as an elephant problem; therefore cropping is never necessary;

● Illegal hunting has reduced many elephant populations to dangerously low levels, so that the major management consideration at present is law enforcement.

These two points are blurred to some extent in the article, to produce a Yossarianesque argument, as follows: "We don't have a problem, but the poachers have solved the problem which we don't have".

I find this argument a disappointingly narrow approach to one of the two central questions of conservation, which is: "How should we manage our wildlife resource?"

Under the heading of "management," fall the following — law enforcement, habitat control, tourist development, economic utilisation etc, as no doubt discussed by Robinette and Blankenship (whose article I haven't seen but which sounds excellent).

I say "how should we manage", not "whether we should manage" because there is no such thing as "no management."

Laissez-faire means that the legally constituted authorities responsible for management have abrogated their responsibility in favour of illegal and fortuitous influences. There is therefore an inseparable relationship between law enforcement and management.

In order to answer the question "How should we manage", we must first answer the other central question of conservation which is: "For what are we managing? What is our objective?".

This, as I have argued elsewhere, is at once the most difficult and the most important decision in conservation (or, indeed, in any form of development). It is an *aesthetic* not a scientific decision: it is the basic design decision of landscape architecture. Once this decision has been made, then the answers to such questions as at what level to maintain elephant populations, either through cropping or law enforcement, must follow easily and without stress. With regard to the choice of objective for a conservation area, I agree with Iain Douglas-Hamilton that there is no single answer, or even set of principles to follow, and that each situation should be treated separately according to its individual characteristics.

The first step in elephant management, therefore, is to decide for the area concerned — what is the desired elephant density, taking into account considerations of soils, vegetation, other animals, crop damage, and economic objectives (i.e. tourism and revenue from cropping products). Having made this decision, conservation areas fall into three classes with respect to elephant management:

(i) those in which the elephant density is below the desired density as a result of illegal hunting (i.e. Kabalega and Ruwenzori National Parks, Uganda);

(ii) those in which heavy illegal hunting is taking place, but in which elephant densities are having significant impacts on the vegetation (i.e. Luangwa Valley, Zambia).

(iii) those in which illegal hunting is insignificant, and habitat stability must be maintained by cropping (i.e. Kruger National Park, South Africa).

The first two classes are interesting in that illegal hunting has carried out or is in the process of carrying out, management plans that have been advocated by the legally constituted authorities, as a result of decisions made on the acceptable levels of habitat change. There are obviously two solutions to this paradox; either to legalise poaching for the duration of the cropping programme, or to abolish it and substitute cropping.

The first of these alternatives deserves serious consideration for several reasons.

Firstly, poaching has very low overheads as a result of not having to abide by unrealistic meat hygiene regulations, low transport and accomodation costs, and low wages. It is this feature that has made poaching so successful where high technology cropping has often been an expensive failure.

Secondly, poaching provides food, employment and revenue to rural populations in just the way advocated by so many integrated land use plans. Poaching, in short, is intermediate technology.

Of course such a system, especially where ivory is involved, would need to be very closely policed if it were to be regulated at the desired level. But would it require a much greater investment than the alternative, that is, abolishing poaching and substituting cropping or complete protection?

This is a hard question to answer. However, what is quite clear is that to regulate elephant off-take by either means is a difficult and expensive process — Iain Douglas-Hamilton makes this point plainly. What he does not do is to go on to indicate exactly what is involved in terms of money, staff, training and infrastructure. The Wildlife Research Unit of the Malawi National Parks Department has approached this question by carrying out a preliminary "catch-per-effort" analysis of law enforcement activity. We estimate tentatively that the minimum density of Game Scouts required for effective law enforcement is one per 50 sq. km. of area at risk. This compares with existing figures of Kafue National Park, Zambia, — about 1:140sq. km; Tanzania:- about 1:140sq. km.; Tsavo National Park, Kenya:- about 1:150sq. km.

Those are among the better protected national parks in Eastern Africa; most others are much worse off. Indeed most areas fall so far short of a realistic establishment that it is difficult to believe that the authorities concerned are serious in their commitment to law enforcement, in spite of great lip service paid to it. In fact, in terms of most aspects of management, (i.e. cropping, utilisation of timber and other resources, fire control etc.) most legally constituted authorities have abrogated their responsibilities.

I therefore second Iain Douglas-Hamilton's appeal for a genuine and intense effort towards law enforcement, *in order to allow us to manage our wildlife resource in a rational way.*

We can now turn to the original question of the reversibility (or otherwise) of habitat change caused by elephant (or anything else) and see it in its proper perspective.

The degree and reversibility of a change is only a problem in relation to the stated objectives of the conservation area in question. If a reversible change conflicts with these objectives, then it must be corrected by management. If an irreversible change is consistent with these objectives, then it should not be deflected by management.

I therefore wish to dissociate myself completely from the implied agreement with Iain Douglas-Hamilton's comment on Peter Beard's book, firstly because the question of habitat reversibility is irrelevent to the discussion of how to manage a conservation area in the absence of a statement of objectives by the legally constituted authority; and secondly because this example is misleading, for the following reasons:

"Cropping is effective in reversing habitat change; therefore cropping is unneccessary."

So I was delighted by the typographical (?) slip in the caption that described the exclosure plot as an "excusion" plot. This must be an experiment designed by the "New Ecologists" to excuse elephants from any blame in ecological problems.

— R. H. V. Bell,
Box 43,
Kasungu,
Malawi.

ON WILDLIFE ECONOMICS



'Do they expect a tip?'

From "It's Our world too" (Collins for WWF)

Sir — in the last issue of "Africana" you made the astonishing statement that " *related to any profit and loss account, the game ought to be exterminated"!* You went on to say that *"we"* fiddle the tourism accounts, leaving out debits in social costs to make it appear worthwile for the government of Kenya and Tanzania to *"carry"* their parks and reserves.

Coming from anyone this would (in Mr. Troughear's words) be "puerile rubbish" — let alone from a magazine carrying the World Wildlife Fund emblem. It is by no means impossible that some governmental decision-maker somewhere will read the magazine and the credibility of conservationists will be damaged in process Luckily, in Kenya and Tanzania the Governments are apparently better informed. William Davis on page eight quotes a "top official" in Kenya as saying *"wildlife.... has proved that it has a right to exist not only as part of the aesthetic inheritance of the country but also because it is an economic proposition".*

You may, of course, have written your provocative nonsense to stimulate a useful flow of economic argument in favour of wildlife conservation — a clever tactic in some contexts, but far too risky here and now. It appears that "Africana" is guilty of very poor tactics or extreme ignorance.

You should know the scale of the economic benefits of tourism and wildlife better than anyone. Elsewhere in the magazine *(p.18)* you quote Kenya's tourism receipts as exceeding $100 million a year. Research has shown that a high proportion of even those tourists who only visit the beaches actually select Kenya because of the optional attractions of its wildlife. So it is fair to assume that a high proportion of the total tourism receipts are directly related to wildlife.

So, what are the "debits" you refer to? What are those enormous "social costs'2 that outweigh the economic benefit to the nation of all that foreign exchange? (Without foreign exchange there would be no oil, no manufacturing industry, no tractors for road building, agriculture etc.) The answer is, of course, that the social costs are insignificant by comparison. For example, the number of Kenyans who are exposed to the alleged evils of tourism is

very small in relation to the total population. Most of the "damaging" exposure is hardly different from exposure to the whole modern development process which inevitably alters traditional culture.

Another possible social cost would result from maintaining wildlife on land that could be more economically used for agricultural or industrial purposes. There may (just) be some areas where this applies, but we all know of plenty where the reverse appears to be true — for example in Tsavo (Kenya's largest game park) there is no competing use for the land that would yield higher economic returns, that is, as long as the elephants remain there to attract the dollars and Deutsch Marks. A similar argument applies to the majority of the areas reserved for wildlife.

If this is true now, it is likely that wildlife will be an even more valuable economic resource in decades to come when unspoiled wilderness will be an extreme rarity. The scarcity value of Kenya's wildlife will then make it possible to charge tourists much more than we do today.

The chances of the game surviving would be increased if conservationists — "Africana" included — got the accounting straight. Once you have done that, your philosophical or aesthetic arguments may be heard with more sympathy.

Finally, you said that wildlife conservation was no more relevant than, say, the imminent collapse of the Acropolis. Apart from the rather obvious economic arguments, you ignore the potential value to man in many scientific fields — (e.g. medicine) of millions of years of evolution that are locked up in irreplaceable animal and plant species. Some animal or plant may — if not killed off — yield a cure for cancer; the possible benfits are enormous.

— Name and address supplied.

I AM NOT publishing the correspondent's name and address by request. But he's a Welshman in banking or insurance, or sounds like it. In any event he's a very serious fellow.

So serious that he failed to read light, irony in our apparent support for madaxeman Marxists who would exterminate the game for economic, social but mostly political reasons.

Irony, incidentally, being defined as ... *"the simulated adoption of another's point of view for the purpose of ridicule; the use of language that has an inner meaning for a privileged audience and an outer meaning for others."*

The correspondent is clearly one of "the others," and for him we must obviously spell it out simply and very seriously:-

●We do not support the destruction of wildlife; or does WWF-Kenya;

●We are not economists, but neither are we entirely ignorant of local wildlife/tourism economics.

●We are occasionally "tactically provocative" in the magazine, but usually apply long experience of local publishing in a calculation of "risk" against possible "return."

For which reason, I would argue that this letter indicates the quality of information currently fed to government decision-makers in East Africa by wildlife experts. Not "puerile rubbish." It would be impolite even to imply it. Just poor quality information.

Vide:-

1. Tanzania does "carry (subsidise) its parks and reserves. The responsible Minister says so. *(Editorial, page 3)*

2. In Kenya, historically, only Nairobi and Nakuru parks make money directly from wildlife.

3. Research does NOT show that "a high proportion" of Kenya beach tourism is related to the wildlife/safari option. This is rarely in the package of beach strip attractions sold without much conscience, imaginstion and "national benefit" in the basements of Europe. *(Ref. a K£300,000 research of the international "Kenya Coast Planners" group reporting to the Treasury. Or merely ref. the emphases of "kaufhof" advertising of the Kenya beach.*

4. The estimated gross annual revenue from Kenya tourism — the $100 million — might or might not include a "national" as well as a "private" profit from the business. So far as I know, no-one has yet done the sum: Indirect benefits, whatever they are; plus the balance of direct revenue to the Exchequer (return on investment, fees, taxes, etc.) against all government costs (infrastructural, management and social.)

It could be that, as of now, the country is losing out on tourism. *(Ref. another indicator — as discussed by Jack Block in the last issue — which is the performance of the government's tourism investment parastatal, the KTDC.)*

5. There ARE "wildlife debits" which are not written off by rhetoric.

Just one example: In Laikipia where wild animal strays from Mt. Kenya Park and refugees from the north are said to be responsible for large debits on the local farm accounts. The government could try offering cash compensation for loss of life and property, but the indications are that it will accept the farmers' demand for the immediate total removal of the wildlife liability from their land.

6. Finally, the social costs of tourism development are not normally "insignificant." Not in other areas of rampant tourism in the world and probably not right now at the Kenya Coast.

Ref:--

(i) The sociologists' section of the Treasury report;

(ii) The projected cost of remedial social development in one small area of the Coast — of around $100 million. (The magic figure.)

Or merely ref. any Kenya beach resident who has been mugged, burgled, accosted, conned or otherwise offended by people who could be responding to a differential between their own life-style and life as they see it on the golden strip.

However, in some respects, the correspondent is right!

There must be "economic justification" for preserving the African wilderness for tourism — if not now then, as the man say "in the decades to come" when Europe runs out of green space.

There is also undisputed justification for wildlife conservation in the area of aesthetics, philosophy and culture. Even science, medicinal and the rest, so long as ecologists and game-meat economists stop debiting the public account with expensive research for nil return; and so long as they improve the quality of information they feed to government decision-makers. — **Editor**

THE UNKINDEST CUT FOR A FEMALE

Sir – Would a father allow his son's penis to be completely cut off? No! Then why does a father allow his daughter clitoris to be completely cut off?

A clitoris is a miniature, residual penis. The intense pleasure experienced by a woman from her clitoris, either during masturbation or sexual intercourse, is equal to — or more than — that of a man's pleasure from his penis.

Do people who still practice the custom of clitorodectomy realize what a clitoris is? Do they realize that an embryo of a baby, while still in its mother's womb has both male and female sexual organs? At an early state of foetal development one set becomes residual (does not develop any further) and the baby is either a boy or a girl. (There are cases where the male organs develop on one side and the female organs on the other. Luckily, these cases are rare.)

There isn't much sign of the residual female organs in a man, other than that he has a percentage of the female hormone *(estrogen)*. A woman has a percentage of the male hormone *(testosterone)* and her clitoris (residual penis).

A "Maasai Africana Reader" in "Letters: P. 19, Vol,6 No. 11 states that " circumcision of a boy helps in cleanliness. Agreed. My two sons were circumcised on my husband's and my written approval in the hospital when they were five days old. They don't even remember it, but I remember crying for them.

"Maasai. Reader" goes on to state that "it is more difficult to justify a woman's option for clitorodectomy."

Would a woman *have* an "option" for a clitorodectomy when she was four years old?

"Maasai Reader" goes on to state that a clitoris is an "obsolete thing but harmless and not worth the bother to remove it"

A clitoris may be RESIDUAL, but it is not "obsolete" and *it is certainly worth SAVING!!!*

"Maasai Reader" also: "Women do not need surgical assistance to prolong sexplay. They usually take a bit longer than most men can wait — which is very disappointing to everybody!!" Well, after her organ of pleasure is cut off, what does he expect?

"Maasai Reader" goes on to justify the Maasai concept of God and I agree with him Many religions have God as male — but God is a thing of the spirit; of the mind which is not "male" or "female".

The Christian religion, while it did not surgically remove the clitoris, rendered it inoperable by stating that sexual intercourse was sinful.

Pleasure-in-sex helps to keep a man and woman together long enough to raise healthy, happy children to adults. It is a gift of nature and should not be denied to women either surgically or psychologically.

Clitorodectomy and sewing up of the labia have been methods of controlling population. But when these practices are stopped, girls and boys, men and women should be instructed in, and supplied with, methods of preventing *unwanted* pregnacy. "The Pill" for women and vascectomy for men are the only 100 per cent effective methods.

WANTED babies are the most loved, and babies, in any country, need 50 per cent LOVE and 50 per cent FOOD etc. to be happy and healthy.

— Norma F. Bicknell Batchelor Crescent, Galgary, Canada.

P.S. I am 52 years old, married 26 years; have four children and one grandson. I was educated to level of B.A. (Medical Technology) at the University of Saskatchewan, Canada.

ARTICLE: KARL VON ORSDOL

UGANDA WAR DIARY

ARTICLE and photographs by KARL von ORSDOL, a 26-year-old American engaged at Cambridge University on post-graduate studies in applied biology. Until recently, he was in Uganda researching lion predation at Ruwenzori National Park, but left after forty of his study group of lion were shot. Von Orsdol himself was generally harassed and once shot at by Tanzanian soldiers camped in the park.

UGANDA is a land of tragic ironies. The people are basically peaceful and friendly, yet their history is a chronicle of tribal and religious strife. Their land is fertile, yet under-productive after eight years of Idi Amin's tyranny and the uncertain "liberation" that followed it.

When the invaders from Tanzania first arrived, the people danced in the streets. But now, six months later, the celebration drums are silent. In terms of basic freedoms, the Ugandans are probably worse off than they ever were.

But my particular concern is for Uganda's wildlife in the Parks along the Nile, at Kidepo and at Ruwenzori where I lived and worked for four years. It was bad enough in Amin's time, but I watched a massacre after the arrival of the Tanzanian Army. When I left, the Park was silent like the drums. From the verandah of my cabin, I heard nothing. No dawn chorus of grunts from the hippo, nor even the once familiar night-noise of hyena. And for me, more distressing than anything else — no sound, or sign, of my study group of lion.



Dead and abandoned hippo, Ruwenzori National Park: picture Karl von Orsdol.

The following extracts from my diary tell the story of Ruwenzori National Park:

April 19, 1979: The first of the Tanzanian army units marches through the Park. Infantry plus tanks and heavy artillery. The column passes herds of buffalo and kob, but not a shot is fired. Well-disciplined firstline troops, obviously saving their bullets for Amin's retreating rabble.

April 27: Woken up before dawn by machine-gun fire. It turns out to be Tanzanian troops (rear-guard *shenzis?)* hunting for hippo. Sporadic fire through most of the morning, and the result is four hippo dead and butchered on the spot. Apparently the meat is going across Lake Edward to Zaire as well as to local markets.

Several hippo have been hit, but not followed up and killed. These will slowly bleed to death, maybe tonight or tomorrow or the next day. We'll know the score when their rotting bodies eventually wash ashore.

Hippo left unscathed are as far out in the water as they can get, as if they expect the guns will be back.

April 28: The guns are back! At least five hundred rounds fired within earshot of the Park Headquarters.

April 29: The Park was left with only three vehicles by the retreating Amin forces. Then the Tanzanians commandeered one of these, returning it today with its engine wrecked. They said they needed it to supply the troops in the park with food and water. But, as a senior warden pointed out to them, they'd used it to transport poached meat.



Tanzanian troops supervise the field butchery

April 30: The Tanzanian Army arrives at the Ishasha section at the southern end of the Park, where I am also studying lion — the famous tree-climbing *simba*. The commander requests permission to shoot for meat.

June 15: The troops at Ishasha pack up and depart. They've been reasonable, taking no more than about four buffalo a week for the garrison. During their stay, four soldiers were arrested by their officers for poaching. The unit leaves with thanks (for decent behaviour) from the Parks' staff.

June 18: We are treated to a show which reminds me of what it must have been like in the American bush when they were eliminating buffalo. A truck arrives, open-backed and full of about fifteen Tanzanian soldiers. They go for a herd of about four hundred topi, blazing away as they crash and bump along — missing more than they hit. They keep up the chase for several miles, then slowly pick up the corpses strewn around the battleground. They ignore the winged and wounded.

June 28: The above scenario has been repeated almost on a daily basis, with more or less the same callous intensity.

June 29: This diarist's routine observations are interrupted by bursts of machine-gun shells passing close to his head. The lions quickly flee; so does the diarist.

July 6: I'm told that more than fifty civilian poachers have been arrested in the past two weeks. I'm also told that the Police released all of them on orders from the Tanzanian Army. Having routed Amin, they are now in the country to restore law and order.

July 9: Five hippo and two elephant carcasses are decorating the shore immediately below Mweya Safari Lodge. But the stench permeates the entire lodge area and since there are no Tanzanians claiming the meat, a senior Park's officer orders them towed away.

The Park's staff have thus become undertakers to wildlife, but in no way willingly. The protests have been loud and frequent. But they are fobbed off with lies by the Tanzanian commanders, threatened by the troops, and ignored by the government in Kampala. No ranger patrols are sent out in the Park, with good reason. They'd almost certainly be mowed down with the game.

July 10: The shooting in and around Park Headquarters intensifies. One bullet flying through camp just misses a bus-load of schoolchildren. We — me and a Park's officer — make our fifth (or is it sixth?) trip to Kasese to complain to the unit's commander.

He says he will do what he calls " his level best" to stop the poaching or at least the careless spraying of bullets among human non-combatants in the Park.

Stopped on the way back by one of his platoons, another irregular hunting party. One of them points a rifle at my head in response to my protest. He explains that "this is war" and that anyone interfering in its honourable progress may be summarily executed. He further explains that if they can't help themselves to the local wildlife, they would have to loot the local peasantry they are liberating and protecting.

July 16: One of my lions is machine-gunned today. I had been studying it closely since April 1977 and the radio collar I had attached was clearly visible. The camouflage paint had rubbed off.

July 20: Another lion in the same pride is shot and killed. I'm told the skins are to be taken to nearby Katwe for export to Zaire.

July 25: One of the two remaining Park vehicles takes people to the dispensary at Katwe. On arrival, the driver is ordered out at gunpoint and the truck driven off by Tanzanian soldiers.

July 26: Park Headquarters are informed that the truck has crashed at Katwe and that the tyres, engine and other vital parts have been sold in some other town.

July 27: I hear that even the villagers are complaining now about the hunting in the Ishasha section. They reported a recent haul of the usual load of topi, plus seven lion carcasses.

July 28: Two American tourists take a launch trip along the Kazinga Channel. They pass a group of Tanzanian soldiers and civilians butchering hippo. Guns are levelled at them, so they put down their cameras and raise their hands. The threat is obvious — take pictures and get shot.

July 30: Rangers in a nearby Game Reserve arrest a group of civilians with poached game meat. A few escape and later return with Tanzanian troops. The Rangers are told to release their prisoners and not to arrest anyone in future. No interference with the meat business or else!

August 3: I go on a launch cruise with two Americans, counting hippo. Our tally is 85 alive, 78 dead. Tanzanians stop the boat twice and demand to know what we're up to. We are innocent tourists, of course, and later view three Tanzanians supervising the butchering of a hippo.

August 15: Two Ugandan officials, concerned with wildlife conservation, arrive at Ruwenzori for a fact-finding visit. Both are shot at in separate incidents.

Late August: Radio Uganda announces the withdrawal from the parks and return to barracks of the Tanzanian troops. But Perhaps the order hasn't reached Ruwenzori because two soldiers kill a lioness and sell her cubs.

IT MUST be said that many Ugandans (and some Tanzanians) did all they could to stop the wildlife slaughter in the process of the war and after. Among them were Dr. Eric Edroma, Chief Research Officer at the Uganda Institute of Ecology and Mr. William Ochira, Acting Chief Warden of Ruwenzori National Park. If there is any improvement in the situation as I saw it when I left Uganda, then these two deserve a large share of the credit.

But of course the "situation" should not have occurred in the first place. To me it's ironic that the Tanzanian government has a reasonably good record for wildlife conservation and yet still allows (or allowed) its army to plunder the game in Uganda. Direct orders from Dar es Salaam to stop the killing were expected, but then a great deal was expected from Dar which never happened. In particular, the promised total withdrawal and an end to the "liberation." Another tragic irony in the history of Uganda.

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OFF-BEAT SAFARI

ARTICLE: by ALAN EARNSHAWE — Cartoon: MOYRA OWENS



"Take twelve pairs of Tackies. . ."

HILLABILLY STYLE TO THE 'JADE SEA'

IT is still true, in theory at any rate – and I hope that venerable doyen of coast-lore, Mr. Edward Rodwell, will bear me out on this — that if you want to cut down a fruit tree on Mombasa Island you must have the District Commissioner's permission.

What, you might be wondering, does Mombasa and mango trees have to do with the mighty Milgis lugga and the mysterious Mathews mountains? Are Kenya Canners, perhaps out there in the desert sands to make a killing from the Ndorobo?

Well, later maybe, when Lamu to Shimoni is one great megalopolis on Kenya's north-eastern seaboard and the fruit-growers are thinking of heading west on Route 66 through Ijara, Garissa and Garba Tula.

No, what I had in mind was just how futile the law can be if the law-enforcement officers are disinterested in using their authority to see that the laws are properly carried out.

To be perfectly honest, hewers of fruits trees on Mombasa Island — be they real estate developers or charcoal burners — may yet be going to the DC for permission to cut down trees. But I do know that when we ran into poachers on a just killed reticulated giraffe on the Milgis in March 1977, and subsequently reported them to the Game Warden, Wamba, the same man who received our report somehow managed to make it to the Crocodile Bar at Nyama Yangu Lodge before we did, and that was quite a remarkable feat (as we were very thirsty ideed after ten days camelling in the Mathews.)

There has probably always been poaching in the north. George Adamson, when he was Game Warden, Isiolo, encountered quite substantial poaching of elephant, rhino and giraffe, by the Turkana and Ndorobo in particular, during his period of duty in the late 1930s.

He made three extensive antipoaching tours of the Mathews and Ndotos between 1930 and 1945, and, it is interesting in this day and age to read how he found Turkana poachers hunting rhino for their hide to make into sandals, the horns being thrown away after they had been used for pounding the skins into a state of greater suppleness!

However, I digress. Poaching there will probably always be, but the extent depends not only on the external demand but also on the quality of the government officials entrusted with dealing with this menace.

That is why I am pleased to report that good things are happening once again in Samburu under the new wardenship of Walter Njuguna, and in the new Shaba Game Reserve under the wardenship of (I think his name is) Evans Gatutia.

Perhaps there is a new wind blowing down the luggas of the north.

This year, when attemping to take camels up into the magnificent Ngeng Valley, we even came across a government official who actually volunteered poaching information. He was Samuel Lekesio Lentukunye, the Assistant Chief at Ngilai Trading Centre. It didn't amount to much, at least superficially — some wild fruits, a recently-chewed *mshwake* and a Somali *shuka* picked up by a young Samburu herdsman in the bush — but it was something, and to a skillful and experienced observer it could mean a great deal. Alien cultural artefacts or fruits in season in another part of the mountains can be very singular and telling evidence.

On our return to Nairobi we made out a report to the Game Department and we recently received a letter from the Assistant Chief at Ngilai saying that: "Since you left the place we did not see anything like poachers or any suspects, although the anti-poaching unit have been patrolling the area several times but there are no signs of poachers."

Poor chap. He was rather surprised, I think, that action had actually been taken. You see, the main receiver in the area is well known and up until very recently his bar was stocked from an official Mess in Wamba so that he can ingratiate himself with the locals. For this reason it was usually quite difficult to rake up any prompt action from the hierarchy in

Wamba who are all in cahoots. I should say "were" in cahoots, because apparently there have been quite a lot of changes taking place in the upper echelons of local government in the area, mostly for the better.

However, the proprietor of what I shall call the "Red Kudu Bar" is still "in place," as is the Somali duka-wallah. Unfortunately, wherever one finds individuals of an alien tribe living far from home it is almost impossible nowadays not to be suspicious of them. Perhaps the new breeze blowing in the north will be encouraged by the Wildlife and Conservation Management Department here in Nairobi and a survey done of these alien scorpions who are found, not only in the north, but in many parts of Kenya where they are doing great damage to basically honourable tribes like the Maasai and the Samburu.

Why all this heat generated by a few wild fruit, a mshwake and a Somali shuka?

Ah, to appreciate that you have to have walked along the magical Milgis in the shadow of the Ndotos — the Dreaming Mountains — and strolled down the shady boulevards of the Seiya lugga of a clear-air evening. You have to have scrambled up towards the forest-clad peaks of Loomolok looking for the elusive greater kudu and have bathed with the trout in the ice-cold waters of Burton's pool or stood on top of Kisin — Klipspringer Rock — gazing out over the Ilaponyeki plains towards the far Karisia Hills.

Then you will understand how easy it is to get passionate about the Mathews, or Ol Doinyo Lenkiyio — in the Maa language "the mountains where the child got lost."

The Mathews, geographically-speaking, are a forty-mile series of mountains which together with the Ndotos and the Nyiru range are part of a chain of inselbergs — or island mountains — which dominate the N.F.D. like the backbone of a now-extinct stegosaurus. Ol Doinyo Sabachi, or Lolokwe, is the braincase perched at the end and with the mountain tail floundering in the waters of Lake Turkana, its islands still rising up like relic tail flukes.

John Hillaby, the "Jade Sea Hillbilly," sat on Lololokwe on an early safari taking this all in and immediately went and bought himself dozen pairs of "tackies" — sneakers, plymsolls or what have you — and off he set like a latter-day Burton on his journey of exploration.

Reading his very forthright account of his inexperience and initial ineptitude, it is fascinating to wonder just how many of the explorers in the early days were perhaps just as charmingly naive and unprepared. George Adamson who, as late as 1939, was still able to write that the greater part of the Mathews had never before been visited by a white man, was certainly not in this category. Nor was the highly respected elephant hunter Arthur Neumann, or "Nyama Yangu," who hunted for big ivory in this area around 1902. According to George Adamson "Nyama Yangu" was "one of the very few Europeans who left a lasting impression on the Samburu" — no small compliment.

In 1977 we were due to make camp at one of his old haunts, the Ilkerrai water-hole, but in the heat of the day while we dozed in little caves cut out in the mshwake our camel train unwittingly passed us and we were forced to slog on after them, catching up with them only at nightfall. Fortunately for us "Nyama Yangu" knew his stuff when he camped at Ilkerrai because we found water there by digging in the sands of the Milgis Lugga, this at the end of that great long drought which began in the north in 1971.

The Milgis, like the rest of the country around the Mathews, is very deceptive when it comes to water. Although the whole area is desert, you would never think so going by the startling greenery of some of the acacia foliage and the existence of many large trees along some of the luggas. But just how dangerous this deception can be was found out by Count Teleki on his safari to Lake Turkana in 1888 after he had "discovered" the Mathews — named after General Lloyd Mathews, the British official who did a lot to help Teleki's expedition get under way — and was headed for Barsaloi.

Near Barsaloi, after spending a whole night digging in a lugga before they found water, and a whole day before enough of it had seeped through for everyone to have had a drink, so great was the danger of the trek foundering from thirst that the good Count had to stage a fifty mile forced march to Mt. Nyiru where plenty of water was said to be available.

He just made it, although many of his porters nearly died of exhaustion and dehydration on the way. It's tough country allright even though, now, after all these unusual rains, most of the luggas are flowing like permanent rivers! In fact one is hard pushed to get a camel up some of them. We learned this in '77 on the same trip that we became very thirsty at Ilkerrai and were subsequently held up at gunpoint by poachers near Ntumot Eserem at the junction of the Seiya and the Milgis.

Obviously the Fates didn't think we were getting our money's worth out of the N.F.D., because immediately after we had craftily extricated ourselves from the poacher ambush, we found ourselves in the dead of night being washed away by a flash flood of fairly awesome dimensions. The skies had been totally clear that day, as they had been the entire trip, and having almost died of thirst a couple of days previously it was little wonder that when Tony "Lugga Legs" Church climbed a rock in the evening to survey the sunset and saw a tiny streak of silver in the distance in the bottom of the lugga, he should regard it with satisfaction as "something to wash the dust off the camels' feet."

Unfortunately it did a little more than that! It was full moon that night and no sooner had we gone to bed — on higher ground than the camels luckily — than it seemed as if somehow we had been translocated into the path to the "Flying Scotsman" en route from London to Edinburgh. The lugga was in flood and, like the "Flying Scotsman," it had a schedule to keep, one of the non-stop types.

One minute we were admiring "Hillabilly's" moon over the Mathews, the next all was pandemonium as all of a sudden a dozen and a half camels decided that three legs were better than none and started off down the lugga at an alarming gait. Even those that did get out of the hobbling ropes were quickly overtaken by the flood and soon our whole complement of "ships of the desert" was serenely afloat. In fact, so serenely that all efforts to help the beasts were met with more than the usual growls and groans of protest.

Camels adapt very quickly to a new status quo. The camel syces, unhappy wretches, were all running around stark naked looking for their shukas and "thousand-milers" which had been the first articles washed down stream, and it was left to the Kambas among our camp staff to dive into the swollen, silt-laden torrent to sever the "hand brakes" by which the camels were customarily hobbled at night. Human chains were then formed to tug in the floating animals as they swirled by. Five Derby hopefuls were finally retrieved about two miles down river, washed on to a little island in the flood, and had to be towed back, bellowing their concern at all the fresh elephant and lion spoor around. The lugga subsequently flowed for another three days, forcing us to detour into higher ground. Nothing is ever predictable in the Mathews and it is often paradoxical.

Having said — and will continue to say — that "in normal times" this is real camel country. Traditionally, even during the hunting days, the Mathews was always a foot-and-camel area where you left your motorised transport at Isiolo or Serolevi or Wamba and proceeded from there on foot, camels carrying everything you required for a safari of whatever duration. In my opinion this is an excellent idea, and ecologically-sound safaris of this nature should be given wider encouragement by the Ministry of Tourism.

To the south are the Samburu and Shaba Game Reserves where more conventional game-viewing can be done, but the Mathews we should keep as a true wilderness area. Not that there isn't game around — elephant and buffalo can be quite plentiful and there are many lion and cheetah out on the plains — it is simply that we shouldn't over-civilise all our wild country or the true safari mystique will eventually disappear. What is needed is for the Wamba County Council to take the whole area and turn it into a proper reserve with a full complement of game rangers to patrol it, with proper entrance and camping fees, but with no vehicles being allowed in.

Another corps of camels needs to be stationed at Wamba now that the one at Barsaloi has been disbanded, and the one at Serolevi needs to be strengthened and encouraged. There are some very fine camel-men at Serolevi but their job has not always been an easy one. Each unit should have at least twenty trained adult camels, adequate veterinary facilities for the camels and proper tack. In addition, both corps should be managed and booked from Wamba, not Maralal as is presently the case.

But what am I talking about? I don't really want these suggestions to be taken up anyway or the next time I'm along the Milgis I might get knocked over by enthusiastic joggers who find the sands of the lugga more of a challenge than dodging the traffic on Fifth Avenue.

WRONG RHINO FIGURES

Sir — The review of the status of the black rhino in Kenya, by Drs. Hillman and Bradley Martin, in the last issue of "Africana" was interesting to read, but I was very surprised to see that I had been completely misquoted in the table giving the rhino population of Samburu-Isiolo Game Reserve in 1973.

The implication is that John Barkham and I estimated a population of 69 rhino living in the reserve from our aerial survey. How far from the truth this is!

Only five rhino were seen during this aerial survey, which covered 25 per cent of the reserve area, and we therefore estimated a population of only 20 rhino in the whole reserve. During the same survey, a population of 59 rhino was estimated for the 2,200 sq. km. area around and including the game reserve.

Furthermore, during our three months field-working period in the reserve, the six-member expedition saw rhino on only four occasions. No rhino were seen during two series of ground (Land-Rover) transects, which covered 50 per cent of the reserve area and included all parts of the reserve. Readers may be interested in the conclusions the expedition reached on the status of black rhino in Samburu-Isiolo Game Reserve in 1973:

"The animals are very shy and have suffered greatly from poaching on the edges of the reserve in the north and the south where their remaining strongholds lie."

Therefore the decline of rhino in Samburu-Isiolo G.R. has not been as rapid as the Africana article seems to suggest. However, the actual rate of decline is now irrelevant, compared with the serious problem of how to effectively conserve the remaining two to 10 rhinos, whom I hope have not been poached as I write this letter.

– Clare Shorter (nee Ridding)
Box 30020, Nairobi.



A mongoose named Mollie

The first white-tailed mongoose I ever saw I shot dead.

We were living on an ancient mission station on the shores of Lake Victoria back in the mid-forties. We were new to the country and when one of the fellows working for us came rushing into the house one evening with the news that there was a creature outside that needed to be shot, I hustled out with my shotgun in one hand and a torch in the other. We were still having language problems but I grasped that the animal was a bad actor.

The torch picked up a form scampering across the yard and it didn't take much marksmanship to stretch it out dead in the grass. As I examined the exquisite soft, pearl-gray fur of the small animal I realised it was a mongoose. I began to wonder how bad it really was. The answer that it killed chickens was sufficient reason to put it in the accused class with my African friends. But I never killed another.

There were many striped *mongas* in that area and we saw them often. A large family of them running through the grass in a long line, giving the illusion of a great snake travelling in high gear, was a sight worth watching and we saw it often.

Moreover, there was an ant hill in the yard, old and white, its pipes resembling a cathedral organ. A whole family of the striped variety would disappear into it to reappear with a little head sticking up out of each pipe. I only wished they could have sung a song.

Several years later, in the forest area on the western side of Lake Victoria, I witnessed a battle between two small brown *mongas* and a black mamba. The grass was quite tall but the fighters had beaten down an area about 15 feet square. The snake was in the centre with its head held about 3 feet above an untidy mass of twitching coils. The fight was in full swing when I almost stumbled into the arena. Neither the snake nor the *mongas* paid any attention to my arrival. The little animals were running in opposite directions around the coiled snake trying to make it dizzy or at least give one a chance to attack. The snake's eyes moved from one to the other of the darting animals. Suddenly it struck, its coils flying in every direction.

Fighting

Three times it struck, missed and recoiled, and each time the mongoose failed to get the advantage and kill the snake. How long they had been fighting before I came I do not know, but suddenly they called it a draw — the *mongas* diving off into the grass and the snake gliding away, its head held regally above the long grass like a periscope.

That those two little *mongas* would tackle a snake of that calibre made me a confirmed admirer of *mongas* of every species.

During those years, the white-tails were our close neighbours; in fact, they almost lived with us. Although they did in a few of our chickens we chalked that up to nature and allowed it to go against the garbage they collected.

I found that a squeaking noise made with the lips attracted them and often they came close to see if I was a mouse or a bird. One moonlight night, I called a mother with three small ones until they came and stood in front of me trying to puzzle out what kind of a creature I was. One of the kits climbed up on my shoe and nibbled at the lace while the mother peered up at me from every angle.

However, it wasn't until a few years ago at our home in Kijabe in the Kenya highlands that we really got acquainted, on a first name basis, with a white-tailed mongoose. "Mollie" was her name.

Our son, who was then teaching at Rift Valley Academy, came down to our house one evening to say that he had acquired a new pet — a baby white-tailed mongoose. It had been washed out of its nest in a drain and picked up by some of the students. They had turned it over to him. Now he came asking for a nursing bottle, that he knew we had, especially made for animals. He wanted to see if he could keep the small animal alive.

For the next couple of weeks we received periodic reports on the baby mongoose's progress. Jon was keeping it

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Prof. CHARLES GUGGISBERG is one of the most prolific authors in East Africa an authority on wildlife and a noted historian. In this article, he looks back on thirty years in Kenya and claims that in some ways the state of the game is better now than it was then.

WHEN my wife and I arrived in East Africa in 1946, Nairobi National Park was just about to be gazetted. I knew that wildlife had suffered badly during the war years — enormous numbers of animals had been killed on the Laikipia Plateau and elsewhere in order to feed the Italian P.o.W's, for instance. But the creation of a national park close to Kenya's capital city seemed to indicate a definite turn for the better.

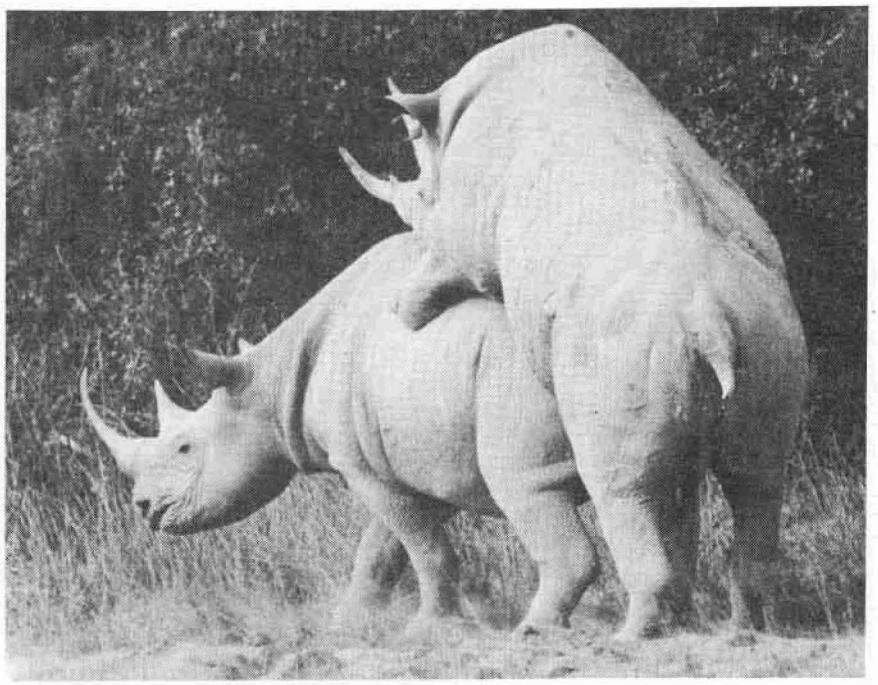
Game reserves had of course been in existence for a long time — without them the animals could not possibly have lasted through the first three decades of the present century. They had been set up after East Africa was split between Germany and Britain towards the end of the last century by administrators sent out by the colonial powers! Among them, were many remarkable men who took a lively personal interest in the little-known areas entrusted to them; in the peoples they had to rule — the German, Merker, and the Englishman, Hollis, wrote fundamental books on the Maasai long before the First World War — and in the wildlife they encountered on their safaris. Some, like Sir Harry Johnston, H. von Wissmann and Sir Frederick Jackson, were keen naturalists before they joined the colonial service, and they devoted all their spare time to the study of the fabulous array of animal life for which East Africa was rapidly becoming famous.

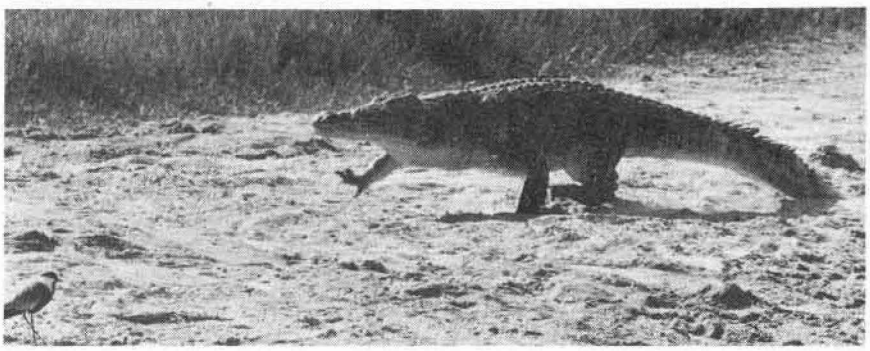
They clearly saw the dangers that the advance of civilisation would bring to this remnant of the pleistocene fauna, and they took steps to safeguard it for future generations. It can be said that their efforts were successful beyond anything they could possibly have visualised. Strict game laws were drafted, which put an end to indiscriminate slaughter. In German East Africa, as early as the 1880s, von Wissmann, the first governor, formulated a set of excellent regulations and took special measures to protect the much depleted elephants. A sportsman visiting the country was allowed only one of these animals, for which he had to pay 500 Rupees.

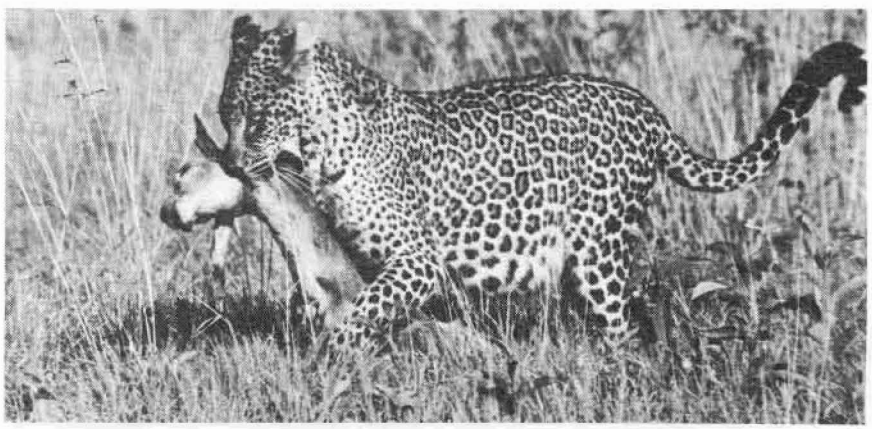
It was soon realised, however, that game laws alone were not enough; that certain areas had to be entirely closed to hunting.

In Kenya, three game reserves were established as early as 1900, designated as the "Sugota," "Jubaland" and "Ukamba" Reserves. The first two later became merged into the *Northern Reserve*, while the so-called Ukamba Reserve was renamed the *Southern Reserve*. Both survived up to the end of the second World War, but it had long been realised that they were too big for effective control.

Plans for streamlining conservation had already come under discussion during the thirties. There were suggestions to turn the part of the Southern Reserve immediately adjoining Nairobi into a national park and to establish another park in the dry bush country of the Tsavo region. But decision had not been reached by 1939, and the terrible events engulfing practically th whole world caused the projects to be shelved for the duration. When they were resuscitated soon after the end of World War II, they at first met with considerable opposition, but this was overcome by a well organised and persuasive propaganda campaign instigated mainly by Colonel Mervyn Cowie, later the Director of Kenya National Parks.







THE GRAND PARADE: pictures Charles Guggisberg.

The long-delayed gazetting of Nairobi National Park was followed in 1947 by the creation of Tsavo National Park, which to this day has remained the largest park in East Africa. The Mount Kenya National Park was established in the same year, and the Aberdare National Park in 1950.

The Northern Game Reserve was turned into the "Marsabit Game Reserve," later to be reduced to the area around and including Marsabit Mountain, and the Samburu Reserve north of the Uaso Nyiro. Buffalo Springs Reserve on the south bank of the river and Shaba Reserve, east of the main Isiolo-Archer's Post road, were added later.

In 1948 an important sector of the old Southern Game Reserve became the Amboseli National Reserve, and in the

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same year, part of the once famous hunting grounds along the Mara River was made into the Mara National Reserve.

On the Serengeti Plains of what was then Tanganyika, a partial reserve came into being in 1929. It was turned into a full reserve in 1937 and, together with the Ngorongoro Crater, became a national park in 1950.

In Uganda, the old-established game reserves along the Victoria Nile and at Katwe on Lake Edward were gazetted national parks in 1952.

Thus, during the years immediately following the war, conservation seemed to make excellent progress, with a considerable number of parks and reserves established on an apparently sound foundation. But to visit these areas, you had to be prepared to drive on often very rough tracks and to carry camp equipment and provisions. There was a permanent camp, on the rim of Ngorongoro and, at Amboseli, a camp built by a film company was turned over to the national parks' authorities which made it available to visitors at the beginning of the Fifties. Another simple lodge was soon afterward opened in Ngulia Valley of Tsavo West. All those lodges were of the do-yourself style.

The people touring the parks and reserves at that time were mainly Europeans living in East Africa. Of the overseas' tourists, still few in numbers, a considerable percentage came for hunting big game, thus continuing a tradition going back to the first decade of the present century. Shooting trips were organised and outfitted by local safari firms and led by professional hunters, and you had to be in the big money league to indulge in this kind of sport. It has to be admitted though, that in the 50s and 60s the East African economy derived considerably more benefits from the trophy hunters than from the scattering of visitors who came to photograph animals within the conservation areas.

Hunting for sport was of course subject to very strict rules and regulations, and a professional hunter caught breaking any of them would have been very severely dealt with. As far as East Africa is concerned, the kind of mass-slaughter the uninformed public commonly associates with shooting safaris had, as has already been pointed out, come to an end at the turn of the century with the establishment of game laws and game departments. Ever since, the amount of game animals a sportsman could shoot had been strictly limited, the schedule being reviewed from time to time and changed in accordance with the numerical decline or increase of certain species.

After buffalo had been practically wiped out by rinderpest during the nineties, they were given complete protection and made such a miraculous recovery that after a short time it became possible to allow one, later two and even more specimens on a sportsman's licence. Until the recent



advent of four-wheel drive vehicles, light airplanes and helicopters, it was of course almost impossible to assess East African animal populations with even a remote approach to accuracy, and it cannot be denied that in their efforts to arrive at tolerable cropping figures, the game departments had to rely on a considerable amount of guesswork.

The introduction of game laws created the poacher. Humans being what they are, this was an inevitable development, and the game departments had to be given the necessary powers to keep illegal hunting in check. So long as it was mainly a matter of people in the bush occasionally getting some free meat for their families, the problem was not serious. But after World War II, game animals came under increasing pressure through large-scale poaching, which rapidly became big business and developed into a major threat for wildlife, a threat that the administrative authorities seemed unwilling to counter in a really effective manner. They were quite obviously losing interest in conservation and began to act in complete denial of the principles which a few years previously had found official acceptance and acclaim.

It would perhaps be unfair not to admit that the pressures the administrators were coming under could not have been foreseen even a short time before. With population figures rising dramatically, there was a clamour for more and more land to be made available for agricultural development. Conservationists saw a new danger taking shape, perhaps even more devastating than the illegal slaughter that was going on practically unchecked in all parts of East Africa, and they frankly stated their fears. But, in one instance, the Kenya Government answered by commissioning a professional hunter to exterminate all black rhinos in the Makueni area in order to obtain 50,000 acres of land for African settlement. The hunter massacred no less than 1,088 of the species, which now is so close to extinction within conservation areas in Kenya.

The Tanganyika government did not hesitate to move in the same direction, providing full proof — if such were needed — that national parks were by no means the inviolate sanctuaries one had hoped they would be.

A governor, well-known for his antagonism to wildlife conservation, decided against expert advice to excise the eastern Serengeti, Ngorongoro and the whole of the Carter Highlands from the Serengeti National Park. But the world-wide uproar that followed this autocratic action prevented him from opening the region to general slaughter, and he compromised by turning it into what he was pleased to call a "Conservation Unit". The animals were still theoretically protected, but the wonderland of Ngorongoro was opened to human exploitation with all the dangers this entailed for wildlife.

Considering the way those early administrators — men with independent, inquiring minds — had fully acknowledged their responsibility for the unique fauna, of which an accident of history had made them the trustees, this change of policy, this total loss of interest which could easily destroy the devoted work of half a century, was difficult to understand. It must be remembered, however that to some extent administrative posts in the colonial service became political appointments, stepping stones in a political career. Whether he likes it or not, to be a political careerist is to be something of an opportunist, able to adapt his views in accordance with whatever "wind of change" that may be blowing across the political scene.

In East Africa, agitation for independence was now in full swing, and there could be absolutely no doubt about the impending end of colonial rule. The administrators found themselves in a very delicate position. They had to remain in the "good books" of their political masters in Europe, on whom their futures depended. Their superiors, on the other hand, were determined to remain on good terms with the future rulers of the colonial dominions. Thus in order not to make themselves and their masters unpopular, the local administrators gave in to demands for agricultural land, even if situated within a well-established national park, and refused to act against poachers. Moreover, none of them would have been so foolish as to blot their copybooks by advocating more national parks and game reserves.

There is reason to assume that they honestly believed they were acting in the best possible way, for their economic and financial advisors had fully convinced them that game parks would never attract a sufficient number of tourists to add even the most modest contribution to national revenue. As far as the experts were concerned, conservation was an unmitigated nuisance, and they regarded the conservationists as a bunch of poor fools, whose pipe dreams would be swept into oblivion when the independent governments assumed power. The theory was that the new Africans would abolish the parks and



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reserves, making the only pssible economic use of their animal inhabitants by having them slaughtered for their meat, their skins and whatever else could be turned into money.

But experts can be wrong of course and looking at the state of the world today, one cannot help wondering whether economic experts might not be wrong more often than not! They certainly were wrong in their prediction that there was not the remotest chance of East Africa's conservation areas ever becoming a paying proposition.

At just the right moment, reasonably priced charter flights turned East Africa into an important target of world tourism, and the trickle of non-hunting visitors to Kenya, Tanganyika and Uganda, grew into such a stream that their impact soon surpassed — and by far — that of the comparatively few hunting parties. In direct contradiction to expert opinion, the conservation areas had almost overnight turned into national assets of very considerable value.

Enormous efforts were immediately made to open up the parks and reserves to this lucrative invasion from Europe and America The road system had to be improved and extended, and there was of course an urgent need for suitable accommodation. The Uganda parks already had lodges run as hotels, and there was the famous Kilaguni Lodge of Tsavo West, which had been established in 1961, mainly to give up-country Europeans on their way to coastal holiday resorts an opportunity to spend a day or two in the national park. Similar lodges began to spring up all over Kenya and northern Tanganyika.

When the three countries attained independence — with Tanganyika changing its name to Tanzania — tourism had already reached a momentum that no economist planning for the future could overlook. The respective governments were fully aware that they owed this bonanza first and foremost to East Africa's wildlife and, far from abolishing the parks, they set up new ones at Kidepo in north-eastern Uganda; at Ruaha, Mikumi and Tarangire in Tanzania; and at Lake Nakuru, Meru, Mount Elgon and Malindi in Kenya, to mention only a few. A sector of the Amboseli Reserve was given national park status, and a considerable part of the Mara Reserve, though not nominally a park, at least became administered as one and has thus been closed to all human exploitation apart from tourism.

In 1966, Kenya was visited by 103,355 tourists. This figure rose to 275,970 in 1969, and to over 300,000 in 1970. In 1977, tourist earnings amounted to K£8.3 million.

Shooting safaris were still being organised, but with game becoming scarce outside the conservation areas, due both to poaching and to intensified agricultural development, professional hunters found it increasingly difficult to provide their clients with really first-class trophies. In Tanzania, hunting for sport was banned for a while and then permitted again; in Kenya it came to an end in 1977 — permanently, it is said.

Poaching, unfortunately, remained a major threat to wildlife. In Kenya, great harm was done through a politically motivated change. The excellent and highly respected national parks service was dismantled and conservation made the sole responsibility of the Game Department. A somewhat chaotic situation prevailed for some time, and the poachers made full use of this. They become highly organized and acquired modern weapons and motor transport and after practically wiping out the game in many unprotected areas, they invaded the parks and reserves. The most dramatic casualty of all this was the black rhinoceros.

In 1960, Kenya rhino were thought to number about 2,500. I quoted this figure for what it was worth in my book "SOS Rhino" *(East African Publishing House and Andre Deutsch, 1966)* and wrote: "Even though Kenya and Tanganyika are the African countries with the greatest number of black rhinos, there is no room for complacency. If the rhinos are not given the most effective protection possible, they could be wiped out in a very short time."

In fact the 1960 figure should have been much higher, but my prediction has nevertheless come true in a most distressing manner. During the last six years, Kenya alone may have lost as many as 10,000 black rhinos. Tsavo National Park is though to have been stripped off 95 per cent of its rhino population; Amboseli, once such an excellent place for observing the animals, of 85 per cent. For Ngorongoro, Tarangire and Manyara, the respective figures are given as 70, 80 and 80 to 85 per cent.

In 1977, the Kenya Rangeland Ecological Monitoring Unit (KREMU) came up with the figure 1,818 for the black rhino population in the whole of Kenya with the exception of forest areas. Taking into account certain standard errors implied in the method employed and adding an estimated number of forest rhinos, the figure may, in actual fact, have been around 5,000. But in the following year, 400 were killed in Meru National Park alone.

Most people take pride in seeing their predictions come true — I can only deplore that mine has proved so shockingly accurate!

Rhino are still fairly numerous in the Aberdare National Park and regularly visit the salt licks at the two game-viewing lodges, "Treetops" and "The Ark". As to the extent of poaching with in the Aberdare forests, I have information of such contradictory nature that I would not dare to pronounce a personal opinion. Strangely enough, black rhino are now quite regularly seen in Nairobi National Park which 30 years ago harboured not more than two or three. In the course of time a few were transferred to the park from areas taken over for agricultural development, and they have become amazingly well established. I have recently heard of a plan to bring as many rhinos as possible into a special well-guarded reserve, where efforts would be made to maintain and increase their numbers by breeding, until the battle against poaching has been won. It can be stated fortunately, that the gangs of criminals out to rob East Africa of its most precious heritage do not have things all their own way any longer, for well armed and thoroughly trained anti-poaching units have now gone into action. Good luck to them.

It must be admitted that there has also been some perfectly legal over-exploitation of certain wildlife resources. When my wife and I paid our first visit to Lake Baringo in the early fifties, we found crocodiles amazingly numerous. Their scaly backs could be seen crossing and recrossing the surface of the lake, and Kamasia tribesmen stood up to their armpits in the water, fishing for tilapia, without paying the slightest attention to the reptiles.

"Aren't you afraid of the crocodiles?" I asked one of the fishermen as he came wading out of the lake with his catch. He laughed and said: "Why should I be afraid of them? They're not dangerous at all. If you happen to step on one, it rushes off very quickly."

Another Kamasia added: "The crocodiles of Baringo are not like those of Kisumu. There they will eat people — but not here."

A few years later a professional crocodile hunter established himself on the lake and made what can well be called a clean sweep of the big reptiles. Today, you are very lucky indeed if, in course of a trip to Lake Baringo, you catch sight of even a single crocodile.

With crocodile hand bags having become a status symbol among the fashionable ladies of Europe and America, the same kind of slaughter went on all over East Africa. In the Lake Rukwa region of Tanzania, one licensed hunter and his gang of helpers accounted for 45,000 crocodiles. This, of course, is the kind of pressure no species can endure for any length of time, but human exploiters out for quick profits seem to be quite unable to grasp this simple fact. The incredibly short-sighted way in which the crocodile hunters acted is well exemplified in the answer Hugh Cott, one of the world's foremost authorities on crocodile ecology, received when he remonstrated with one of the shooters. "When we finish them here," the man said, "we go on to another place."

Crocodiles, therefore, became very scarce in many areas where they used to be numerous up to the end of World War II. For a time, Kabalega. (Murchison Falls) National Park was about the only place where tourists had a really good chance of getting acquainted with these prehistoric monsters. They have lately shown signs of a very satisfactory recovery in the Galana River of Tsavo East and in the Uaso Nyiro where it flows through the Samburu-Buffalo Springs Reserve. Attempts are now being made to restock Lake Baringo.

Human activities — protective and destructive — are by no means the only factors to have influenced the East African wildlife situation over the past 30 years. You have to live in this part of the world for a considerable length of time to realise fully the degree to which fluctuations of climate can transform the habitat and how much they affect almost all forms of life

The fifties were very dry and Lake Nakuru gradually dried up, turning into a vast salt pan with just a few small lagoons where rivers entered the lake bed. Huge clouds of salt dust were blown into Nakuru township and plans for getting rid of this nuisance by having the white plain covered with salt-loving vegetation were under discussion.

If you wanted to see flamingoes in large numbers, you had to go to Lakes Elmentaita or Hannington which, although low, did not become completely dry because both receive a considerable part of their water from springs situated within the lake bed. Lake Manyara in northern Tanganyika went through a similar process of dessication.

The level of the deeper, fresh water Lake Naivasha fell so much that the whole rim of the small crater known as Crescent Island emerged from the water, forming a long, circular peninsula instead of a crescentic island A large part of the lake became transformed into a vast papyrus swamp which, towards the end of the fifties, began to dry up and was then devastated by vast fires. Drought conditions attained a catastrophic climax during the first half of 1961, causing tremendous losses among domestic stock and wildlife. In Nairobi National Park, the entire annual crop of wildebeest calves was wiped out.

The November-December rains — the "shortrains" — of 1969 brought precipitation far above average, and they went on through January and February, merging into the very heavy "long rains" of 1962. The floods resulting from this excess of rain



THE CLOWNS: Among them, the giraffe. Picture: by FABBY: one of a series of eight postcards (appx. same sixe) available from World Wildlife Fund — Kenya.

were said to have caused quite as much damage as the preceding drought had done. Lake Nakuru filled up and the flamingoes, which had been absent for so many years, returned in force. The same happened at Manyara. The basin of Lake Natron in northern Tanganyika was flooded to such an extent that the flamingoes which Leslie Brown had found nesting there a few years previously moved to Lake Magadi where, in 1962, they formed a breeding colony of about a million couples. Unfortunately they have never returned to this very accessible place. Lake Naivasha also rose, and Crescent Island resumed its normal size and insular status. Around Lake Victoria, port installations were flooded and goods sheds could be seen standing far out in the water.

During the sixties, rainfall was, as a whole, considerably better than it had been in course of the fifties. Lakes Naivasha and Nakuru remained fairly stable and the Nakuru flamingoes became one of East Nakuru also acquired a large population of white pelicans.

The beginning of the seventies, however, brough a return to drought conditions, and the levels of Lakes Naivasha and Nakuru began to fall fairly rapidly. As the waters of Lake Nakuru receded, their alcalinity increased and the pelicans took to washing the salt out of their pumage by bathing at the mouths of the various rivers entering the lake. To do this they usually congregated in great numbers, and for a time it was possible to obtain spectacular photographs from a hide that had been erected in shallow water and now stood high and dry on a river bank.

With the lake level falling steadily, the pelicans had to perform their ablutions farther and farther out and finally went to other places which suited them better, but were less accessible to the photographer.

The northern parts of Kenya, dry at the best of times, were hard hit by the new drought and Grevy zebra, already over hunted and over-poached, went into a rapid decline. Visitors from Europe and America wrote luridly dramatic accounts of Tsavo National Park turned into a red desert dotted over with elephant carcases. They confidently predicted that the vegetation of Tsavo was beyond recovery and the whole area thus doomed as a conservation area.

But then the last quarter of 1976 brought excellent rainfall,' and precipitation has been far above average ever since. Lakes Naivasha and Nakuru have attained levels higher than in 1962. This may have brought about changes in the composition of the planeton, or it may simply have been the depth of the water over their usual feeding grounds. But whatever the reason, the flamingoes left Nakuru and the tourists were naturally disappointed, even though they could see thousands of pelicans and great numbers of wood ibis, spoonbills, herons, stilts, avocets, sacred ibis, glossy ibis, cormorants and duck. Having heard so much of the lake surrounded by a pink fringe of a couple of million flamingoes, most of them could not get up any enthusiasm over the other species of birds. Small flocks of flamingoes visited the lake from time to time, and at the moment it looks as if these visits might gradually develop into a proper return movement.

For several years now, Tsavo National Park has had a constant covering of high grass. With water available everywhere, game — including elephant — has been able to disperse over a vast area and visitors again have something to complain about.

Nairobi National Park, too, has lately come in for a lot of disparaging comment from disappointed tourists — and locals — and for the time being, I, for one, am very hesitant to take a newcomer into this reserve. It has been amazingly green for years, the grass never turning really yellow as it otherwise does during the dry season, and there is very little game to be seen.

Under normal conditions, the game population of Nairobi Park has always been subject to very marked seasonal fluctuations. Some species, especially zebra, wildebeest, Grant's and Thomson's gazelles — and to a lesser degree, hartebeest — have a strong tendency to wander out to the plains south of the park just as soon as the rains begin. The dry season brings a movement back to the park.

These migrations were very noticeable during the fifties, especially from 1958 to mid-1961. During the catastrophic drought of that year, the total number of animals within the park rose to over 13,000 head. Impala, waterbuck, bush buck and reedbuck displayed a remarkably sedentary behaviour even then.

A lot of interesting information was obtained from monthly game counts, instigated in 1960 and continued into the first half of the seventies. When these counts were started, the wildebeest was by ▶



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far the most common of the plains' animals, up to 2,000 being recorded on various occasions. As has already been mentioned, they were badly hit by the 1961 drought, but produced an unusual number of calves in 1963 and 1964. In Nairobi National Park, wildebeest calves are normally dropped at the end of February and in March, but the first "1963" calves appeared just before Christmas 1962, and in 1964 calving began in January. It looked almost as if the wildebeest were out to make good the disastrous losses of 1961 as quickly as they possibly could.

In 1964, most of them left the park at the beginning of the long rains, as they had always done, but this time very few herds returned during the dry season. The majority obviously found enough grazing and water in the reserve south of the park, thanks to the continuation of the predominantly humid phase that had started during the second half of 1961. They were, however, brought back by the drought that set in at the beginning of the seventies, when, on one occasion, over 20,000 head of game were counted within the park area.

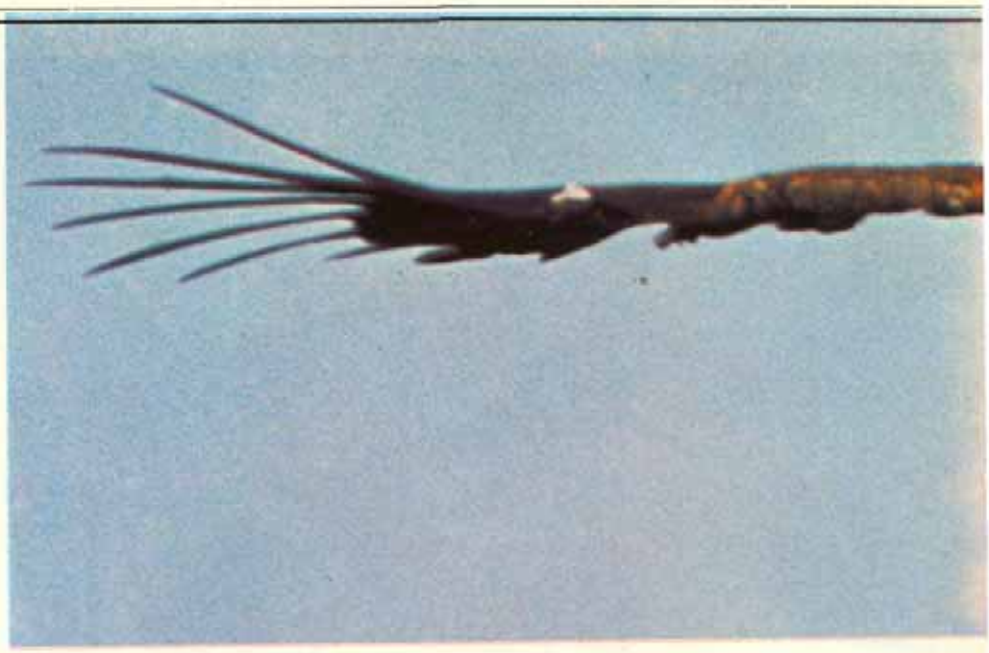
The years of abundant rainfall that followed the drought of the early seventies brought about a very general exodus. Nobody knows how long the present wet phase will last, but once dry or at least average conditions return, the animals which have not been killed off by poachers will presumably come back to Nairobi National Park.

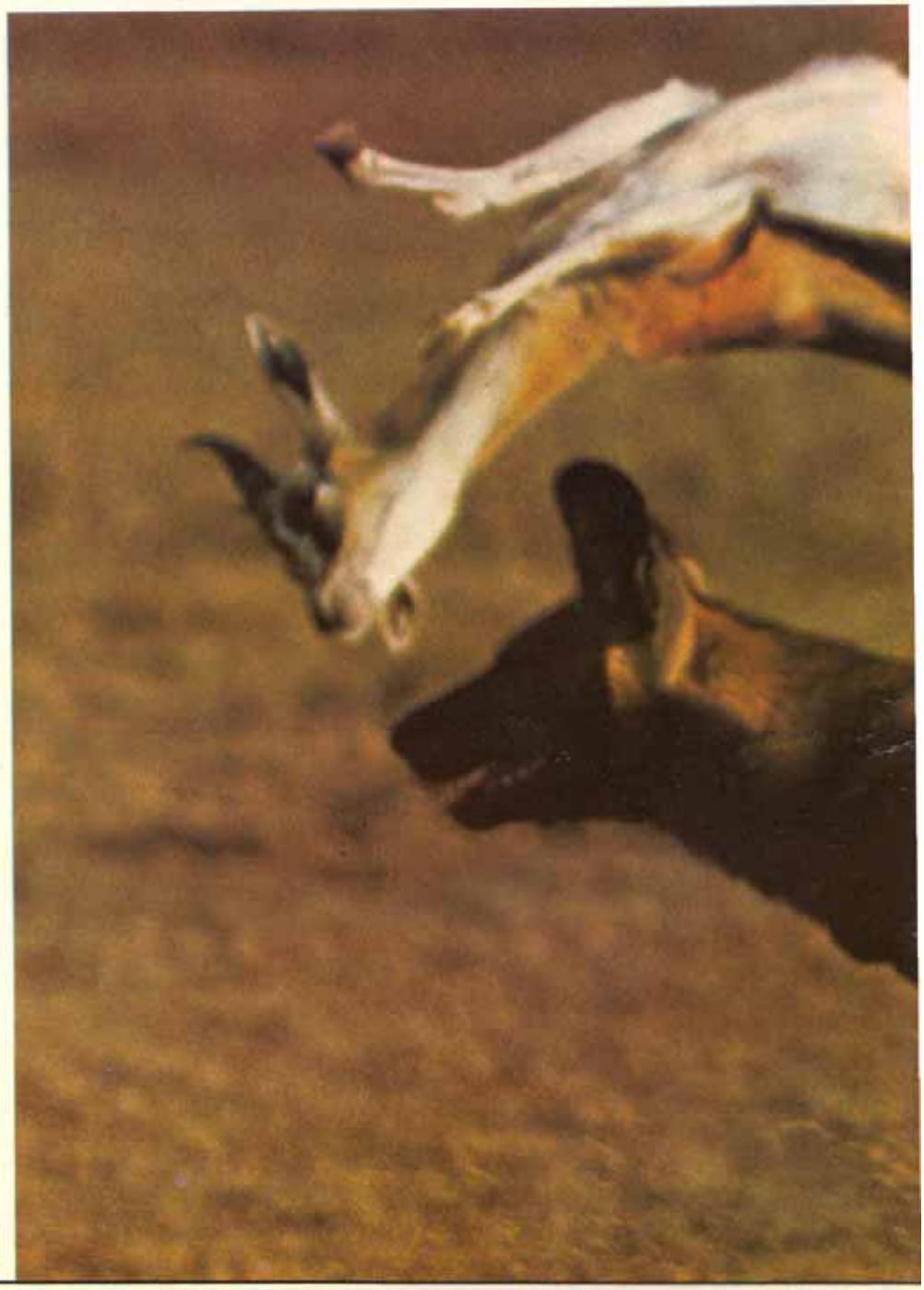
After most of the wildebeest had left the park area in 1964, hartebeest began to increase in numbers and became the dominant game species. During the fifties and early sixties, the lions, as was to be expected, killed mainly wildebeest. Zebra came second among their prey, and hartebeest were taken only very occasionally. After 1964, the lions at first went on chosing their prey mainly from the much-reduced wildebeest population, and several years went by before the now very numerous hartebeest for the first time topped the list of lion kills.

It is pleasant to record that during the last few years even the north of Kenya has come in for a very fair share of rainfall, and at the moment the Grevy zebra seem to show some hopeful signs of recovery.

Changes of habitat quite as spectacular as those caused by man and by fluctuations of climate have, within the last thirty years, been brought about by massive increases in elephant populations. The pretty Terminalia-woodlands, through which I passed on my first safari to the newly-gazetted Murchison Falls National Park of Uganda, I saw not so many years later as vast stands of dead, ring-barked trees. I did not visit this region often enough to follow the tranformation from woodlands to grasslands in detail, but I was certainly able to observe closely the changes brought about by elephants in Tsavo National Park.

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THE AERIAL ACTS. The colour portfolio here and on the following four pages are by Baron Hugo van Lawick from his superb book on Serengeti predators "Savage Paradise." The photographs are reproduced by kind permission of Collins Publishers. U.K.







IT S STILL THE GREATEST SHOW ON EARTH

In 1951, when I visited Tsavo for the first and second time, most of the park was covered by a bushy savanna. It may not have been quite as dense as it apparently was at the turn of the century, when the Uganda Railway was being built, but there were few places where you could see farther than about a hundred metres. Elephants were fairly numerous both in March and September, though you could sometimes drive around for a whole day without encountering a single one. When you did come upon a few, you had to manoeuvre for a long time until the viewfinder of your camera showed you more than an occasional grey back or a flapping ear.

From notes written at the time I see that in September I sneaked to within 40 metres of some elephants not far from Tsavo Station without getting a single picture. I then scrambled up one of the rocky "inselbergs" so characteristic of African landscapes, but even from that elevated point I could not gain an unobstructed view of the animals.

A few days later I had a similar experience near the old Ngulia Camp. After having stalked two bulls without getting a single chance for a reasonable exposure, I hoisted myself on to a pile of rocks and was rewarded by one of the elephants coming out on to a small clearing. As it walked across the open space, I was able to snap it four or five times in quick succession before it went into cover again.

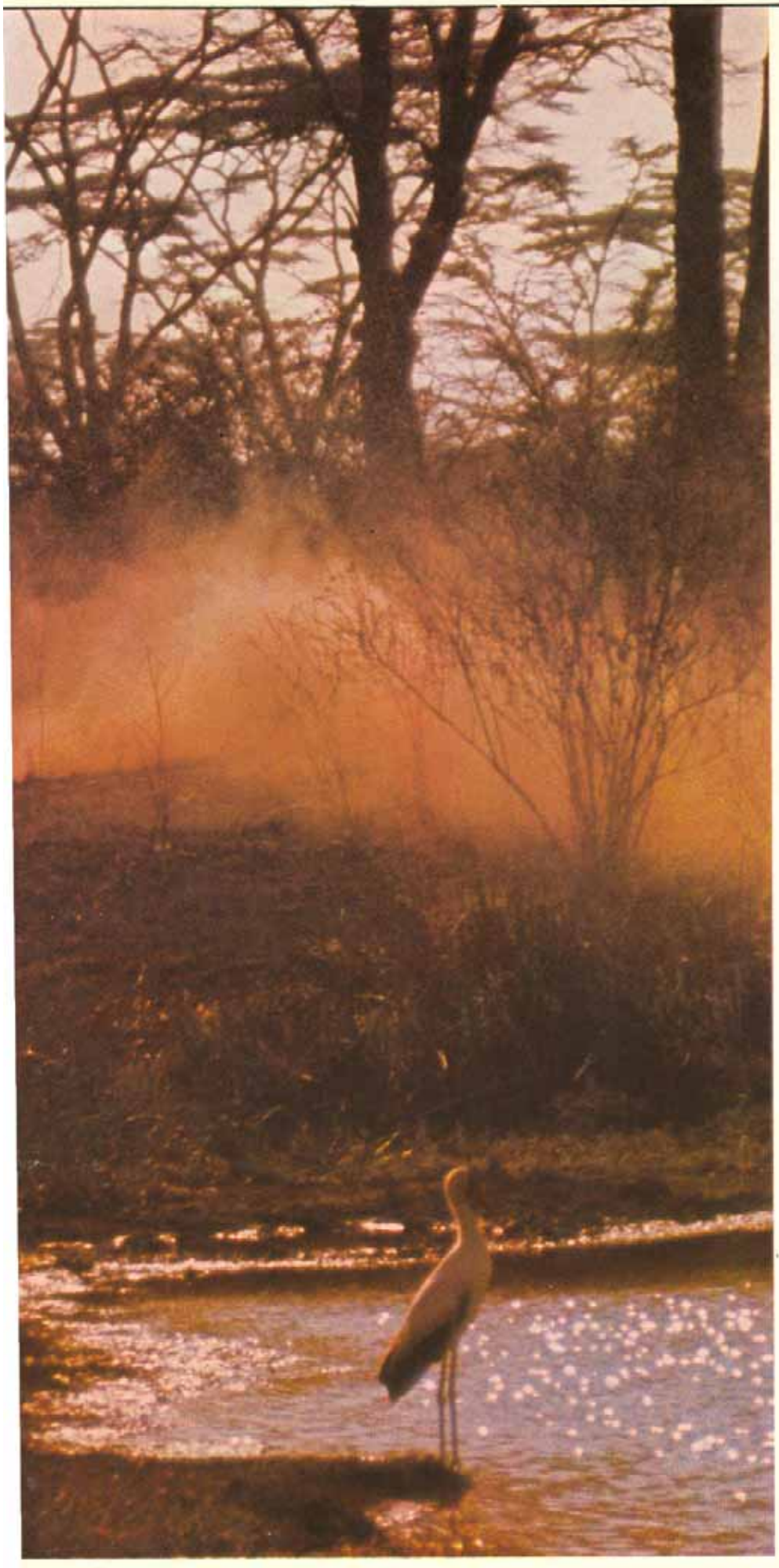
During the mid-fifties, elephants rapidly increased in numbers, and I remember passing through regions where the savanna looked as if it had been under heavy gunfire. In many places, visibility was still very limited, however, and a friend of mine got lost west of the Aruba Dam-Galana track, wandering about for several days with the trees preventing him from seeing either the Yatta Escarpment or the mountains in the vicinity of Voi.

The elephants eventually became so numerous that they turned most of the savanna into grassland with just a few scattered trees here and there. The "inselberg" near Tsavo Station is now surrounded by open country, and from the rock where I photographed the elephant crossing a small clearing you have an uninterrupted view down the whole of Ngulia Valley. In almost the same place, where in 1952 I approached a solitary bull and never got more on my films than part of his head among thick growth, I recently photographed a fine tusker standing perfectly free. The landmarks which my friend was unable to see can now be spotted from any part of the area where he lost his way even in reasonably strong moonlight.

These changes have brought about a considerable influx of plains game into Tsavo Park, but in many places where lesser kudu and gerenuk used to be common, I cannot find them any more. The elephants might, in actual fact, be partly responsible for the catastrophic decline of the Tsavo and Amboseli rhino, for in both places they have



THE BIG CATS. . . another plate from Hugo von Lawick's "Savage Paradise. (Collins.)



cleared away a large part of the cover in which the rhino found a certain amount of security.

Baobab trees, very common in the Tsavo area, survived the destruction of the savanna, but in recent years elephants have taken to feeding on their softish wood, and it is now rare to see one of the vegetable giants that has not been badly gnawed. Many of them have been turned into pitiful ruins.

Various control schemes have from time to time been advocated, but the authorities were understandably reluctant to order the destruction of hundreds or even thousands of elephants within a region that had been set aside primarily for their protection. Some ecologists expressed hopes that a pattern of self-regulation would eventually emerge and restore the balance. In Tsavo National Park, the mating age of elephants has, in fact, already gone up from 10 years or less to about 12 years. While calving intervals have increased in length from four to seven years.

The severe drought at the beginning of the seventies has also done something towards controlling the Tsavo elephant population by killing — according to an official report — about 3,000 out of a total of 20,000, mainly calves, elderly and very old animals. This comes closely to the cropping figures suggested by game biologists.

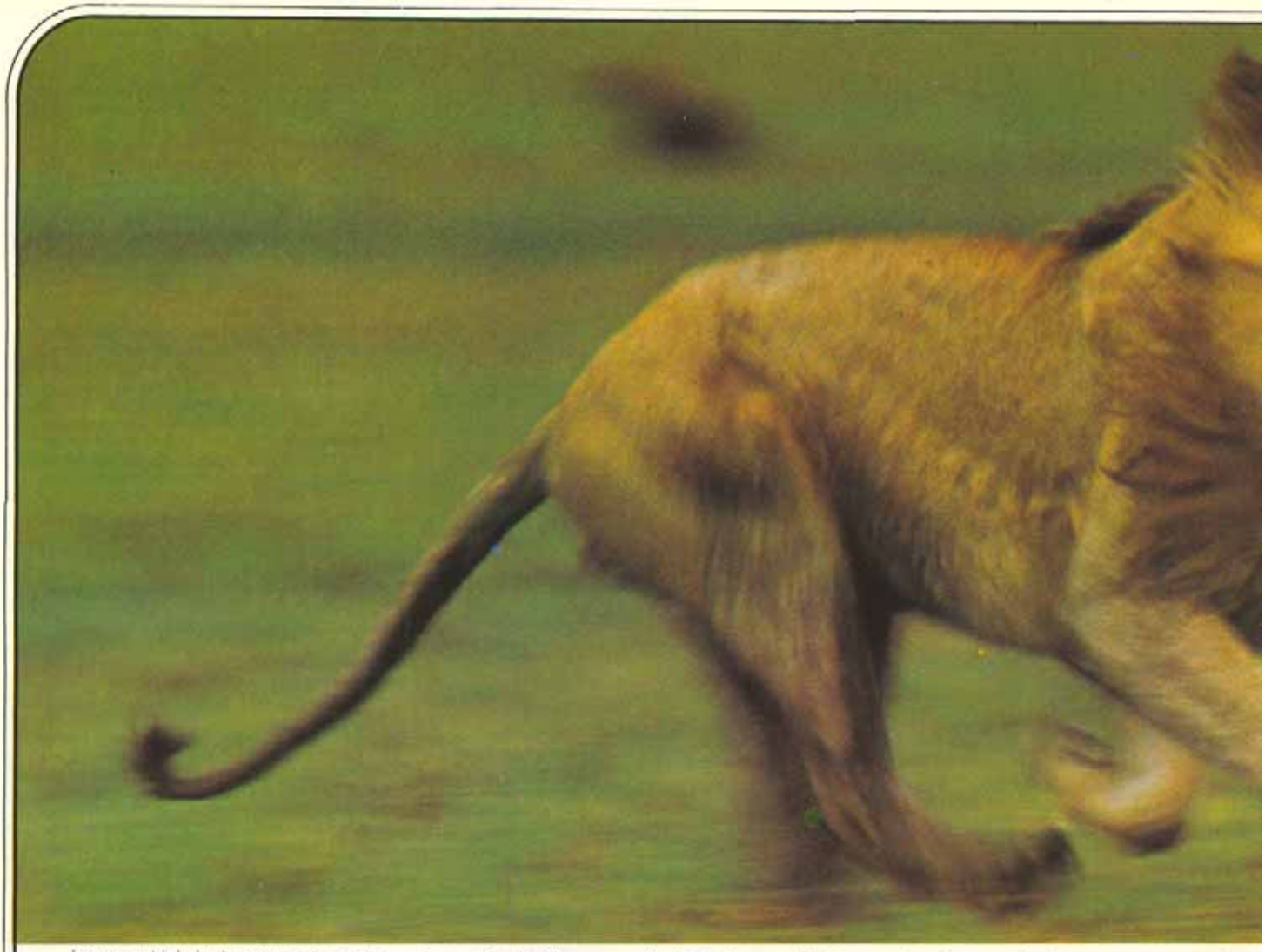
Despite the sad overall decline of East Africa's wildlife, today's tourist will, in actual fact, see considerably more game than he would have done thirty years ago. Within parks and reserves, most species have definitely increased in numbers, and he is able to view and photograph the animals under conditions which, during the fifties, I would not have imaginied in my wildest dreams. When the tourist boom set in, they quickly became used to the rapidly increasing number of motor cars and are now so indifferent to vehicles that — despite all the information available through books, movies and television — newcomers to East Africa are always utterly amazed when they find out just how close they usually can get to whatever they want to photograph. Anybody carrying fairly adequate equipment — and who is able to use it correctly — cannot fail to return from safari with excellent movie shots or a splendid collection of colour slides.

When, at the end of the Forties, I visited the Serengeti for the first time, I found most animals fairly shy, and in some respects the photographic results were by no means overwhelming. I had to work hard, for instance, to obtain some reasonably good exposures of topi and waterbuck, and I never got close enough to eland and buffalo. There was one notable exception, however: The lions were easy to photograph even then! We know from the pictures taken by Martin Johnson, Marcuswell Maxwell and others that just as soon as they were awarded some measure of protection, the Serengeti lions had decided that the noisy, smelly monsters that from time to time appeared on their hunting grounds were neither a new kind of prey nor an enemy to be feared and could therefore be ignored.

In 1949, after a number of years which had brought very few visitors to the Serengeti, the big cats were still as tolerant of cars as they had been during the late twenties and up to World War II. On that early safari, I performed the experiment of getting out of our car about 70 metres from two big, fully fed males resting under a tree. While they had paid absolutely no attention to the vehicle — an open-sided safari car with all of us plainly visible — the two lions now instantly jumped to their feet and ran for cover like a couple of hare.

One day we saw a leopard climb an acacia tree, carrying a Thomson's gazelle in its fang. At the foot of the tree there were two

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hyenas which had apparently tried to rob the cat of its prey and now seemed quite ready to resort to siege tactics. While I got my camera ready, my wife spotted another leopard hiding among the branches, but long before we were close enough for photography, the first leopard dropped its prey, which hit the ground lose to one of the hyenas, jumped off the tree and vanished in a thicket, followed by its companion, of which I caught only a glimpse.

This was more or less what I had expected. All books on African wildlife I had read stressed the leopard's highly elusive habits, and I knew that many people had spent twenty or more years in Africa without ever seeing one of these spotted cats. As C. G. Schillings, the pioneer animal photographer who travelled in East Africa at the turn of the century, put it: "Vastly more numerous than the lion, the leopard is literally everywhere and nowhere."

In course of the Fifties, we saw leopards practically every time we visited the Serengeti National Park, but it was always the same story: A yellow flash, as one jumped out of a tree and bounded away in the direction of the nearest cover, or a fleeting glimpse of a long-tailed shape darting across the track into the high grass and scrub fringing a river bed.

On most occasions photography was quite out of the question, and once only did I get some reasonably good shots of a running female before she vanished from sight.

At the beginning of the sixties, stories began to circulate in Nairobi of one Serengeti leopard, a big male, that had developed a complete indifference to cars. He became known as "Good as Gold", for if you managed to find him, you were absolutely sure of obtaining excellent photographs. My wife and I made his acquaintance on October 10th 1962. He lay stretched out peacefully on a thick, almost horizontal branch of a yellow-barked acacia and near him hung the skin of a baboon which he had killed the previous day. He hardly looked at us, and I spent the next few hours taking dozens of pictures, wondering whether I would ever again see a leopard with such absolutely un-leopard-like behaviour. I need not have worried, for during the next few years we saw and photographed "Good-as-Gold" on several other occasions, for the last time in 1964. He disappeared about a year later, and nobody knows what happened to him.

By that time, however, other leopards had departed from their usually so secretive ways, especially youngish animals which had got to know motor cars at a very early age. Some of them became as tame — or even tamer — than "Good-as-Gold", and the Seronera region of the Serengeti acquired a well-deserved reputation for being just about the best place in all Africa for watching and photographing the spotted cats.

I have since also obtained good leopard photographs — which not so many years ago would have been considered exceptional — in the Nairobi and Tsavo National Parks, as well as in the Mara and Samburu Reserves. But in none of these places are conditions quite as favourable for leopard spotting as they are — or at least were during the sixties and early seventies — in the vicinity of Seronera.

The cheetahs inhabiting the East African conservation areas also changed their attitude towards humans — or rather towards their vehicles — in a most remarkable manner. In a book published in 1924, Martin Johnson captioned one of his photographs: "A tame cheetah — the wild ones went too fast for the camera." On my first visits to the Serengeti National Park they also bounded away the moment they caught sight of a vehicle.

During the second half of the Fifties, however, as more and more cheetah cubs in Nairobi Park, in the Amboseli Reserve and on the Serengeti Plains grew up in increasingly frequent contact with cars, they gradually developed an indifference to them which a few years past nobody would have thought possible. In 1964, the cubs of a Nairobi Park litter not only came to the cars in order to sniff at them, but eventually made a habit of jumping onto the bonnets and roofs. There they often sat down comfortably, with their tails hanging down outside the car windows. More recently in the Amboseli Reserve, one could sometimes come across a cheetah family resting surrounded by 25 or 30 tourist buses, and none of the animals ever looked at the cars.

In 1925, Marius Maxwell wrote: "Photographing the East African buffalo in its marshy haunts or in bush country is not any easy task. The most one can expect under such conditions is to snatch a glimpse of a raised head of one's massive flanks. Where the animals have been in any way disturbed, they usually remain in the shelter of the swamp and make their appearance in the open at night time."

As far as Kenya and Tanganyika were concerned, there had been no change in bufallo behavious by tHe late forties and early fifties. Photographing them remained



a far from easy task, and I had to go to the long-established Katwe Reserve (later Queen Elizabeth National Park) of of western Uganda in 1950, in order to get my first really satisfactory shots of the big black bovids. To find the Katwe buffaloes, grazing in the open in broad daylight, and to be able to drive up to one group of mighty bulls after the other came as a tremendous surprise to me. I found it more difficult to get pictures of heards, for they almost invariably took fright and lumbered away before I was really close enough for the 13.5 cm lens I was using at that time.

During the second half of the fifties, the Manyara National Park became known as a good place for buffaloes. They had begun to change over to diurnal habits, remaining out of cover almost permanently, and had lost their fear of cars. Same as in the Katwe Reserve, the old bulls were the first that could be approached closely. It took quite a number of years more for the herds to develop a similar attitude of indifference.

Gradually, the buffaloes of Amboseli, Samburu and Mara, of the Serengeti National Park and Ngorongoro went through the same change of habits, and today's tourists find it easy to photograph the impressive animals.

In Amboseli, for instance, it is sometimes possible to drive right in among a heard resting on the edge of a swamp. On a recent visit, I saw this herd leave their swamp retreat about mid-morning and slowly wander past two or three cars. Some approached to within a few metres and stood staring, while a dozen cameras kept clicking away. How amazed Maxwell would have been if he could have witnessed this scene! ■

ARTICLE: by MARK and DELIA OWENS, research scientists in the Kalahari Desert

The social life of the brown hyena

A DENIZEN of darkness and inhabitant of remote desert regions of Southern Africa, the brown hyena has long been an elusive and misunderstood carnivore. It is often portrayed as a timid, solitary animal, skulking through the blackness of night and dominated by all but the smallest of predators. Six years of research in the Central Kalahari have shown that the brown hyena simply does not fit this mould.

Brown hyenas are highly skilled "active scavengers." While seldom hunting themselves, individual hyenas bully most other predators, including leopards, from their kills single handedly.

And the brown hyena is anything but solitary. Although they forage alone, individuals exist as part of a clan, the members exhibiting high degrees of altruism while rearing the young in communal dens.

The 55,000sq. km. Central Kalahari Game Reserve in Botswana, where the research is located, is one of the largest game protectorates in the world. Seven times larger than the Serengeti Plains, it is a huge, totally undeveloped tract of wilderness, so remote that it is closed to general tourism. We are the only inhabitants other than a few bands of migratory Kalahari Bushmen.

The nearest African village where supplies may be obtained is over 200 km. away and all our food, fuel, and water must be hauled great distances over sand tracks. But the logistics problems are offset by the privilege of conducting research in a pristine environment where most of the animals have never before seen modern man.

Because of the dictates of the Central Kalahari environment, where food items are scarce and widely scattered for much of the year, brown hyenas always forage alone. Due to the size of these food items and their wide distribution it simply is not profitable for browns to forage in groups. This fact is probably responsible for their reputation as solitary animals.

They do, in fact, live in clans of ten to twelve individuals including the young. The clan consists of a dominant male, a number of subordinate males, four or five adult females and their young. Each member of the hyena clan occupies a position within a social hierachy or "pecking order"

Clan members jointly defend a territory of about 170sq. km. against neighbouring clans. The territory includes a segment of the fossil river valley which becomes prime real estate during the rains (January-March). At that time large numbers of springbok, gemsbok, and other herbivores congregate on the fossil river bed to graze the nutritious seasonal grasses. At this time of year, kills by lions, leopards, cheetahs, and occasionally wild dogs yield large amounts of carrion concentrated on the dry river courses. Life is good for the brown hyena.

But the clan's territory also includes mixed bush and woodland habitat types adjacent to the river systems. These areas become more important to the brown hyena during the dry months when the large herbivores have migrated away from the fossil river valley.

The brown hyena's diet consists almost entirely of material scavenged from the kills of other predators. Radio tracking the movements of lions and hyenas by aircraft and truck has shown that lion range movements and prey selection greatly influence brown hyena ecology. The diet, range movement, and even the size and shape of the clan's territory are affected by the lion pride operating in the area. In the dry season when the lion pride expands its territory, the hyena clan nearly duplicates this expansion.

All that is left for brown hyenas when lions are finished with a kill are skin, bones, horns, and hooves. There is very little fresh meat available. Yet with its hammer-mill jaws and powerful digestive juices, the hyenas are able to injest and assimilate remains of lion kills.

Browns never feed with nor even venture closer than 100 metres to lions attending a carcass. This caution is necessary since lions occasionally kill them. Even after the cats have moved off, the brown hyena approaches the kill very carefully and then takes over the remains.

Except for lions, however, brown hyenas are the most dominant and numerous large carnivore in the research area. An individual brown hyena will chase leopards, cheetahs, jackals, and smaller predators from their kills. When present spotted hyenas and wild dogs do dominate brown hyenas, but these two predators are extremely rare in the reserve and therefore constitute little competitive threat to the brown hyena.

One night a large male leopard killed a springbok near our camp. Before it could feed, "Shadow," one of the brown hyena clan females arrived at the scene. With hackles raised she charged the leopard and chased him 150 metres into camp and up the tree next to our kitchen tent. "Shadow" and "Old Yellow", the dominant male of the clan, consumed the springbok.

A brown hyena takes a very systematic approach to its feeding on a carcass. The primary objective is the dismemberment of a portion, usually a leg, which can be carried off and cached in thick grass or under a bush. Seventy per cent of the times we have observed browns leaving a carcass they carried some portion with them.



Caching is an effective means of competition with other clan members without the disruption of fighting. It is also a means of spreading the food resource over several nights.

Particularly in the dry season, when many of the large lion prey species have migrated away and less carrion is available, browns supplement their scavenged diet by hunting. Only small prey such as rodents, birds, reptiles, and insects are taken.

There is no drinking water of any kind in the Central Kalahari for thousands of square kilometres for six or eight months every year, or more if there is a drought. Brown hyenas must survive on the fluids of occasional small prey and on the moisture of wild melons, which become critically important during the dry season.

Because of the widely scattered food resources in an arid environment the hyenas must cover great distances to find a meal. During the dry months a brown often travels over 30 km. a night.

It would seem that since browns forage alone and so far afield, that clan members would never meet. However, individuals move throughout the territory over a network of common pathways maintained through scent marking. At various junctions and points of interest along these "olfactory highways" a hyena "pastes" his scent onto grass stalks. Each scent mark contains information on the individual's identity, social rank, and time of passing. Scent marking is the most efficient means of long range communication since they have no loud vocalisations as do the spotted hyenas. This communication permits clan members to locate each other for socialisation or other purposes.

Greeting brown hyenas engage in a bizarre ritual we call the "carpal crawl". The submissive hyena lowers itself to its carpals or "knees" and with its tail curled over its back, lips pulled up in a grin, and ears plastered to its head, it crawls around the dominant while emitting a strange squeal. Both pirouette in a small circle while smelling under each other's tail, where each brown hyena carries its identity card. The posture of the subordinate is actually an appeasement inhibiting aggression in the dominant hyena, and it is derived from the posture used by cubs in begging food from adults.

When a large carcass such as giraffe or gemsbok is located, up to six hyenas of the clan congregate for communal scavenging. At these times the large carcass setting often becomes quite a social affair. Usually no more than three hyenas feed at a time, while the others greet, engage in ritualised combat, or groom themselves and each other.

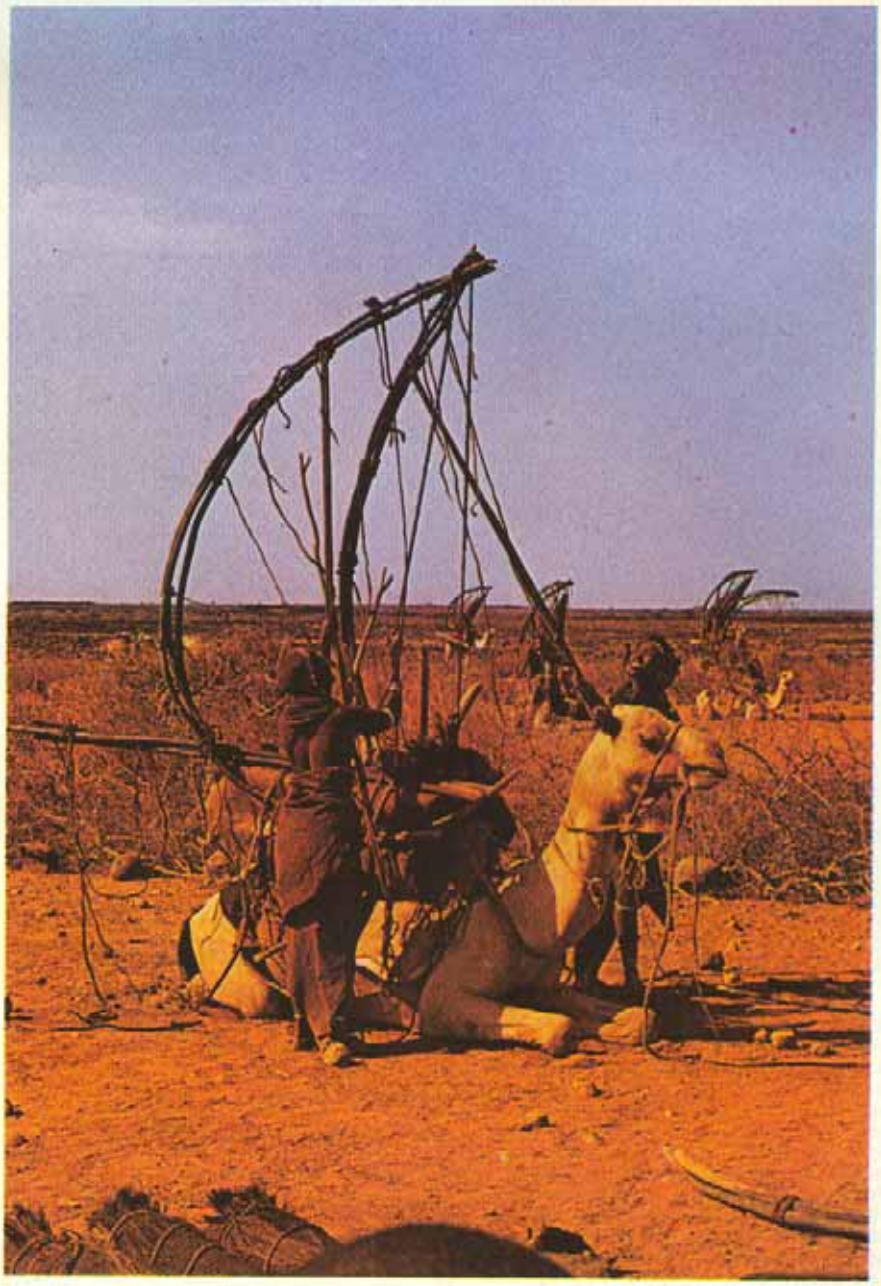
The social hierarchy among adult hyenas is established and maintained through ritualised fighting, which consists of neck-biting, muzzle-wrestling and chasing.

In muzzle-wrestling two hyenas stand face to face throwing their muzzles together while using them to push and shove against each other. It is a type of sparring match in which they attempt to grab the opponent by the neck. It is most impressive to observe two hyenas thus engaged, their great jaws chopping the air, canines gleaming like chunks of quartz.

Suddenly one has the other by the neck, skin and hair clamped firmly between its front teeth. A rasping scream shatters still night air as the hyena violently shakes the other, throwing it off its feet. We can hear the sound of teeth cutting thickened skin, and blood begins to colour the blonde hair of the mantle.

At first we were stunned by the violence of the scene. Wounds are often opened in the neck and one female lost an eye during neck-biting. Although it would only take seconds to do so, the dominant never kills the submissive hyena in combat. The fighting is thus ritualised, following discreet

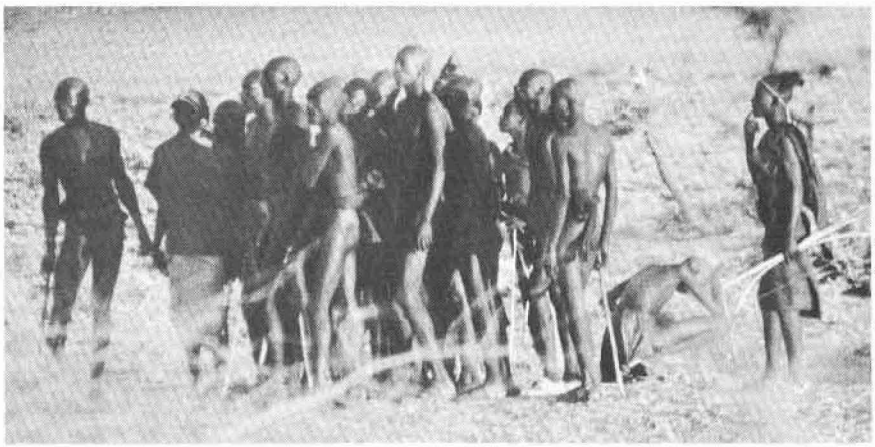
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TOP: Rendille woman of Gob Kimogol loading a camel for a community move; (Above): on safari.

HE RENDILLE:Report and photographs by ANNE W. BEAMAN



The making of a man

THE sun was not yet up that morning when I woke, but there was no time for further dozing. Having planned for six months and travelled many thousands of miles for this day, I clambered from my sleeping bag and unzipped the tent, rubbing the sleep from my eyes, afraid I might already be late.

The desert wind was still. Even the livestock, usually in full voice by first light, was strangely quiet. In the grey dawn, women hurried in and out of the dark, round huts, rushing through perfunctory duties, then gathered in a nervous cluster just inside the community fence. Sixty metres away I could see that the boys and a group of men had already assembled behind the *gaim*, the large, airy shelter of thorn branches built especially for the occasion. Late-rising men hurried to join them, and children danced up and down in a frenzy. Circumcision Day had come at last.

I looked for the boys' faces, but could hardly make them out. Huddled tightly together, stripped of all their adornments and their heads shaven bald, they seemed to have lost their individual identities, and to have become not the boys I knew but a mass of initiates. They were ready, the waiting was over, and all their energies were concentrated on the test that lay before them.

As the sun rose, the first initiate stood up and began the short walk to warriorhood. He was completely naked. Even the black goat-skin cape he had worn for the past four months as a badge of his special status had been twisted into a rope and tied tightly around his waist to quiet the whirling in his gut. Two men were beside him. They checked him over, removed his shoes and the last of any ornaments; then each holding an arm, they walked with him to the front of the *gaim*.

They helped him to sit down on the stone there by the entrance, and showed him how to position his feet, and how to hold tightly to his toes. As his supporters moved into place around him, the same question must have been in the minds of all: would this boy flinch, and bring disgrace upon himself, his family, and his community forever? Or would he pass through the test all Rendille men must face, and enter warriorhood with honour?

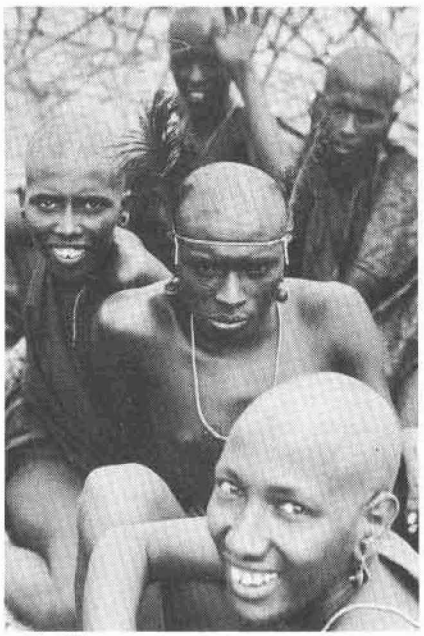
But behind this lurked another question, one that few of them could have formulated, and none could have answered, but which would concern all Rendille people: As this boy passed through this ancient rite, leaving his childhood behind forever in the tradition of his ancestors, what kind of future was it that he and all his tribesmen faced?

Then the crowd closed around him, and the circumciser crouched in front of him and went to work.

The ritual in which these people were engaged is many centuries old, its origins obscured by time. Once wide-spread throughout East Africa, a vital and complex part of social organisation, it has now faded away in many places, leaving only the operation without the principles it once signified.

The Rendille are among a relative handful of peoples among whom group circumcisions, and the organisation of men into age-sets or classes who pass through life's stages together, are still essential elements of economy, politics, history, demography, and the division of labour.

This was no tourist revival. Most of the people present saw their future stretching out before them as their past stretched out behind. The little boys, their faces shining with male importance, imagined the day, fourteen years hence, when they too would become warriors. But I looked on and wondered if that day would ever come.



Top: Before: Rendille boys stand in line waiting for the circumcisor's knife: Above: After the event.

The Rendille people, with a population generally estimated at 15,000, inhabit a territory of some 10,000 sq. km in the hot, flat plains of Kenya's Marsabit District, a territory as harsh and arid as any Kenya has to offer. Farming is impossible here; the rain is far too scanty. With a mixed herding economy of camels, sheep, and goats, and a thoroughly nomadic lifestyle, the Rendille have succeeded in making a living where few other options were open to them, and where life offers little margin for error. They have become past masters at squeezing the benefits from every available resource, and have evolved a society in which a range of controls, balances, and alternatives helps provide for the survival and well-being of all.

Warriorhood is an essential part of this system, and a central part of the life of every Rendille male. Among the Rendille people, initiation into warriohood comes only once every fourteen years. The initiation provides a specific and irreversible event that marks the end of a young man's boyhood, such that there is never any confusion about his status in society.

Warriorhood provides a body of available young men whose primary responsibility is the care and defence of the vitally important camel herds. This task often keeps warriors many miles from home, camping out with the herds for months at a time, as they seek the best pastures. The repeating fourteen-year cycle, and the timing of events within the cycle, provide a framework by which the Rendille people remember the passing of history.

Sahei Kimogol, young head of the community known as *Gob Kimogol*, explained it to me this way: "A Rendille man's life has three parts.

"First he is a boy, *he is a boy, is a boy, isaboyisaboyisaboy* . . . for thirty years, if he is a first-born like me, he remains a boy.

"Then he is circumcised and he is a warrior for only ten years.

"Then he marries and becomes an elder, and he remains an elder for the rest of his life."

Because eligibility for circumcision does not depend on the age or level of development of the boy alone, the Rendille institution cannot accurately be called an "age-

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set" system. Included in the equation must be the year and warrior-class within which a boy's father was circumcised. A minimum of forty-two years must pass between the circumcision of any man and that of his sons, regardless of the age of the sons. Thus a late-born son of an older father may become eligible before an older boy, first-born of a younger father, does. The latter, though chronologically older, will have to wait another fourteen years to enter the system, and may be, like Sahei, thirty years old by the time he is allowed to leave his childhood behind, and forty-one by the time he starts a family of his own.

The prohibition on the marriage of warriors helps to keep the population growth under control, necessary in so harsh an environment. Controls also exist that affect the timing of the marriage of some women. The research of Shun Sato, a Japanese cultural ecologist, has shown that when mortality and social constraints are all taken into consideration, Rendille human population growth is kept to a level that very closely matches the slow growth of the camel herds on which the society is so dependent.

But the social changes now sweeping Kenya have begun to affect her nomadic populations as well.

Gradually, more and more Rendille children are being sent to school; more nomadic communities are staying camped as permanent satellites around the tiny desert towns that spring up at wells; and more Rendille men and women trickle south to Nairobi in search of jobs. For these people, the old system and the old rites, however deeply instilled and revered, cannot have the same meaning nor serve the same functions.

So gradually, as in many other nomadic societies, the ceremony of circumcision and the organisational principles it signifies have begun to alter, and may one day disappear. What will replace them, and what the new way will bring, is still in grave doubt.

For the few, education opens the way to new opportunities. The Honourable Al Haji Kholekhole Adichareh is a case in point. Sent away to school in the late 1940's, today he is Member of Parliament for Marsabit District South, and a renowned wholesaler. Another is Chief George Orre, once headmaster of the Kargi Primary School, and now chief of Kargi township. Others are teachers, shopkeepers, drivers, radio broadcasters, and catechists. But the number of jobs available in Rendille-land is severely limited by the lack of resources for development, and the unemployment problem of Nairobi is well known. As the number of school-leavers increases, so does the demand for jobs, and so also the frustration of those who cannot find them.

To return to the traditional herding life is unthinkable to most educated Rendille. Although at least one school-educated elder, resisting all offers of permanent employment, lives as he has always preferred, as an elder and a stock-owner in his *manyatta*, the established school curriculum inculcates in most students a strong disdain for the old ways. There is nothing taught that would encourage a student to be a better herdsman, or help him to bring scientific knowledge to animal husbandry.

Further, school removes a student for all of his most formative years from the setting in which his brothers learn the skills vital to a livestock owner. It is no wonder that eldest sons are seldom sent to school. It separates the students from their past, and prepares them for a future which it cannot provide, a future based on skills and activities totally unrelated to the land and heritage which spawned them. It is building a population of young unemployed in whom restlessness and the potential for explosive frustration are always increasing. Without a careful re-evaluation of the curriculum, the long-term benefits of school in Rendille-land are open to serious questions.

Those Rendille who will never go to school also face an unknown future. During the eight-year drought which ended with the spring rains of 1977, many families lost the pack camels that make migration possible. Encouraged by government agencies to settle down in permanent locations, many did so, and have remained there since the rains began again. But one need not conduct long years of research to determine the effect of permanent settlement by pastoral peoples in an environment as marginal as that of south-western Marsabit District. The view from the air of any of the towns in the area aptly demonstrates the environmental degradation, the land that stretches out from the centre of these settlement sites, denuded of vegetation for miles in all directions. But in the absence of an airplane, a trip through Kargi on the ground will suffice.

Few more desolate hamlets than Kargi are to be found in Kenya. It rests on a scattering of gravel-covered hills, baked by the sun, only one lone acacia tree offering shady respite from the heat that bounces back from the stony ground. The only grass in Kargi grows inside an experimental United Nations plot. The people who live there can rarely keep enough livestock to feed their families; the animals are sent away to distant grazing camps. The children of Kargi, with little to occupy their time, amuse themselves by tormenting passing motorists, and are growing up on a diet of maize-meal *posho* and tinned lard, instead of milk. The potential effect of settlement on childhood nutrition and health has yet to be studied.

More wells relieve hardship, but tend to increase livestock populations. More livestock increases the rate at which vegetation is consumed, but the well-water can do nothing to replace it. Under pressure from the changing world around them, social controls on human population growth begin to crumble, and human population, aided by medical intervention, rises. School leads young people away, but most of them settle in the local towns, putting more pressure on already strained resources.

Thus Rendille society has reached a turning point. The people know and have tremendous confidence in the way it has always been. They know it has always worked for them. But they have no control over a future that bears so little on their past.

"Rendille people never liked the ways of the Government," says Sahei Kimogol. "We never liked the towns. It's not the Rendile way. But what can we do now? The Government is all around us."

He does not mean the government alone. He means the whole range of outside influences that now threaten the continuity of his way of life.

Thus it is possible that the twin aims of development in nomadic areas, to settle people and to educate them, may have disastrous long-term effects unless there is serious reconsideration of the special needs and conditions of these areas. Conferences have been held on these issues, but communication is poor, and results are minimal. And rarely do these conferences include senior Rendille elders.

The future need not leave the Rendille behind. But neither should it destroy them as a people, nor devastate their homeland. Surely there is a way to join the heritage and skills of a time-honoured society with the aims of a modern nation. This is the challenge facing all those engaged in charting the course.

From 1976 to 1978 I lived among the Rendille people, conducting research for a Ph.D. dissertation in social anthropology. Accepted as a family member of *Gob Kimogol*, I moved with them across the landscape, my goods on a pack camel, trying my best to learn the system that lay behind the confusion of everyday life. My arrival coincided with the time when the *Ilkinchili* warriors, circumcised in 1965, were preparing to marry.

Moving into the community, I came to know Sahei's family, and when Sahei married I followed his procession to the *gob* of his in-laws for the wedding. I watched as Sahei and his bride grew accustomed to their new roles, and to each other, and I cheered the birth of their first child, cradling the infant in my arms.

When I left Rendille-land in 1978, the people walked with me out of the bush to where the roads led back, ultimately, to Nairobi and beyond. I didn't know if I'd be able to return, and they chuckled over my parting tears. But a stroke of good luck landed me in Kenya again, in May, 1979, accompanied by friend Elaine Fiorillo, an anthropologist from Boston. We were, if our calculations were correct, just in time for the next circumcisions, the very special occasion "my" boys had been looking forward to for so long. Very possibly, it would be the last circumcision the Rendille people would hold according to the old custom. Who knows what will happen by 1993?

In a rented Land Cruiser we drove to Marsabit, and inched down that treacherous, washed-out, non-road that leads down the west side of the mountain to Kargi. *Gob Kimogol* was in the bush, we had been told, some ten miles east of the little town. Word went out that I had come back, and after a day or two in Kargi we filled the car with warriors-to-be to guide us, and struck out across the rocky landscape to the unmarked site where the *gob* had set up camp near a dry river-bed thick with shade trees.

"Are you afraid?" I asked the young men, referring to the impending event.

"No!" they chorused. "We are ready!" said Harule Kimogol, a school-boy home for the occasion. Then in English he added: "Did you bring any antiseptic medicine?"

I had. Fear is forbidden, but medicine is not.

As we approached the *gob*, and drew up beside the community of round, thatched huts, crowds of people rushed out to welcome us with glad shouts and warm hugs, a boost to any ego. We were given milk and meat — more meat than we could eat — and excitedly we exchanged all the news. It was good to be back, and we had arrived on time.

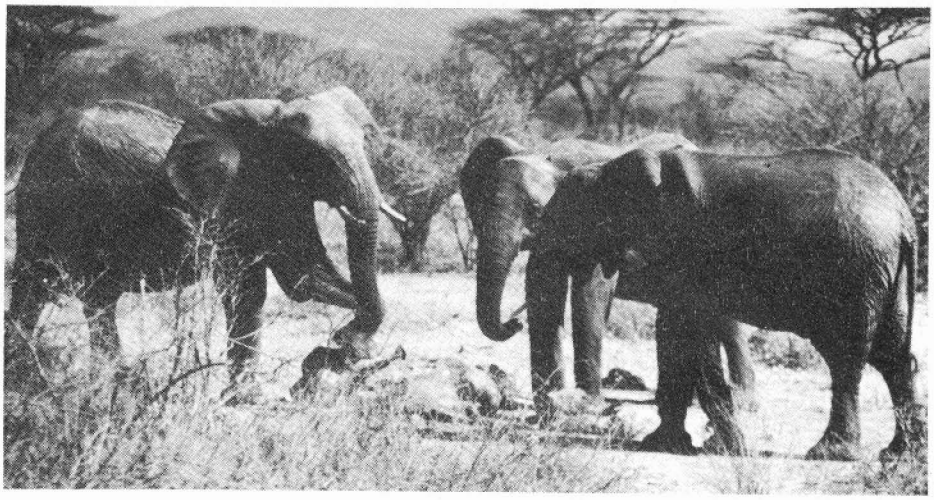
There are always more initiates than circumcisers in Rendille-land, and the circumcisions, held separately in each community, had to be staggered over the two weeks in which they take place the circumcisers moving from one community to another. By the time *Gob Kimogol* was ready for its own circumcisions, it was the last possible day, and everyone was in a state of nervous anticipation.

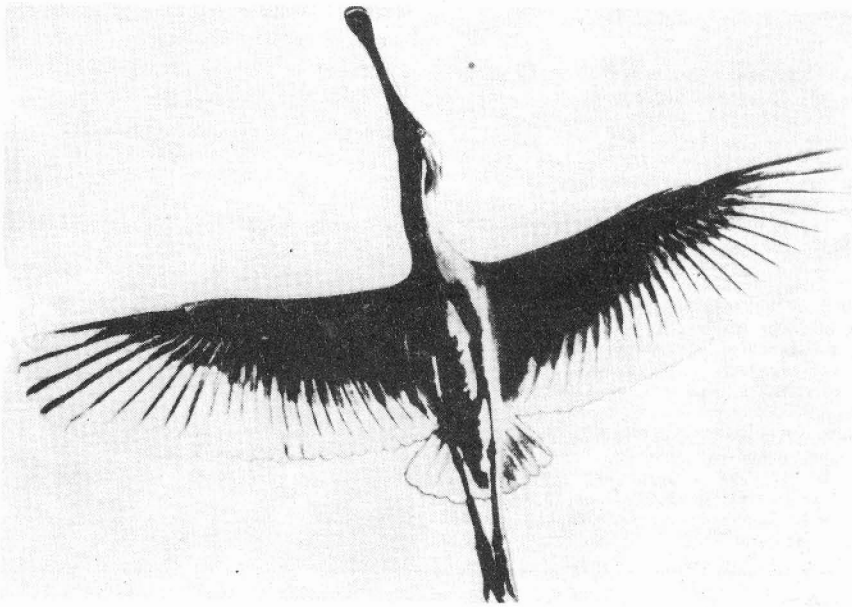
Then the day dawned. The boys and men gathered by the thorny *gaim*, and the first initiate stepped forward. There was a hush as all attention focused on him and even the women, standing by their houses, wrung their hands and held their breath.

After a few moments the circumciser leaned back and a shout of relief went up. The boy had passed, without a flicker or a twitch, and was a warrior at last. There was great commotion as his relatives shouted out their offered gifts of livestock, and then he stood, his cape once again draped around him, and stepped inside the *gaim* to rest there in the shade, joined one by one by his fellows.

The future was theirs; they had passed the test of their ancestors. For the next month or so they would learn the things a warrior must know, and feed on a nutritious mixture of milk and blood as they healed. Then they would go forward proudly to face the challenges that lay ahead. What that future will bring them, only time will tell.

Among the elephants: A great respect for the dead





WE WERE watching a group of elephants near Buffalo Springs when I noticed that one group was standing very still. We drove over and saw that they were standing around the carcass of an elephant which had been dead for some considerable time. There was little left but the dried skin.

One elephant had its foot on the carcass, others had laid their trunks on it and another held a bone in its trunk. All remained still for at least fifteen minutes and there was a strong feeling of reverence and grief.

I felt that this herd always stopped here on their way to the river and remembered their dead friend.

This behaviour had been reported but not believed by certain self-styled scientists until film-maker Simon Trevor placed bones and tusks on an elephant track. His films show elephants passing their trunks over the bones and withdrawing the tusks, possibly on first finding the carcass.

My own observation goes a little further, perhaps, since the elephants I saw spend the day by the river and the night in the bush and follow regular trails between the two. I suspect therefore that they had passed this place several times and if they stopped it was through love, reverence, grief or what you will and curiosity can be ruled out. Some will say I am being anthropomorphic, but I am unrepentant since I consider that animals feel fear, love, hate and grief in much the same way as humans do.

* * * *

This made me think of an earlier visit to the Buffalo Springs area as photographer to a hunting safari. I was in charge of two very well-known hunters and I learned a great deal from them and their trackers about the ways of wild animals and safari techniques in general. But what a nasty business it all was!

The client was not in the least interested in hunting, he just wanted to kill and as he was collecting for a museum, he had a wonderful time.

We could not find a shootable elephant in this area so moved north up to the Merille Lugga where we could drive up and down the sand rivers and avoid any walking. Eventually the client decided that it was too dangerous to go near an elephant anyway (he wanted to shoot a baby one but we told him this would be still more dangerous!) and his wife did the shooting.

We walked a few yards to where two old bulls where feeding together (they had very small tusks and had probably never been molested before) and shot one who dropped instantly. His companion would not leave him and spent a considerable time beside his old friend putting his trunk into the other's mouth to see if he was breathing. I stood there with tears pouring down my face, but the client and hunter were most elated and when the second elephant was at last driven off they gleefully cut off the tusks, ears, feet and tail and left the rest to rot.

These hunters and their clients shot only under licence and had little effect on animal populations. Nowadays many of them are prominent in conservation work, but I can never really accept then as entirely civilised people. Surely the rich hunter who kills because he enjoys it is worse than the poacher who kills for money?

The arguments about hunting are full of paradoxes and illogicalities and we have all had enough of them — but I'd like to make just one more point on the subject.

On this same safari I foolishly pointed out a rhino sleeping by the road and it was promptly shot at range of about 100 yards.

Shoot a sleeping rhino! Well, why not? at least it suffered no distress.

* * * *

BUT to get back to the Buffalo Springs area. I am often asked how I find it today, compared to the way it was 30 years ago and people are surprised when I say that there is much more game now and of course it's much easier to see.

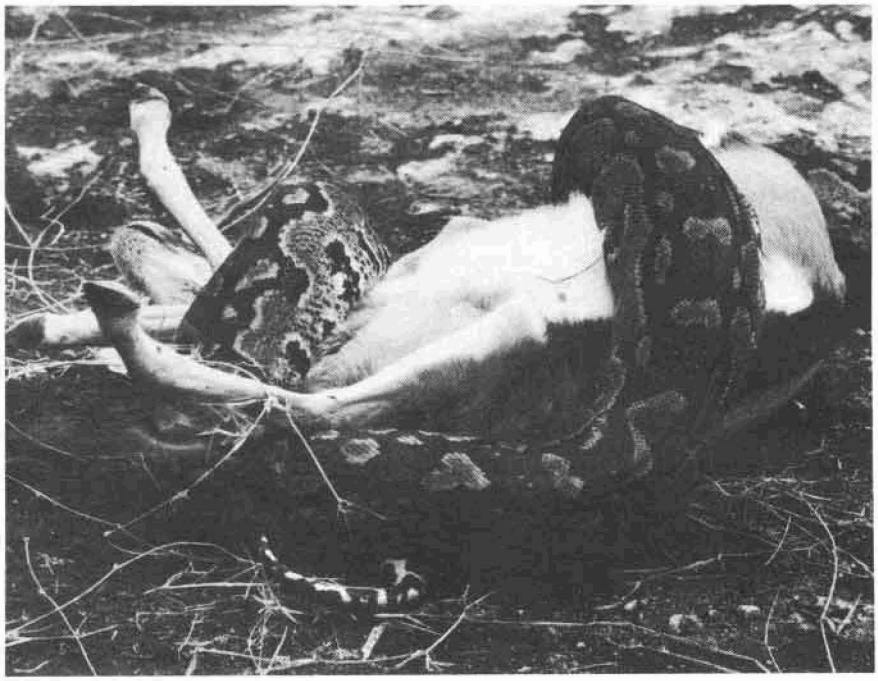
In those days there were few oryx and they were so hunted that you were lucky to get within a mile of them. I don't think there were any big crocodile and I often crossed the river on foot which I certainly wouldn't dare to do now.

The great thing about the area now is the extreme tameness of the animals. It is a delight to watch oryx, impala, baboon and dik-dik within a few yards or to be surrounded by a herd of elephants and be able to watch them for hours without disturbing them.

"See how that baby has fed from two different mothers! Three other elephants have come to greet that tuskless cow — could they be sorry for her?" The modern tourist does not realise how lucky he is to see such things.

On the morning that we saw the grieving elephants we also saw wild dog, lion and cheetah; watched a dik-dik fight and saw a sitting ostrich hiding itself under clods of earth. To see such variety is unusual even now, but it would have been impossible in the old days because there were so few tracks.

Even the birds seem tamer nowadays and the rarer ones more plentiful. Just the other day I saw a bat-hawk catch a bat. This is a very specialised bird which eats only bats and swifts, catching them on the wing at dusk and dawn and apparently spending the whole of the remainder of the day at rest. It's an amazing flier, looping and.



Gluttonous even for this twenty-foot python — a young Tommy at one sitting. Picture sent to us by Dennis Zaphiro, former Maasailand and NFD Game Warden and now frequent guide on Julian McKeand's camel trek safaris.

Among the elephants

rolling to catch its prey above and to the side rather than below.

On the same day, we saw two black-faced sand-grouse in the track ahead with three tiny young. Since a sand-grouse egg is only slightly bigger than a pigeon's, but the sand-grouse has to get to its feet soon after it is born (as a chicken does), the young are very small indeed as well as being irresistibly comic. One of the young kept charging round with his wings out as if he was quite sure he would take off if he tried hard enough.

But why was this so special? My client had seen over 800 birds on three safaris, but said this was the best 30 minutes he had had. I suppose it was because we were seeing something very secret, that this wild bird so persecuted by hunters was so confiding with her young and we were also wondering how the parents could possibly bring up the young without losing them. It is such little things that make safari life continually interesting.

All this then, was less easy to see 30 years ago but of course, life is less adventurous and the country to the north largely spoilt, from our point of view, by the increasing number of people and the church mission stations which have urbanised nearly all the good watering points.

I do not mention the poachers since the damage they do, as a threat to wildlife, is insignificant compared to the increase in population. In March 78, not long before his death, Bob Poole of the AWLF made a speech which should be published and republished until everyone in this country knows it by heart. "To say that there is no prospect for wildlife in Kenya if the human population continues to double every 18 years, is a colossal understatement. There'll be no room for wildlife or anything else."

● Robert Lowis is prepared to answer readers' questions on safaris in Kenya. Write to Trans-Africa Guides Ltd., Box 49538, Nairobi.

The prodigal hippo comes home

SOUNDS like a happy ending to the saga of Suzie the Hippo.

We told the story in the last issue, if you remember. About Jonathan Leakey's two-ton waif sent to Bamburi to keep another lonely (half-tame) hippo company. Of being beaten up for her trouble...returned up country (getting lost for a day on the way) ...and ending up in the bedroom of Don Hunt's house at the Mt. Kenya Game Ranch.



Not so easy, said Don, trying to back a ton of hippo out of a two foot six doorway.

So she had to go — but where?

Now Don tells us that she was eventually accepted by the Warden at Lake Nakuru National Park and is proving a star attraction.

The Warden says they stuck her well away from people at the southern end of the park. She was obviously a bit bewildered by the sudden return to nature and kind of moped for a few days, lying flat out by the side of the road for most of the time.

Then she woke up, set about the geography of the area, and soon found Lake Nakuru Lodge—and people!

At first they chased her away, thinking she was a wild rogue. But then the management realised the potential of a photogenic hippo in the fish pond and allowed her to stay.

"She is comfortable there and happy," they say. "A living symbol of the co-existence between man and wild animals."

Painted nails on Mt. Kenya

IT WAS at a party in Nairobi, fairly late on.

Why not, I said. It would be more fun climbing Mt. Kenya the following morning than looking after the offspring and doing the household chores. The fact, notwithstanding, that never previously had I climbed much higher than the rooftop restaurant at the Kenyatta Conference Centre; in the lift.

However, at eight-thirty on the morning after — with painted nails and a hangover — I was aboard a minibus on my way up the mountain. To Point Lenana, wherever that was, which I understood was around the altitude of Mont Blanc, but only a stiff hike. The real alpine stuff was after that, they said.

I should say that I was equipped for the job. On or about my person were the essentials (list below) loaned by various friends. Plus one of the girlfriends herself full of useful reassurance.

I was to be in the hands of specialists, a climb-safari outfit called "Tropical Ice Ltd." under the direction of Messrs. Iain Allan and Vincent Fayad.

They were in fact very experienced climbers. Iain had climbed Mt. Kenya eleven different ways, finding four of them himself. He was also among the first to shin up the sheer rock face at Hell's Gate and also pioneered a new route to the Kersten Icefield on Kilimanjaro.

Vince was brought up on the famed mammary mountains of Wyoming, the Grand Tetons. He is now a fully-fledged professional mountaineer and, *interal*, has been up and down all six major routes on Mt. Kenya. Useful additional qualifications are his University of Michigan major in wildlife biology and minor in "recreation management."

All this was noted after we turned off the tar and into the bush at Timau on the north west shoulder of the mountain. Up the Sirimon Track to the first camp, a short wrestle with the light-weight tents and a campfire dinner of good wholesome basic food. Liver and onions (to build up the red corpuscles) and plenty of liquids (to avoid dehydration). Also plenty of carbohydrates, thereafter forced into us at regular intervals in the form of biscuits. (For energy and weight-gain).

We were broken in gently with a brief acclimatisation trip around the forest of the lower slopes. A good start this; leisurely and full of wonder at the great silence of the forest, a sudden waterfall and an occasioanl glimpse of furry wildlife and rare birds.

Then it was off in earnest, undulating through the trees — mostly up but occasionally down — towards the "Barrow," traversing across "the Knoll" and into the Liki North Valley." A toughish hike, but made easier (at least pyschologically) by expert instruction in how to walk and how to breath yoga-style. It worked to the extent that I was able to enjoy the minor botany of the trail, a variety of heathers, plus wild sage and thyme. Very aromatic.

In some ways the progress was a theatrical pageant, complete with intervals and Vince going round before each act like a stage hand calling "two minutes please". "Beginners" would of course have been more apt.

On these rest-stops, like children on an outing, we dipped into our little bags of "trail food;" nuts, sweets and chocolate. More carbo-hydrates and delicious.

And thus it went on until late afternoon when we pitched a quick fly-camp, ate an early dinner and contemplated the darkening peaks above us. Batiaan, Nelion, Tareri, Sendeyo and our own lesser light, Lenana. All named for Maasai "spiritual leaders" and seemingly well named that night — remote, faceless, but halo-ed in the moonlight and robed in silvered snow.

The dawn next morning was a shade less romantic, but cheered somewhat by a full English breakfast and afterwards a pleasant stroll up slopes of sprung grass to the head of the Mackinder Valley. This was spectacular: a great sweep of high meadow, tufted with giant heathers, lobelia and overgrown dandelions called grounsels. An *al fresco* lunch of cheese, biscuits and handfuls of a mountain stream; more treking; and an early afternoon camp.

Dusk was swift and a cold reminder of the altitude. But dinner was a hot stew and bed was early (on account of a pre-dawn start for our assault on the Lenana summit).

And so it was, 5.30 a.m. Morning, they said, as we opened our eyes to stars overhead and the dim incandescence of the tropical ice we were meant to reach before the day was over. At that hour, in the chill of the night, the notion seemed unreal or at least improbable.

But later, after a soft dawn over the peaks, the safari — my personal conquest of Mt. Kenya — was back to being a good idea. Even the notorious scree of loose stones and soil wasn't too bad since it was, still half-frozen and offered firm footholds, once the art of digging in toes was acquired. Eventually the tough part was over, the scree and the rock faces, and we were onto a plateau overlooking a moonscape they called "Gorges Valley." Another attraction of the area was a lake thereafter to be called by this Mt. Kenya cognoscenti (a?) — a "tarn".

At that point we were only about six hundred feet from Point Lenana, not more than a couple of liftless conference centres above. As it turned out we ladies had to be partly hand-hauled — by our trusty guides, up a steepish band of rock called appropriately "The Rock Band." But we made it. On top of the world, or so it seemed at nine in the morning with the sun shining. And of course a shining glow of achievement. There below, in hazeless technicolour, were the tarns and rocks and screes and valleys right down to the wheatfields of Timau where it all started.

As it turned out, the descent was also exhilerating in a way. We kind of slid down the defrosting scree, arriving back at camp rather swiftly at about eleven in the morning.

In fact, it had all been a bit too swift and so we all decided to have more of the same with a second hike up to the Liki North Valley. But as a kind of rebuff, the mountain showed its sour face — manifest as a hailstorm all the way.

This time we didn't stop on route and what last time was a gentle slope was now a vertical bog, complete with an Irish mist. But again we made it, wet and soggy and cold until I donned my most treasured possession, a duvet jacket.

Hardly elegant, they said. Less St. Moritz than the Michelin Man. But I minded not at all, being as I was, as snug as a tube in a tyre.

Our last morning. The sun shone and the bacon sizzled. We took down the tents, packed our frozen socks and set off on the last hike to civilisation. To the pub at Naro Moru, to be precise. ■

CHRISTINE JENKIN

BROWN HYENA

From Page 24

rules insuring against death, while dominance and social position are determined.

One of the most social aspects of the brown hyena society is the rearing of the young, in which many altruistic behaviour patterns are displayed. Although they do not hunt in packs, brown hyena clan members assist in caring for the cubs as do wolves and wild dogs.

A female brown hyena gives birth to her litter of one to four cubs in a maternity den somewhere in the clan's territory. The infant cubs are left alone within the den when the mother forages, but while they are very young she will return twice a night to suckle them.

When the cubs are between two and three months of age, the mother picks up each cub by the scruff of the neck and carries it to the communal den to join the young of other clan females.

The communal den is a working brown hyena mother's dream. For much of the year, food items are so scarce in the Central Kalahari that a great amount of forage time is required for the female hyena just to feed herself, quite apart from feeding her cubs. She could never cope alone. Evolution has provided the answer in the communal den where all the females with or without cubs, share in the rearing of the young. Even young sub-adult females which have left the den but have not yet bred help provide food for the cubs.

Periodically and usually at different times, the females return to the den carrying spring-hare, *korhaans*, bones, tsama melons, and other scraps for the cubs. A lactating female even suckles cubs other than her own up to 14 months of age. Such collective effort in rearing the cubs in such a harsh environment certainly improves their chances of survival.

An important advantage of the communal den is that the clan females completely take over the rearing of the young if a female with cubs dies. This year a radio-collared female we have known for five years was killed by lions. At that time she had three cubs six months old at the den. The orphaned cubs were well taken care of by the remaining clan females and are now as healthy as ever.

The cubs are unattended most of the time, and the den is their only defence against would-be predators. The den is usually surrounded by thick bush and tall grass, and rustling vegetation betrays the approach of any animal. Clubs have an acute sense of hearing, and at the sound of grass moving they are immediately alert, diving into the nearest den opening.

Above ground older and larger cubs may stand with hackles and tails raised. This is often enough to discourage wild dogs and leopards. But if a lion approaches, the older cubs also dive into the den.

The communal den also enhances the opportunity for frequent play among cubs. Play gives cubs a chance to learn and practice those social skills so important in achieving status as adults in brown hyena society. During the "heavy hour" just before dark, play fighting, greeting, and other social rituals are practised over and over again.

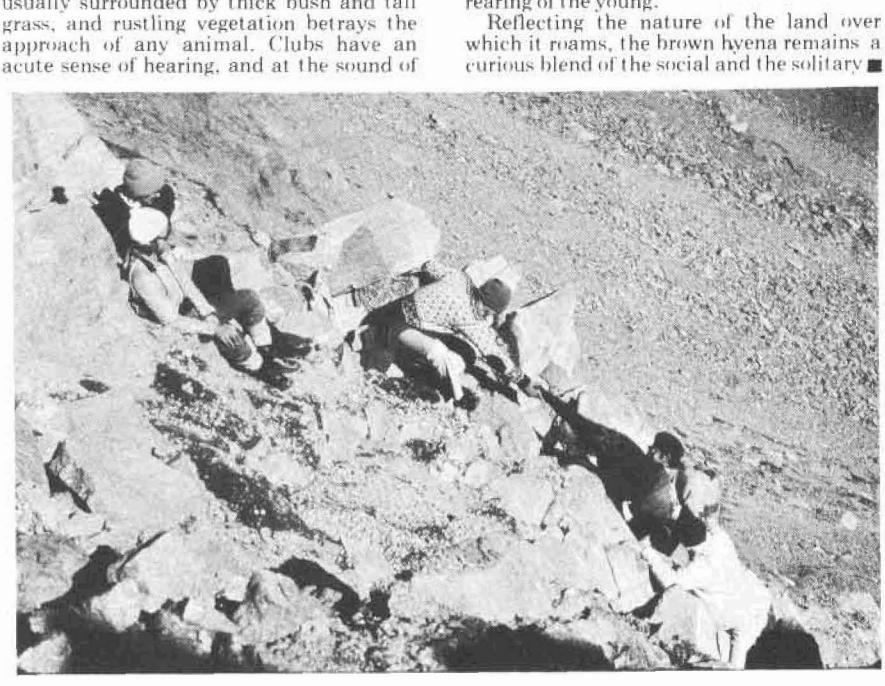
Male hyenas participate in cub rearing by visiting the den and socialising and playing with the cubs. The male hyena lies patiently as the cubs "attack" his ears, face, and tail, pounce on his back, and race wildly all around him. The adult often gently muzzle-wrestles and neck-bites with the tiny cubs.

Cubs depend on the communal den for food, defence, and social contact until they are approximately 15 months of age. At that time they begin accompanying adults, not necessarily their parents, on forage trips away from the den. Any adult clan member which visits the den may find a young shadow in tow as it leaves to forage. There is much to learn about the art of the scavenging existence including pathways and how to respond to predators. During these lessons the adult freely surrenders food items to the young and is generally very tolerant and altruistic about this relationship. This forbearance lasts until sub-adult hyenas reach the age of about 30 months when adults begin rebuffing them with severe neck-biting. At this age, some of the young, particularly males, are excluded from the clan.

The maintenance of a social order, joint defence of territories, communal scavenging, and communal rearing of the young, collectively ensure a co-operative and organised effort for survival in a land intolerant of non-conformity.

The Kalahari is a land of contrary natures. With the short rains it becomes a verdant grassland sporting an abundance of food. Without rain, it is a burning desert where only the strongest survive. Because the brown hyena has adapted to the fickle Kalahari it exhibits a contrary nature as well. The often limited food supply which forces the hyena to forage alone over great distances, also forces it to be social in the rearing of the young.

Reflecting the nature of the land over which it roams, the brown hyena remains a curious blend of the social and the solitary ■



HAND and bottom hanled up Mr. Kenya. picture: Chris Mitchell

from page 13

in his room. It was growing fast but kept him awake at nights. It was friendly and crawled into bed with him, but it scratched. If only the little rascal would sleep at the right time, all would be well.

Finally what I had been expecting happened. Jon turned up one evening with a *Kikapu* over his arm.

"It's in the basket" he said. "By the way, it's a she. She's tame, too — probably asleep right now".

He set the *kikapu* on the kitchen counter. I stuck my hand gingerly into the basket wanting to see what my new pet looked like.

"Don't worry. She thinks I'm her mother. Just grab her."

All of a sudden the mongoose grabbed me with a vengeance. She bit into the end of my thumb and I lifted her out of the basket hanging on like a tiny grey bulldog. The mongoose's top teeth were against my thumb nail and the lower teeth in the soft back of my thumb. I shook it off into the basket and stood looking at my thumb ruefully. Blood was dripping from it. I held my hand over the kitchen sink letting the blood drip while I examined the damage. Only one tooth had pierced the flesh and blood was dripping from the small wound.

Jon had retrieved the animal and was full of apologies while I stood wondering if I should visit my doctor neighbour. I watched the blood drip into the sink as I imagined the conversation.

Not friendly

"Sorry to bother you this time of the evening, doc — but I just got bit by a mongoose. What do you think I ought to do?"

He'd look at me quizzically over his glasses and ask: "Was the mongoose mad?"

"Well it certainly wasn't friendly" I'd give the stock answer.

About that time he would start looking for one of those needles with a hook on the end and fumble about in the fridge for a bottle of *dawa*, saying: "Well, to be on the safe side, 18 injections should do the trick."

I shook my head on the whole deal. After all, the mongoose had been only drinking milk, I let my thumb bleed a bit more and forgot it. The next day it had healed up nicely and I couldn't even see it.

That was the first and last time Mollie ever bit me. She was a homely little thing about ten inches long. Her hair was a dull grey, her eyes were soulless shoe buttons. Mollie's tail had short hair like the rest of her body and was quite thick. She looked more like a salamander than anything else — a far cry from the beauty she was to become.

We put her in the utility room in a basket with a few rags. My wife was far from enthusiastic with the strange civet smell, but it wasn't overly offensive. The utility room proved ideal for Mollie. Besides a washing machine and various cupboards and boxes there were brooms and mops and many hiding places, all of which she eventually made use of.

After a few days of feeding Mollie milk with the tiny nursing bottle I tried a saucer and she took to it immediately. From then on, feeding the rat-like creature was no problem. She ate everything and anything. Her forbearers had probably grown up on the garbage pits and Mollie had no dislikes. One evening we gave her a small bowl of popcorn. She piled into it so enthusiastically that it flew all over the room. Totally non-plussed, Mollie scurried around eating every single one.

It wasn't long before she was almost full grown. By this time we had developed a play time time-table. For 15 or 20 minutes every evening I'd go into the room and sit down in the centre of the floor like a guru and make some squeaking sounds. In a few seconds I'd see her peeking out from one of her hiding places in the utility room's assortment of mops and cupboards. She would look at me with her dull gray eyes unblinking. Then she would charge to the fray, running up my arms, over my shoulders or legs as if I was a tree suddenly transported into her room.

Squeals

I found out that the rougher I was with her the better she liked it. Slapping and cuffing her from side to side brought delighted squeals and she raced over me like a blur of grey fur.

Our 12-year-old son began to come in and watch the game, standing quietly by the door. Mollie would eye him suspiciously for several minutes before she decided to play rough and tumble in his presence. After a while she accepted him, too, and when he sat on the floor, included him in the wild game.

Suddenly she would run out of steam and roll over on her back and want her stomach scratched.

One evening we were having guests and we casually mentioned that we had a white-tailed mongoose living with us. (We figured we'd better say something before they asked what the smell was). Naturally they all wanted to see it. I went into Mollie's room and picked her up and carried her into the living room.

For one brief moment she stared from one to another of the group surrounding us. Suddenly she gave the awfullest, spitting screech anyone had ever heard. At close range it scattered the crowd like a bomb blast. I ran for the utility room and Mollie dived from my arms into her favourite mops. That was her first and last debut.

Finally the day came when the utility room was no longer large enough. She knew everything in the place and now she wanted out. Going to the closed door she began to jump for the latch. What made her think this had anything to do with opening the door, I don't know. But once she started she never stopped jumping. She would jump straight up to the latch and slide down the door. After a few days the varnish was completely gone from the door. Reluctantly I opened up and let her have the run of the house.

Surprise

By this time my wife had become adjusted to the pet and realised my son and I were having a wonderful time with the little grey animal. However, she had many a surprise in the weeks that followed, finding Mollie tucked away in her sewing basket or sleeping in the dark corner of a closet. Mollie couldn't stand fences. She had to get into everything there was. Her favourite trick was to crawl up the back of our writing desk and get into one of the half-filled drawers for her daily snooze. I finally got used to the shrieks my wife made when she would open the drawer and find it full of sleeping mongoose.

Mollie had no fear of our large Persian cat. They looked each over once and called a truce that was never broken. When Mollie began to go out into the yard with us, the truce was immediately made with our Collie dog Mollie would eat from the dog's dish as if it was her own She thoroughly enjoyed tinned dog food.

By now Mollie was full grown — a beautiful gray and white animal with soft, clean fur. We had no idea what she was going to do next, but we knew the move was up to her. She still came in with us after every outing and made herself at home in whatever corner she chose. Yet we had been informed that Mollie wouldn't be with us for all of her days. We had already learned that her indomitable will would get her whatever she wanted.

She loved to walk with us in the moonlight, scampering from one interesting object to the next and eating whatever suited her fancy. I found that at night her tail was fully fluffed out and that it acted as some kind of protective radar system. It was impossible to pick her up, no matter how close she was. The hair on her tail seemed to sense a hand coming down and like quick silver, she slithered away. Yet when her walk was over she was always content to return to the house.

Then we had to go away for a week. What could we do with Mollie? We couldn't take her with us. We decided she would have stay outside and be on her own. However, to be sure she was cared for, we asked a neighbour boy to put out food for her each evening.

When we returned from our trip we were told that the boy had seen her the first two nights, but she had been afraid of him. Now she had disappeared. It was a dull house for a few days, although Mollie's presence still lingered. My wife aired the place as best she could. We watched for her at night and walked the road wondering if she would turn up. But it appeared she had gone her own way for good.

Brilliant

It was several months later when a noise outside of our bedroom window caused me to get up and see what was out there. It was a brilliant moonlight night and there standing on our lawn was Mollie. She was in the rock garden under the Euphorbia, very much at home. She climbed into a lawn chair to see if it was in good repair. Then I noticed another mongoose a bit farther away. Mollie's husband? Could it be that she had found a mate and brought him back to view her childhood scenes? She was chirring away and it almost seemed as if she was trying to tell him all about it, but he was afraid and wouldn't come near.

I watched, wondering what I should do. Surely it was Mollie, but then all *mongas* look very much alike. But who else would be in her old haunts? I squeaked softly. She turned toward the window and listened. Then she went back to her inspection tour.

Quietly I walked through the living room and out on to the lawn. The two little grey animals were just going around the corner to the back of the house. I followed, my bare feet quiet and cold in the wet grass.

I peered around the corner. They were standing close together. Again I squeaked. Mollie looked up quickly. I wondered if she would come to me. I squeaked more urgently. Her mate scuttled into the deep shade of the big Podo tree, but Mollie held her ground. For a long moment we stared at each other across fifteen feet of moonlit lawn. Then Mollie turned and slowly followed her mate. They walked side by side, their tails soft, white and untouchable. They never looked back, and I never squeaked. **—ED ARENSEN**

PANDA NEWS

FROM World Wildlife Fund, Kenya National Appeal; compiled by Ellis Monks.

GOVERNMENT STOPS A LAND GRAB AT NAKURU

IN THE last issue of "Africana," reference was made to an imminent excision of 6,500 acres of Lake Nakuru National Park for agricultural settlement. The land had been purchased previously, with substantial assistance from WWF, for the expansion of the Park.

However, following a government report and representations by WWF-Kenya, it would now appear that the parkland will NOT be given over to people. The proposed excision was unauthorised, it seems; or at least was planned without the knowledge and consent of the Commissioner of Lands.

Efforts are now being made to formalise or "gazette" the Park boundaries so that, in future, no change in status of the land can be made without parliamentary approval.

The level of the lake fell six cms. recently, but is going up again with the arrival of the "short rains." On a recent visit, I found the shore road inundated with water and impassable; the hides water-logged and the President's Pavilion set like an island in the shallows.

But, as a result of the rain, birdlife is as prolific as ever, with the exception of flamingo which have not yet returned in strength. There are small groups on the western shore, but the main legions are still on the other Rift Valley lakes, notably Bogoria. It has not been fully established why the flamingo left Nakuru, but it is believed that the rising level of the lake resulted in a lowering of the alkalinity and thus density of the blue-green algae on which the birds feed.

● Contrary to a report issued by the Fauna Preservation Society (UK), the pelicans are not "usurping" the flamingo's nesting areas. Flamingo have never bred on Lake Nakuru.

● RESEARCHERS at Makalia Falls in the Nakuru Park have noted a dying-off of White Fronted Bee-eaters, with 35 birds reported dead over a three week period. It is thought that a virus infection, transmitted by the *Ornithodorus* ticks or by mites, may be the cause. The sudden deaths are similar to those which occured in the cormorant colony in March 1977 when the colony was almost wiped out.

AT NAIVASHA

For some time now, WWF-Kenya has been pressing for action to eliminate Feral Coypu which have invaded Lake Naivasha and many of the dams around the Nyandarua (Aberdare) Mountains.

The animals have caused considerable destruction on Lake Naivasha. They have taken out quantities of Blue Water Lillies and, as a result, the fish breeding which takes place in the areas shaded by the lillies has been greatly reduced.

An investigation into the Coypu threat is now listed by the Dept. of Wildlife Conservation and Management as a priority.



THE mystery rhino horns — originated in Nairobi from a "non-existent" consignee to a German firm which claims they did not order them. (See story — Page 33)

A GREAT START FOR KENYA'S RHINO PROJECT

KENYA's "Rhino Project" was launched with the showing of a brilliant film — Simon Trevor's "Bloody Ivory." Although concerned mainly with the dramatic and often moving story of Tsavo, it also illustrated the "bloody" battle against poaching in general.

The film was received with acclaim, both by British TV audiences and at the World Premiere in Nairobi, arranged by the David Sheldrick Memorial Appeal which also donated £5,000 to the Rhino Project fund.

The event raised a further considerable sum as a result of generous contributions from numerous organisations and individuals. Included were: Simon Trevor himself ; the management of the Twentieth Century Cinema; the advertising agency Ogilvy & Mather and many supporting advertisers; and the wildlife artist, David Shepherd.

He presented an original painting for auction in support of wildlife conservation, as he has done several times previously — in Zambia, for the purchase of anti-poaching helicopters, and in India to help save the tiger. His gesture in Kenya is greatly appreciated.

The premiere was also the occasion for the presentation of the Mzuri Safari Foundation's "Award for Conservation Endeavour". The organisation is an outgrowth of the Mzuri Safari Club of San Francisco, a non-profit public corporation formed in 1969 for the sole purpose of assisting in the preservation of wildlife throughout the world. Since its inception, it has raised nearly half a million dollars in support of projects in the US, Canada and Britain.

In East Africa, the Foundation donated $5,000 to the Kenya Government in support of Meru National Park and a contribution of $5,000 to the African Wildlife Leadership Foundation.

On this occasion the Foundation awarded $2,000, with a cap badge and shield, to Mohammed Adam of the Tsavo Anti-poaching Unit. In addition, the award carries with it a further $2,000 to go to the conservation project of the recipient's choice in consultation with the David Sheldrick Memorial Appeal advisory committee.

At the same time, a posthumous award was made to William Labosso who lost his life in an aircraft which crashed on anti-poaching patrol in the Masai-Mara Reserve.

GOOD LUCK—from Prince Philip

H.R.H. Prince Philip, President of WWF's British National Appeal," sent the following message to President Moi on the launch of Kenya's "Rhino Project":-

"COMMERCIAL exploitation has always been the greatest threat to wild populations.

"In an earlier age, the North American buffalo and the fur seal, to mention two examples, were both almost wiped out.

"In our time, the whale and the rhinoceros are under sentence of extermination. Recent decisions have brought a stay of execution on the whale, but unless the WWF Rhino Campaign can be made to be effective and quickly, the future prospects for the rhino are black indeed.

"Kenya has already set such a splendid example to the world in all matters of wildlife conservation that I am quite confident that the response from the people of Kenya to the Rhino Campaign will be positive and generous.

"Once again this lead by a country with such a direct and practical interest in the saving of the rhino will stimulate the supporters of the World Wildlife Fund throughout the world to give this campaign their full backing and encouragement.

"Best wishes for the success of the campaign in Kenya."

CASH FLOWS FOR RHINO

DONATIONS from many parts of the world have been received for the Kenya Rhino Project.

Prorities have been examined and the Government's Wildlife Conservation and Management Department has presented its immediate and long-term programmes on which the local "Rhino Group" will be basing its fund-raising efforts.

It is realised that support for the anti/poaching units must be a continuing aim, but that the immediate priority is to secure and safeguard existing stocks of rhino.

In some instances this may mean immoblising rhinos in a national park and translocating them to stockades within that park to give them maximum security.

Elsewhere, The rhinos will have to be moved from areas where they are threatened to safer areas in the parks.

Plans are in hand by the Department to carry out this programme and funding organisations are invited to support it.

But there is one constraint: Large sums of money have been made available in the past to Kenya's Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife to strengthen the anti-poaching units, to purchase vehicles and to improve radio communications. But there were also funds, for this purpose allocated to the Ministry from the Treasury which for some reason was not used and in due course returned. It is hoped that public funds available for conservation will be spent as scheduled in future.

In the meantime, unscheduled expenditures can and are being met by the WWF-Kenya and other bodies.

● The Peoples Trust for Endangered Species, based in England, has made available a four-wheel drive vehicle for use in the Aberdare Park.

●The David Sheldrick Memorial Appeal has been able to have radios repaired and WWF-Kenya has made funds available to repair the helicopter and capture truck.

A further four-wheel drive capture truck has been promised to the Capture Unit by an American donor.

● WWF-U.S. has donated $1,000 for use by the Rhino Action Group and WWF International has made available $10,000 to initiate the Rhino Project.

● Day-to-day funding has beem provided by the Elsa Wild Animal Appeal, World Wildlife Fund-Kenya and the E.A. Wildlife Society.

This tremendous display of concern for Kenya's rhinos augurs well for a successful "Save the Rhino" project. However your supporting donation, large or small, would be most welcome. Please send to "Rhino Project," WWF-Kenya, Box 24603, Nairobi.

New rhino killings

LAIKIPIA RANCH; on the shoulder of Mt. Kenya, has perhaps the largest concentration of rhino in the country outside the Aberdare Park. It is a 96,000-acre ranch given over to cattle, but the owners have also provided protection for the resident population of an estimated sixty rhino.

Now three ot these rhinos have been poached within a few months.

● To help protect the remainder, the Kenya Rhino Action Group has provided funds for four additional teams of three men each to join the 15 men already deployed on anti-poaching patrols.



Arabian Oryx return home

FOUR Arabian Oryx have headed home from Los Angels to the Middle East after a 17-year exile.

The oryx were transferred from San Diego Wild Animal Park to the Shaumari Wildlife Reserve in Jordan. Once acclimatised, and together with seven others already held at Shaumari, they will be released into the adjacent Azraq National Park.

Kenya has a special interst in the Arabian oryx as the first three oryx to be captured in 1962 was as a result of an expedition from Kenya led by the then Chief Game Warden, Ian Grimwood, and the Game Dept. Biologist Don Stewart. The rescue expedition was financed by the Fauna Preservation Society, WWF, and the Shikar Safari Club.

To these three was added one other animal donated by the London Zoological Society and all four were flown out to Phoenix Park, Arizona, and became the first members of an International Herd. Today the herd comprises nearly 100 animals, housed at the San Diego Wild Animal Park.

There are no wild Arabian oryx, the last having been killed in 1972. There are, however, rather less than 200 oryx alive today in captive herds throughout the world.

● The transfer was coordinated by the WWF-US.

WWF INTERVENES ON HUNTING

ACTION to save the rhino in Zambia — launched recently by Prince Philip in Lusaka — is being threatened by commercial safari operators.

WWF reported from Switzerland that safari operators in Germany and Holland are offering European hunters the opportunity to shoot rhino in Zambia.

"This is an outrageous attempt to turn the clock back 50 years. It is totally unacceptable at a time when the rhino is on the very edge of extinction", said WWF's Director-General Charles de Haes. He sent a strong-worded telegramme to the Zambian government as follows:-

"We have just learned that advertisements of Chassorbis of Holland and Kettner of Germany invite hunters to Zambia to shoot rhinoceros. This is completely in opposition to the world-wide efforts of WWF and IUCN to conserve the rhino and, in particular, in view of our recent discussion with you, to help in this regard. We trust you will take immediate steps to ensure that these companies cannot promote hunting of rhinoceros in Zambia and that you make this known to us and the public. Otherwise the credibility of Zambia as a responsible conservation-minded country could be seriously compromised. World-Wildlife Fund cannot consider funding conservation projects in Zambia unless we receive your reassurance that rhino hunting in your country will not be allowed."

● WWF International later reported that the Zambian government had responded with a ban on rhino hunting. The Dutch agency also agreed to stop advertising these hunting safaris.

Now a TRAFFIC office for Kenya

WWF-Kenya is monitoring the trade in Kenya of wildlife products under its own office of "TRAFFIC" (Trade Records Anaysis of Fauna & Flora in Commerce). And some intersting figures have emerged from the the preliminary investigations.

Although the export of animals is automatically prohibited under the blanket ban on hunting — it is not possible to export an animal unless it has first been hunted — there continues to be a considerable and lucrative trade in animal export. Live frogs and reptiles, in particular, constitute big business.

During 1979, Lufthansa transported over 327,000 frogs from Kenya to many parts of the world and over 105,000 unspecified "reptiles".

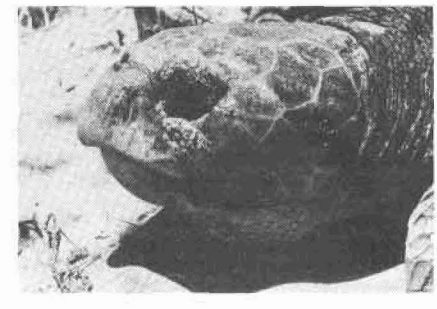
Whilst the precise species involved is not known, it is believed that included are the small tree frog, *Hyalambates* and the clawed toads.

A trade in primates is also open to controversy for as one local firm exported approximately 500 baboons, a number of research bodies overseas were endeavouring to stop the importation as prejudicial to the development of breeding centres. Trade in primates is closely watched by CITES but baboons and vervet monkeys are still regarded as vermin in Kenya.

However, of special concern is a continuing export birds from Kenya.

All birds here are regarded as protected species (with the exception of game birds, quelea and mousebirds) and bird-shooting has always been closely controlled — even before the hunting ban. Nevertheless shipments still continue, and the provisions under which export can be carried out as defined in the Wildlife Conservation and Management Act have been ignored.

Serious disturbance of the bird populations around Lake Baringo has been observed following the catching operations in this area.



Oman seeks help

THE Sultan of Oman and his government were disturbed at the threat to local sea turtles and invited WWF and the IUCN to help.

Following an "Oman Sea Turtles Survey", it was found that Masirah Island, off the Oman coast, had the world's biggest breeding colony of Loggerhead Turtles, with perhaps 30,000 adult females nesting there each year.

The greatest threat posed was the expansion of a village neat the main nesting beach.

Recommendations have now been proposed to allow development and conservation to proceed in harmony.



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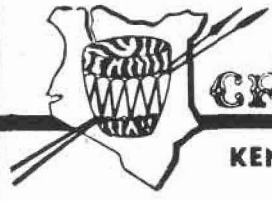
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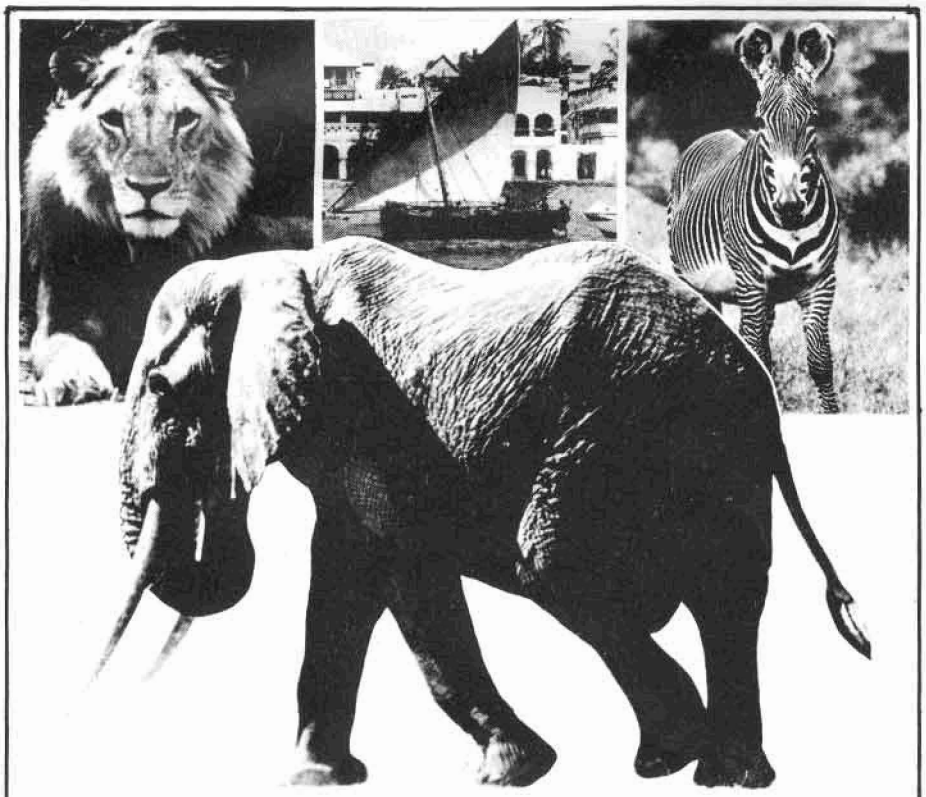
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Commentary

from page 26

ill-advised, yet the drought in Tsavo combined with the restricted boundaries managed to slowly remove the herds that the poachers left alive. Would a smaller more manageable elephant group have fared more normally? Can conservation in the year before 1980 afford tender toes?

When this writer lived in Western Australia there was absolutely no interest in the Albany Whaling Station except as a point to visit on trips to the southwest coast. When a young American dynamo entered the scene and raised a million dollars for the world whales, not only the West Australians but the entire globe heard about the doomed whales. Petitions popped up everywhere: at underwater film shows in New Orleans, on the corner of Lexington and 47th St. in New York, and in Sydney and Amsterdam. As a result the Australian Government has agreed to a ban on whaling.

Admittedly, until the Russian and Japanese see the ecological light, the whales still lead a precarious existence! But rallied, the western world fundraisers won a battle.

Animals need all the vocalization they can get. And as irrational as man is, a little "antropomorphic slush" isn't all bad either.

This word ANTHROPOMORPHIC is one of those loaded labels semanticists can ponder on. After Personal Close Encounters of the Furry Kind, this writer finds its basic premise displeasing.

Most users imply an irrational application of human qualities to animals. Yet the more one studies and lives close to elephant, hyrax, giraffe, or dogs, the more human qualities of tenderness, loyalty and loneliness can be observed. These are not Kiplingesque "*Jungle Book*" exaggerations, but basic parts of sensitive creatures' characters.

Temper tantrums and pure exhileration can occasionally be observed. So whether the prose is lovingly anthropomorphic or coldly scientific, in pure observation the two types of information can permit the readers to participate in watching an exotic animal's day to day existence in far away places so they can relate to their problems.

When dollars, marks, francs, shillings, or yen pour in it is often for the very human reasons like tenderness, loyalty and even anger (at the forces who wish to endanger these beasts).

And there's a word: *beasts* as in Rousseau or the Bible, and *Sauvages* as in Gauguin. Sauvage meant originally "from the wilderness" and implied no other derogatory meaning until "civilised" visitors to the wilds found them threatening and violent and changed the meaning of *beasts* and *sauvages* to frightening unknowns. The new breed of conservationist would like to bring back the Gentle Beasties and Les Sauvages if never again to Eden, at least out of Limbo. United they just may succeed.

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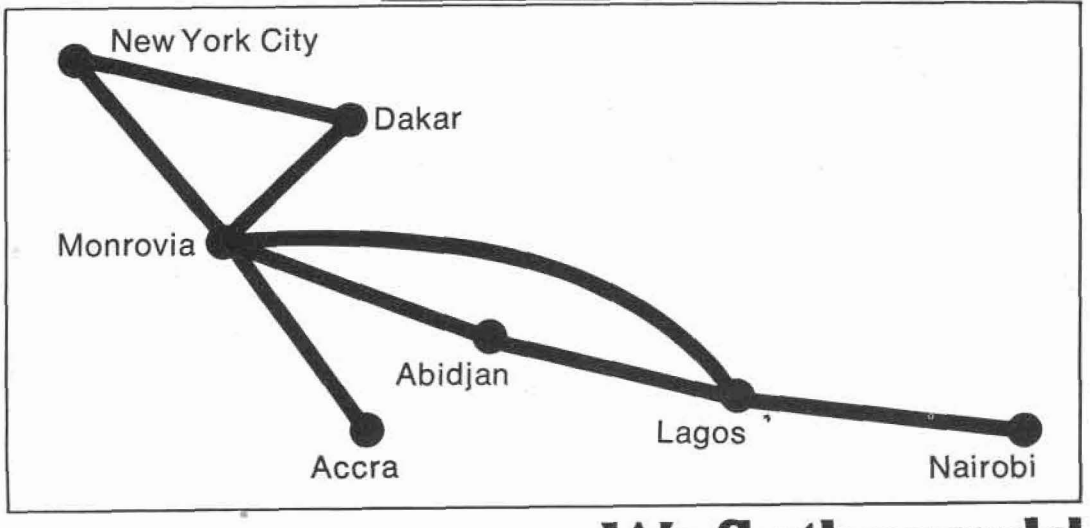
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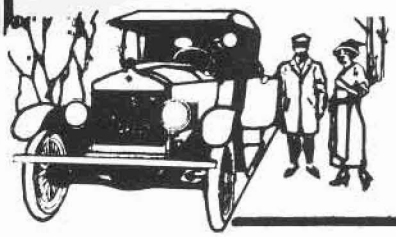
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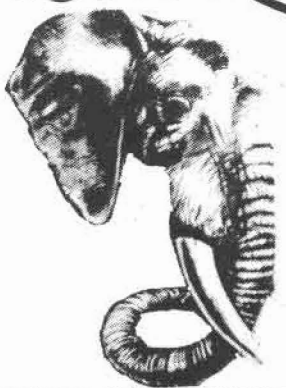
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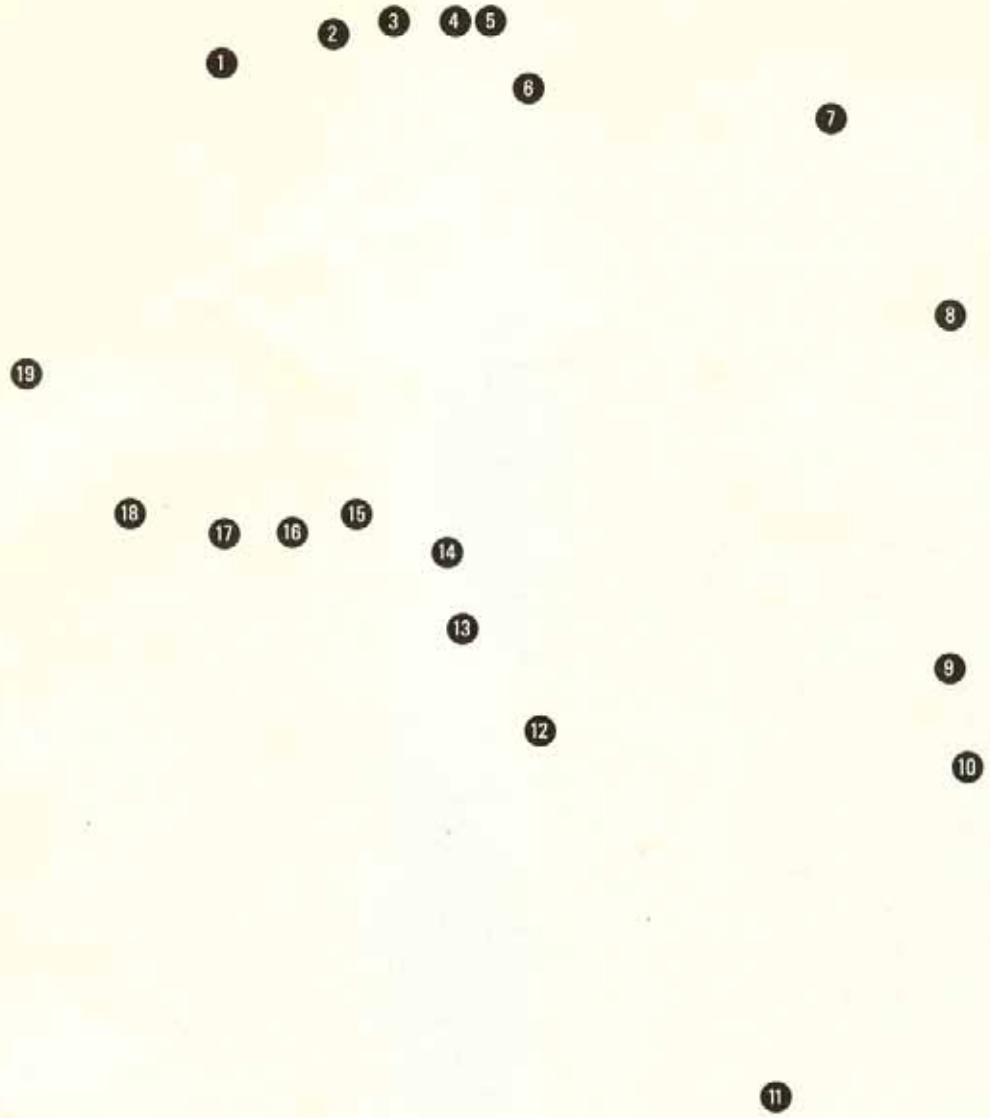
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GGK

Winter timetable 1978/79, subject to change.

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